

We believe it is our mission to support individuals with disabilities by encouraging and assisting them to accomplish health and fitness goals, valued personal goals, and a sense of belonging in their home and community. We will provide a supportive atmosphere of love, care, acceptance, dignity, and respect while upholding their right to:

- BE FREE TO MAKE DECISIONS/CHOICES
- BE AN INTEGRAL MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY IN WHICH THEY LIVE
- BE THE BEST THAT THEY HAVE THE DESIRE TO BECOME



"We are the People" - DRLD 2023 Theme

Restoring Hope team members, host families, and excited clients celebrated, advocated, and connected with State Representatives this past March during Disability Rights Legislative Day at our State Capitol. Prior to breaking up into two groups and meeting with representatives, all sit in on the yearly rally. During the rally, various legislators and disability advocates spoke on topics ranging from transportation, employment, to the caregiver crisis.



A Big High Five

State Representative, Aaron Crossley, and Adrian, are pictured above, fixing to embrace in a congratulatory high five, as Adrian shared he had just won Homecoming King! Representative Crossley continued on with asking both Adrian and Donesha questions about their active lives.



Restoring hope one relationship at a time.



Participation Provides the Building Blocks for Growth

Donesha Mitchell (pictured above, left) is enjoying herself while conversing with representatives at Disability Rights Legislative Day. Donesha has been a great advocate for not only herself, but openly shares about the benefits she has received from her loving host family and Restoring Hope. Damen Garlinger (pictured above, right) gets the opportunity within the Kirksville Excel Day Program to assemble and paint a bird house.

Finding Light After Darkness

BY WHITLEY LEMON

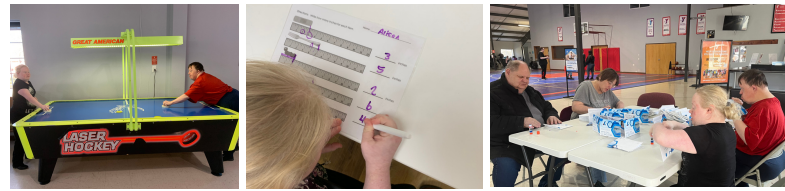
She will never know how her thoughtful gift has changed me forever. Kim Dowling, a fellow team member gifted me, *The Boy Who Was Raised As A Dog*, written by Bruce D. Perry, MD, Ph D. and Maia Szalavitz. What I've learned from it is that the tragedy of trauma and the many horrific stories that encapsulate the personal narratives of those we serve, our clients, is enough to break someone's heart into pieces, but the beauty, if any can be found, is that a glimmer of hope is there when we refuse to give up on others. As we celebrate April, signified as the National Month of Hope, I feel it is only prudent to acknowledge the positive changes that have been made and the people on the ground - advocates, caregivers, physicians, psychologists, politicians, social workers, and parents who are fighting for hope - and who have succeeded. As an agency, community, and family, we must continue learning and never lose sight of the compassion that drove us to where we are now. We can never become callused to the atrocities that so many of those living with developmental and intellectual disabilities have likely faced and the reality that many are being underserved. If we allow it to break our hearts and we pull back the veil of truth behind what trauma and neglect cause, we develop the passion to continue serving others even when they may hurt us, or react out of pain. Our endurance as caregivers and those working behind the scenes *fighting for hope*, will last and we will triumph in seeing positive change. We must also take care of ourselves in this heart-wrenching, yet fulfilling journey of service to others. "Helping each other with physical, emotional, and psychological health concerns makes for a staff that has energy and spirit. The more you can foster a "family" environment among your group, the better you will be at handling the most difficult cases." - Bruce D. Perry, MD Ph D.

The more stories and testimonies I hear, I still find it incredibly hard not to ask the question, why on earth did this innocent child, young person, or adult have to face such pain and mistreatment in their life? The answer to this question and many others I find myself pondering about, I may never discover nor understand. I do know however, that people's hearts and minds are changed by those we serve. Time and time again, I've heard from our caregivers, *I get so much more out of this than I give*. What a powerful and transformative occurrence! In the act of caring for someone else, their cup is filled to overflowing. This is what Restoring Hope is all about. Our culture, our mission - it's everything we are and do - a foundation built on hope and relationship. Not in all cases, but in many, caregivers became caregivers because of their background, their story of pain, trauma, and personal hardship. They've grown enough and clung to the light so much, that they're able to use it all as their *why*. Maybe they grew up in the foster system, or at one point was a child or young adult who faced abuse and neglect by someone they thought they could trust. In some cases what breaks us can be used for good. So, when my mind meanders to those unanswered questions, why did this have to happen to this person, it may not be for me to know. But I think we find the light in the darkness when we help others add new and bright pages to their story, one relationship at a time.



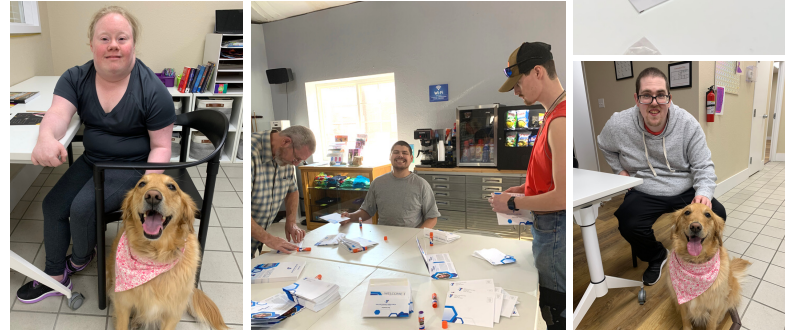
NIXA EXCEL DAY PROGRAM

Participants at Nixa Excel are staying active and highly involved in their community! After helping clean the Discovery Center in Springfield, they get to enjoy the fun activities the center has to offer. Valentine's Day brought with it a fun-to-make and yummy treat, chocolate covered strawberries! Not only that, but participants have begun attending a Fitness Class each week that is catered to their abilities through Missouri State University. And as a reward for doing such an excellent job this quarter, participants were treated with ice cream cones from McDonalds!



BUFFALO EXCEL DAY PROGRAM

"Buffalo Excel Program has had an active start to 2023. The group has continued to partner with the Dallas County YMCA and New To You thrift store. Consumers are able to participate in various volunteer opportunities with each business. Excel clients have assisted in packaging all eggs for the Egg Hunt in Dallas County. Buffalo Excel attendees have enjoyed going to Expresso 825, Art Zone, the bowling alley, and several art galleries during the colder months. Consumers have continued to develop independent living skills through skill stations and cooking activities. The group is excited to spend more time outdoors in the community with the warmer weather approaching!" - Emma O'Dell



SPRINGFIELD EXCEL DAY PROGRAM

There is never a dull moment at the Springfield Excel! Between bowling adventures, facials, arts and crafts, and karaoke battles against Program Coordinator, Rebecca Chilson, clients are living their best life and having a blast everyday!



KIRKSVILLE EXCEL DAY PROGRAM

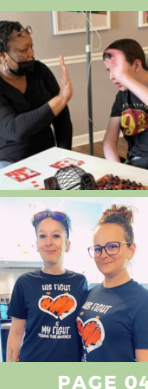
Now fully open and operating, Kirksville Excel participants are diving into fun activities with staff! Open house was held January 6th, where the community and expectant participants could check out the day program, find their cubbies, and see what the program had to offer. Since opening, participants have adopted a pet tortoise and were greeted with sniffs and puppy kisses from Nala, who belongs to Leah, one of the DSP's at our Kirksville location. Not only that, but participants also had the ability to assemble and paint bird houses, in which the material was donated by a kind, community member.



Medical ISL's - Lincoln & St. Louis | Traditional ISL - Buffalo

We can't say enough about our incredible staff! A week such as National Feeding Tube Awareness, which fell on February 6th-10th, reveals what a vital role DSP's play in the stability and long-term success of our clients. But, our DSP's seem to take it even one step further. They love what they do and the positive difference it makes in the lives of those they serve! "I've been a DSP for over 30 years ... It's rewarding to see a kid with a G-tube site start smacking their lips or smiling because they know it's time to be fed and to know they get satisfied by having a full stomach." - Sandra Weekfall, St. Louis Medical ISL. Or, as Jessica Hoffman, a DSP at our Lincoln ISL puts it, "As many 12's as it takes." That is the devotion she among others have for our kiddos. It's not an easy job. It's back-breaking, gut and heart-wrenching work, but our family team is committed to seeing that these precious lives are filled with joy and belonging by the relationships they've developed and continue developing. We are incredibly blessed with the staff we have, but these kiddos will forever change our hearts, shape us and our families to be more service-hearted people and to adopt a greater depth of gratitude in our own lives.

Overall, our clients have enjoyed spring break and fun activities with staff! One of our St. Louis clients, Julian, started attending a day program, United Cerebral Palsy Heartland, in February. Here he will have access to extensive new technology and sensory equipment. Both Lincoln ISL's are doing amazing! Older kiddos are gearing up for prom season. The younger ones are getting their fishing gear ready to go with the weather warming up. The Buffalo Traditional ISL girls are becoming more involved in the community and loving learning new skills. "I could not be more proud of the team at each of our homes. A wonderful group of people with such big hearts helping our clients live their best lives!" - Aaron Harms



Anniversary Dates

Each quarter we continue to grow and grow! So, for our contractors and staff who started their journey with us between the months of January - March, we want to say thank you, for their year(s) of serving others!

Contractors

11-12 Years

Brek Snyder, Veronica Snyder, Steve Smith

9-10 Years

Riley Holesapple, Lyle Rothschiller, Racquel Uhlmann

7-8 Years

Elizabeth Johnson, Julie Johnson, James Hawthorne, Barry Hairston, Kevin Styles, Kayla Swanigan, Tara Swanigan, Christina Williams, Rachael Sherrer, Matt Sherrer

5-6 Years

Melissa Alberson, Cheryl Conaway, Paige Hurd, Evan Hurd, Nick Adams, Sarah Davis, Austin Davis, Amy Dismer, Craig Edwards, Roscillin Edwards, Kathie Jackson, Troy Jackson, Tony Kerr, Yelena Montalvo, Ryan Pace, Ruby Pace, Curtis Palmer, Dennis Palmer, Relmond Rice, JoAnne Rice, Levi Chamness, Larry Williams, Robert Gardner, Kathleen Gardner

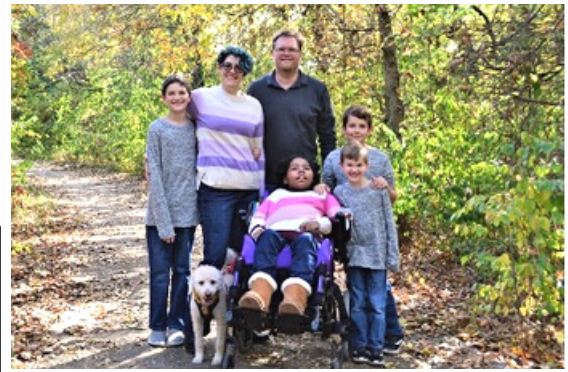
3-4 Years

Shawn Johnson, Hilda Coleman,

Daryl Coleman, Mike Brooks, Shandy Miller, Soledad Pacheco, Joseph Pacheco, Josue Palacios, Melissa Peck, Brandon Peck, Yelena Seu, Oleg Seu, Ekaterina Shavlovsky, Brooke Snider, Paula Thompson, Jill Fike, Sierra Freeman, Charles Chesser, Jessica Stanley, Mary Brown, Natalie Herrick, Thomas Herrick, Tommy Herrick, Sharon Spillers, Joyce Baker, David Baker, Sherrlyn Keisler

1-2 Years

Billy Ebarb, Yenis Estrada, Jesus Herrera, Dasha Hopkins, Megan Meehan, Deborah Hodges, Jonna Mooneyham, Les Mooneyham, Tyler Reeves, Keegan O'Dell, Sierra Stratton, Daniel Wilkinson, Jon Yates, Jonna Yates, Chris Brawley, Cindy Upton, April Chambers, Josh Kamery, Jeffrey Lueck, Tim Parish, Alexandra Monroe, Finley Monroe, Brenda Raetz, Mark Raetz, Roy Weatherby, Becky Williams, Jessica Hall, Laura Lawson, Jessica Young, Troy Broeker, Carla Callahan, Jerry Cottrell, Sydney Webb, Gail Davidson, Shannon Davidson, Jaiseno Locke, Jennifer Locke, Catherine Suermann, Jerry Suermann, Darletta Tabb, Bette Tolliver



Staff

7-8 Years

Angela Bullard, Kelli DeBoard, Whitney Schnakenberg

5-6 Years

Heather Thompson, Jaime Grider, MacKenzie Howard

3-4 Years

Kyli Plowman, Danielle Coffey

1-2 Years

Deborah Fajen, Madison Harlan, Emma O'Dell, Kyle Collins, Keisa Danfort, Chandler Gaugh, Tierra McCray



Project Hope

Accepting donations now through May 31st.

Each year we partner with you to bring hope to our communities in an impactful way. For 2023, we have decided to collect donations and distribute those items to our local homeless shelters and community outreach facilities throughout the state. If you'd like to get involved, see the list of items we're collecting below.

- canned vegetables
- soups
- mac & cheese
- granola bars
- jerky sticks
- peanut butter crackers
- deodorant
- toothpaste/toothbrushes
- hairbrush/combs
- feminine products
- towels
- sheets
- pillows
- blankets
- fast food gift cards
- Walmart gift cards

To get a donation bag, be sure to reach out to your Program Manager or contact the Business Office with any questions you may have. We truly couldn't do this without YOU. Thank you for helping make a difference in the lives of others! For more details, see the full flyer [here](#).

Upcoming Events

Meet & Greet Zoom - Connect with our Placement and Out-of-Home Respite Coordinators to learn and share!

- April 18th @ 5:30pm
- April 19th @ 10:00am
- May 16th @ 5:30pm
- May 17th @ 10:00am
- June 20th @ 5:30pm
- June 21st @ 10:00am

To attend, contact **Heather Thompson**; heatherthompson@werestorhope.com or 417-255-8781.

Andy B's | Springfield - Spring Party
May 25th from 6pm to 8pm

Centennial Pool | Central - Summer Party
June 29th from 6:30-8:00pm

Belton Parks & Rec | Kansas City - Summer Party
June 30th, Time: TBD

Business Office

306 Davis Dr. Suite 200
West Plains, MO 65775

P: 417.255.8781

F: 417.256.2063

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Leave us a review on [Google](#).

@restoringhopellc



Your Doorstep Your Journey

You've opened your door to many, that's why it's our privilege to host a day of pampering, praise, and encouragement, packed full of resources and incredible speakers - all for YOU! Not only that, but your client(s) will have the opportunity to experience a full day at Wonderland Camp with their Restoring Hope friends! Don't miss out, registration numbers are limited. We hope to see you at the second annual **r3 Conference**!



Scan QR code to view
full flyer or visit the link:

https://rebrand.ly/r3ConferenceFlyer_2023

Registration Opens April 17th!

Updates From the Business Office

Host Home Relief and Out-of-Home Respite

Payroll [Frequently Asked Questions](#) can be found here: https://rebrand.ly/RHPayroll_FAQs

Or, by visiting: www.werestore.com > Forms > input password (ask your PM for assistance if you don't know) > scroll down until you find Payroll | Frequently Asked Questions and select.

We realize change can be hard, but it is change and growth that demands smarter and more efficient systems. Each month caregivers will receive a reminder email to submit their time. Instructional forms and a training video have been made available on the website under our [Forms](#) tab. Additionally, our Payroll Team and Business Office will be available to assist all caregivers with this transition. **Please allow our Payroll Team at least 24 hours to respond to your text, email, and phone calls regarding your Host Home Relief and/or Out-of-Home Respite submissions.** We appreciate the cooperation of everyone as Restoring Hope continues to grow and provide even more care to those who desperately need it, one relationship at a time!

Tips From the Behavioral Team

New Behavioral Tips | Training Videos

The Behavioral Team has worked very hard to bring helpful tips and informational videos to you! Topics covered range from building foundations of a relationship with your client, triggers, deescalating behaviors, finding ways to exit a crisis cycle, and so much more.

Visit our website at: werestorehope.com > Resources > [Behavioral Tips](#), to learn more!



Do You Have a Story to Share?

New Hear From Families Just Like You

If you haven't been following us on social media, you may have missed out! Keep up with our Testimonial page, at: www.werestorehope.com/testimonials where new Restoring Hope stories will be frequently added, or follow us on our social accounts. If you or your client have a breakthrough or heartwarming story to share, contact: whitleylemon@werestorehope.com.