



# OHIO CIT NEWS



Spring 2020



## Interacting and De-escalating Individuals with Special Needs



By Officer Diane Dudziak

Growing up with a brother that has Down Syndrome gives you a certain advantage in the “people department”. Namely patience, tolerance and gratitude. My brother, Jeff, is the sixth of seven children. He was expected, and challenged, to perform just as the rest of us. The only difference is that we allowed Jeff to work within his own timeline. This may have been the exact formula to help him become as high functioning as he is today. It was not without struggle. At the time Jeff was born, 33 years ago, doctors told my mother he would never walk, talk or be a productive member of society. She and my dad had gone against the grain and simply added "one more" to the bunch. This began our journey of acceptance, tolerance, and education in the enigmatic world of raising a child with special needs.

When Jeff was twenty, he had a job at McDonald's. He cleaned and wiped tables in the dining room. He developed a pattern and routine; he really knew what he was doing. One day, Jeff was asked by his supervisor to perform this same task but to do it in the way the supervisor wanted. Those instructions went in one ear and out the other, and Jeff went about doing his job, his way. The supervisor approached Jeff to give him some constructive criticism and redirection. This caused a lot of confusion for him. The supervisor spoke to Jeff and paused for a response. He did not respond. Jeff's most common response in this type of situation is to clench his fists at his side, and as time passes, make clicking noises with his mouth. He'll simply stare at the person and basically, shut down, needing more time to process the fast-paced interaction. I may have failed to mention, but by this time, Jeff was a pretty stocky, strong looking young man. It is not surprising that his supervisor would be frightened by the aggressive man with clenched fists standing just a few feet from him. He was subsequently fired for presenting such threatening behavior, unfortunately, an example situation and result not uncommon for people with special needs.

Jeff has also had his fair share of interactions with police officers. He is not a hardened criminal by any means. Growing up, he was brought home by the police or had the police called on him on more than one occasion. He wasn't committing terrible crimes; he was just a kid...playing behind garages, throwing stones in traffic, etc. He just happened to be the kid that stuck around when the police showed up. He just wouldn't run like the other kids. Maybe he was too slow to react, or more likely, he loved the police and he just wanted to see them. Since a lot of his interactions with police officers were at parades, school events and safety town, he doesn't connect “law enforcement” with the police. He connects them with a friendly role that he is familiar with like when they shook his hand on the playground. We were very lucky, however, that the officers in our town knew our family and knew where we lived. They would bring him home to us safely, no force necessary, no handcuffs.



To this day, however, this doesn't calm my fears of the possibility he will interact with law enforcement. What if the next officer does not recognize his disability? What if his stubbornness escalates the officer? What if Jeff clenches his fists at a police officer next time?

Encounters with people with special needs are inevitable in law enforcement.... aging parents living with adult children they can no longer control, a young person running from a group home, or a person with autism having difficulty with an unexpected change in their bus schedule. We can teach and guide people with special needs to prepare for interactions with the police, but ultimately, it is up to officers to guide the interaction when it occurs.

The main difference for people with special needs experiencing a crisis is they present different behaviors than those with which we are familiar. Some of these behaviors are called STIM (stimulating) behaviors. They are used to calm themselves. They may appear as flapping their hands, rocking back and forth, making loud noises, or even screaming. Unfortunately, STIM behaviors can be perceived by others as pre-attack indicators. When STIM behaviors present themselves, officers need to assess them quickly and recognize the difference between a pending attack or a person in crisis, calming themselves, and just needing a little extra time and help.

Here are a few quick tips if you find yourself interacting with an individual in crisis who has special needs:

- 1) PATIENCE is key. There may be up to a 15 second delay in communication or action. It doesn't feel natural but count in your head before you move on to the next question or command.
- 2) Slow down. Really...S-L-O-W D-O-W-N! Take a deep breath. If situations are tense, create space and look for cover. If you are dealing with an individual with an intellectual disability, your advantage will be how you methodically move through the situation since they are processing this experience much slower than you.
- 3) Speak Plainly. Be direct and utilize clear communication throughout the interaction.
- 4) Become acquainted with people with special needs in your community before they are in crisis. It's important to have normal interactions, often, when they are not in crisis.

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## Advanced CIT Training Available in Ohio

Officer Diane Dudziak presents ***Interacting and De-Escalating Individuals with Special Needs***. Her brother, Jeff, and his non-verbal friend, Nick, typically join her for the 2-hour presentation. The class focuses on her experience with the special needs population and interacting with them as law enforcement officers. You can contact Officer Dudziak at [ddudziak@kent.edu](mailto:ddudziak@kent.edu).

Due to skyrocketing diagnosis rates and the challenges posed by Autism Spectrum Disorder ("ASD"), people with ASD have up to seven times more contact with law enforcement officers than others. These interactions can pose risk of harm to both the person and the officer given the wide-ranging impact ASD has on the one's ability to communicate, follow directions, and regulate emotions. ***Recognize and Respond to Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder*** training was developed by Carrie Gutowski, Esq. and Chief Deputy Jon

Scowden CLEE (Delaware County Sheriff's Office) who are both parents to children with ASD. The training provides specialized tactics and accommodations that can be implemented to reduce the likelihood an officer will use force and thus, lower the potential liability exposure for the officer and agency. To request this training you can contact either instructor at [carrie.gutowski@gmail.com](mailto:carrie.gutowski@gmail.com) or [jscowden@co.delaware.oh.us](mailto:jscowden@co.delaware.oh.us).

The **Communication Officer as a Crisis Negotiator** class is primarily for dispatchers and call-takers. All the instructors have previous dispatch experience (one being awarded "Ohio NENA/APCO Gold Star award 2004), over 30 years of hostage crisis negotiation experience, and over 50 years of law enforcement collectively. The course includes but is not limited to active listening skills and specific verbal communication skills, suicidal callers, PTSD, active shooter calls, dealing with adolescents, intelligence gathering, scenario-based exercises, and dispatcher self-care/PTS/PTSD. This is a two-day class that agencies can request to host in their area. For more information contact Officer Tricia Knoles at [tknoles.kent.edu](mailto:tknoles.kent.edu).

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Advanced CIT training is a vital CIT Core Element and provides CIT officers with additional knowledge and skills that might not be discussed during the full CIT course. In Ohio, several communities host advanced training on various topics, including veterans, youth, autism spectrum disorder, officer wellness, substance use disorders, Alzheimer's disease, PTSD, pink-slip processes, developmental disabilities, and much more.

We encourage local communities to ask officers what subject matter should be offered in advanced training. With the new Ohio CIT Support and Expansion Project, there are mini grants available to help offset the cost of holding advanced training.

If interested in learning more about advanced training, please contact the Criminal Justice Coordinating Center of Excellence: [jeff.futo@gmail.com](mailto:jeff.futo@gmail.com) or [rsimera@neomed.edu](mailto:rsimera@neomed.edu) or 330-325-6670.

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## Recent Ohio CIT Course Graduates

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### Mahoning County Completed CIT Training in March 2020



Mahoning County Mental Health and Recovery Board is proud to graduate twenty law enforcement officials and first responders in CIT.

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## Butler County Completed Second CIT Training in November 2019



NAMI of Butler County is proud to graduate twenty-two law enforcement officers and first responders in CIT.

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## Montgomery County Completed CIT Training in January 2020



Montgomery County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Board is proud to graduate 23 law enforcement officers and other related personnel in CIT.



## Montgomery County Completed Dispatcher CIT Training in March 2020



Montgomery County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Board is proud to graduate seven dispatchers in CIT.

## Richland County Completed CIT Training in March 2020



NAMI of Richland County is proud to graduate eighteen law enforcement officers and other related personnel in CIT.



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## 20-Years CIT Celebration

CIT in Ohio is celebrating 20 years of existence and service this spring. The first CIT trainings occurred in Summit County and Lucas County in May 2000 and June 2000 respectively. The CJ CCoE, with support and participation of our partners, is planning a week of activities to honor and celebrate this incredible milestone.

The CJ CCoE have engaged a small group of individuals from the CIT Coordinators group, Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Summit and Lucas Counties, NAMI Ohio, and state leadership to constitute a planning committee for this celebration. With the current public health situation, the celebration will be planned for later in the year, but we look forward to a weeklong celebration that includes activities at the local, county and state level. Additional information will be forthcoming. Please plan to celebrate with us!



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## Ohio CIT Coordinators Semi-Annual Meeting

**When:** Friday, May 8, 2020 at 10:00 AM

**Where:** Zoom Meeting

Registration for the meeting is required, please visit

<https://neomed.zoom.us/meeting/register/uJcsceyurigt9wtDNOOEacb1TlhKs6c6Hw> to register. Following registration, you will be provided with a link to join the meeting via PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android.

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## Welcome New CIT Coordinators

- Lisa Ward
  - Rhonda Benson and Candance Martin
  - Jessica Ball
  - Arielle Edwards
  - Jerry Fulmer
  - Morgan Brown
  - Melissa Johnson, Jamie McGrew,  
Jeff LeCocq and Stacy Fleegle
  - Captain James McPike and Brigitte Dorr Guiser
- Belmont, Harrison and Monroe Counties
  - Butler County
  - Hamilton County
  - Lorain County
  - Mahoning County
  - Union County
  - Six County Area
  - Cleveland Division of Police

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## From NAMI Ohio

CIT pins, patches, Quick Reference Guides, and Hearing Distressing Voices training kits are available upon request. Coming soon are CIT lapel bars (alternative to round pins).



## CIT Mini Grants and Law Enforcement Scholarships

The Criminal Justice Coordinating Center of Excellence and NAMI Ohio collaborate to make mini grants and scholarships available to Ohio CIT training programs. Funding for mini grants and scholarships is made possible through awards from the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Ohio Attorney General's Office, and the Office of Criminal Justice Services.

### **CIT Mini Grants to Support full CIT Courses: \$1,800**

Mini grants in the amount of \$1,800 are available to offset the costs of hosting full CIT courses or academies. Communities can request a mini grant for each 40-hour (or equivalent) course held between January 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021.

### **CIT Mini Grants for Advanced, Refresher, or Companion Training: \$1,000**

Mini grants in the amount of \$1,000 are available for those communities wishing to offer advanced, refresher, or companion trainings. This includes training that does not meet the full 40-hours requirement but seeks to provide advanced topic training to existing CIT officers, refresher training to existing CIT officers, or CIT companion training to key CIT partners, e.g., dispatchers, fire/EMS, behavioral health providers.

### **CIT Mini Grants for First-Time Implementation of CIT Dispatcher Training: \$500**

A limited number of supplemental mini grants in the amount of \$500 are available through June 30, 2020 for those communities wishing to develop and implement their first CIT Dispatcher Training. These funds CAN supplement the mini grants referenced above and are strictly limited to those communities that have not offered dispatch training in the past.

### **CIT Scholarships for Law Enforcement Agencies to send Personnel to CIT Training: \$1,800 and \$1,000**

Scholarships of \$1,800 are available for Law Enforcement agencies sending police officers for the first time to complete the full 40-hours CIT course. These scholarships prioritize agencies who have not participated in CIT training in the past. A limited number of scholarships are available to agencies that have participated in the past but have financial constraints affecting their ability to send additional officers.

A limited number of scholarships of \$1,000 are available for law enforcement agencies sending dispatchers and corrections officers to a full CIT training.

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All future mini grant and scholarship requests should be made by the county CIT Program Coordinator and made to Mekal Banyasz at the CJ CCoE: [mbanyasz@neomed.edu](mailto:mbanyasz@neomed.edu).

For all mini grant requests, please provide the following information. If you previously submitted a request, it is not necessary to submit a new request. If you want to add trainings to your existing request, you can do so through an email to Mekal Banyasz, identifying the type of training to be held and the dates of training.

1. Type of training (full CIT course, advanced, refresher, companion)
2. Date of the training
3. A list of the members of your CIT Steering Committee
4. Name and address of the entity to whom the check should be made payable (in the case of scholarships, this should be specific law enforcement agencies)
5. Name of law enforcement agency and name and rank/position of specific personnel who will attend training (required for scholarships only)
6. Acknowledgment that you will forward a completed roster of all graduates and the course agenda/curriculum outline to Mekal Banyasz ([mbanyasz@neomed.edu](mailto:mbanyasz@neomed.edu)) upon the completion of your training

All mini grants will be paid after completion of the course and once the course roster and agenda/curriculum outline are submitted to Mekal Banyasz, [mbanyasz@neomed.edu](mailto:mbanyasz@neomed.edu).

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## The Value of Peer Reviews

Many Ohio Counties have gone through the Peer Review process over the years and gained valuable insight and information on improving not only their CIT course but also their CIT program. A three-member team is sent to your community to meet with your Steering Committee to mutually finalize the team's findings after the community provides the team with materials and evaluations from your course and program. Of special interest, your community CIT program will receive **\$1,000** just for going through the process. Make sure you are striving to incorporate the Core Elements of what makes a CIT program so successful as developed by The University of Memphis CIT Center, the Ohio CIT Coordinators group and CIT International.

For more information or to set up a review of your CIT program during fiscal year 2021, July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021, please contact Jeff Futo at [Jeff.futo@gmail.com](mailto:Jeff.futo@gmail.com).

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## Spring 2020 Ohio CIT Courses

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|---|------------------------|
| • Mahoning County                       | March 2-6 (Completed)  |
| • Montgomery County-CIT for Dispatchers | March 5 (Completed)    |
| • Preble County-Refresher Training      | March 6                |
| • Allen, Auglaize and Hardin Counties   | March 9-13 (Completed) |
| • Franklin County                       | March 9-13 (Completed) |
| • Licking and Knox Counties             | March 9-13 (Completed) |
| • Richland County                       | March 9-13 (Completed) |

- Butler County March 16-20
- ~~Cuyahoga County~~ ~~March 16-20 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- Hamilton County March 16-20 (Completed)
- ~~Stark County~~ ~~March 16-20 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- ~~Hancock County~~ ~~March 23-27 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- Richland County-Refresher Training March 25-26
- ~~Crawford and Marion Counties~~ ~~March 30-April 2 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- ~~Summit County/Akron Children's Hospital CIT for Dispatchers~~ ~~April 4 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- ~~Miami, Darke and Shelby Counties~~ ~~April 6-9 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- ~~Licking and Knox Counties~~ ~~April 8, 15, 22, 29 and May 6 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- ~~Montgomery County~~ ~~April 13-17 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- ~~Wood County~~ ~~April 13-16 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- ~~Cuyahoga County – Cleveland Division of Police~~ ~~April 20-24 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- ~~Summit County~~ ~~April 20-24 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- ~~Fairfield County-CIT Advanced Training~~ ~~April 24 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- Columbiana County April 23-24 and 27-29
- ~~Delaware and Morrow Counties~~ ~~April 27-May 1 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- ~~Lorain County~~ ~~April 27-May 1 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- ~~Seneca, Sandusky and Wyandot Counties~~ ~~April 29, May 6, 13, 20-21 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- Geauga County May 4-8
- ~~Lake County~~ ~~May 4-8 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- ~~Mercer, Van Wert and Paulding~~ ~~May 4-8 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- ~~Paint Valley~~ ~~May 4-8 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- Stark County-Advanced CIT Training May 4
- Washington County May 4-8
- Stark County-CIT for Dispatchers May 5
- ~~Montgomery County-CIT for Behavioral Health~~ ~~May 6-7 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- ~~Wood County-CIT for Behavioral Health~~ ~~May 6, 13 and 20 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- Lucas County May 11-15
- ~~Franklin County-CIT for Corrections~~ ~~May 18-22 (Canceled Due to COVID-19)~~
- Hamilton County May 18-22
- Portage County/Kent State University-CIT for Dispatchers May 19
- Portage County-CIT Advanced Training May 20
- Portage County-CIT Advanced Training May 27
- Franklin County-CIT Advanced Training May 28
- Franklin County-CIT for New Officers June 8-12

**Please advise Haley Farver at [hfarver@neomed.edu](mailto:hfarver@neomed.edu) of your planned CIT Courses for 2020!**



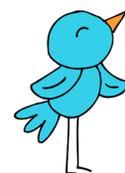
# Ohio CIT Program Coordinator or Contact Information

*Note: information is subject to change*

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## In Grateful Memory

The Ohio CIT Community lost Captain James Purcell of the Cleveland Division of Police this past January. Captain Purcell served as the first coordinator for the Cleveland Division of Police Crisis Intervention Team. He will be remembered for his meaningful contributions to Ohio CIT programs and so much more.



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## National News and Updates

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### CIT International – Conference Registration

CIT International's annual conference will be held on August 24-26, 2020 in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania.

To register visit [www.citinternational.org/events](http://www.citinternational.org/events).

Please pass word along to your local CIT officers and Law Enforcement agencies.

