

Meet Your Employment Navigator  
**KARA SHUTLER**

**Kara Shutler** resides in Colerain with her husband, Zac, and their two children, Luke, 7, and Leah, 5. Kara holds a master's degree in social work from Ohio University and has been a Transition Specialist with the BHN Alliance for eight



years. During that time, she has worked in *Bridges to Transition*, an initiative that provides the training

and resources needed to ensure a successful transition from school to work for youth ages 14 to 25. In her free time, Kara enjoys being with her family and preparing home-baked goods for them. She has turned her love for baking into Kara's Cake Pops, a small business she operates out of her home. Call Kara at 740-695-0407, ext. 353.

Meet Your Benefits Counselor  
**DAWN EDWARDS**

**Dawn Edwards** holds a bachelor's degree in Organizational Leadership and Development from Wheeling Jesuit University. Before becoming a Benefits Counselor, she was the business manager at the Harrison County Board of DD and continues to work as the Quality Improvement Coordinator for the BHN Alliance. Dawn and her husband have built a home on their small farm where they intend to raise show cattle. They enjoy spending time with the five children they have between them. Her oldest daughter works for the J.M. Smucker Company while her youngest daughter is studying biology at Mount Union College. Call Dawn at 740-942-2158.



## Employment First Partners

Belco Works / Employment Works  
Goodwill Industries  
Paramount Support Services  
TEAM Consulting  
Employment First  
Social Security Administration  
BHN Alliance  
Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities

740-695-0500  
740-695-2335  
740-526-0540  
740-489-5395  
[www.employmentfirst.org](http://www.employmentfirst.org)  
<http://www.ssa.gov/>  
740-695-7433  
1-800-248-4391



Belmont-Harrison-Noble  
County Boards of Developmental Disabilities



# How Working Benefits You

Information for people who want to work





**Working means  
you can earn  
your own money,  
increase your  
independence  
and create  
opportunities for  
a better life.**

*Individuals with developmental disabilities have the right to make informed decisions about where they work, and to have opportunities to obtain community jobs that may result in greater earnings, better benefits, improved health and increased quality of life.*

John Kasich, Governor, State of Ohio  
Executive Order 2012-05K

## Why is work important?

THERE ARE MANY REASONS WHY WORK IS IMPORTANT. ASK YOURSELF:

- ◆ Do I like to have money?
- ◆ Do I want to be able to pay for the things I like and want?

If you answered “yes” to one or both of those questions, then you know why work is important.

Now that you’ve decided about work, ask yourself these questions:

- ◆ Where would I like to work?

- ◆ What type of career do I want?

- ◆ How may working affect the benefits I already receive?



**The BHN Employment Navigator** and our partners will get to know you and identify your strengths and interests. Everything will be considered, like your hobbies and what you like and dislike.

### WHAT TYPE OF CAREER DO YOU WANT?

No matter where you are in life, we can help you develop a career. There are all kinds of jobs like office work, grounds keeping, maintenance, retail, hospitality, and food service, just to name a few.

- ◆ If you are just leaving high school, we can help you decide what to do in your neighborhood or community.
- ◆ If you’re currently not working, we can help you get started.
- ◆ If you’re in a job that doesn’t fit you well, we can help you find a better fit.
- ◆ If you’re a senior citizen and would like to retire, we can help you with that, too.

### WHERE DO YOU WANT TO WORK?

We will make it possible for you to visit businesses and learn more about different types of jobs. That’s so you can figure out the best place for you to work.

We’ll also provide experiences where you actually work on a job to see if it’s a job you like and can do.

### HOW MAY WORKING AFFECT YOUR BENEFITS?

**Considering employment can also be a big change and it may bring lots of questions about what that means for you.**

You may be afraid that your benefits will change if you work. Working may affect your benefits. We understand and that’s why our **Benefits Counselor** will walk you through the process and answer all your questions.

## Having a job opens doors and offers you more choices

**We help people with disabilities achieve independence through opportunities to work.**

We want to help you make the best decisions regarding employment and how it may affect your benefits.

*This can be simple and sometimes it can be complex. Either way, we will connect you with the right people who will give you the information you need to make an informed choice.*

Work incentive employment helps people go to work by minimizing the risk of losing SSI or Medicaid benefits. Some work incentive examples are:

- ◆ Earned Income Exclusion
- ◆ Student Earned Income Exclusion
- ◆ Impairment-related work expenses
- ◆ Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS)
- ◆ Ticket to Work
- ◆ Medicaid Buy-In
- ◆ STABLE Accounts (your ability to save and invest your money)

*“She’s loving the program and I can tell she feels a connection to purpose.”*

Mother of person sampling a job in the hospitality industry



**Belmont County**  
740-695-0407

**Harrison County**  
740-942-2158

**Noble County**  
740-732-7144