

# Disability Supports

OF THE GREAT PLAINS

McPherson Campus  
501 E. Northview Rd.  
McPherson, KS 67460  
620.241.8411

The Clayworks  
107 N. Main St.  
McPherson, KS 67460  
620.504.6550

Hutchinson Campus  
2520 N. Waldron St.  
Hutchinson, KS 67501  
620.669.8522

Please visit [dsgp.org](http://dsgp.org)

— ALL OF —  
**LIFE'S TREASURES**

DISABILITY SUPPORTS  
OF THE GREAT PLAINS

2

OK

We don't believe that our clients are broken and need to be fixed. We're simply here to give them the extra support they need. — Virginia Thornton, Senior Case Manager

*l.c.*

STET,  
leave as is

w

OK

If you have a child or family member with intellectual and developmental disabilities, helping them develop a rich and rewarding life as an adult may seem like too much to hope for outside of your existing family structure. Disability Supports of the Great Plains, in McPherson and Hutchinson, Kan., restores this hope by offering a higher standard of care.

in 1996 with a  
serving people  
e looking for  
at the time.

While the types of services provided to disabled adults may be similar from agency to agency, Disability Supports is committed to

redefining the manner in which care is delivered — within exceptional surroundings, by people with a calling to care, and through limitless creativity.

A parent-driven board of directors has an emotional investment in the clients and, therefore, a stronger foundation as a not-for-profit service provider. These parents' passions for creating a higher standard of care became the foundation for the new agency. It's a vision and commitment that has resulted in an administration and staff completely focused on communicating a parent's limitless love into the hearts and lives of each precious soul, each and every day.



as an adult may see  
outside of your exis  
Disability Supports o  
McPherson and Hut  
hope by offering a l

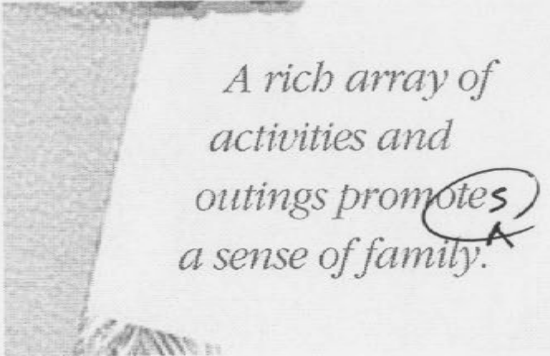
Disability Supports of the Great Plains was formed in 1996 with a board comprised exclusively of parents and began serving people with intellectual disabilities. Founding families were looking for a more progressive option than what was available at the time.

— WELCOME TO A HIGHER —

# Standard of Care

6

OK



*A rich array of  
activities and  
outings promotes  
a sense of family.*

*array is  
the noun,  
needs verb  
with s*

# An Independent Life

Like all parents, Birdie and DeWayne Herrs had expectations for their daughter that she would grow up, move out, and establish a life of her own. When Lizzie was diagnosed with significant health problems and intellectual disabilities, it did not change the Herrs' expectations. "She was not going to live with us forever," Birdie says. "We wanted her to have an independent life."

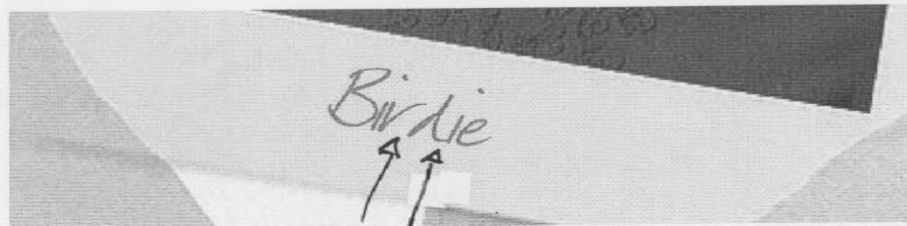
However, when the time came, visits to the local service provider found their normally easygoing teenager refusing to get out of the car. Lizzie wasn't happy. DeWayne and Birdie weren't happy. There had to be something better.

"Then the phone rang," Birdie says. "A group of parents had gone to Topeka to find out what was needed to start a new agency. They were calling other parents who would be interested and involved," she says. "It was an answer to a prayer."

Disability Supports has given Lizzie the opportunity to be the person she is. It's everything we wanted it to be.

— Birdie Herrs, Lizzie's Mother  
l.c.

colon,  
not semicolon



kern together

**NOTE!**

These free junk fonts from [dafont.com](http://dafont.com) (and elsewhere) often have terrible letter-fitting and have to be hand-kerned. Especially scripts like this.

# Loving Friends

OK

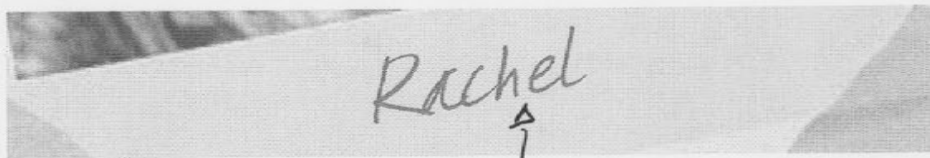
Meet Rachel, a former cheerleader, choir and band member, and fluent French speaker. One night in her junior year of high school, Rachel's world changed. A drunk driver hit Rachel's vehicle and she suffered devastating injuries. Her French was gone, her eyesight and speech were severely limited and she no longer had the use of her arms, legs and, except for two fingers, hands.

Rachel's daily activities and dreams for the future were forever changed. Likewise, her parents' dreams and focus changed, too. Rachel's mother became a relentless advocate for her care, and when the family was relocated to Michigan, found a measure of peace when she found a home for Rachel at Disability Supports.

"I searched for comparable services and care near our new home, but there was nothing," says Susan McGee, Rachel's new reality required caregivers who understood the behaviors that can accompany head injuries — including previously uncharacteristic bursts of anger. Rachel's outbursts are met with unconditional love and tenderness, rather than punishment.

*Wing to left*  
"She likes what every girl likes — clothes, hair, makeup — and time spent with friends."

Though Rachel's parents now live several states away, they know Rachel is at home with her extended family at Disability Supports. "I know she's in good hands," says Susan McGee.



Rachel



kern

A BETTER LIFE THROUGH

# Gentle Teaching

At Disability Supports the outdated model of staff members impersonally dealing with clients is gone. Here, care givers and clients form true friendships under an all-encompassing technique called gentle teaching.

When Disability Supports was founded Jon Zehnder spent two weeks studying gentle teaching with its developer, Dr. John McGee. "The approach is based on interdependence, engagement and valuing that is not earned but given freely and unconditionally," Zehnder says. Creating opportunities for companionship and dialog is the first step in gentle teaching. True friendships are encouraged in which both client and staff enjoy mutual support, empathy and opportunities to share. Tasks and activities are used as vehicles for engagement.

"We believe in demonstrating love with our clients," says Virginia Thornton, a senior case manager. Thornton says appropriate but warm, loving physical touch fills a universal spiritual need in each soul, and is quite the opposite of other agencies' clinical, hands-off approach. "There are no side hugs here. I'll fully wrap my arms around someone and give them a huge hug."

Gentle teaching uses unconditional love rooted in kindness, instead of punishment strategies, to resolve conflict. In time, relationships grow stronger and tensions weaker. Much like a successful family unit, this gentle way of living makes Disability Supports an interdependent, confidence-inspiring community.

new  
Q1,  
add  
blank  
line



Q

*Jon Zebnder greets client with a friendly  
high-five in hallway.*

“Gentle teaching is simple.  
We encourage people to be  
in tune with themselves and  
the people they are around.  
It is a way of being with  
others. It’s just being nice.”

—Jon Zebnder, Director of Advocacy and Policy  
at Disability Supports

long/em dash  
(Shift-Option-Hyphen)

## GENTLE TEACHING

A positive behavior support program ~~that~~ promotes independence between caregivers and clients. ~~This practice~~ *Gentle teaching* begins with the affirmation of the inherent worth of all people, which helps facilitate a sense of companionship, feelings of safety and security, and mutual transformation.

*Incomplete  
sentence  
as orig.  
written*

hang to  
left

"We're committed to providing the best in individualized services and supports to children and adults with developmental disabilities. Just as importantly, we're here to support the entire family."  
— Rick Staab, CEO

For each of us every day is a gift. While other providers' day programs could be described as vanilla, ours is full of flavor. Staff energy level is high and our focus is to create activities and experiences that are productive in every sense of the word.