

**Human Development Center**  
**Quarterly Agency Report to the DD Council**  
(September 1 – December 31, 2016)

**UPDATE/PROGRESS ON AGENCY INITIATIVES**

HDC has initiatives across the areas of **Early Childhood, K-12 Education, Employment/Transition, Health, and Direct Services.**

**Early Childhood Initiatives**

**New Project:** HDC was awarded a Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) grant by HRSA in July. LEND is a national training program with over 50 programs around the country. The year-long program focuses on preparing leaders and advocates to work in Maternal and Child Health fields and serve children and families with neurodevelopmental disabilities including ASD.

- ✓ HDC recruited 8 trainees this first year: 2 occupational therapy students, 1 audiology student, 1 speech therapy student, 1 physical therapy student, 1 parent of a child with a disability, and 2 self-advocates.
- ✓ HDC will be training LEND students and child care providers to complete **autism screening** with over 150 toddlers (18- and 24 months) in child care settings.

HDC **Early Head Start Child Care Partnership** provides comprehensive services to 210 low-income children and families. Over 17% (36) of those children have IFSPs and others have delays and established medical conditions. Partnership personnel are trained to:

- ✓ conduct surveillance and screening of all children,
- ✓ make appropriate referrals, and
- ✓ work as part of an IFSP team for children receiving Part C services.

HDC was selected to participate in the **CLASS Special Needs pilot** conducted by the Department of Education. The pilot is intended to assess the impact of 3 different coaching interventions to improve the quality of services available to children with disabilities in child care settings. The implementation and data collection began this fall and will continue through the spring. We are providing technical assistance to 4 coaches and 32 teachers participating in the pilot.

**New Opportunity:** HDC is recruiting infants and toddlers with special health care needs/and or developmental disabilities for the **Early Learning Center**. Four placements are available for quality full day inclusive childcare. The ELC will provide high quality care for children and families and training opportunities for students and professionals.

**Education - K-12 School-Age Initiative**

**Louisiana School Psychology Internship Consortium – (LAS\*PIC, APA-accredited)**

- ✓ The 10 interns of the 2016-17 class attended and presented five sessions at the annual conference of the Louisiana School Psychological Association in November. Their presentations focused on applied skills to help school psychologists improve the support they provide to students and educators.
- ✓ Five online learning modules authored by intern teams will be added to the TIERS Group website.
- ✓ Five Webinars were delivered in the second quarter by interns. Early December marked the completion of their Media Rotation where they developed their skills in effective professional learning and developing resources to help educators and those who work with children improve their practices and ensure better outcomes for students. The end of Media Rotation including their diligent work in creating a webinar, a conference presentation, and an online learning module were celebrated with awards and “Oscar” trophies at the annual Media Rotation Academy Awards event.
- ✓ LAS\*PIC received over 60 applications for the 2017-18 internship year from students in doctoral school psychology programs from across the country. Thirty-six applicants were selected via screening to interview with partner schools and school districts and the LAS\*PIC program on one of four days in December and January. The internship match results will be announced in February.

#### **Louisiana Autism Spectrum and Related Disorders Project LASARD)**

- ✓ Over 100 technical assistance contacts with partner and alumni teams were made by LASARD Project facilitators from October through December.
- ✓ Over 40 partner team meetings to monitor student progress and plan for students with ASD and related disabilities were conducted by LASARD facilitators.
- ✓ Over 40 participants have registered for the LASARD online modules.
- ✓ 20 face-to-face professional development sessions for partner schools and LEAs were conducted by LASARD.
- ✓ Over 350 participants attended professional development trainings.
- ✓ 471 participants (total) have attended 7 live webinars were conducted by LASARD staff. These webinars have covered topics such as reinforcement, executive functioning, functional communication, pragmatics, curricular modifications, visual supports, and functional behavior assessments. Participants have represented LASARD partner LEAs as well as non-partner LEAs such as Caddo Parish, Iberia Parish, Jefferson Davis Parish, Bossier, Acadia Parish, Arise Schools, Terrebonne, Bogalusa City, East Baton Rouge, Grant Parish, Lafayette Parish, Lafourche Parish, LSDVI, St. John Parish, St. Mary Parish, West Carroll, and others. Participants included district and schools administrators, family members, para-educators, related service providers, special education teachers, and general education teachers.

#### **Teams Intervening Early to Reach all Students (TIERS Group)**

- ✓ Completed a large scale evaluation of MTSS/RtI (multi-tier systems of support/Response to Intervention) in the largest school system in Minnesota in conjunction with the University of Minnesota.
- ✓ Provided a keynote address and several workshop presentations on MTSS for a multi-state professional event sponsored by the University of Tennessee – Chattanooga.
- ✓ 50 school visits were conducted by TIERS Group, working with school leaders, network leaders, special education directors, student support staff, and teachers.

- ✓ Seven professional development events were provided to school staff on Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), Functional Behavior Assessments & Behavior Intervention Plans (FBA/BIP), De-escalation of Behavior, and Classroom Behavior Management.
- ✓ At the request of an area charter school network, the TIERS Group conducted a special education program review across network schools to inform strategic planning.
- ✓ TIERS Group has again been invited to lead a two day professional development session for school leaders and support teams for a parish in the north.
- ✓ TIERS Group has been invited to join an expert panel during the upcoming annual meeting of the National Association of School Psychologists meeting to discuss the ramifications of implementing the common core state standards. This is the fourth year in a row for the invitation, an unprecedented tenure.
- ✓ TIERS Group will offer two mini-skills workshops during the upcoming annual meeting of the National Association of School Psychologists meeting. One mini-skills session will focus on implementation fidelity of MTSS/RtI. Another mini-skills session will focus on sustaining the implementation of MTSS/RtI.

### **Louisiana Deafblind Project for Children and Youth**

- ✓ LA DBP represented in the following statewide activities: Transition Core Meeting, Lafayette; Special Education Advisory Panel, Baton Rouge; LA Commission for the Deaf, Baton Rouge, LA DOE Communication Work Group, Baton Rouge, LA.
- ✓ LA DBP initiated collaboration with the following state agencies: Children with Special Health Care Needs.
- ✓ LA DBP exhibited at the following events as part of the statewide outreach: Acadiana Diversity Job Fair, Lafayette; SPALS Convention, Baton Rouge; LSDVI Transition Fair, Baton Rouge; LSU Health New Orleans Wellness Event, New Orleans.
- ✓ LA DBP provided direct technical assistance regarding individual enrollees: Terrebonne Parish Schools, East Baton Rouge Parish Schools (2x), St Martin Parish Schools (2x); St. Tammany Parish Schools; Jefferson Parish Schools
- ✓ LA DBP sponsored four teachers of the visually impaired to attend the Louisiana Teacher Training Program at the Louisiana Center for the Blind, Ruston, LA
- ✓ LA DBP hosted the annual meeting of the Advisory Board in New Orleans. At this meeting the Collaborative for Students with Unique Communication Needs project was announced and faculty for project were introduced to the LA DBP Advisory Board
- ✓ LA DBP, in collaboration with the Employment and Transition staff at HDC developed a Work Based Learning Experience (WBLE) for an individual with deafblindness. The individual was employed 10/01/2016 and currently works approximately 20 hours per week in the program.

### **Collaborative for Students with Unique Communication Needs**

This is a new project awarded by the LA DOE to the Human Development Center beginning 10/01/2016. The project, *Collaborative for Students with Unique Communication Needs* (Collaborative), is a statewide technical assistance project designed to train school personnel regarding best practice for serving two targeted populations – preschooler aged students with cochlear implants and students of any age without an auditory/verbal communication system.

- ✓ Project Abstract: The creation of the *Collaborative for Students with Unique Communication Needs* provides a pathway to improve services for students at the preschool level who have cochlear implants and for other students, of all ages, with complex communication needs and who may enter/exit school without a formal communication system. The Collaborative is an interdisciplinary, student-centered model of technical assistance that trains cohorts of school district personnel from Louisiana school districts. The proposed model is cyclical in design and, over time, addresses personnel training in each geographic region of the state. This document details efforts of the Collaborative that will be completed within the 2016-17 academic year. A three year implementation schedule has been proposed should the project be funded over a three year period. Currently the project if funded for one year.

The Collaborative is designed to address the three activities described in the RFA:

- ✓ the use of a group of individuals, to guide the activities, who possess expertise in providing services to preschoolers with cochlear implants and to students with complex communication needs;
- ✓ 2. the provision for statewide direct and targeted technical assistance to include outcomes which incorporate  $\geq 50$  school district personnel,  $\geq 6$  school districts, and targeted assistance to  $\geq 10$  students with cochlear implants and  $\geq 10$  students using AAC devices; and
- ✓ 3. the origination of professional development resources specific to the two target areas.

The use of a group of individuals with expertise: A group of talented and experienced professionals has been assembled to address this area. This group includes professionals from areas of special education (early intervention, vision impaired, deaf/hard-of-hearing, & multiple disabilities), speech-language pathology, physical therapy, occupational therapy, vision rehabilitation specialist, and audiology. In addition to these professionals, also represented in this group is a parent/advocate familiar with cochlear implants, augmentative communication devices, and Louisiana special education regulation. This group

will be responsible for the origination of the interdisciplinary project curriculum that will be used to train cohorts of school district personnel statewide.

The project's technical assistance begins with the development of a curriculum addressing normal language development, language development in the targeted populations (Cochlear Implant & Alternative, Augmentative Communication), sensory & motor factors, assessment, device selection, implementation challenges, progress monitoring, IEP development and federal and state regulations associated with the targeted populations

Statewide direct and targeted technical assistance: Once established, the curriculum will be used to train school based personnel across Louisiana. The project faculty will offer direct training to school district teams. These school district teams will be solicited via an invitation to participate. Districts interested in participating will complete a survey to determine the district's interest, dedication, need, readiness and commitment to the technical assistance process. A rubric will be used to determine districts facing the greatest need and challenges regarding the targeted populations. School district teams will be comprised of a special educator, general educator, speech-language pathologist or audiologist, paraprofessional, motor expert (PT or OT), a parent whose child receives services and a representative from the associated LA Assistive Technology Initiative (LATI) regional center.

The school based teams will receive two days of direct training regarding students with cochlear implants, AAC, and other unique communication needs. The teams will select a student with either a cochlear implant, an AAC device or other unique communication need within their district to serve as an exemplar during the training. The teams also will be assigned an individual faculty mentor from the broad interdisciplinary personnel associated with the project. This faculty mentor will become the point of contact between the team and the project. The faculty mentor will provide coaching and mentoring to the team through the training, implementation and evaluative phases of the project. As part of their training, district teams will devise a plan of implementation and evaluation based on didactic information presented in the training and the unique features of the selected student and the school district. With the implementation plan in hand, the district teams will return to their respective districts for implementation. During the implementation phase (two months), each team will receive consultation and support and/or resources from their assigned faculty member to assist with unanticipated obstacles to implementation. The coaching/mentoring will take place onsite in the team's respective school district and/or via electronic media.

Participating school districts will receive (as needed) instructional resources/technology kits to assist the district in device selection and device

trials during the implementation phase of the technical assistance. These resources/technology kits will then become the property of the participating school districts.

An institute addressing the targeted populations will be held prior to the 2017-18 academic year (and annually, as funded) serving as the final technical assistance project for the grant year. The institute will be coordinated with the annual CONNECTIONS conference sponsored by the Louisiana Deafblind Project for Children and Youth. In addition to four state-based partners, this project will fund participation of two nationally recognized presenters on students with cochlear implants in schools and students with unique communication needs (AAC) in schools. School district personnel participating in the project will receive a stipend to attend the institute.

Development of professional development resources specific to the two target areas. The project curriculum will be designed using the Moodle platform or another commercially available online platform. This will allow the participants to return to specific modules for specifics regarding the targeted populations. Additionally, the online platform will allow interested individuals across the state access to the training modules to provide assistance within their communities.

The program presented during the institute will be available online to allow access for individuals who are unable to travel to the LSU Health New Orleans, School of Allied Health, Human Development Center campus for the institute. This feature will also allow the presentations to be recorded (as allowable) and the recordings stored on the LA DOE website (for an acceptable period of time) allowing access by a stakeholders.

Finally, the instructional modules designed for training interveners for students with deafblindness are available through the National Center on Deafblindness. This resource is an OSEP-funded deliverable and can be linked to the LA DOE website to provide ongoing training of individuals providing services to this unique population.

## **Employment/Transition Initiatives**

### **New Project: Postsecondary Apprenticeship for Youth (Pay Check Pilot)**

The Postsecondary Apprenticeship Pilot for Youth (Pay Check) pilot is an innovative collaboration between the LSUHSC-Human Development Center (HDC), Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, Delgado Community College, two public school systems, one public Charter school association, and the University Medical Center-New Orleans.

Pay Check Partners include: LRS/LWC, Delgado CC, UMC-New Orleans, Orleans parish school charters and Jefferson Parish Public School System.

Pay Check is a 3-5 semester program wherein students:

- ✓ select courses at Delgado Community College related to UMC targeted apprenticeship areas,
- ✓ participate in professional career development activities,
- ✓ learn community and work skills, and
- ✓ gain employment experience through a paid apprenticeship at the University Medical Center.

Delgado Community College First Semester Courses include; Survey of Computer Applications, College Career Success Skills and Fitness (elective).

UMC targeted apprenticeship area examples; Central Sterile Processing, Courier (Patient Escort), Patient Access, OT/PT Aide, Central Stock Supply, OT Aide, and PT Aide.

The Pre-Employment Transition Skills and On-the-Job Training skills include; Work-Based Learning Experiences, Work Skills Training, Self-Advocacy, Life Skills, Creating & Managing Schedules, Budgeting and Money Management Skills and Using Public Transportation.

### **Transition Activities**

Drafting curriculum for Pre-ETS training for providers and possibly educators.

### **Benefits Planning Services**

HDC's Louisiana Benefits Planning Services (LA-BPS) continues to support SSDI and SSI beneficiaries with disabilities by providing work incentives planning and assistance services to support beneficiaries in their efforts to acquire, retain, and increase meaningful employment and improve financial independence.

BPS provides comprehensive, proactive guidance to beneficiaries in order to:

- ✓ Retain the documentation and information beneficiaries need to ensure full access to work incentives, anticipate changes in benefits, and access all available Federal, State, and local work incentives including, but not limited to, Plans to Achieve Self-Support (PASS), the Ticket to Work (TTW), and Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWE).
- ✓ Encourage and support accurate and timely reporting to reduce the size or likelihood of benefit overpayments.
- ✓ Offer information and support beneficiaries need to access services to make a successful transition to employment.

HDC continues to provide free benefits counseling throughout the state in conjunction with the Advocacy Center.

- ✓ HDC averages 28-35 referrals each month and,

- ✓ Provides Information and Referral to all beneficiaries with specific and focused benefits planning to individuals who are employed or considering employment.

HDC’s SSA-WIPA RFA for the next four years will provide the HDC and Advocacy Center opportunities to work independently and collaboratively to provide services to all Louisianans, to locate local and community programs that services their area of the state.

- ✓ Certification trainings to insure HDC Benefits Planners maintain knowledge content for serving Social Security beneficiaries with the latest information regarding the impact of income on the disability benefits received from Social Security and other state local support programs have begun.
- ✓ A recent email blast was initiated by HDC for targeted referrals from key state agencies including, Education, Medicaid, LRS/LWC, OCDD, Behavioral Health, Veterans, Native Americans, and local agencies.

**WIPA Benchmarks for in report period 10/1/16 - 12/7/16**

I&R Services	Number
Number of Referrals Accepted or New Enrollees	79

**Supported Employment Activities**

- ✓ HDC provided 1 CORE SE trainings (40 hour) and 2 one-day SE trainings throughout SE LA during this quarter.
- ✓ HDC continues to attend all **SE provider meetings** and to work with LRS staff and administration to advocate for quality service provision.
- ✓ HDC staff attended the October **LRC** meeting.
- ✓ HDC staff attended the October LA APSE meeting.
- ✓ HDC staff active on the national **APSE Public Policy committee** and have attended the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday monthly meetings which have focused primarily on the Workforce Investment and Opportunities Act (WIOA) and the new CMS HCBS waiver notice for states to develop a five-year plan.
- ✓ HDC staff attended the one day Employment First symposium.
- ✓ Meetings with school personnel students and families to provide education/outreach and to discuss apprenticeship pilot.
- ✓ Training with DDC and Partners in Monroe and Alexandria on Employment

**Health Initiatives**

**New Project:** HDC is collaborating with 3 other UCEDDs and the Association for University Centers on Disabilities on a Wal-Mart Foundation grant to implement a program aimed at improving nutrition, increasing physical activity, and reducing obesity rates of people with disabilities across Louisiana. The **Nutrition Is For Everyone (NIFE)** project



has identified 6 Deputy Nutrition Ambassadors from 3 regions (Orleans, Jefferson, and Rapides Parishes) who will teach *Cooking Matters* courses in their respective areas. Cooking Matters is a 6-week cooking and nutrition education course that teaches participants how to cook, eat, and shop healthfully on a budget. NIFE is adapting the current curriculum to be inclusive of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Our 6 Deputies attended a half-day training session hosted in partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank at the HDC in September, where they learned how to become Cooking Matters instructors. After the training, they returned home to begin recruiting participants for the courses. Our project plans to recruit 4 more Deputies in 2 additional regions to host courses in the spring semester. The project has established an online social media presence through its Facebook page which offers inclusive nutrition information and more.

- ✓ All pediatric residents at LSU and Tulane complete **Health Care Provider Training Modules** as part of their developmental rotation. Topics include: Developmental Screening, Early Intervention, Navigating the School System, Patient and Family Centered Care, Medical Home, Care Coordination, ASD, and Youth Health Care Transition.
- ✓ HDC staff is participating in a research study with UCLA Health Care Institute to improve **Health Literacy** of at-risk families. Seventy two families participated in trainings this fall and are receiving receive follow-up home visits this spring.

### **Direct Services Initiatives**

Autism Spectrum Disorder Interdisciplinary Diagnostic (ASDID) Clinic: Currently, one interdisciplinary evaluation occurs each month. Given an increase in resources more evaluations could occur. Conversations continue concerning inclusion of other disciplines in clinic activities.

Assistive Technology (AT) Clinic – continues to complete 2 evaluations per month.

Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) Clinic – continues conducting 2 -3 evaluations per week. Seeing 25 clients for AAC intervention weekly. Motor expert needed for assessing positioning and seating for access and use of AAC devices

Feeding & Swallowing Clinic – Not yet initiated. Equipment has been purchased. Personnel for clinic is being explored.

### **STATUS OF AGENCY'S ACTIVITIES ON DDC PLAN INITIATIVES AND IMPACT**

***Objective 2.3*** *DSPs serving Louisianans with developmental disabilities will display a minimum skills set and have access to a graduated certification process with corresponding compensation increases.*

***Activity 2.3.1*** *Advocate for the development of a (or use of existing) comprehensive and evidence-based training curriculum and certification for DSPs statewide*

- HDC and LA APSE continue to collaborate and to advocate for Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) certification.
- HDC and APSE and Work Pays plan to a CESP exam early in the 2017 state fiscal year – February 2017.
- HDC Employment Division continues to provide comprehensive CORE and one-day SE trainings to promote learning of skills and competencies and are currently developing the NEW 2017-2018 calendar.

**Objective 7.2** *Changes in policies and practices that result in students with developmental disabilities attaining competitive employment in integrated settings.*

**Activity 7.2.1** *Advocate with the LSU-HSC Human Development Center and other collaborators for the development and implementation of policies and practices (i.e., college and career pathways) that ensure students with developmental disabilities have access to and opportunities that prepare them for post-secondary education and/or competitive, integrated employment.*

- HDC staff continues to advocate for and promote Employment First by providing Community Trainings through FHF and attend Employment Coalition, Work Pays and stakeholder meetings as scheduled.
- HDC continues to work on the development of a collaborative funding model for an Apprenticeship to Careers and Employment model.
- Worked collaboratively with GODA, DD Council, and Advocacy Center to discuss Employment First Executive Order.

**Objective 9.1** *Louisiana will develop and implement an Employment First plan.*

**Activity 9.1.1** *Advocate for:*

- *policies that incentivize services for individualized integrated, competitive employment and dis-incentivize segregated, sheltered day habilitation services,*
- *sheltered workshops to transition people into individualized, competitive, paid employment and discontinue admissions into segregated day programs,*
- *collaborative policy making and practices across state agencies that promote students being supported in and transitioning into competitive paid employment,*
- *LRS and OCDD will collaborate to mandate that all supported employment vendors/providers complete a university-based 40-hour training,*
- *Support family members and other advocates to serve on the Louisiana work team in developing an Employment First agenda and implementation plan including participation in state level meetings.*
- HDC provided 2 40-hour CORE Supported Employment as well as 3 one-day trainings: SE Management and Funding/Budgeting, Job Developer Clinic and SSA Benefits and Work Incentives. HDC provides at least one training each month in various locations around the state. In this reporting period, HDC has trained 75 individuals.
- HDC staff provided four presentations to parents and self-advocates interested in supported and/or customized employment.
- HDC employment staff conducted 4 training sessions for parents, job-seekers and advocates on Supported Employment.

- HDC continue to work collaboratively with ALL PAYCHECK apprenticeship pilot entities (LRS, UMC, Orleans and Jefferson parish schools and two LEA charters).
- HDC employment staff sits on the national APSE Public Policy Work Group and attend monthly meetings via Go to Meeting. Recent focus has been on comments for WIOA and sub-minimum wage comments.
- HDC Employment Staff attended LRC meetings as LRC member.
- HDC Pay Check pilot funded and initiated with LRS - supported apprenticeship model with University Medical Center.
- HDC employment staff attended Louisiana APSE governing board meeting in May.
- HDC staff conducted 2 family and self-advocate online training sessions and one in-person session on Supported Employment and choosing quality providers for FHF Greater New Orleans.
- HDC employment staff, as Louisiana APSE members and WorkPays members attended quarterly meetings.

## **AREA OF EMPHASIS GOAL**

**Goal 8:** Children participating in EarlySteps will demonstrate improved developmental outcomes through increased access to quality services and will lead to the full inclusion and meaningful participation of people with developmental disabilities in all facets of community life.

- HDC continues to serve on the Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council to LDE and BESE. HDC staff serve on a workgroup to develop recommendations on implementation of Act 3, specifically improvements to coordinated enrollment, coordinated funding, and accountability. The workgroup will be developing recommendations to align School Readiness Tax Credits to the new accountability system this winter.

## **STATUS OF COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS TO AGENCY**

No recommendations have been received.