



LSUHSC Human Development Center Activities Report, 2nd Quarter for January - March 2023

The Human Development Center (HDC) is part of a nationwide network of University Centers of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) and serves as a resource for Louisiana in the areas of education, research, and service relative to the needs of people with developmental disabilities. Below are highlights of the activities that took place last quarter (January - March 2023) in HDC's four initiative areas according to the three main goals for this grant cycle: Enhance Collaboration, Increase Access to Quality Services, and Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice.

Early Childhood Initiatives

Early Childhood Initiatives target children between the ages of 1 and 5 years and include the **Early Head Start Childcare Partnership (EHS-CCP)**, **Inclusive Practices in Early Childhood (IPEC)**, and the **LSU Health Early Learning Center**. These programs provide training, technical assistance, and resources to increase access and equity to quality inclusive early learning environments.

○ Enhance Collaboration

- HDC IPEC continues their collaboration with the New Orleans Early Education Network (NOEEN) to increase the capacity of the City Seats program to effectively serve children with disabilities in inclusive childcare settings by:
 - Supporting developmental screening and providing referral/case coordination to 400 children across 22 centers;
 - Providing technical assistance to EC programs in collaboration with Tulane Infant Mental Health and Early Steps, to promote effective inclusion.
- HDC EHS-CCP is collaborating with the National Center on Health, Behavioral Health and Safety to develop and pilot a staff wellness initiative with the Office of Head Start to support early childhood teachers.

○ Increase Access to Quality Services

- HDC EHS-CCP is serving 190 children in eight childcare centers, 23 of whom currently have IFSP/IEPs. All children received developmental screening and sensory screens (hearing and vision). Nine additional children are in referral for services.
- HDC IPEC completed developmental screening for over 400 children in the NOEEN City Seats program:
 - 127 children received follow-up classroom observation;
 - 92 referrals were made for Part C or Part B services;
 - 8 children were referred for ASD evaluation.
- HDC IPEC is providing 68 disability/inclusion technical assistance visits in early childhood classrooms.

○ Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice

- HDC hosts monthly professional development for 80 early childhood educators and administrators.
- HDC's Inclusive Practices in Early Childhood (IPEC) is providing training about disability in early childhood. For more information see our postcard and click on the QR code here:
<https://www.hdc.lsuhs.edu/news/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/IPEC-Postcard.pdf>.

- HDC is working with the Department of Education to develop language and recommendations that would support centers to implement effective inclusion strategies and reduce inappropriate discipline, suspension, and expulsion.

K-12 Initiatives

HDC's K-12 Education Initiatives provide continuing education and technical assistance to families, educators, administrators, and policymakers regarding best practices for evidence-based and inclusive education. These programs include **Louisiana Autism Spectrum and Related Disabilities project (LASARD)** and the **Louisiana DeafBlind Project for Children and Youth (LA DBP)**.

○ **Enhance Collaboration**

- HDC LASARD staff presented *Spring to September: A Timeline for Annual Transition Planning* to St. Charles Parish Schools special education district personnel. This training promoted strategies on how to collaborate with general and special education teachers and family members for better transitions across school years.
- HDC LASARD staff presented *Puberty and Autism* to the East Baton Rouge Parish School District Parent Advisory Committee.
- HDC LASARD staff collaborated with LA DBP staff, Nicky Gillies, to provide strategies and supports for students with vision and hearing loss in Ascension and Terrebonne Parish School Districts.
- HDC K-12 Initiatives director, Julie Riley, was invited to participate in the Whole Health Louisiana steering committee to create a trauma-informed state plan responsive to the needs of Louisiana's children and families. This is a committee formed by First Lady Donna Edwards' Louisiana First Foundation in collaboration with the Louisiana Department of Health through the Bureau of Family Health.

○ **Increase Access to Quality Services**

- HDC LASARD send a monthly newsletter to highlight practices and distribute new free resources. From January to March, the monthly newsletter was opened by over 2200 individuals, and over 600 individuals clicked to download the resources.
- HDC LASARD staff provided multiple communities of practice sessions virtually for many different participants across the state. From January to March, sessions were conducted for schools and district across the state, such as Richland Parish, Audubon Charter School, East Baton Rouge Parish Schools, Iberville Parish Schools, Tangipahoa Parish Schools, Monroe City Schools, among others. Groups and topics include: behavior support for social workers, evidence-based practices for paraeducators, functional skills for special education teachers, communication collaboration for speech-language pathologists and PreK teachers.
- In East Baton Rouge Parish Schools, multiple school-level administrator trainings were conducted and covered topics such as characteristics of ASD, essential supports strategies, inclusive practices, and LEAP connectors.

○ **Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice**

- HDC LASARD staff presented at the 2023 C.W. Austin Learning Disabilities Conference. They presented *Stuck is a State of Mind: Strategies to Address Executive Functioning Struggles in Secondary Students*.
- To provide training at a time that works for teachers, HDC LASARD staff have provided "Nap and Learn" training series for Jackson Parish and Lincoln Parish PreK teachers.
- HDC LASARD hosted monthly "Lunch and Learn" webinars, open to families and educators on topics related to evidence-based practices for individuals with disabilities. Topics this quarter included:
 - January 2023 – Self-Regulation
 - February 2023 – Communication
 - March 2023 – Social Interaction

Transition, Employment, and Careers (TEC) Initiatives

HDC's TEC initiatives support agencies, programs, service providers and job seekers with disabilities to obtain and maintain community employment outcomes that are competitive and integrated by building knowledge and capacity of secondary and post-secondary educators, community providers, employers, and self-advocates/advocates. Programs include; West South Central Work Incentives Planning Assistance (WSC-WIPA), Computing for Youth with Autism CYA – FHF NOLA, Employment First Core Training, Customized Employment Training and Postsecondary Apprenticeship for Youth (PAY Check).

○ Enhance Collaboration

- Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS) and Jefferson Parish Public School System (JPPSS) continue to collaborate with HDC to implement the Postsecondary Apprenticeship for Youth (PAY Check) program. Other school systems are referring exiting students for PAY Check services through their LRS counselor.
- For Computing for Youth with Autism (CYA), HDC TEC works in partnership with FHF NOLA, LRS, Delgado and Operation SPARK to expand and refine the talent pipeline to technology careers.
- HDC TEC staff is active on the national APSE Public Policy committee and is also working with the SSA policy updates, national ethical guidelines, and the national job coach certification council for Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP).
- HDC TEC continues to collaborate with St. Paul's Catholic High School to provide PAY Check services on the north shore.
- HDC TEC Sue Killam has been named to the NEON (National Employment Opportunities Network) as a Subject Matter Expert (SME) to help states work towards the goals and outcomes identified in the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS). This work will start in Summer 2023.
- St. Bernard, St. Tammany, E. Ascension, NOLA PS, Natchitoches, and St. Charles are interested in establishing transition services and supports similar to the PAY Check program. HDC TEC submitted a proposal for a session at the upcoming Teacher Leader Summit on how to work with TEC through the vendor guide to establish a program in their district.

○ Increase Access to Quality Services

- Currently there are 12 students in HDC's PAY Check programs in PAY Check NOLA and PAY Check North Shore.
- Enrollment of 2023-2024 students is on-going in preparation for services to begin July 2023.
- Jefferson Parish Human Services Authority and Florida Parish Human Services District are now collaborating to ensure the individual's who have left high school that are within the age range, have access to transition and employment opportunities with PAY Check.
- HDC's PAY Check program continues to focus on providing participants with in-person, one-on-one pre-ETS units/sessions, two paid internships, Job Shadowing (2) and Work Site Visits (2), and Job Placement as the individual progresses along their 12-month career pathway.
- HDC West South Central Work Incentives Planning Assistance (WSC-WIPA) continues to receive between 40+ referrals each month. Lighthouse for the Blind provides WIPA services for the other half of the state. HDC WIPA includes twenty-one Texas counties and thirty-three Louisiana parishes.

○ Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice

- HDC TEC is promoting professional development, planning, and mentoring and TA to school districts interested in expanding and enhancing their transition services and supports for students in transition. TEC initiatives will engage with interested school districts to plan for targeted activities. HDC TEC would work in concert with school district personnel to plan and implement expansion of best practice models for schools and their communities.

- HDC TEC provided SE CORE Training in March 2023 and will provide a Customized Employment training beginning in April.

Interdisciplinary Training Initiatives

HDC's Interdisciplinary Training Initiatives provides training opportunities to graduate students, professionals, families, and self-advocates. HDC's Interdisciplinary Training programs include **Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities (Louisiana LEND)** (funded by US Department of Health and Human Services- Maternal Child Health Bureau) and **Interprofessional Preparation for Related Services Personnel Serving Children with Disabilities Who Have High Intensity Needs (known as IPP)** (funded by US Office of Special Education Programs) grants. These programs provide training as well as clinical and field experiences to graduate students and professionals working in a variety of disciplines (e.g., Occupational and Speech Therapy, Psychology, Audiology), as well as self-advocates and parents. HDC's Interdisciplinary Training Initiatives also include the Autism Spectrum Disorder Interdisciplinary Diagnostic Clinic (ASDID) and the Early Learning Center (ELC), which provide opportunities for interdisciplinary experiential learning.

○ Enhance Collaboration

- The IPP program is designed to foster collaboration between the related services professionals and special education educators in providing comprehensive services to student receiving special education services as mandated by IDEA.

○ Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice

- HDC's Interdisciplinary Training programs, Louisiana LEND and IPP, continue to provide training as well as clinical and field experiences to 23 graduate students, self-advocates, parents and working professionals.

○ Increase Access to Quality Services

- The IPP program is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) as part of their efforts to increase the number of educators and related services professionals sufficient to assure trained personnel to work with children and youth who qualify for special education in the nation's schools. At the close of this year's cohort (July 31, 2023) the program will have trained thirty-one individual graduate students. The program is currently recruiting for the 2023-24 cohort and targeting admission of fourteen additional scholars.