

La DD Council - Status Report of FFY 2024 Action Plan

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- 'On Target: Initiative' indicates progress has been made as expected.
- 'On Target: Expenditures' indicates invoiced amounts are as expected.

Activity	Progress
As applicable, data is presented year-to-date and quarterly (July 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024).	
<p>Goal 1 Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families will have access to information and supports to become effective leaders of their communities and advocate for systems changes on behalf of themselves and other individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.</p>	
<p>Obj. 1.1 Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities of all ages will have access to opportunities to increase their awareness and knowledge of rights as a contributing member to society; including subject matters on (but not limited to) advocacy, voting, exploitation prevention, financial stability and responsibilities, and decision making.</p>	
<p>1.1.1 Provide financial support and technical assistance for Partners in Policymaking and its alumni network.</p> <p>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$90,000</p>	<p>LaDDC Newsletters promoting recruitment for the 2025 PiP class were issued on August 14, 2024, as well as corresponding social media posts on Facebook and Twitter. Fifty-five (55) applications were received by the deadline of September 30, 2023 for the 2025 PiP class. The 2025 PiP Selection Committee is scheduled to convene October 10th.</p> <p><u>Partners Active in Systems Change</u> Ten participants have been active in advocacy and self-advocacy training events provided by LaCAN (Legislative Roundtables, Yellow Shirt Days, Legislative Visions, Action Alerts).</p> <p><u>Partners' Graduates Active in Systems Change</u> Two serve as FHF Executive Directors Six serve as LaCAN Leaders Twenty-three responded to Action Alerts Twelve participated in Yellow Shirt Days</p> <p><u>Graduates also serve on state and regional bodies such as:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council (5) • Louisiana ABLE Account Advisory Board (5) • Disability Rights Louisiana Board of Directors (1) • Statewide Independent Living Council (4)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) State Advisory Council (5) • People First of LA Boards (4) • Special Education Advisory Panel (3) • Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline (2) • Families Helping Families Boards (7) • Regional Human Services Districts/Authorities Boards (2) <p>Previous Quarter(s): The 2024 Partners in Policymaking class graduated with a class of 18.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>1.1.2 Provide financial support and information, training, technical assistance, and leadership to a grassroots network of individuals with intellectual developmental disabilities and family members of individuals with developmental disabilities to effectively educate policy makers on the development/improvement of programs and services for people with intellectual developmental disabilities.</p> <p>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$240,000</p>	<p>As of September 2024, there are over 6,700 individuals registered for the Council and LaCAN list serve to receive information and action alerts.</p> <p><u>Advocacy Activities</u> Since October 1, 2023, there have been a total of twenty-two (22) LaCAN action alerts and nine (9) yellow shirt days.</p> <p>22 Action Alerts – 1,732 actions taken 9 Yellow Shirt Days – 168 attended; 12 testimony provided</p> <p>To date, LaCAN Leaders have supported members in 49 formal legislative visits of which 30 were with key committee members to discuss this year’s advocacy agenda.</p> <p>LaCAN continues to host two LaCAN Leader conference calls per month, which include updates on current concerns/issues and development of strategies to better educate, maintain, support, and lead LaCAN members.</p> <p><u>Update on Leader Positions</u> All LaCAN leader positions are currently filled.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>

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<p>1.1.3 Facilitate and support diverse advocacy events, including but not limited to Legislative Roundtables, toward training, services and policies that will benefit individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.</p> <p>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$30,000</p>	<p>Since July 1, 2024, there has been a total of 13 community input/ member meetings conducted by LaCAN leaders/ FHF Directors with a total of 134 individuals in attendance to discuss concerns and ideas for 2025 Legislative Advocacy agenda.</p> <p>LaCAN leaders and FHF Directors participated in the 2025 Legislative Kickoff on September 17, 2024. Advocacy leaders discussed, prioritized and rated over 80 concerns/issues to generate the top items for their official recommendations toward the Council’s 2025 legislative advocacy agenda.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): LaCAN Leaders planned nine regional Legislative Roundtables in collaboration with their Families Helping Families Centers. There were 389 participants in attendance.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>1.1.4 Provide financial support (from the entirety of state general funds) and technical assistance to nine Families Helping Families Regional Resource Centers across the state.</p>	<p>Since October 1, 2023, Centers have assisted over 37,000 individuals with disabilities and families with information, referral, peer to peer and other supports. There has been over 65,000 units of information and referral completed with 382 trainings conducted with 8,306 individuals in attendance. Centers have conducted a total of 690 outreach activities to hospitals, pediatricians, school districts, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) clinics and physical therapy clinics.</p> <p>The Council requested the \$500,000 received in FY25 to continue in FY26 with its budget request. Justification for full funding for the Centers was provided. However this funding was not approved. Meetings have been requested with LDH Leadership to further discuss the importance of stable funding for FHF Centers. The Council’s Legislative Advocacy Ad Hoc Committee included advocating for FHF funding in its recommendations for the Council’s 2025 Legislative Advocacy Agenda.</p> <p>The Council will not be issuing a contract to Families Helping Families of New Orleans (FHF NOLA) for this fiscal year. Council staff received reports of misuse and misappropriation of funding by the former Executive Director and possibly others. This mismanagement of the funds and Center resulted in unpaid wages to staff and termination of employment and layoffs of staff for an undetermined amount of time. Council staff did inform LDH legal of our concerns, and legal will determine if additional actions are needed.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): Council added to its 2024 Legislative Advocacy Agenda funding for the Families Helping Families Centers. Fact sheet was created and shared at various advocacy events and legislative visits. The</p>

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	<p>additional \$500,000 in state general fund was included in amendments to the state’s supplemental budget (HB782).</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>																				
<p>1.1.5 Share videos and other visual materials featuring information important to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.</p>	<p>All videos and visual materials created by 23East (formerly O’neill Communications) in FY23 have been shared multiple times on social media. We will continue to regularly share information important to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): In quarter 1, all 6 videos made in FY23 for the Fully Included HOW TO series were shared on social media. In quarter 2, all 4 videos made in FY23 for the <i>Your Next Best Hire!</i> webinar series were shared on social media.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>																				
<p>1.1.6 Produce and provide information important to individuals with intellectual developmental disabilities and their families through a variety of electronic and social media (Council website, Facebook, and LaDDC News).</p>	<p>The Council’s social media presence on Facebook and Twitter continues to grow each quarter. Data as of September 23, 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s listserv has 6,923 active subscribers. • The Council’s Facebook has 6,452 page followers. • The Council’s Twitter has 538 followers. <p>Twenty-six (26) LaDDC Newsletters were released via listserv and advertised on the Council’s Facebook and Twitter. All newsletters of the Council can be found HERE.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s):</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Listserv Active Subscribers</th> <th>Facebook Followers</th> <th>Twitter Followers</th> <th>LaDDC News Shared to Listserv</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Quarter 1</td> <td>6,755</td> <td>6,205</td> <td>533</td> <td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quarter 2</td> <td>6,771</td> <td>6,250</td> <td>533</td> <td>18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quarter 3</td> <td>6,857</td> <td>6,323</td> <td>537</td> <td>18</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>		Listserv Active Subscribers	Facebook Followers	Twitter Followers	LaDDC News Shared to Listserv	Quarter 1	6,755	6,205	533	7	Quarter 2	6,771	6,250	533	18	Quarter 3	6,857	6,323	537	18
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1.1.7 Advocate for increased meaningful opportunities for stakeholder input; improved practices to facilitate stakeholder input and consideration of stakeholder recommendations.

The Council announced regional LaCAN Community input meetings via an [Information Alert](#) for stakeholders to receive information about LaCAN's accomplishments in the 2024 legislative session and share ideas and recommendations for the Council's 2025 advocacy agenda.

Disability Rights Louisiana (DRLA) was seeking mental health advocates for the Protection & Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI) Advisory Council. The Council shared a [LaDDC Newsletter](#) for stakeholders to apply for membership on July 22nd.

The Council held Yellow Shirt Day at the House Appropriations Committee on August 30th due to the impending fiscal cliff and possible cuts to the Louisiana Department of Health's (LDH) FY26 budget. An [Action Alert](#) was shared on August 28th encouraging stakeholders to attend.

The Council held the Legislative Advocacy Ad Hoc Committee to determine recommendations for the Council and LaCAN 2025 Legislative Advocacy Agenda. A [LaDDC News](#) was shared encouraging stakeholder input and participation on September 5th.

The following LaDDC News articles were also shared:

- [Self-Direction Quarterly Meeting](#) July 3, 2024 and July 23, 2024
- [Partners in Policymaking Recruitment](#) August 14, 2024
- [Governor's Office of Disability Affairs Annual Conference](#) August 15, 2024
- [DDC Council Meeting Notice](#) September 13, 2024
- [OCDD State Advisory Committee Meeting](#) September 16, 2024
- [Upcoming OCDD Roadshows: Community Conversations](#) September 20, 2024
- [Partners in Policymaking Recruitment](#) September 23, 2024

Previous Quarter(s):

The National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) hosted Self-Advocacy committee meetings on May 23rd and June 20th. The DD Council adopted its Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2025 Action Plan and sought public comment, a [LaDDC Newsletter](#) was shared encouraging stakeholders to provide feedback. The DD Council participated in Disability Pride Month in July, and asked stakeholders to share their stories throughout the month of July. OCDD held Roadshows across the state throughout October and November to discuss the department's upcoming initiatives and an [LaDDC Newsletter](#) was shared. The DD Council shared an [LaDDC Newsletter](#) about OCDD and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) hosted two informational sessions for anyone interested in fostering children and teens with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Also shared

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	<p>an LaDDC Newsletter inviting self-advocates and people with lived experience to participate in a conversation about what is needed to improve mental health crisis services.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>1.1.8 Provide financial support and technical assistance for the Louisiana Youth Leadership Forum. Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$45,000</p>	<p>The Louisiana Youth Leadership Forum has been working on building a website specifically for the program, and it is finally complete. On the website, community members can apply to be a staff member or delegate; learn more about LAYLF’s history and view our schedule-at-a-glance; view frequently asked questions; and more. YLF Executive Team has met with the Governor’s Office of Disability Affairs and LSU Human Development Center to discuss the camp, partnerships, volunteer opportunities, etc.</p> <p>Due to accessibility issues at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette’s campus, the LAYLF Executive Team decided to explore alternative host sites for LAYLF 2025. Louisiana State University Eunice (LSUE) and Nicholls State University were both identified as being central in the state, and not too far from the state Capitol. LAYLF’s Executive Team will be touring both sites to see if they can find a good fit.</p> <p>Lastly, YLF is planning two alumni events over the next few months. The first event was hosted at the Global Wildlife Center in Folsom, LA on October 5th. The second event will be hosted at Rock N Bowl in Lafayette, LA on February 8th.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): The Youth Leadership Forum had their 2024 camp session June 20-23 at the University of Louisiana Lafayette. There were 10 delegates in attendance. Many speakers and panelists including Lillian Dejean, Rashad Bristo and Myron Wright had the privilege of imparting their personal experience and wisdom to the teenage delegates. Additionally there were delegates from last year who came back to assist as staff this year.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>1.1.9 Provide financial support, technical assistance to educate and train individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities on voting awareness, rights and accessibility.</p>	<p>The Council has collaborated with People First of Louisiana to offer ten (10) statewide training opportunities (1 web-based and 9 in-person) to empower and educate individuals on voting rights for people with disabilities. As of October 2023, one (1) web-based training occurred with four (4) participants in attendance and seven (7) in-person trainings with 240 participants in attendance. The in-person training session included representatives from the Secretary of State’s office to provide hands-on experience with voting machines.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s):</p>

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<p>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$30,000</p>	<p>Last quarter, one (1) web-based training occurred with four (4) participants in attendance and five (5) in-person training with sixty (60) participants in attendance.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>Obj. 1.2 Louisiana’s self-advocacy network, partner groups, and citizens with intellectual and developmental disabilities will be supported in self-advocacy training, systems change advocacy, and through participation on a variety of boards and commissions.</p>	
<p>1.2.1 Provide technical assistance and training opportunities designed to strengthen the self-advocacy network and the effectiveness of its systems change activities and promote self-advocacy participation in training of other self-advocates in leadership positions.</p> <p>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$25,000</p>	<p>A People First member attended the annual Nation Council on Independent Living conference in July. The member really enjoyed this opportunity and is going to present the information learned at the next People First meeting.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): The Arc’s National Convention was held in New Orleans, interested members of People First and three (3) Direct Support Workers (DSWs) registered and attended. Ten (10) participants attend the Together in Harmony and Hope conference focused on Traumatic Brain Injuries. People First sent a self-advocate to Washington D.C. for the Disability Policy Seminar. Lastly, People First Annual Meeting and Training, took place in Baton Rouge with two self-advocate speakers and 80 attendees.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>1.2.2 Provide information and support for participation of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families in cross-disability and culturally diverse leadership coalitions and advisory bodies.</p>	<p>The Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) State Advisory Committee (SAC) was scheduled to meet September 11th and stakeholders were encouraged to participate. The meeting was rescheduled and held September 25th due to inclement weather from Hurricane Francine. A LaDDC Newsletter was shared announcing the change on September 16th.</p> <p>The following LaDDC News articles were shared regarding other opportunities to participate and serve on various leadership coalitions and bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Recruitment July 22, 2024 • DDC Legislative Advocacy Ad Hoc Committee Meeting September 5, 2024 • DDC Council Meeting Notice September 13, 2024 <p>Previous Quarter(s): The LaDDC News articles were shared regarding other opportunities to participate and serve on various leadership coalitions and bodies, such as Post-secondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council, Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC) meetings, People First of Louisiana, DD Council positions, LRC membership vacancies, and Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) vacancies.</p>

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	<p>All newsletters can be found HERE and alerts HERE.</p> <p>On target: <input type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>1.2.3 Support Council members' participation in training and educational opportunities and Council leadership's participation in national training, networking events and advocacy opportunities.</p> <p>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$15,000</p>	<p>The Council's Executive Director (ED) and Program Manager attended the 2024 National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) Conference in Washington, D.C. July 22nd – 25th.</p> <p>The ED attended Region VI CEO Onboarding meeting with the new Executive Director for NACDD, Jill Jacobs, on September 9th in Dallas, TX. The Vice-Chair and Deputy Director joined via Zoom to present on our Council's current projects and successes. The group also discussed concerns including current political climates within each state and ideas about how NACDD can best support DD Councils.</p> <p>The ED attended the NACDD Executive Director Leadership Summit (EDLS) in Phoenix, AZ on September 23rd – 26th. ED's had the opportunity to share thoughts, concerns, opportunities, promising practices and ideas on how to efficiently operate DD Councils within our states. ITACC also shared information on Five Year planning.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): Council Staff attended The Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (OIDD) held it's 2024 Training and Technical Assistance Institute. In celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Olmstead Decision, the Council shared a LaDDC Newsletter encouraging the entire disability community to watch as the White House and DD Councils across the country reflected on the progress made and the work still ahead for individuals with developmental disabilities.</p> <p>Held two orientation sessions for new self-advocate Council members. They also participated in parliamentary procedure training with other new members. New Officer Training with the Executive Committee and Parliamentarian was held and an additional training to discuss the roles, responsibilities and duties of the Executive Committee and each officer position. New member orientation for members appointed in October 2023 held on January 9th.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>Goal 2 To be fully participating members of the community, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including those with the most challenging needs, and their families will have access to quality supports and services inclusive of affordable healthcare, resources across various service delivery systems, and shall be treated equally by all members of the community.</p>	

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Obj. 2.1 Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities will have increased access to appropriate and affordable healthcare, including primary and specialist providers, preventive health services and prevention of chronic diseases, dental care, sexual/reproductive health services and behavioral health services.

2.1.1 Oversee implementation of the Community and Family Support System Plan and advocate for adequate funding, the expansion of home and community based services, for waivers to provide access to services listed in the Freedom of Choice Provider Listing and consistent implementation of policy across regions, including, if necessary, changes in law and/or contracts with local governing entities (LGEs).

During the 2024 Legislative Session, the Council and LaCAN along with other stakeholders successfully advocated for \$10.1M to increase the night rate to the day rate in I/DD waivers. OCDD confirmed on July 3rd, the night rate will go into effect October 1st. Additionally, OCDD plans to create a Self-Advocate Advisory Council to discuss hot topics within the disability community and provide stakeholder feedback to OCDD.

OCDD contracted with the University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability and their systemic therapeutic assessment resources and treatment (START) team to study mental health crisis services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in Louisiana. OCDD invited stakeholders to a presentation on the systems analysis that began last summer (2023) with START to look at meeting the needs of individuals with IDD and co-occurring behavioral health needs. The presentation shared that Louisiana has more work to do in this area to improve services for those individuals with dual diagnosis in Louisiana.

The Council along with the Community Provider Association of Louisiana, The Arc of Louisiana, and the Supported Living Network met with the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) on July 10th and August 27th to discuss the progress of the rate methodology for HCBS programs. Milliman will conduct the rate methodology. Ongoing meetings will continue to determine progress as well as updates provided at the Council's SD/CI committee. Additionally, LDH continues to meet with Subject Matter Expert, Lisa Mills, and other States in a Peer Learning Collaborative to provide Direct Support Worker Technical Assistance and assist Louisiana with innovative ideas to address the DSW shortage.

The Technology Support Focus Group of LDH resumed meetings on August 29th. The group provided input and guidance on the materials and information to support Phase I implementation including training materials for Support Coordination, Provider and individuals and families.

[Action Alert](#) was shared on August 28th regarding potential \$100 million in cuts to LDH's budget in FY26. This equates to nearly \$400 million when factoring in federal matching funds. [Proposed cuts](#) to address the shortfall would be detrimental to disability services.

The Council's Legislative Advocacy Ad Hoc Committee included advocacy to address the impending fiscal cliff and potential cuts to LDH in its recommendations for the Council's 2025 Legislative Advocacy Agenda.

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	<p>Previous Quarter(s): The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the final Ensuring Access to Medicaid Service Rule (Access Rule). The Council will receive quarterly updates about the Access Rule at the Self-Determination/Community Inclusion committee from OCDD. In January, LDH agreed to submit a request to CMS to utilize unused enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to complete a rate methodology study. Approval was granted by CMS and LDH sought contractors to develop a rate methodology for the HCBS waivers for the Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) and OCDD waiver programs.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>2.1.2 Conduct research on best practices to provide appropriate, accessible sexual education to middle and high school aged people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.</p>	<p>No update this quarter.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): Staff emailed Maine DD Council and California DD Council to get information on similar activity. Staff also emailed the curriculum developers that the council used to get more information on trainings. Staff also researched other states and their activities that are similar to this activity. Council Staff received information from ACL and conducted research on project SHINE (Sexual Health Innovation Network for Equitable Education) and Yoursexualhealthtoolkit.org a resource for youth with ID/DD.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>2.1.3 Provide financial support for training to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities on how to navigate the Developmental Disability, Behavioral Health and Medicaid/Managed Care Organization Systems. Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$30,000</p>	<p>Hustle & Grow hosted two training sessions on “Person Centered & Trauma-Informed Care” with the collaboration of Beacon Behavioral Health. The first was August 1st in Alexandria and the second was August 8th in Monroe. They have also finalized the “How to Pick a Provider” training material and were scheduled to have that training on Thursday, September 19th.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): There were two training sessions on “De-Escalation in Times of Behavioral Health Crisis” held in April. The first was in Alexandria and the second was in Mandeville. The first training session on “Person Centered and Trauma-Informed Care” was held in Mandeville.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>Obj. 2.2 Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families will have access to and be served by qualified trained professionals, including Direct Support Professionals, First Responders, and other professionals, who will value and promote inclusive community living.</p>	

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<p>2.2.1 Provide financial support to conduct training sessions on first-responder tactics, approaches and resources in fostering relationships with and dealing with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and training for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities on how to interact with first responders.</p> <p>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$80,000</p>	<p>Council contracted for a fourth and final year with Interaction Advisory Group (IAG) to conduct training sessions for first responders. Trainings were originally scheduled to be held in-person, but virtual trainings were also offered to combat difficulties the contractor has faced scheduling trainings with first responder agencies. Unfortunately, the initiative this year has not been as successful in previous years. In August, a LaDDC News was shared to announce several virtual master class events designed for self-advocates, family members and caregivers. Twenty registered to attend the master class but only 7 attended. Only 17 individuals trained for the entire year.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): Difficulty scheduling trainings continued throughout the entirety of this fiscal year which the contractor suspects may have been due to ongoing litigation in Jefferson Parish. A virtual training event was held with 4 first responders in attendance: Plaquemine’s Parish Sheriff, Terrebonne Parish Sheriff and District Attorney’s (DA) Office. An agency wide training event for the Plaquemine’s Parish Fire Department was scheduled to take place in June, but the agency requested to reschedule the event. Another training event in June is scheduled in conjunction with the Autism Society of Acadiana’s conference. An investigator with the Terrebonne Parish DA’s office shared:</p> <p>“Thank you for hosting this awareness class. It was very enlightening! You piqued my interest because there have been a few scenarios where an Autistic individual died or seriously injured from LEOs mishandling the situation. There have been no classes I have seen like yours that give awareness and some training on handling those specific situations.”</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>2.2.2 Provide financial support to establish a training program on emergency preparedness and response relative to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities</p> <p>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$50,000</p>	<p>Council contracted for a fourth and final year with Niagara University to bring its emergency preparedness and disability awareness training to Louisiana. Shared an LaDDC News on July 18, 2024 to announce upcoming September trainings. The final two trainings of this initiative were held in Lafayette (September 9 – 10) and Shreveport (September 11 – 12). Despite Hurricane Francine approaching, both trainings occurred with great attendance. The second day of the Lafayette training was held virtually to allow attendees the opportunity to prepare for the storm and for the trainer to make it to Shreveport before the weather worsened. At the time this report was created, attendance and year-end data was not available.</p> <p>Contractor is hosting a follow up webinar for all individuals having previously participated in the emergency management and disability awareness trainings over the past four years. This refresher webinar will be held on November 12th from 1 – 2:30 PM. The webinar is free but registration is required. Register HERE</p>

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	<p>Previous Quarter(s)</p> <p>. The contractor hosted a refresher virtual training for participants from all five states currently contracting for this initiative. There were 74 registered participants with 28 from Louisiana (the largest attendance of any state). Shared an LaDDC News on March 6th to announce upcoming trainings in Alexandria (April 29 – 30) and Baton Rouge (May 1 – 2). Two trainings were held during the third quarter: Alexandria (April 29 – 30) and Baton Rouge (May 1 -2).</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>2.2.3 Advocate for increased meaningful opportunities for stakeholder input; improved practices to facilitate stakeholder input and consideration of stakeholder recommendations.</p>	<p>The Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) held a quarterly Self-Direction meeting to discuss the Self-Direction Advisory Group’s proposed changes to the handbook. A LaDDC Newsletter was shared on July 3rd encouraging stakeholder participation.</p> <p>OCDD will host another set of roadshows to discuss the department’s upcoming initiatives. A LaDDC Newsletter was shared September 20th encouraging all interested stakeholders to participate.</p> <p>Shared the following LaDDC News was also shared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Recruitment July 22, 2024 • Self-Direction Quarterly Meeting July 23, 2024 • Governor’s Office of Disability Affairs Annual Conference August 15, 2024 • Behavioral Health Resource and Information Workshop September 10, 2024 • Upcoming OCDD Roadshows: Community Conversations September 20, 2024 <p>Previous Quarter(s):</p> <p>The DD Council adopted its Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2025 Action Plan during their April quarterly meeting. Public comment sought on the plan via a shared a LaDDC Newsletter. Also shared an LaDDC Newsletter inviting self-advocates and people with lived experience to participate in a conversation about what is needed to improve mental health crisis services. Hosted by OCDD with the University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability. The Louisiana Medicaid Innovation Technical Committee under LDH conducted a focus group to obtain feedback on the Patient Liability (PLI) notice in order to improve the PLI Notice readability. Council members were encouraged to participate on this focus group and sent information on via email. Additionally, OCDD held Roadshows across the state throughout October and November to discuss the department’s upcoming initiatives. Shared an LaDDC Newsletter. Lastly, shared an LaDDC Newsletter announcing informational sessions to give information to anyone interested in fostering children and teens with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.</p>

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	<p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>Obj. 2.3. Females with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families will have increased access to health services and health education. (Targeted Disparity – Disadvantaged population)</p>	
<p>2.3.1 Collaborate with the Louisiana Department of Health to address accessible, educational materials on Women’s health topics.</p>	<p>Council staff attempted to meet with the Office of Women’s Health and Community Health (OWHCH) again on September 20th, but the meeting had to be reschedule due to a scheduling conflict. Council staff plans to follow up on collaborating with OWHCH on creating accessible materials that have to be created for Act 122 and Act 332 of the 2024 Legislative Session.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): Council Staff met with the Office of Women’s Health and Community Health (OWHCH) to discuss the potential to collaborate on accessible, educational materials on Women’s health topics. OWHCH informed Council staff they are going to conduct a perinatal mental health campaign in June, and would collaborate to ensure the flyers and other materials for the campaign are accessible to all women. Council staff also discussed the bills being heard in the 2024 legislative session, and OWHCH agreed that if the bills passed, they would be also interested in collaborating to ensure the materials that would be created for SB55 (Act 122) and SB325 (Act 332) would be accessible to all women. Both bills became law.</p> <p>On target: <input type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>Goal 3 Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities will have access to quality education in inclusive and safe environments throughout all stages of life and access to self-determined, individualized, equal and gainful employment opportunities that provide competitive wages and integrated work environments.</p>	
<p>Obj. 3.1 Parents of students with intellectual and developmental disabilities will have increased access to early diagnosis, identification of needs, early intervention services, childcare and information and opportunities to collaborate with educators regarding individualized educational planning or programming to meet the needs of their students.</p>	
<p>3.1.1 Advocate for increased focus and capacity within Louisiana Department of Education to address Special Education, including specific areas/issues (i.e., disability/topical/etc.)</p>	<p>An Action Alert was sent on July 25th about the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAP) meeting on July 31st. SEAP discussed legislation passed during the 2024 Legislative Session and proposed bulletin changes recommended by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). Advocates were encouraged to reach out to SEAP before the meeting.</p> <p>Council staff attended the SEAP meeting on July 31, 2024. The meeting was the first meeting with the new Panel. Discussion was centered around alternate assessment participation, bulletin updates in response to the 2024 Regular Legislative Session and the LDOE response plan to the Louisiana Legislative Auditor Report on Risk-Based Monitoring.</p>

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	<p>On August 13, an Action Alert was sent out regarding the consideration of a status report regarding economically disadvantaged students and students with disabilities and the consideration of revisions to bulletins in response to special education legislation of the 2024 Regular Legislative Session and recommendations from the Louisiana Legislative Auditors.</p> <p>At the September SEAP Meeting the Louisiana’s Educational Rights of Children with Disabilities: Special Education Processes and Procedural Safeguards handbook was updated to include new legislation and policy updates, updated FHF contacts and add additional parent support options, special education ombudsman information, moved parent resources to front of the handbook per stakeholder and SEAP suggestion, formatting for parent-friendly access.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): An Action Alert was sent about LDOE’s support of waiving Bulletin 1530, which would allow a chronological age span of more than three years within a special education class. At the December BESE meeting, Louisiana State Superintendent, Dr. Cade Brumley, stated he has included a request in the Executive budget for six additional positions that will be specifically for special education monitoring. An Action Alert was sent on January 10th informing advocates that Governor Landry, by Executive Order, vetoed BESE’s new policy establishing an appeals process for qualifying high school seniors who do not meet the state’s LEAP test scoring requirement for graduation. An Action Alert was sent about SEAP considering topics that would affect focus and capacity within LDOE to address Special Education. Council Staff attended SEAP on January and participated as a proxy in the March meeting. A LaDDC News was sent about 2024 Special Education Parent Involvement Survey. LDOE surveys parents of children with disabilities who receive special education services to gather information about how well schools involve parents in the education of their children.</p> <p>On target: <input type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>3.1.2 Advocate for the Louisiana Department of Education to perform ongoing monitoring of local school districts to ensure compliance of all Special Education laws and policies.</p>	<p>An Action Alert was sent on July 25th about the SEAP meeting on July 31st. SEAP discussed legislation that passed during the 2024 Legislative Session and proposed bulletin changes recommended by BESE. SEAP also discussed a response plan to the LA Legislative Auditor report on risk-based monitoring and updates to Bulletin 1922 – Compliance Monitoring Procedures. Advocates were encouraged to reach out to SEAP before the meeting.</p> <p>An Action Alert was sent on August 13th about the BESE committee meeting occurring on August 20th to discuss multiple issues affecting students with disabilities including the bulletin changes discussed at SEAP and Charter schools serving students with disabilities. BESE also discussed proposed updates to</p>

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	<p>Bulletin 1922: <i>Compliance Monitoring Procedures</i> including adding that all local education agencies (LEAs) will receive risk-based monitoring activities at least once in a six year cycle. LDOE also requested that a national OSEP-funded technical assistance center, the National Center on Systemic Improvement, review the state’s policy. LDOE is including some clarifying updates based on that feedback. Advocates were encouraged to reach out to BESE before their meeting.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): The Legislative Auditor released the first of a series of reports in September 2023 related to the evaluation of LDOE oversight of students with disabilities in Louisiana. An Action Alert was sent which highlighted several areas of concern. An Action Alert and YSD for SEAP was also held. At the October 2023 BESE meeting, the Board directed the LDOE to bring an updated response to the audit to the December 2023 Academic Goals and Instructional Improvement Committee. The implementation plan and policy to address the report were discussed and endorsed by the SEAP at their November meeting. You can view the plan and draft policy shared at the SEAP meeting. An Action Alert was sent and a yellow shirt day scheduled for BESE’s meeting in December. Council Staff also attended the BESE this meeting. See the response plan and timeline from LDOE. Lastly, LDOE presented the updated complaint management procedures. An Action Alert was sent about SEAP considering several important topics that would affect monitoring of local school districts. Shared LaDDC News in May about LDOE Risk-Based Monitoring Performance Audit. This audit focuses on Special Education Monitoring. In June, sent an action alert (AA19: BESE to Discuss Special Education Monitoring Audit).</p> <p>On target: <input type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>3.1.3 Advocate for educational systems change based on emergent education issues.</p>	<p>No update this quarter.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): In September, the Louisiana Legislative Auditor released a performance audit of LDOE process to address complaints related to students with disabilities. During the October 2023 Council meeting, the Education and Employment committee expressed concerns for the new State Ombudsman LDOE hired. The Council requested a letter be sent to BESE before their January 2024 meeting about Act 392 of the 2023 Legislative Session expressing concerns about allowing convicted felons in the classrooms with students, especially students with disabilities. In February, Council Chair, Christi Gonzales, and Council Staff attended a Zoom meeting with LDOE to discuss the concerns over Act 392. An Action Alert was sent informing advocates that Governor Landry, by Executive Order, vetoed BESE’s new policy establishing an appeals process for qualifying high school seniors who do not meet the state’s LEAP test scoring requirement for graduation. An Action Alert was sent about the legislature making Governor Landry’s veto of BESE’s new policy establishing an appeals process for qualifying high school seniors</p>

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	<p>who do not meet the state’s EOC/LEAP test scoring requirement for graduation a permanent decision with House Bill 8 (HB8).</p> <p>An Action Alert was sent due to the unexpected dismissal of the entire membership of SEAP. BESE voted to allow for SEAP to meet for the March quarterly meeting with the current members, and current members were encouraged to reapply for SEAP. An Action Alert was sent with an updated Action Alert sharing information on multiple bills creating Education Savings Accounts/Scholarships and their impact on students with disabilities. Advocates were encouraged to reach out their State Representatives and/or Senators about the potential impact on students with disabilities. SB313 was signed by the governor and created the Louisiana Giving All True Opportunity to Rise (LAGATOR) program.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>3.1.4 Advocate for increased meaningful opportunities for stakeholder input; improved practices to facilitate stakeholder input and consideration of stakeholder recommendations.</p>	<p>During the fourth Quarter, one LaDDC News and two Action Alerts were sent for stakeholder input:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Action Alert #20: SEAP to Discuss Changes to Special Education Bulletins July 25, 2024 2. Action Alert #21: BESE Committees Need to Hear from You August 13, 2024 3. 2024 Louisiana Rehabilitation Services Needs and Satisfaction Survey August 8, 2024 <p>Previous Quarter(s): During the first quarter, three Action Alerts were sent for stakeholder input. Three alerts were also sent during the second quarter and four LaDDC Newsletters. During the third quarter, a LaDDC Newsletter was sent for stakeholder input. All newsletters can be found HERE and alerts HERE.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>3.1.5 Provide financial support to build capacity for advocacy regarding education and employment. Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$87,000</p>	<p>During this contract year, 10 training sessions were completed in Education and Employment. These trainings were heavily focused on new and proposed changes in Federal and state laws in education and employment for people with disabilities. The outcome was to expand and enhance the advocacy skills of students with disabilities, their families, and education and employment advocates. 138 people registered for the in-person and web-based training.</p> <p>During Quarter 4, The Arc of Louisiana scheduled trainings in regions 5, 4, 3, 1, 6, 7, and 8. Region 3 training was canceled due to no one registered. Regions 4 and 5 were combined and done via zoom because of low registration for both. Two additional trainings for businesses and employment specialists were also done via zoom. The Arc also attended SEAP and BESE and sent LaCAN alert language for those meetings.</p>

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	<p>Previous Quarter(s): The Arc developed education and employment training materials. They have also attended meetings including SEAP in November and LRC in October. The Arc also made recommendations to LDOE based on testimony from parents, and sent language to DDC staff to share in LaCAN alerts for two BESE meetings and a SEAP meeting. They also watched the MFP Taskforce meeting and BESE retreat. Additionally, they sent an email to all BESE members regarding the dismissal of SEAP members. They also met with several legislators and helped develop a concurrent resolution to urge LDH to update its policies in the Medicaid Buy-In program to increase the amount of income individuals can earn when working. The Arc sent language to staff to share in 4 LaCAN Action Alerts. The Arc hosted their Region 2 training, with updates based on feedback. The Arc attended Senate Education and shared comments on HB708, LRC meeting in Lafayette, and testified in the House Health and Welfare Committee for the Medicaid Buy-In. All newsletters can be found HERE and alerts HERE.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>Obj. 3.2 Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities will have increased employment outcomes upon transitioning from secondary educational settings, access to employment opportunities inclusive of services from highly qualified employment support providers, and increased competitive and integrated opportunities from employers who are educated on how to support people with developmental disabilities.</p>	
<p>3.2.1 Advocate for systems change based on emergent employment issues.</p>	<p>No activity this quarter.</p> <p>On target: <input type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>