



LSUHNO Human Development Center Activities Report, 1st Quarter for January - March 2025

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. During this period, HDC reorganized its programs to the following four initiative areas: Early Childhood; Education Transition, Community; Community Health; and Long-Term Training. See the organization chart on the HDC website www.hdc.lsuhsu.edu. Each of HDC's initiative areas is described below including the highlights of their activities that took place last quarter (January – March 2025).

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 Sciences Early Learning Center. These programs provide training, technical assistance, and resources to increase access and equity to quality inclusive early learning environments.

- HDC EHS hired an additional family services specialist to provide parenting education for families with infants and toddlers.
- HDC EHS is collaborating with Southern Psychological Specialists to provide mental health support and wellness education for teachers and families
- HDC EHS is completing the first cohort of Conscious Discipline for Families (8-week course) in May, which is helping families and schools work together to support child behavior and learning.
- HDC EHS continues to provide bi-monthly professional development for 60 early childhood teachers and administrators on topics including: Language Modeling, Expanding Language, Teacher Wellness Strategies, Stress Reduction Strategies, Child Nutrition, Oral Health at School.
- HDC EHS is mentoring a cohort of new Head Start Directors across Region VI; this cohort completes in May.

Education, Transition, & Community Initiatives

HDC's Education, Transition, and Community Initiatives provides continuing education and technical assistance to families, educators, administrators, and policymakers regarding best practices for evidence-based and inclusive education. Additionally, this initiative area initiatives supports 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. These programs include **Louisiana Autism Spectrum and Related Disabilities project (LASARD)**, **Louisiana Deafblind Project for Children and Youth (LADBP)**, **West South-Central Work Incentives Planning Assistance (WSC-WIPA)**, **Employment First Core Training**, and **Postsecondary Apprenticeship for Youth (PAYCheck)**.

- **LASARD**

- HDC LASARD currently has 50 contracts with 38 school districts/charter networks statewide and has provided:
 - 1400 hours of coaching educators (teachers, paras, related service providers, and/or administrators)
 - 36 Professional Development sessions for districts around the state
 - 7 completed Communities of Practice series
- HDC had the following presentations at national conferences:
 - 2024 TASH Conference
 - Keynote Session “Lessons from the Louisiana UCEDD”
 - “A Roadmap to Engaging & Accessible Inclusive Education”
 - 2025 Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Conference
 - “Collaborative Conversation: Student-Centered & Student-Led IEPs”
 - “10 High-Yield and Easy-to-Implement Instructional Strategies to Make Learning Accessible to All”
 - “Including Students with Significant Disabilities in All Educational Settings”

- **LADBP**

- HDC LADBP launched “Families Together,” a virtual support group in September 2024.
- HDC LADBP provided a series of trainings for LRS counselors on working with youth who are DeafBlind.
- HDC LADBP submitted a NIDILRR grant proposal in collaboration with the LSU Health Genetics Department to interview families raising children with Usher Syndrome in Louisiana.

- **PAYCheck**

- HDC PAYCheck continues to support college level courses at Delgado Community College and provide Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for 18 students.
- Pathway to PAYCheck was presented at the TASH National Conference in New Orleans in early December 2024.
- HDC submitted a NIDILRR grant proposal “Collective Impact: Interagency Strategies for Individualized Transition Planning & Pre-ETS.”

Community Health Initiatives

HDC’s Community Health initiative area partners with community members and organizations to address their health-related priorities to improve ALL community members’ well-being and quality-of-life. These initiatives target root causes of disparities not only in health, but in education access & quality, economic stability, and neighborhood & social circumstances. Listed below are current partners and a brief description of their programs.

In this last quarter, HDC’s Community Health Initiative participated in the following ways:

- In collaboration with **Split Second Foundation**, HDC has begun hosting a Grief Support Group.

- HDC continues to provide educational and vocational support planning to **Treatment After Cancer and Late Effects Clinic at Manning Family Children's Hospital**.
- HDC continues to provide developmental screening to families associated with **We PLAY by TrainingGrounds** childcare center.
- HDC continues planning for the **GeneBIORETS** grant summer programming. A joint effort with the **LSU School of Allied Health Professions, LSU School of Public Health, and the LSU School of Medicine**, this program provides Louisiana high school teachers with specialized training to enhance their science curricula and their support of students with disabilities.

Long-Term Training Initiatives

HDC's Long-Term 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.

The HDC LEND program is designed to prepare students for future roles as leaders in supporting families and individuals with developmental delays/disabilities and special health care needs. HDC LEND promotes principles of family and person-centered care (and thinking) as well as interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaboration. The IPP program is designed to foster collaboration between the related services professionals and special education educators in providing comprehensive services to students receiving special education services as mandated by IDEA.

Both programs provide over 300 hours of training as well as clinical and field experiences to graduate students and professionals working in a variety of disciplines, as well as self-advocates and family members. HDC's Interdisciplinary Training Initiatives also include the Autism Spectrum Disorder Interdisciplinary Diagnostic Clinic (ASDID) which provides opportunities for interdisciplinary experiential learning.

- HDC's **Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities (LEND)** 2024-2025 cohort is composed of 12 scholars from various disciplines including BCBA, Education, Speech Language Pathology, Audiology, Public Health and Dentistry. Scholars with lived experiences include a parent and three self-advocates. Scholars attended an Orientation and participated in a 40-hour Maternal Child Health Foundations Week, and biweekly seminars. They attended the 2024 AUCD Conference in Washington D.C. and have been working on their Family Mentoring Experience, Policy & Advocacy, and Capstone projects. They will be presenting their final Capstone projects this month.
- HDC's **Interprofessional Preparation for Related Services Personnel Serving Children with Disabilities Who Have High Intensity Needs (or IPP)** program is currently in a no cost extension year from October 1, 2024, to September 30, 2025. In this year the program admitted two graduate students, one student from the LSUHSC Occupational Therapy training program and one student from the LSUHSC Counseling program. Unfortunately, the student from the Counseling program has withdrawn from the program in the last month.