



LSUHNO Human Development Center Activities Report, 2nd Quarter for April - June 2025

The Human Development Center (HDC) is part of a nationwide network of 68 University Centers of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs) 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.lsuhs.edu. Each of HDC's initiative areas is described below including the highlights of their activities that took place during last quarter (April – June 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) 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.

- Provided over 25 hours of mental health counseling services to parents and teachers.
- Starting a collaboration with Covenant House and Hotel Hope to help parents living in temporary housing, especially those with intellectual disabilities, access childcare and develop action plans to stabilize their families.
- Hosted a graduation event for a cohort of 10 families who participated in the Conscious Discipline for Families (8-week course) which provides families strategies and support to address challenging behavior using positive support strategies.
- Provided 2 days of professional development for 60 early childhood teachers and administrators on topics including: Safe and Healthy Environments for Infants and Toddlers, Early Literacy, and Child Assessment.
- Provided monthly mentoring to a second cohort of new Head Start Directors across 5 states.

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**
 - Currently have 25 district partnerships for the 2025-2026 school year and in conversation with other districts and schools.
 - Presented LASARD's Collaboration Playbook for Diverse Learner Teams at Louisiana's DOE Teacher Leader Summit in June.
 - Completed their monthly Lunch & Learn series with Task Analysis in April and Video Modeling in May.
- **LADBP**
 - Continued training series for LRS counselors across the state.
 - Worked with Louisiana's Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) to begin targeted outreach to families with children who may be DeafBlind.
 - Formed a family transition group for parents of DeafBlind youth transitioning into adulthood.
 - Began planning the 10th biannual Usher syndrome Symposium taking place Friday, September 19th.
- **PAYCheck**
 - Continued to support the current 18 students with college level courses at Delgado Community College and by providing Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), including permanent job placements.
 - Planning to support 12 new students at Nunez Community College with the St. Bernard Parish School District.

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 collaboration with **Split Second Foundation**, HDC continued hosting a monthly Grief Support Group.
- Continued to provide educational and vocational support planning to the **Treatment After Cancer and Late Effects Clinic at Manning Family Children's** hospital. In this quarter the HDC has extended the educational and vocational case management services to the monthly **Sickle Cell Clinic** also at **Manning Family Children's** hospital.
- Continues to provide developmental screening to families associated with **We PLAY by TrainingGrounds** childcare center.
- The **GeneBIORETS** grant summer programming commenced in June 2025 with a cohort of eight high school science teachers representing the entire state of Louisiana. 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 and a new emphasis on **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)**.

- HDC's **Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities (LEND)** 2024-2025 cohort wrapped up the year with all 12 scholars completing the program. A new cohort for 2025-2026 was selected after an application and interview process. This new cohort is composed of 13 scholars from various disciplines including Education, Speech Language Pathology, Occupational Therapy, Counseling, Dentistry, and scholars with lived experience. Scholars will attend an Orientation, participate in a 40-hour Maternal Child Health Foundations Week held in August, and subsequent biweekly seminars. They will attend the 2025 National FASD Impact Week in Washington D.C. and complete a Family Mentoring Experience, Policy & Advocacy project, and Capstone project, during the course of this upcoming year.
- The **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. This quarter, the program is continuing to support the remaining graduate student from the LSUHSC Occupational Therapy training program.
- HDC's **FASD Initiative** completed an exciting first year of programming by partnering with the LA DD Council and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to conduct FASD 101 trainings in 9 regions of the state. Almost 200 social workers, foster/adoptive parents, DCFS staff, and community members were trained in recognizing the signs and symptoms of FASD, preventing FASD, and evidence-based supports and services for people with FASD and their families. An FASD United chapter for the state of Louisiana was also created with the first meeting being held on July 2nd at 10 am via Zoom. In this meeting, members will plan awareness activities to take place in September, which is national FASD Awareness Month.