LSU Human Development Center
Activities Report, 1th Quarter, July-September, 2021

Below are highlights of the activities that took place last quarter (July-September, 2021) 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:

- **Enhance Collaboration**
  - HDC is collaborating with the New Orleans Early Education Network (NOEEN), Tulane TIKES and 22 childcare centers to implement developmental screening programs that will impact at least 400 children in private childcare centers. HDC is monitoring developmental screening and referral and providing strategies for continuous quality improvement.
  - HDC's Early Head Start-Childcare Partnership (EHS-CCP) program expanded to 8 childcare centers (33 classrooms serving 210 infants and toddlers. Approximately 16% of funded enrollment will be children with disabilities.
  - HDC's EHS-CCP program is collaborating with LDH to pilot the Act Early/Safe, Secure and Loved program to educate and support families in developmental monitoring and mindful parenting practices.

- **Increase Access to Quality Services**
  - HDC's Early Head Start-CCP was closed for 3 weeks due to Hurricane Ida. In spite of the extended interruption, 145 children were enrolled through September. Sixteen of those children (11%) have an IFSP.
  - HDC is providing interdisciplinary autism evaluations to rule in or rule out ASD to children in Early Head Start, NOEEN City Seats and local LA4 programs.
  - HDC's EHS-CCP program will implement an autism-screening pilot (in addition to general developmental screening) with over 200 toddlers in childcare centers starting in October.

- **Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice**
  - HDC conducted training in August for 60 early childhood educators on implementing developmental screening, and discussing child development with families. Training will be followed-up with coaching or consultation with teachers and administrators in the fall.
  - HDC is providing training on developmental screening using the ASQ-3 and ASQ:SE to teachers in the City Seats program in October.
  - HDC's Inclusive Practices in Early Childhood (IPEC) program is providing technical assistance to 22 childcare centers in the NOEEN City Seats program to improve disability supports in inclusive classrooms.

K-12 Initiatives:

- **Enhance Collaboration**

- HDC LASARD secured contracts with **25 school systems across the state** for the 2021-2022 school year as an approved vendor in the Louisiana Department of Education Partnership for Success vendor guide.
- HDC LASARD staff conducted collaborative planning sessions with multiple partner schools and districts to develop Action Plans to guide our services throughout the year.
- HDC LASARD staff received introductory training in Motivational Interviewing strategies to infuse into our coaching practices to enhance collaboration and teacher efficacy.
- HDC Louisiana DeafBlind Project (LA DBP) continues participation in clinical services within the Ambulatory Care Services of Children's Hospital of New Orleans. Services include three Cancer Survivor Late Effects clinics and one Hearing Disorders ENT clinic per month. For this quarter staff from the LA DBP participated in twenty (20) hours of direct clinical service.
- HDC Louisiana DeafBlind Project provided twenty-two hours of targeted technical assistance supporting agencies including National Association of Vison Professionals, Early Steps Regional Interagency Coordinating Council Regional meetings, Family Helping Families agencies, district special education administrators and Lighthouse Louisiana.
- HDC Louisiana Deafblind Project for Children and Youth participated in monthly meetings of the Louisiana Deafblind Collaborative Team coordinated by the Helen Keller National Center.
- Supporting the OSEP funded personnel preparation grant (**LSU Health New Orleans' Interprofessional Preparation for Related Services Personnel Serving Children with Disabilities Who Have High Intensity Needs)**, HDC Louisiana Deafblind Project facilitated MOU with St. Bernard Parish School Board, Plaquemines Parish School Board, Collegiate Academies, Inc., & the Belle Chasse YMCA.
- HDC participated in the Back-to-School Mini Conference sponsored by the Louisiana Special Education Administrators, Inc. fall 2021 in Baton Rouge.

- **Increase Access to Quality Services**
  - HDC LASARD provided professional development sessions for back to school on topics such as environmental supports, functional skills, executive functioning, and writing SMART IEP goals.
  - HDC LASARD staff provided coaching to schools and districts around topics such as positive behavior supports, instructional strategies, and environmental supports.
  - HDC LASARD added two new facilitators, Ali Kowitz in the GNO area, and Lisa Davison in the Shreveport area.
  - HDC Louisiana DeafBlind Project continues an intensive technical assistance relationship with the National Center for Deaf-Blindness in efforts to establish the use of Interveners with DeafBlind students in Louisiana.
  - The Louisiana DeafBlind Project received ten (10) referral for newly identified students with deafblindness in this quarter.
  - HDC Louisiana Deafblind Project provided thirty-five (35) hours of intensive technical assistance opportunities on behalf of Louisiana students, families, teachers, and school districts.

- **Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice**
  - HDC LASARD expanded their website and social media to provide resources for educators and families, including visual support templates for various ages in the domains of communication, social, behavior, and environment.
  - HDC LASARD expanded our online course offerings to include PreK Environment supports.
  - HDC LASARD staff provided collaborative training to a family and educational team to support a student using the Picture Exchange Communication System.

- HDC Louisiana DeafBlind Project entered a MOU with and participated in the Families Helping Families of Greater New Orleans' RSA PTI Region B-2 "**Independent Futures that Work!** Project.
- HDC Louisiana DeafBlind Project submitted an annual renewal report to the LSUHSC Office of Research regarding the current IRB approved research study entitled. **Analysis of Medical, Psychology, Educational, Social, and Vocational Data Available from the Children's Hospital New Orleans Late Effects Clinic Database**.

Transition, Employment, and Careers (TEC) Initiatives:

- **Enhance Collaboration**
  - Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS), Jefferson parish public schools (JPPSS) and other greater New Orleans school system students (and graduates) continue to collaborate with HDC to implement the Postsecondary Apprenticeship for Youth (PAY Check) program. Other parish schools systems and LRS are now referring students/clients for PAY Check services who have recently graduated from HS and are taking post-secondary courses.
  - HDC TEC continues working in partnership with FHF NOLA, LRS and Operation SPARK, Delgado Community College and Nunez Community College to expand and refine a disability/diversity talent pipeline to technology careers, called Coding Pathway for Youth with Autism. During this quarter, TEC is providing assistance and mentoring to FHF NOLA's Computer Coding Program Coordinator. FHF NOLA just received approval as an LRS vendor for the Computer Coding Pathway for Youth with Autism. HDC TEC is invited to the second meeting of grant applicants for the GNO Foundation Impact grants to receive funding support to continue to provide mentoring and TA to this program.
  - HDC TEC attends Office of Disability Employment Programs (ODEP) US Department of Labor Visionary Opportunities to Increase Competitive Employment (VOICES) and State as Model Employer (SAME) initiative calls and meetings.
  - HDC TEC staff is active on the national APSE Public Policy committee with a specific focus on providing supports and services to individuals during the COVID pandemic.
  - HDC TEC is collaborating with St. Paul's Catholic High School to provide pilot PAY Check services on the north shore for five students that will begin services in October. HDC TEC has held meetings with LRS Northshore and St. Tammany Parish Schools to discuss expanding PAY Check to those students with an expected service start date of January, 2022. TEC has hired a Transition Specialist for the Northshore who began 9/23/2021.

- **Increase Access to Quality Services**
  - Currently there are 30 students in HDC's PAY Check program from various school systems and direct referrals from LRS. This includes students from 2020/2021 and the students from the previous year's cohort who are completing Internships and/or being placed in permanent employment.
  - PAY Check continues the focus on providing each participant with two paid internships, Job Shadowing and Work Site Visits as they progress along their career pathway.
  - HDC LA-BPS continues to average between 35-40 referrals each month and provides Information and referral to all beneficiaries and individualized benefits planning for those employed or considering employment. There had been a decrease in referrals at the start of the pandemic, but many beneficiaries have found work as essential employees that has increased the number of referrals.
  - HDC TEC was awarded the five-year grant for West South Central Work Incentives Planning Assistance (WSC-WIPA) services on June 30. The new RFA catchment area for the HDC WIPA includes twenty-one Texas counties and thirty-three Louisiana parishes. Our WSC WIPA staff have agreed to take the referrals for the newly awarded WIPA program for the Greater New Orleans area, Lighthouse for the Blind and have received 28 referrals this month from the national WIPA hotline.

- HDC TEC WSC-WIPA is currently in discussions with TEXAS Workforce Commission VR to discuss Fee for Service WIPA referrals and are planning to apply as an eligible WIPA program with TEXAS VR when Open Enrollment begins.

- **Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice**

  - HDC TEC continues to provide online Employment First CORE trainings and hosted over 35 virtual participants in the September 3-day event. The next training is being planned for March 2022.
  - HDC TEC Customized Employment Train-the-Trainer – HDC TEC staff have completed the Discovery and will be working on the CE Plan and placement and will be meeting with LRS State Office to discuss the Train-the-Trainer training for LA CRPs. Angela Montgomery indicated the meeting to discuss this will occur sometime in late October, 2021
  - HDC TEC is working with national Project Search to discuss starting another Project Search in Louisiana and have begun discussions with a large statewide employer interested in being a host site. HDC TEC staff attended the national Project Search virtual conference in July 2021 and subsequently met with LRS State Office to discuss the new site. TEC is awaiting meeting dates with the host site's planning team that will hopefully occur in October or November.

Interdisciplinary Training

- **Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice**
  - HDC exited ten (10) graduate students enrolled in Cohort One of the OSEP funded personnel preparation grant; **LSU Health New Orleans' Interprofessional Preparation for Related Services Personnel Serving Children with Disabilities Who Have High Intensity Needs.** These graduate students represented the professions audiology, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, physical therapy and school psychology.
  - HDC enrolled ten (11) individuals (i.e., graduate students representing five different disciplines, parents of children with disabilities, self-advocate on the ASD spectrum, and a practicing Behavior Analyst) into Cohort Two of the OSEP funded personnel preparation grant **Louisiana Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities (LEND)** grant funded by the Maternal Child Health Bureau (HCB)**.**
- **Enhance Collaboration**
  - The HDC Early Learning Center is still open and serving about 5 families. Due to challenges related to serving families during the COVID 19 pandemic, we have allowed the normal attrition that comes from children "aging out" and families moving away to occur without filling vacancies. However, we recently received approval to become a Type III childcare center. This designation will support our ability to recruit, enroll and support families with children who have developmental delays and/or are medically fragile. When this occurs, we will be able to expand our community partners.