LSUHSC Human Development Center
Activities Report, 1st Quarter, October-December, 2021

Below are highlights of the activities that took place last quarter (October-December, 2021) in the Human Development Center's (HDC) 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 a developmental screening program 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 collaborated with Easter Seals to implement an early literacy pilot with toddlers in New Orleans from September through December.
  - 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.
  - HDC is collaborating with the New Orleans Ready Start Network on their transformation grant application. One of the four main goals included in the application is to develop a strategic plan to improve the quality of special education services in early childhood settings serving children birth to 5 years.

- **Increase Access to Quality Services**
  - HDC's EHS-CCP is serving 187 children, eighteen of those children have an IFSP and six others are in referral.
  - 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 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. There are currently 16 children with IFSP/IEP and 6 children in referral.

- **Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice**
  - HDC's EHS-CCP program provided 12 hours of professional development to 56 early childhood educators on topics including curriculum implementation, documenting child progress, and differentiating instruction.
  - HDC's EHS-CCP program started an autism-screening pilot (in addition to general developmental screening) with over 200 toddlers in childcare centers. The pilot will run from October through June.

K-12 Initiatives:

- **Enhance Collaboration**
  - HDC LASARD secured contracts with six additional school districts during this quarter, bringing the total to 31 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. Additionally, HDC LASARD extended their

services to two school districts that are current partners to add additional coaching and/or professional development sessions.

- In November, HDC LASARD presented an overview of their services for the East Baton Rouge Parish Schools Special Education Parent Advisory Council.
- 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 thirty-six (36) hours of direct clinical service.
- HDC LA DBP 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, LA AEM Center within the LA Special School District and Lighthouse Louisiana.
- HDC LA DBP 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 LA DBP facilitated an MOU with St. Bernard Parish School Board, Plaquemines Parish School Board, Collegiate Academies, Inc., & the Belle Chasse YMCA.

- **Increase Access to Quality Services**
    - HDC LASARD provided professional development sessions for school districts on topics such as teacher-paraeducator collaboration, supporting communication, and instructional strategies.
    - HDC LASARD staff provided coaching to schools and districts around topics such as co-teaching, increasing inclusive opportunities, and embedding individualized goals in classroom instruction.
    - HDC LA DBP 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.
    - HDC LA DBP received thirty-four (24) referrals for newly identified students with deafblindness in this quarter.
    - HDC LA DBP provided thirty-five (35) instances of intensive technical assistance opportunities on behalf of Louisiana students, families, teachers, and school districts.

- **Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice**
    - HDC LASARD has supported groups of educators to collaborate across a district using a Community of Practice format. In this format, which meets for 6 one-hour sessions on Zoom, the HDC LASARD facilitator presents a small amount of content around an evidence-based practice and then leads the group in a collaborative problem solving session. This quarter, HDC LASARD worked with a group of middle school teachers and speech-language pathologists on strategies to increase social-communication and a group of elementary teachers on evidence-based positive behavior support.
    - HDC LA DBP 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 LA DBP continues data abstraction 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) and Jefferson Parish Public School System (JPPSS) continue to collaborate with HDC to implement the Postsecondary Apprenticeship for Youth (PAY Check) program. The program enrollment has returned to regular pre-pandemic status. The students who were in the program when COVID-19 surfaced have now finished all requirements and gone on to job placement. Other Louisiana parish schools systems and LRS are now referring students/clients for PAY Check services.
  - Coding Pathway for Youth with Autism - HDC TEC continues working in partnership with FHF NOLA, LRS and Operation SPARK to expand and refine a disability/diversity talent pipeline to technology careers. During this quarter, HDC TEC assisted FHF NOLA and their newly hired Program Coordinator to initiate LRS services with a cadre of students. The Coding Pathway Collaborative has recently received over $300,000 in GNO Foundation, Baptist Community Ministries and BCBS funding to continue to support the pathway program.
  - 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 collaborated with St. Paul's Catholic High School to provide pilot PAY Check services on the north shore for five students and began services in August 2021. HDC TEC, serving as the LRS vendor, is working with the school's teachers/administrators and area businesses to plan implementation of these services.
  - St Tammany Schools and St. Bernard Schools are in the process of initiating PAY Check programs with HDC.
  - HDC TEC is working with Project Search national office, Ochsner Administration and LRS to start a Project Search at Ochsner Main Campus on Jefferson Highway in Metairie. Currently Ochsner and national Project Search are working on the contract and licensing. It is expected to start in the Fall of 2022.

- **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.
  - PAY Check continues the focus on providing each participant with two paid internships, Job Shadowing and Work Site Visits, and Job Placement as they progress along their career pathway.
  - HDC West South Central Work Incentives Planning Assistance (WSC-WIPA) continues to average between 35-40 referrals each month. The HDC WIPA program has been accepting volunteer referrals while the partner program, Lighthouse for the Blind, finishes the required training and certification. The volunteer referrals comprised 150 individuals over the last quarter. Lighthouse just completed their training and certification and will now be working those referrals. Many beneficiaries have found work as essential employees and that has increased the number of referrals. The new catchment area for the HDC WIPA includes twenty-one Texas counties and thirty-three Louisiana parishes.

- **Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice**
  - HDC TEC continues to provide online Employment First CORE trainings and hosts virtual training events. The next training is scheduled for March 2022.
  - HDC TEC staff have completed the Customized Employment Train-the-Trainer training and are finalizing a statewide training proposal for LRS for Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) that will provide Customized Employment services. HDC is preparing to provide training to selected CRPs in Fall or Spring 2022.

Interdisciplinary Training Initiatives

- **Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice**
  - HDC's Interdisciplinary Training programs (i.e., **Leadership Education in Neurodevelomental and related Disabilities** (**LEND)** and **Interprofessional Preparation for Related Services Personnel Serving Children with**

Disabilities Who Have High Intensity Needs grants continue to provide training as well as clinical and field experiences to 21 graduate students, self-advocates, parents and working professionals.

- Under the tutelage of Ms. Liz Gary, LEND scholars are preparing information to educate Louisiana's Congressional Delegation and state elected officials about the prevalence and impact of FASD as well as the importance of identifying and serving children with FASD in Louisiana.
- The HDC Early Learning Center (ELC) remains open but due to challenges related to serving families during the COVID-19 pandemic, the ELC has allowed the normal attrition that comes from children "aging out" and families moving away to occur without filling vacancies. Plans to begin recruiting families with children who have a developmental delay are underway. Suggestions from Council members for how to recruit families with children who have a developmental delay are welcome.