LSUHSC Human Development Center
Activities Report, 1st Quarter for October - December 2022

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. Below are highlights of the activities that took place last quarter (October - December 2022) 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

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

- **Enhance Collaboration**
  - HDC IPEC continues their collaboration with the New Orleans Early Education Network (NOEEN) to increase the capacity of the City Seats program to effectively serve children with disabilities in inclusive childcare settings by:
    - Piloting a developmental screening and referral program to serve children in publicly funded programs across 22 centers.
    - Providing technical assistance to NOEEN and EC programs to implement the EHCO Disability Augmentation grants in spring 2023 (provides funds to centers serving children with disabilities to improve access and quality).
  - HDC participated in the development of the ECE Workforce Playbook to support retention and recruitment efforts of early childhood educators as publicly EC programs continue to expand (available in January).
  - HDC EHS-CCP is working with the Office of Head Start to create an enhanced wage structure for early childhood teachers that will get to parity with PreK-K teachers in Louisiana (expected in March).

- **Increase Access to Quality Services**
  - HDC EHS-CCP is serving 190 children, 22 of whom currently have IFSPs, in eight childcare centers. All children have received developmental screening and are currently getting sensory screens (hearing and vision). Four children are currently in referral for evaluation.
  - HDC IPEC completed developmental screener screening for over 400 children in the NOEEN City Seats program.
    - 127 children received follow-up classroom observation
    - 33 referrals were made for Part C or Part B services
    - 8 children were referred for ASD evaluation
  - HDC IPEC is providing disability coaching in 22 early childhood classrooms.
  - HDC IPEC staff and Dr. Michael Norman (HDC, LA Deafblind Project) are supporting family and staff to effectively include our first toddler with Visual Impairments in the HDC Early Learning Center.
  - HDC IPEC is providing technical assistance and training to the Archdiocese of New Orleans to improve services for children with disabilities.

- **Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice**
    - HDC faculty participated on a panel about 'Early Education Access' at the New Orleans Collaborative of Early Childhood Research symposium in October.
    - HDC's EHS-CCP is taking care of teachers! We developed a 3-pronged approach to retention and recruitment.
        - Financial Stability – providing a living wage and creating a career ladder for upward mobility.
        - Mental Wellness – teaching evidence-based practices that promote individual capabilities including self-awareness, self-efficacy, and self-regulation.
        - Physical Health – providing education and incentives for teachers to improve their health. Teachers participate in monthly professional development that addresses all three areas.
    - HDC hosts monthly professional development for 80 early childhood educators and administrators.
    - HDC's Inclusive Practices in Early Childhood (IPEC) is providing training about disability in early childhood. For more information see our postcard and click on the QR code here: https://www.hdc.lsuhsc.edu/news/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/IPEC-Postcard.pdf.

K-12 Initiatives

HDC's K-12 Education Initiatives provide continuing education and technical assistance to families, educators, administrators, and policymakers regarding best practices for evidence-based and inclusive education. These programs **include Louisiana Autism Spectrum and Related Disabilities project (LASARD)** and the **Louisiana DeafBlind Project for Children and Youth (LA DBP)**.

- **Enhance Collaboration**
    - HDC LASARD has provided training for teacher and paraeducator teams to work collaboratively in the classroom. In one school district, this training was followed by a community of practice specifically for paraeducators to learn specific skills.

- **Increase Access to Quality Services**
    - So far this school year, HDC LASARD has provided over 50 professional development sessions for school districts with over 1900 participants. Satisfaction surveys show that over 99% of participants were satisfied or highly satisfied with the training. Topics have included classroom choreography (schedules for the adults in the classroom), lesson planning, and emotional regulation.
    - HDC LASARD staff has continued to provide coaching to schools and districts across the state. So far this school year, HDC LASARD staff have completed over 300 coaching sessions, supporting over 450 educators. Coaching has taken place around topics such as inclusive practices, active student engagement, and incorporating sensory supports in the classroom.

- **Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice**
    - HDC LASARD hosted monthly "Lunch and Learn" webinars, open to families and educators on topics related to evidence-based practices for individuals with disabilities. Topics have included:
        - October 2022 – Visual Cues
        - November 2022 – Choice making
        - December 2022 – Reinforcement and Token Systems

Transition, Employment, and Careers (TEC) Initiatives

HDC's TEC initiatives support 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. Programs include: West South Central Work Incentives Planning Assistance (WSC-WIPA), Computing for Youth with Autism CYA – FHF NOLA, Employment First Core Training, Customized Employment Training and Postsecondary Apprenticeship for Youth (PAY Check).

- **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. Other school systems are referring exiting students for PAY Check services through their LRS counselor.
  - Computing for Youth with Autism (C YA) - HDC TEC works in partnership with FHF NOLA, LRS, Delgado and Operation SPARK to expand and refine the talent pipeline to technology careers. HDC TEC works with the new Program Director and Transition Specialist. The Coding Pathway Collaborative has received myriad funding to continue to support the expansion of the program and for an industry and employer convening advisory. HDC is receiving some limited funding to assist and support the CYA pathway.
  - HDC TEC staff is active on the national APSE Public Policy committee and is also working with the SSA policy updates, national ethical guidelines and the national job coach certification council for Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP).
  - HDC TEC continues to collaborate with St. Paul's Catholic High School to provide PAY Check services on the north shore.
  - St. Bernard Schools, St. Tammany and E. Ascension are exploring the PAY Check program. St. Bernard Schools has a small contract with HDC for 2022-2023.
  - HDC TEC Project Search initiative with Ochsner Administration and LRS at Ochsner Main Campus is on hold indefinitely. They are working internally to provide similar services with existing personnel.

- **Increase Access to Quality Services**
  - Currently there are 27 students in HDC's PAY Check programs in PAY Check NOLA and PAY Check North Shore from various school systems and direct referrals from LRS.
  - HDC's PAY Check program continues to focus on providing participants with in-person, one-on-one pre-ETS units/sessions, two paid internships, Job Shadowing (2) and Work Site Visits (2), and Job Placement as the individual progresses along their 12-month career pathway.
  - HDC West South Central Work Incentives Planning Assistance (WSC-WIPA) continues to receive 40+ referrals each month. Lighthouse for the Blind provides WIPA services for the other half of the state. HDC WIPA includes twenty-one Texas counties and thirty-three Louisiana parishes. HDC will provide separate fee-for-service benefits planning to Texas Workforce Commission VR transition clients and has submitted proposal to Texas Workforce Commission.

- **Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice**
  - HDC TEC is promoting professional development, planning and mentoring and TA to school districts interested in expanding and enhancing their transition services and supports for students in transition. TEC initiatives will engage with interested school districts to plan for targeted activities. HDC TEC would work in concert with school district personnel to plan and implement expansion of best practice models for schools and their communities.
  - HDC had presentations on WSC WIPA and on Customized Employment at the LRA/APSE, December 2022.
  - HDC TEC will provide SE CORE Training in March, 2023 and also will provide a Customized Employment training in March/April. Details to be announced soon.

Interdisciplinary Training Initiatives

HDC's Interdisciplinary Training Initiatives provides training opportunities to graduate students, professionals, families and self-advocates. HDC's Interdisciplinary Training programs include **Leadership Education in Neurodevelomental 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** (funded by US Office of Special Education Programs) grants. These programs provide training as well as clinical and field experiences to graduate students and professionals working in a variety of disciplines (e.g., Occupational and Speech Therapy, Psychology, Audiology), as well as self-advocates and parents. HDC's Interdisciplinary Training Initiatives also include the Autism Spectrum Disorder Interdisciplinary Diagnostic Clinic (ASDID) and the Early Learning Center (ELC), which provide opportunities for interdisciplinary experiential learning.

- **Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice**
    - HDC's Interdisciplinary Training programs, **Leadership Education in Neurodevelomental and related Disabilities** (**LEND)** and **Interprofessional Preparation for Related Services Personnel Serving Children with Disabilities Who Have High Intensity Needs,** continue to provide training as well as clinical and field experiences to 23 graduate students, self-advocates, parents and working professionals.