LSUHSC Human Development Center
Activities Report, 3rd Quarter, April-June, 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 (April - June 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 programs Early Head Start Childcare Partnership (EHS-CCP) and Inclusive Practices in Early Childhood (IPEC). These programs provide training, technical assistance, and resources to community childcare agencies and their staff in order to better educate and support the children and their families.

- **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 over 400 children in private childcare centers. HDC is monitoring developmental screening and referral, and providing strategies for continuous quality improvement.
  - HDC is collaborating with the New Orleans Ready Start Network on their transformation grant. 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.
  - HDC is collaborating with the New Orleans Collaborative on Early Childhood Research to conduct research with families of young children about their knowledge of, and factors influencing utilization of health and education programs that support families with young children.

- **Increase Access to Quality Services**
  - HDC's EHS-CCP is serving 210 children; over 10% of those children have an Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) and are included in childcare programs.
  - 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 29 children with Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) or Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), and 20 children in referral.
  - HDC's IPEC program processed over 600 developmental screeners, and provided rescreen and referral support for 143 children in the NOEEN City Seats program.
  - HDC's IPEC program provided ongoing classroom technical assistance to support effective inclusion in 11 childcare centers.

- **Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice**
  - HDC's EHS-CCP program provided 6 hours of professional development to 40 early childhood educators.

- HDC's Inclusive Practices in Early Childhood (IPEC) provided training about disability in early childhood for 22 early childhood teachers in the Boys Town EHS program.

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 Louisiana Autism Spectrum and Related Disabilities (LASARD) is in the process of securing contracts for the 2022-2023 school year to school systems across the state.
  - HDC LASARD staff collaborated with the St. Bernard Autism Awareness Krewe and provided training to parents and interested school personnel on using visual supports at home.
  - HDC LASARD participated in the Greater New Orleans Autism Society Autism Awareness Festival.
  - HDC LA DBP submitted Louisiana's annual Child Count based on the individuals currently registered with the Louisiana DeafBlind Project as of December 1, 2021. The National Child Count of Children and Youth who are Deaf-Blind provides information on the population of children identified with deaf-blindness in the U.S, aged birth through 21.
  - HDC LA DBP wrote article on Family Engagement for the third-quarter publication in Families Helping Families Southwest Louisiana newsletter.

- **Increase Access to Quality Services**
  - HDC LASARD provided professional development sessions for school districts on topics such as supporting executive functioning, functional skills, prompting, antecedent behavioral strategies, and reinforcement. HDC LASARD staff also provided make-and-take professional development sessions in which educators had an opportunity to create visual supports for structure and self-regulation.
  - HDC LASARD staff provided coaching to schools and districts around topics such as engaging students with significant disabilities, building peer supports, utilizing task boxes to build vocational skills, and supporting students with ASD in inclusive preK settings.
  - HDC LA DBP participated in four late effects clinics and 3 ENT/hearing clinics. LA DBP also developed a new referral relationship with the ophthalmology department at CHNOLA.
  - HDC LA DBP offered hearing screenings to over 135 attendees at the statewide conference of the National Federation of the Blind of Louisiana. HDC LA DBP also facilitated a forum with 15 individuals who were DeafBlind or whose lives are affected by DeafBlindness, including one TVI and one DeafBlind, first-year college scholarship winner.

- **Promote Use of Evidence Based Practice**
  - HDC LASARD staff were selected to present at the LDOE Teacher Leader Summit. The topics of the sessions were:
    - Building a Communicative Environment
    - Stuck is a State of Mind: Executive Functioning Strategies
  - HDC LASARD staff were selected to present at the National Down Syndrome Congress convention. Presentations were:
    - Utilizing Peer-Mediated Interventions Across School Settings
    - Spring to September: A Timeline for Annual Transition Planning
    - Collaborative Conversations: Student-Centered IEP Meetings
  - HDC LASARD has shared timely evidence-based practices across social media. Examples include:

- Helping children understand schedule changes
- Priming for LEAP testing
- Using visual supports at home
- Summer transition tips

- HDC LA DBP provided 77 hours of TA to families, school districts, and other agencies, including participation in IEP meetings, educational consultation and planning, and guidance regarding ADA accessibility.

Transition, Employment, and Careers (TEC) Initiatives

HDC's TEC initiatives support 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) 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 schools systems are referring exiting students for PAY Check services through their LRS counselor. This does not allow for the PAY Check enrollment fee and is problematic as it affects funding and cost recovery.

  - 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 C YA 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 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. Services began Fall 2021 and most students have completed their paid internships. The north shore program only has five students and HDC is working with LRS and St Tammany School to provide this pre-ETS program to more students in St. Tammany.

  - St. Tammany Schools and St. Bernard Schools are in the process of exploring the PAY Check program with HDC. St. Bernard Schools has a small contract with HDC for 2022-2023.

  - HDC TEC is working with Project Search national office, Ochsner Administration and LRS to start a Project Search at Ochsner Main Campus. Initially expected to start in Fall 2022, it will now start in the Fall of 2023. HDC is now working with Jefferson Parish and Orleans Parish Schools to inform administration of the Project SEARCH criteria and responsibilities to provide staff and students who meet the program criteria.

- **Increase Access to Quality Services**
  - Currently there are 33 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. An additional fifteen (15) students have been placed in employment and receiving follow-up support.

- HDC's PAY Check program continues the focus of 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 PAY Check has been working with St. Tammany Parish School System and St. Bernard School System to initiate PAY Check services in their parishes using Northshore Technical Community College and Nunez Community College respectively. These are expected to launch in Fall 2022 or Spring 2023. HDC is working with the school systems to use a mentor model wherein HDC PAY Check would provide the PAY Check services for the first year but would begin mentoring school personnel to assume the transition instructor roles. HDC would use this approach to expand the model to interested school districts across the state so schools and their communities would have their own best-practice transition program locally. HDC would maintain a mentoring and TA role with the school.

- HDC West South Central Work Incentives Planning Assistance (WSC-WIPA) receives between 35-40 referrals each month. Lighthouse for the Blind provides WIPA services for the other half of the state. The new catchment area for the HDC WIPA includes twenty-one Texas counties and thirty-three Louisiana parishes. Providing services to counties in Texas also has afforded the opportunity to provide separate fee-for-service benefits planning to Texas Workforce Commission VR clients. HDC will submit a response for proposals in the upcoming (July) open enrollment period.

- HDC WSC-WIPA is submitting presentation proposals for the LRA/APSE and the AUCD conferences both in December 2022.

- **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 September 2022.

    - HDC TEC staff have completed the Customized Employment Train-the-Trainer training. HDC is preparing to provide training to selected Community Rehabilitation Providers in Fall 2022 or Spring 2023.

    - HDC TEC staff took part in the DDC Working Together Webinar series and will be speaking at 4-5 sessions.

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**
    - Ten Louisiana LEND Long-term trainees completed the program in May, and one is continuing in the upcoming 2022-2023 cohort.

- Applicants for the new Louisiana LEND cohort were reviewed and 10 new Long-term trainees were admitted to the 2022-2023 cohort. Orientation is July 13 and the Louisiana LEND year begins the second week of August.
- Earlier this spring, Louisiana LEND scholars prepared and presented 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 under the tutelage of Ms. Liz Gary.
- Cohort 2 scholars of HDC's **Interprofessional Preparation for Related Services Personnel Serving Children with Disabilities with High Intensity Needs** completed in July 2022. Six (6) seminars were presented regarding Disability and Disability Laws, Regulation and Rules. Cohort 2 was made up of 9 scholars from 5 training programs and 2 universities.
- Recruitment of Cohort 3 for the personnel preparation grant, **LSU Health New Orleans' Interprofessional Preparation for Related Services Personnel Serving Children with Disabilities with High Intensity Needs**, closed at the end of June 2022. Currently eight (8) scholars from five programs and two universities have been admitted. Three additional students are pending admission until receipt of necessary documentation.