

UCEDD Network Engagement in ABLE Act Implementation Efforts

Background:

The Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act, which was passed by Congress and signed into law in 2014 and updated in 2017, provided people with disabilities the opportunity to establish tax-advantaged accounts for saving money in ways that have little to no impact on eligibility for public benefits, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Medicaid. The federal ABLE Act of 2014 authorized the states to develop their own ABLE programs and offer ABLE accounts to qualified beneficiaries. States moved quickly to pass ABLE laws, and many have launched programs while others are still in the process of developing their ABLE programs.

About AUCD:

The Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) is a membership organization that promotes and supports a national network of university- or medical center-based interdisciplinary programs. The members of AUCD represent every U.S. state and territory and include:

- 67 University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs), funded by the Office of Intellectual Developmental Disabilities (OIDD)
- 52 Interdisciplinary Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) Programs, funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB)
- 14 Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Centers (IDDRCs), most of which are funded by the National Institute for Child Health and Development (NICHD)

Together, these organizations advance policy and practice through research, education, leadership, and services for and with individuals with developmental and other disabilities, their families and communities, in support of independence, productivity, and satisfying quality of life. They serve as a bridge between the university and the community, bringing together the resources of both to achieve meaningful change.

Summary:

A wide range of UCEDDs have engaged in the implementation of the ABLE Act at the national, state, and local levels. UCEDDs are both developing new initiatives and resources specific to the ABLE Act and incorporating content on the ABLE Act into existing programs and projects. These activities and products span all UCEDD Core Functions:

- Pre-service Preparation/Training,
- Community Services: Technical Assistance,
- Community Services: Community Education,
- Community Services: Direct Services,
- Research, and
- Information Dissemination.

UCEDDs have found themselves playing a much more significant role in the community education and information dissemination around the ABLE Act than in researching or engaging in direct services related to the legislation. For example, the *NJ UCEDD, the Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities at Rutgers University*, has incorporated content on the ABLE Act into their Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series, which is an annual community training for over 1,500 professionals, policymakers, individuals with disabilities, and family members to enhance their knowledge and skills in innovative approaches and state of the art practices for people with developmental disabilities. Nevertheless, research and direct service programs at UCEDDs are making significant advances in the development of and enrolment in ABLE accounts as well. The Arkansas PROMISE research project at *Partners for Inclusive Communities, the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville* worked with 534 young adults to help them establish ABLE accounts. In this report you will find summaries of UCEDD initiatives related to the implementation of the ABLE Act, grouped by CORE Function.

Methodology:

The following report of UCEDD projects was developed through a voluntary survey designed through the SurveyMonkey online survey platform and circulated to the network of UCEDD Directors from September 9th to September 13th, 2019. As such should not be taken as a complete inventory of UCEDD activities in this priority area. The survey monkey was necessary because much of the ABLE Act work in the UCEDD network was through incorporation of that content in pre-existing initiatives. It was therefore not frequently captured in the [NIRS Database](#), AUCD's National Information Reporting System. We have encouraged centers to add this content in data entries where relevant moving forward so that future searches of NIRS will be useful both for federal agencies seeking information about Centers' work and areas of expertise and to fellow network members who look for information from other Centers.

Contact Information:

For further information regarding these or other network projects, contact [Sarah DeMaio](#), Senior Manager for AUCD's UCEDD Resource Center.

Pre-service Preparation/Training

State/Center	Activity/Product/ Project Name	Description	Core Function(s)	Contact Information
AL – University of Alabama at Birmingham	Disability Leadership Coalition of Alabama annual meeting	At this event, the Alabama State Treasurer provided details and discussion was open for implementation in our State. Disability Rights Attorneys were also present for input.	Pre-service Preparation/Training	lvrusso@uab.edu
MA – Boston Children's Hospital / UMass Boston	LEND Program	Educate interdisciplinary fellows about the ABLE Act via seminar format (20+ fellows/year)	Pre-service Preparation/Training	david.helm@umb.edu
MA - UMass Medical School	LEND Program	Educate interdisciplinary fellows about the ABLE Act via seminar format	Pre-service Preparation/Training	carol.curtin@umassmed.edu
NY - University of Rochester Medical Center	LEND Disability Policy Seminar Hill Visits	During visits to NY federal legislators during the 2018 & 2019 year the ABLE Act was discussed as a part of the 'employment' discussion for people with disabilities. General educational information was provided to the staff, as well as information as to how it is being implemented in New York State. Not only did staffers benefit from this information, but the LEND trainees learned about the ABLE Act within the broader benefits umbrella for people with disabilities.	Pre-service Preparation/Training; Information Dissemination	Kaitlyn_Richardson@urmc.rochester.edu

Community Services: Technical Assistance

State/Center	Activity/Product/ Project Name	Description	Core Function(s)	Contact Information
MA - UMass Medical School	Benefits & Resources	We developed and administer an extensive online database of online information for the public to access about myriad topics related to disability. Information about the ABLE Act is included in several different ways within the database.	Technical Assistance; Information Dissemination	carol.curtin@umassmed.edu
MT - University of Montana	Promotion of awareness of the ABLE Act	Program staff of the Rural Institute's Transition and Employment Projects presented on the Montana ABLE Accounts program at last year's State Transitions Conference. These program staff provide individuals with technical assistance on the program as well.	Technical Assistance; Community Education; Information Dissemination	theresa.baldry@mso.umt.edu; meg.traci@mso.umt.edu
OH - Cincinnati Children's Hospital	Enabling Direct Deposit to ABLE Accounts	UCEDD maintains relationships with several businesses in the Cincinnati area, many of which serve as national headquarters. In response to general education efforts about the benefits of ABLE accounts for individuals with disabilities and their families, several of these employers have implemented a direct deposit option for employees to put money directly into their ABLE accounts or the ABLE account of a child/dependent.	Technical Assistance; Information Dissemination	kara.ayers@cchmc.org
OH - Cincinnati Children's Hospital	Increasing utilization of ABLE/STABLE accounts	UCEDD maintains contact with the Ohio Office of the Treasurer, which maintains the STABLE (ABLE) accounts for the state as well as out-of-state enrollees. UCEDD is affiliated with individuals who serve on the state ABLE advisory committee and have participated in brainstorming sessions about how to increase the utilization of STABLE accounts. To date, there are 12,304 STABLE accounts open. This represents approximately 1/3 of the country's accounts. This includes around \$71 million in market value under management of the accounts. There have been 122 consecutive weeks of over 100 new accounts per week-indicating a successful outcome for the increased effort to disseminate information targeted to potential STABLE account users.	Technical Assistance; Information Dissemination	kara.ayers@cchmc.org

Community Services: Technical Assistance

State/Center	Activity/Product/ Project Name	Description	Core Function(s)	Contact Information
OK - University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center	Future Planning for People with Disabilities	One-day community training for families, self-advocates and professionals. The training and education activities including the DD Act partners, Oklahoma Disability Law Center, Developmental Disability Council of Oklahoma and the Center for Learning and Leadership/UCEDD which offered TA support for the development and delivery of the training. Training was delivered by the Oklahoma Family Network (F2F), several volunteer attorneys, and community insurance company. The training offers a discussion and planning for the future of children (youth or adult) with developmental disabilities. A range of topics are covered during the day training including the Oklahoma STABLE accounts (ABLE Act accounts) *CLL is planning to expand this training to the OUHSC campus.	Technical Assistance; Community Education; Information Dissemination	wanda-felty@ouhsc.edu

Community Services: Community Education

State/Center	Activity/Product/ Project Name	Description	Core Function(s)	Contact Information
AK - University of Alaska, Anchorage	Training	Provide training on the ABLE Act in a variety of venues: ACRE certified employment services training offered three times each year, provided training at local conferences, at SSA Work Incentive Planning & Assistance outreach sessions, and LEND seminars	Community Education	karenw@alaskachd.org
AR - University of Arkansas	ABLE Act Awareness and Education	Promoted awareness and understanding of the ABLE Act in Arkansas. This was done by including information during community events and trainings and by disseminating information produced by our state's program. We included a speaker from Arkansas's ABLE program at our regional self-advocacy conference.	Community Education; Information Dissemination	deere@uark.edu
CA - University of California, Davis	CalABLE workshop	Two large workshops with the Deputy Executive Director of CalABLE and a special needs trust attorney. The video of the April presentation is at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ci4wz_0j3Js	Community Education; Information Dissemination	sruder@ucdavis.edu
CA - Children's Hospital Los Angeles	UCEDD ABLE Act Collaboration with State Council	At the State Level, the USC UCEDD has been active in working with the CA State Council on Developmental Disabilities in promoting the ABLE Act in multiple activities through training, brochures, and outreach.	Community Education; Information Dissemination	lyin@chla.usc.edu
CA - Children's Hospital Los Angeles	USC UCEDD Trainings	The USC UCEDD has been actively including ABLE Act information in trainings in the community addressing supports and interventions for individuals with ID/DD that include Regional Center, community presentations with providers, pediatricians and pediatric residents at Children's Hospital Los Angeles.	Community Education	lyin@chla.usc.edu
GA- Georgia State University	STABLE Accounts and Special Needs Trusts	This one-hour webinar with Doug Jackson and moderated by Ramatu Muhammad was offered as part of a series of twelve webinars designed for parents of students enrolled in or considering inclusive postsecondary education. More than 50 parents participated, and it is now archived.	Community Education	dcrimmins@gsu.edu

Community Services: Community Education

State/Center	Activity/Product/ Project Name	Description	Core Function(s)	Contact Information
IL - University of Illinois at Chicago	Let's Learn About Able Accounts	This webinar was presented through the Great Lakes ADA Center in partnership with The Autism Program of Illinois (TAP). During this event, the director of Illinois ABLE provided information about the background, benefits and enrollment details for the new ABLE accounts.	Community Education	kkeiling@uic.edu
MA – Boston Children's Hospital / UMass Boston	MA Department of Developmental Service - Service Coordinator Training	Information and resources about the ABLE Act are integrated into training for new DDS service coordinators focused on benefits and the intersection between public benefits and employment, which is held 4 times per year.	Community Education	cindy.thomas@umb.edu
MA – Boston Children's Hospital / UMass Boston	Massachusetts Partnership for Transition to Employment	Family focused Facebook page includes regular posts on the ABLE act including information about resources and training opportunities. The page is administered by ICI in partnership with The Arc of MA and other partners.	Community Education; Information Dissemination	cindy.thomas@umb.edu
MA – Boston Children's Hospital / UMass Boston	Fast Fact; The ABLE Act of 2014: Securing the future of individuals with disabilities	Brief fact sheet on the ABLE Act are distributed by Think College.	Community Education; Information Dissemination	rebecca.lazo@umb.edu
MA – Boston Children's Hospital / UMass Boston	Let's Talk about Money: Planning for College	This webinar was presented by John Nadworny and Alex Nadworny and include information on the ABLE Act as part of a strategy to support planning for college.	Community Education; Information Dissemination	rebecca.lazo@umb.edu
MD – Kennedy Krieger Institute	Maryland ABLE Information and Workshops	The MCDD collaborated with Maryland ABLE to disseminate information to the community in the form of brochures, presentations during two Project SEARCH information nights and two CORE Foundations seminars.	Community Education; Information Dissemination	vanstone@kennedykrieger.org
MS - The University of Southern Mississippi	DD Network Planning	DD Network partners and members of the DD Council meet to plan education sessions regarding the ABLE Act. The MS DD Network including Disability Rights MS, MS Council on Developmental Disabilities and the Institute for	Community Education	rebekah.young@usm.edu

Community Services: Community Education

State/Center	Activity/Product/ Project Name	Description	Core Function(s)	Contact Information
		Disability Studies hosts yearly community forums across the state. The MS Dept of Rehab Services which coordinates the MS Able Accounts were a featured community partner at these forums.		
NH- University of New Hampshire	Your Money, Your Goals Training	Assisted in the development of the YMYG training content with CFPB and then delivered the training with Project E3-WIOA national TA center to Area Agencies and VR agencies specializing in employment for people with intellectual and developmental and mental health disorders. Training delivered to approximately 150 people as part of addressing ABLE awareness to individuals who are low income.	Community Education; Information Dissemination	tobey.partch-davies@unh.edu
NJ - Rutgers, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School	Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series (DDLS) - 9.27.18 The ABLE Act: A Down Payment on Freedom	This is a community and continuing education program provided for professionals, policymakers, individuals with disabilities, and family members to enhance their knowledge and skills in innovative approaches and state of the art practices for people with developmental disabilities. Eight sessions of the Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series are held each year. Over 1,500 people attend the Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series each year. Michael Morris, JD of the National Disability Institute and ABLE National Resource Center provided a presentation on 9.27.18 about the ABLE Act and benefits of ABLE Accounts.	Community Education	colleen.mclaughlin@rutgers.edu
NJ - Rutgers, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School	Employment related Training	The Boggs Center conducts training on a variety of employment related topics. Some of these trainings include information about ABLE Accounts as they related to financial security and benefits. These trainings include: Employment Specialist Foundations Day 4: Long Term Follow Along Phase, Employment Specialist Supplemental: Financial Literacy Training, and Calling the Shots: Self-Advocacy & Employment	Community Education	colleen.mclaughlin@rutgers.edu

Community Services: Community Education

State/Center	Activity/Product/ Project Name	Description	Core Function(s)	Contact Information
NJ - Rutgers, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School	Partners in Policymaking	The Boggs Center implements NJ Partners in Policymaking, an 8-month advocacy and leadership development program, in partnership with the NJCDD and DRNJ. Since the implementation of NJ's ABLE Program, ABLE has been included as an educational and advocacy topic. A representative from NJ's ABLE program addressed the ABLE Act in the session on Employment.	Community Education	colleen.mclaughlin@rutgers.edu
SC - University of South Carolina School of Medicine	Training - ABLE Act	A training session on the ABLE Act was held at the 2019 Assistive Technology EXPO.	Community Education	Carol.page@uscmed.sc.edu
SD - University of South Dakota	Center for Disabilities Symposium	The UCEDD hosts a Conference to provide Community Education for professionals, families, self-advocates, and students which includes content on the ABLE Act.	Community Education	eric.kurtz@usd.edu
TN - Vanderbilt University Medical Center	Tennessee Disability Pathfinder	Tennessee Disability Pathfinder provides a website, database, call-in number and email responses to questions about services and supports in Tennessee. Information about ABLE in Tennessee is included in this database, and program staff can provide information to callers inquiring about ABLE.	Community Education; Information Dissemination	megan.hart@vumc.org
WY - University of Wyoming	ABLE Act Community Training	Facilitated a presentation about Wyoming's Able Act that was available in-person and statewide through Zoom.	Community Education	sre@uwyo.edu

Community Services: Direct Services

State/Center	Activity/Product/ Project Name	Description	Core Function(s)	Contact Information
MA – Boston Children's Hospital / UMass Boston	Down Syndrome Program at BCH	Distributes a flyer about the ABLE Act to all families with children 14yo or older - about 500/year	Direct Services; Information Dissemination	david.helm@umb.edu
MA - UMass Medical School	Autism Insurance Resource Center (AIRC) Fact Sheet	Our AIRC provides assistance to individuals and families to access insurance coverage for people with autism. As part of this effort, we also provide information about obtaining additional financial help to cover co-pays, etc. Our FAQ sheet provides information on the ABLE Act and a link to Fidelity Investments who administers ABLE accounts in Massachusetts.	Direct Services; Information Dissemination	carol.curtin@umassmed.edu
NY - University of Rochester Medical Center	Project SEARCH & financial literacy	Project SEARCH, an employment preparation program for students and young adults with disabilities, includes financial literacy as a unit in their 8-unit curriculum. The Strong Center for Developmental Disabilities shared ABLE Act information with teachers and Monroe County families as a component of the financial literacy curriculum.	Direct Services	Kaitlyn_Richardson@urmc.rochester.edu

Research

State/Center	Activity/Product/ Project Name	Description	Core Function(s)	Contact Information
AR - University of Arkansas	Promoting the Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income	PROMISE is a research project to determine if an intervention can help youth who are receiving disability benefits and their families improve their educational and employment outcomes. Arkansas is one of six sites nationally that are part of the study. As part of our PROMISE program, we worked with 534 young adults to help them establish ABLÉ accounts. If the youth contacted any of the four agencies that might provide future supports after PROMISE ends this month, they received \$100 in their ABLÉ account. Each youth had the possibility of receiving a total of \$400.	Research; Direct Services; Information Dissemination	Lipton@uark.edu
NH – University of New Hampshire	ABLÉ Study, partnership with National Disability Institute, Syracuse University, and Division of Aging and Rehabilitation Services, State of Virginia.	This is a federally funded RCT study funded by NIDILLR to test whether a protocol of LifeCourse Planning, financial education and ABLÉ accounts improve community participation by people with intellectual and developmental disabilities served by the Virginia Vocational Rehabilitation System.	Research	tobey.partch-davies@unh.edu

Information Dissemination

State/Center	Activity/Product/ Project Name	Description	Core Function(s)	Contact Information
AL – University of Alabama at Birmingham	DD Council Meeting	At this event, the AL Director of College Savings Division at the Office of the Treasurer spoke about the Enable Savings Plan of Alabama. Information was shared with us to distribute.	Information Dissemination	lvrusso@uab.edu
AL – University of Alabama at Birmingham	UAB Regional Autism Network monthly workshop, housed within our Civitan- Sparks Center	Disability Rights Attorney presented information on the Enable Saving Program of Alabama and Special Needs Trusts.	Information Dissemination	lvrusso@uab.edu
AL – University of Alabama at Birmingham	Disability Policy Seminar	Joined the ARC of Alabama and shared information with legislators about the significance of raising the age limit for the ABLE accounts.	Information Dissemination	lvrusso@uab.edu
AZ - University of Arizona	Employment First (EF) /Transition	Prior to AZ's Department of Economic Security creating a unit/staff to direct and handle all things related to AZ ABLE, our Sonoran UCEDD has been assuring information on ABLE accounts is in PPT's and discussed when presenting since HB2388 was passed in 2016. More recently we have not only continued the above activities, but also, the EF program manager for the Sonoran UCEDD facilitated a panel which included AZ ABLE representatives for an annual parent/youth transition institute. The DES/ABEL staff or their DES partners are often at disability related events, conferences, and meetings disseminating info on ABLE accounts. We/Employment First have also recently added ABLE to an info graphic we have created on benefits/resources in going to work. This will be posted on the new AZ EF website once launched this year, likely in October.	Information Dissemination	svoirol@email.arizona.edu

Information Dissemination

State/Center	Activity/Product/ Project Name	Description	Core Function(s)	Contact Information
CA - University of California, Davis and University of California, Los Angeles	Dissemination of Information	Discussion of ABLE act in CA at SDCC; and sharing information with stakeholders at CAC meetings.	Information Dissemination	oraynor@mednet.ucla.edu
CA - University of California, Los Angeles	CECY E-News	Disseminate information about events, resources, information about CalAble as part of our weekly CECY E-News on employment to professionals, providers, families and state agency representatives.	Information Dissemination	oraynor@mednet.ucla.edu
GA- Georgia State University	Georgia's ABLE program flyering	Distribute flyers on Georgia's ABLE program at community health fairs, which are held in the metro-Atlanta area at least once per month usually with more than 200 people attending.	Information Dissemination	dcrimmins@gsu.edu
LA - LSU Health Sciences Center	LEND Trainees Legislative Advocacy Project (2017)	Trainees did background research and put together a fact sheet designed to educate legislators. Trainees attended the Disability Policy Summit and met with Louisiana Congressional delegation members/staffers	Information Dissemination	pwilso2@lsuhsc.edu
MA – Boston Children's Hospital / UMass Boston	Think College Facebook page	This Facebook page includes periodic postings related to the ABLE Act including resources and training opportunities.	Information Dissemination	rebecca.lazo@umb.edu
MD - Kennedy Krieger Institute	MD ABLE Presentation	Developed powerpoint presentations on MD ABLE for Kennedy Krieger faculty, staff, and trainees: 01/29/2018 - Lori Markaland, Community Relations Administrator, Maryland ABLE 02/01/2019 - Bette Ann Mobley, Director, Maryland ABLE	Information Dissemination	VANSTONE@KENNEDYKRIEGER.ORG

Information Dissemination

State/Center	Activity/Product/ Project Name	Description	Core Function(s)	Contact Information
MD - Kennedy Krieger Institute	Dissemination of Maryland ABLE information cards	The MCDD, Maryland's UCEDD, requested display boards with Maryland ABLE information to be displayed in lobbies throughout Kennedy Krieger Institute and in the MCDD's Resource Center, so information is readily available for our patients and their families.	Information Dissemination	VANSTONE@KENNEDYKRIEGER.ORG
MS - The University of S. Mississippi	STEP UP Council Dissemination	The STEP UP to Leadership Advisory Council	Information Dissemination	jerry.alliston@usm.edu
MS - The University of Southern Mississippi	Chit Chat Thursday with Taylor	This is a monthly video series highlighting self-advocacy activities, services and successes affecting people with disabilities in Mississippi hosted by Taylor Carley, IDS self-advocacy coordinator. Each video explores a policy issue including one on the ABLE Act.	Information Dissemination	jerry.alliston@usm.edu
NC- University of North Carolina	Community Talks	We have a monthly Community Talks series that is open to the public (self-advocates, families, professionals). For the past 3 years, one of our speakers has been an attorney who specializes in estate planning for families of individuals with IDD. He provides specific information on the ABLE Act. This year, we have included an additional speaker for the series who is an ABLE Act ambassador. In addition, she was a LEND and UCEDD trainee at the CIDD last year and provided this information to our long term interdisciplinary graduate students. Additionally, our social worker/family navigator is well-informed about the ABLE Act and provides this information to families who come to the CIDD for clinical services.	Information Dissemination; Direct Services; Community Education; Pre-service Training	becky.edmondson@cidd.unc.edu
NH- University of New Hampshire	Governor Sununu's Press Coverage and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony	Ribbon cutting ceremony by Governor Sununu for the passage of the ABLE Act and opening on NH STABLE account opportunities (NH's ABLE account)	Information Dissemination	tobey.partch-davies@unh.edu

Information Dissemination

State/Center	Activity/Product/ Project Name	Description	Core Function(s)	Contact Information
WI - University of Wisconsin	Survival Coalition of Wisconsin Disability Organizations	<p>The Waisman Center UCEDD is a member of the coalition, serving as the issue lead for children's topics. The UCEDD supports the work of the coalition and contributes to a wide variety of policy communications through the coalition. The Coalition has worked to introduce legislation for either a Wisconsin based ABLE account or authority to contract with another state to offer an account to Wisconsin residents. A bill was introduced in 2017 to establish a state ABLE account. To date neither of these options has passed in the legislature. The UCEDD also includes information about ABLE accounts and pending legislation through the Family Action Network, our statewide listserv; as part of community resource training; and in our LEND trainee policy preparation.</p>	Information Dissemination	hecht@waisman.wisc.edu



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