

AUCD Network Connections Session

Thursday, October 16, 2025



Lightning Talks



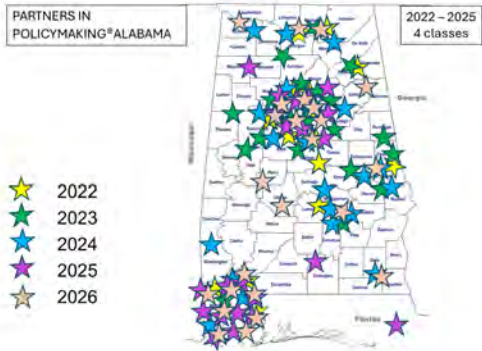
Partners in Policymaking Alabama (PIPA)

Linda Russo, MAE

Sarah O' Kelley PhD and Kristina Ford, MS, SLP

BACKGROUND

[PIPA](#) is a leadership training program designed for individuals with developmental disabilities and family members to be prepared and empowered to be catalysts for systems change.



COLLABORATION

PIPA is a collaborative project of the AL Developmental Disabilities Network:

- Council on Developmental Disabilities (ACDD)
- University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)
- Protection & Advocacy Program (ADAP).

PARTNERSHIPS

The 5th year and has seen growth in applications and sponsoring partnerships with our state to include: Title V program (CRS), Dept. of Mental Health, Institute for Deaf/Blind.



Partners in Policymaking®
Alabama

OUTCOMES

Each PIPA participant develops a leadership project based on their training and knowledge And embody increased independence, inclusion, productivity, integration, and self-determination for all participants and/or family members.

Monthly schedule:

Wednesday	6 PM - 8 PM
Friday	12 PM - 8 PM
Saturday	8 AM - 3 PM

- Advisory Council convened to assist in program planning
- Logo and website creation
- Statewide distribution of application - criteria:
 - Geographic, ethnic / minority representation
 - Range of age levels and genders
 - Inclusive of Cross / Disability Representation
- Class participation ranged from 20-25 participants
- Hybrid, virtual, and in-person sessions
- No cost participation, mileage and respite reimbursement
- National, state, and local speakers adhered to Partners' core values and competencies
- Evaluations for speakers and sessions



CHLA USC University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities:

Employment Projects

Presented by Wesley Witherspoon

AUCD Spark Network Connections **UCEDD Lightning Talk from Maine UCEDD** *Leadership to Lasting Systems Change*

Presented by Monique Stairs
Executive Director of Speaking Up For Us (SUFU) Maine and NH-ME LEND Trainee Alumna

- Leadership Placement at CCIDS: Goal to use data and research to strengthen the experiences and personal narratives of people living with disabilities.
- Opportunity Presented: State's Department of Health and Human Services opening public hearing on behavior regulations.
 - Preparing self-advocates to share their lived experiences.
- Changing systems can take a while: From 2021-2025
 - Work groups and Legislative Action
- Lasting Impact

A Decade of Innovation through Interprofessional Collaboration

Mailman Center for Child Development
University of Miami



2014 Traditional Structure

Siloed Disciplines:

- Psychology
- Social Work
- Medicine
- Individual Disciplines

2015-2025 IPC Integration

5 Interprofessional Collaboratives (IPCs):

- Behavioral Health
- Community Wellness
- Lifespan
- Neurodevelopmental Intervention and Discovery Science

2015-2025 Outcomes

Increases in:

- Funding (avg \$1.5M/yr over 10 years)
- Population level measures
- Citations of work
- Services provided in community

2025 What's Next?

IPCs aligned with 3 critical priorities driving us to **innovation, connection, and impact**

- Health Impact
- Technology Innovation
- Community Participatory Principles

Peer to Peer Support Circle Hawaii For Adults with Disabilities

Center on Disability Studies (CDS)
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Purpose:

Support the well-being & self-advocacy of adults with disabilities through a peer-led support group.

What we plan to do:

- Monthly peer-led support group on O'ahu.
- Provide a safe space for sharing experiences and resources.
- Train peer facilitators so the groups can continue over time.



Project HEAL



- **Project HEAL (Health, Education, Advocacy, and Law)** at Kennedy Krieger Institute is a comprehensive medical-legal partnership (MLP) within the **Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities**, which is Maryland's designated University Center for Excellence (UCEDD).
 - Project HEAL is the only MLP in the nation affiliated with a UCEDD.
- Project HEAL attorneys provide advocacy and civil legal services (special education matters, SSI and SSDI, adult guardianship and less restrictive alternative matters) to patients and their families.
- *Project HEAL recently celebrated its 20th anniversary!*
- **Project HEAL (Health, Education, Advocacy, and Law)**



Family Advocacy Network (FAN)

Empowering families and students to actively engage in the development and meaningful implementation of Individualized Education Programs

- ❑ 108 families/668 hours technical assistance (July 24 – June 25)
- ❑ 473 professionals reached and 3 pilot family cohorts started
- ❑ Received 60% number of referrals of all last year

Next Steps

- ❑ Develop Training Series
- ❑ Expand Family Cohorts
- ❑ Develop Website and Resource Catalog



For more information,
connect Dr. Leslie LaVergne
leslie.lavergne@usm.edu



Consider the Effort: Energy and AAC with
Isaac Baldry



"Everything about this day was standout. One of the best conferences ever!"

Self-Advocacy Trainees: Programmatic Partnerships

Historical Strategy

Implementing ALL means ALL

- How, what, why of LEND
- Program (3 Cores of LEND, mentoring) settings and expectations
- Prep work and Assignments
- Varying educational backgrounds
- Setting-rural, city

Current Strategy

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

- Three-way partnership: CCIDS, SUFU, and NH-ME LEND
- UDL section of Canvas
 - Our Learning Management System
- Weekly office hour for all students
- Training/Co-Training Directors (Seminar Leads) trained in inclusion and accommodations



Pacific Basin UCEDD Research Trainee Program

Center on Disability Studies (CDS)
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Purpose:

- ❖ Includes people with disabilities in every step of research.
- ❖ Provides training and support to build skills for future researchers in American Samoa & Northern Mariana Islands

What we plan to do:

- ❖ Teach basic research skills
- ❖ Practice self-advocacy through research.
- ❖ Use research to highlight community needs.





University of New Hampshire

Institute on Disability

Policy Context/Advisory Input

- New adult Medicaid Benefit;
- Advisory group interest in reaching dental providers.



Training Healthcare Providers

Over 7,000 health professionals have taken our training on the delivery of disability-competent care



Collaborate to make new module

Collaborate with dental provider, disability advocates to create new training video



This presentation was created as part of cooperative agreement number DD000025 with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the CDC.



RUTGERS HEALTH

The Boggs Center on Disability and Human Development

Robert Wood Johnson Medical School



Pre-IEP Family Workbook Series
go.rutgers.edu/fsykvtpm



varango@rutgers.edu

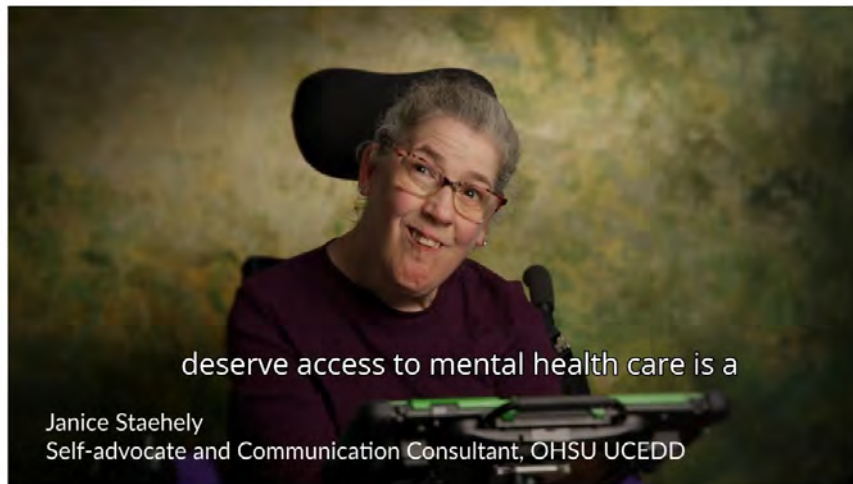
Valentina Arango-Correa Ed.D
OHSU

Accessible Mental Health Care CE

Course 1: Improving Mental Health Care for Clients with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Course 2: Mental Health Assessment and Treatment for Clients with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

- Disability justice lens: approaching care from a rights-based perspective
- Voices included: self-advocates and a mental health professional
- Interactive learning: case studies and self-assessments



<https://bit.ly/ProvideMentalHealth>

Oregon Institute on Development and Disability UCEDD at OHSU
www.ohsu.edu/ucedd



iGROW: I Generate Rural Opportunities for Work

A cooperative effort between the Texas Workforce Commission and Texas A&M University to provide pre-employment training, career exploration, and work experience for youth with disabilities in rural communities



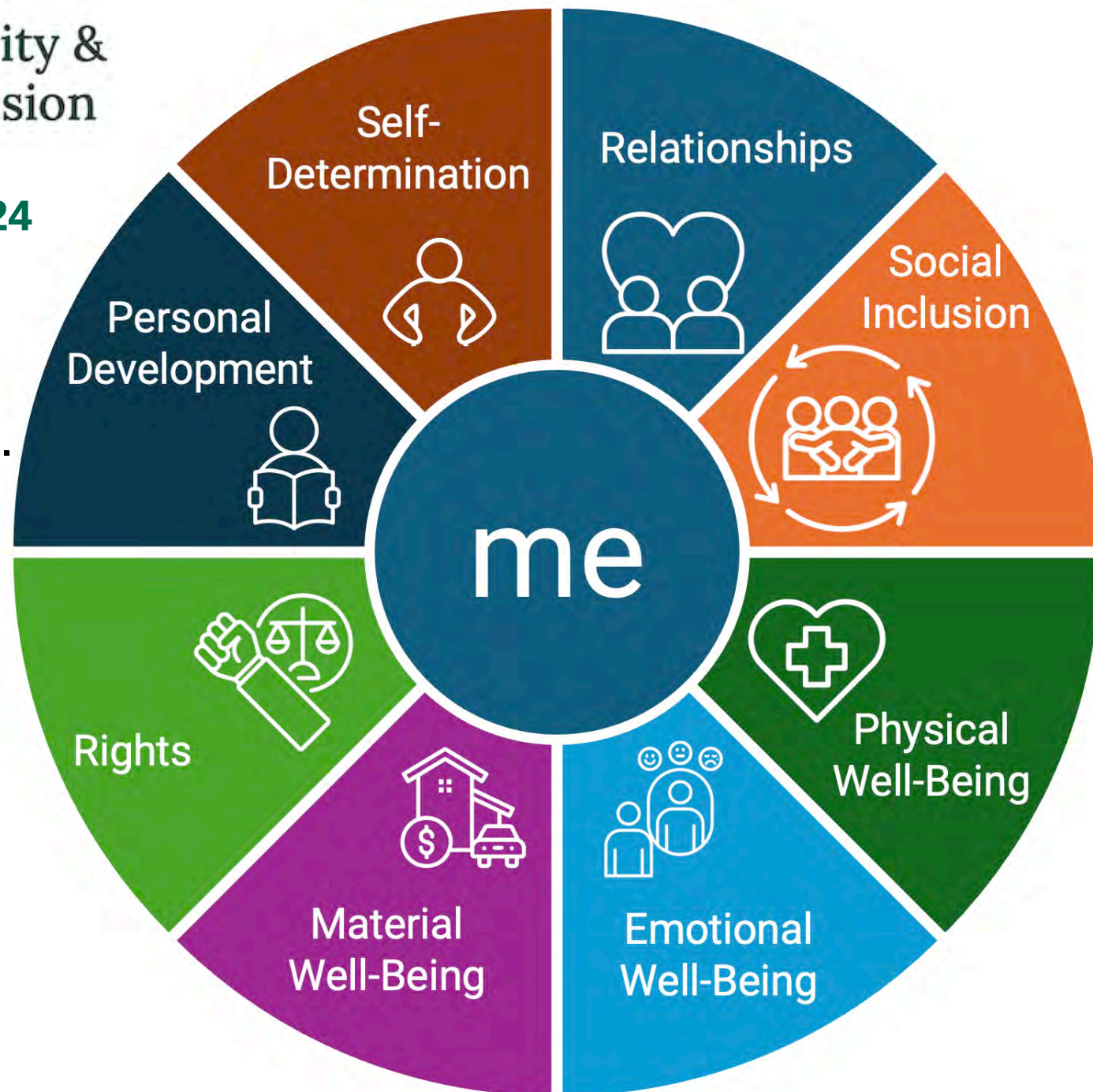
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Center on Disability
& Development

First statewide disability community needs assessment. Designed with advocates and DD Network partners.

Inform public, providers, and policy makers about quality of life domains:

We will use:

- state and national data,
- feedback already shared,
- a new survey, and
- listening sessions.





POSITIVE PARENT STRATEGIES ECHO SERIES



Community Need

For Families

- Direct impact
- Virtual platform
- Free
- Stipend
- Live Spanish Support

For Trainees

- Experienced HUB team
- Direct Modeling
- Multidirectional learning



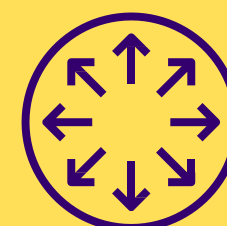
Skill Building

For Families:

- Positive Behavior Strategies
- Confidence
- Resources
- Community

For Trainees

- Resource Navigation
- Research Protocol
- Direct Experience



Capacity Building

For Communities

- Families working together
- Shared Strategies
- Scalable Programing

For Systems

- Supported Families are more stable
- Program utilization
- Efficient

- 2 cohorts of 30
- IHDD Clinics and existing waitlists

- 8 week series
- 90 min
- didactic and case presentations

Method:

- Shared, multidirectional learning

- Families present cases for discussion
- Strategies provided by HUB and Cohort

- Stipends distributed with Pre and Post survey

Join NCSS for the START National Training Institute(SNTI) Virtual | May 12 - 14, 2026



What is SNTI?

The National Center for START Services' (NCSS) premiere annual training event, bringing together START programs, IDD and/or mental health professionals, policymakers, family members, and people with lived experience of IDD-MH.

Impact &

- 500+ participants in 2025
- Attendees praised the relevance, practical tools, and sense of community gained through SNTI.



Overall Satisfaction



What's in it for

As an attendee: Innovative, practical, evidence-informed tools and strategies you can use right away.

As a presenter: Showcase your work nationally, gain visibility as a leader, and inspire real-time change.

For the AUCD network: Your participation helps bridge AUCD innovations with daily practice, advancing impact nationwide.

Get

Submit a presentation proposal by

November 7th, 2025

<http://iod.unh.edu/ncss/snti2026>



NATIONAL CENTER FOR
START SERVICES

ANeW: Restoring IDD Adults to their Community after Arrest

Timeline

2015

Trueblood

WA DSHS violates constitutional rights

2018

Settlement

State must invest in competency & systemic diversion

2023

SSB5440

Diversion for IDD, TBI, and Dementia

2024

ANeW

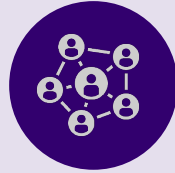
Report to the Legislature November 2026

Goals



Retrospective Review

211 records analyzed to understand population, identify barriers and facilitators to successful community integration



Prospective Pilot

Strengths based, interdisciplinary, transitional team moves with individuals across systems, goal of 20 participants

Team



Medicine

Neurology, Psychiatry, Psychology



Therapeutics

Occupational Therapy, Speech Language Pathology, Social Work



Research

Developmental Pediatrics, Epidemiology, Public Health

IDD in the Criminal Legal System

- Over-represented
- Cycles of trans-institutionalization and long-term involuntary commitment
- High rates of co-occurring mental illness, substance use challenges, and unstable housing

Preliminary Findings

- 12 enrolled participants
- ANeW helps individuals meet their goals and supports receiving teams
- Systemic barriers are pervasive and siloed care impedes reentry

Meeting Mental Health Needs for Autistic Teens and Adults in WI



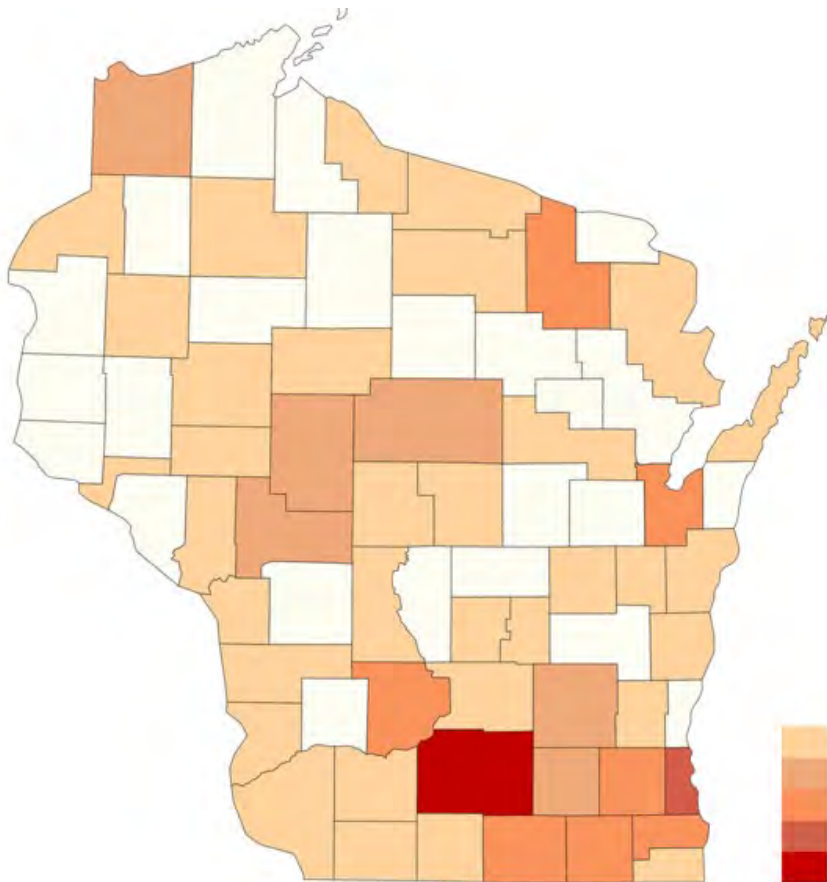
Needs assessment → **mental health** is a critical area of need

Workforce Development

- Expanding our ECHO offerings → Adult Mental Health
- 100+ registered from 17 counties in WI

Autism Research Consortium – Systems of Care

- Examining system factors impacting access to evidence-based practice during transition to adulthood



WAISMAN CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

**WV
LEND**



Maternal and Child Health Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities

**Student/Trainee Badge
Disability Micro-Credential**



Training in Health, Resources, Inclusion, and Vocational Empowerment for California

UCLA Leadership Academy



UCLA PEERS® for Careers



Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Internships

- Advocacy
- Storytelling
- Disability history

- Resumes
- Interviewing
- Social skills

- Real-world experience
- State-level careers
- Hands-on advocacy

Art Immersion and Leadership



Description: A group of people sitting in chairs, looking at a formal painting in a museum.

- Collaboration with Rochester's Memorial Art Gallery
- Art observation exercise
- Part of our leadership training curriculum
- Teaches fellows about what they bring to the table

Components of a Novel “Advocacy in Action” Curriculum



1. Instructional Sessions: Crafting Your Advocacy Message, Understanding Disability Policy Making
2. Applying Policy Learning: OpEd & State-Your-Case Projects
3. Discipline-Specific Mentorship: 1-1 for 6 months
4. Practice Delivering an Advocacy Message: Mock Hill Day
5. Bringing Messages to the Hill
 - The Arc of PA’s Hill Day in Harrisburg
 - Disability Policy Seminar in DC



Bright Sparks Chats



Topics



Room 1

AI & the Future of Work for People with Disabilities

Host: Tafa-Tua Tupuola

Room 2

Data, Bias, and Representation in AI

Host: Rhonda Eppelsheimer

Room 3

Data, Bias, and Representation in AI

Host: Mark Crenshaw

Room 4

AI and the Future of Plain Language & Accessible Communication

Host Sharon Milberger

Thank you!

www.aucd.org

