



Tennessee Developmental Disabilities Network



Disability Rights Tennessee • Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities • University of Tennessee Center on Developmental Disabilities • Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

Working together to improve the lives of Tennesseans with developmental disabilities

DISABILITY INFORMATION & REFERRAL

Tennessee Disability Pathfinder is a statewide disability information and referral service. It offers a central source where individuals and families can search, find, and connect with the disability services they need. Pathfinder is operated through the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center and funded by agencies including the Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Contact: (800) 640-4636, DisabilityPathfinder.org
Visit our website of disability and social service agencies with Spanish-speaking staff.

For more information on our work, visit the DD Network website at TNDDNetwork.org, and search for us on Facebook and Twitter.

TENNESSEE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES NETWORK

“Disability is a natural part of the human experience”

—The Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act)

Four statewide organizations in Tennessee partner to improve our state’s services and supports for people with developmental disabilities. These organizations are guided by input from people with disabilities and their family members, who help us know what is working and where the gaps are. Together, we are working to promote the goals of the federal DD Act:

- Independence
- Inclusion
- Integration
- Productivity
- Self-Determination

Our Developmental Disabilities Network can help you:

- Better understand and navigate the disability services system for yourself, a family member, or client.
- Provide input that will help improve services and supports.
- Become an informed and involved advocate for people with disabilities.

The federal Developmental Disabilities Act created State Councils, Protection and Advocacy Systems, and University Centers for Excellence in every state and U.S. territory. The Act was written by people with developmental disabilities, their families, and disability policy experts, and guides each agency’s activities.

Tennessee is a national leader in how closely our DD Act agencies work together. Our national network of DD Act agencies is organized under the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services.

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY

A developmental disability is significant and ongoing, begins before age 22, and typically requires support in several areas of daily living. A developmental disability can be physical, intellectual, or a combination of both. For example, people with developmental disabilities often rely on assistance to move around, communicate, or take care of their daily needs. There are more than 106,000 individuals with developmental disabilities in Tennessee.

HOW THE NETWORK WORKS TOGETHER

Tennessee’s Developmental Disabilities Network agencies align their work with the Developmental Disabilities Act. We accomplish more by working collectively. We have joined to:

- Improve transition services for students with disabilities getting ready to graduate from high school.
- Promote higher education opportunities (college programs) for students with developmental disabilities.
- Grow employment opportunities for adults with disabilities.
- Support advocates with a developmental disability to mentor their peers.





TENNESSEE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Mission: The Council is a state agency that works to bring about lasting, positive change to the disabilities services system to improve the lives of Tennesseans with developmental disabilities.

Activities: Tennessee is fortunate to have many public and private programs to support Tennesseans with developmental disabilities. The system of services is complex and far-reaching. The Council is the only state agency tasked with understanding the entire disability services network, identifying gaps and opportunities for improvement, and bringing citizens, policymakers, and groups together to guide lasting change from the inside.

We help people understand and improve the disability system in Tennessee by:

- Amplifying the collective voice of the disability community.
- Providing objective, informed guidance for policymakers.
- Educating advocates across the state.
- Launching programs that transform.
- Tracking disability policy.
- Building a more inclusive Tennessee.

Contact: (615) 532-6615, tn.gov/cdd



UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE CENTER ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) support interdisciplinary training, exemplary services, research, technical assistance, and information dissemination.

Mission: To promote, support, and enhance the independence, productivity, integration, and inclusion of individuals with disabilities and their families in the community.

Activities:

- Interdisciplinary family-centered clinical services for children with developmental disabilities and their families
- Interdisciplinary graduate-level leadership training in developmental disabilities
- Family-centered programs supporting children in relative care and in state custody
- Parenting support groups
- Rural physician training in early identification, screening, and diagnosis of developmental disabilities
- Sponsorship of and presentations at local, state, regional, national, and international disability-related conferences
- Support and collaboration in provision of training, resources, and support with transition and employment services for people with disabilities

Contact: (901) 448-6511, uthsc.edu/cdd

VANDERBILT KENNEDY CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (VKC UCEDD)

Mission: To provide innovative leadership in education, research, training, and service to promote the independence, self-determination, community integration, and inclusion of individuals with disabilities across the lifespan and to provide supports for their families.

Activities: Our work falls within four areas of emphasis: Education and Early Intervention, Employment, Health and Mental Health, and Quality of Life.

Examples across the four areas include:

- Workshops for school teams to improve the quality of education for students with diverse learning needs
- Reading and Learning Assessment Clinics
- Training program for special education advocates
- Online resources to prepare transition-age youth with disabilities for life after high school
- Inclusive Higher Education
- Health Care for Adults with IDD Toolkit
- Information and referral to TN services and supports
- Adult sibling programming
- Resources for policymakers

Contact: (866) 322-8852, vkc.vumc.org/ucedd



DISABILITY RIGHTS TENNESSEE

Disability Rights Tennessee (DRT) is the designated federal Protection & Advocacy System for people with disabilities in Tennessee. DRT provides free legal advocacy services to protect the civil and human rights of Tennesseans with disabilities.

Mission: To protect the rights of Tennesseans with disabilities.

Activities: DRT concentrates its work in three areas: freedom from harm, freedom from discrimination, and freedom to participate in the community. DRT collects input from community members to identify areas of work under each strategic area. The Areas of Work help determine the types of direct advocacy and legal cases DRT can accept. Services DRT offers include:

- Information & Referral
- Investigation of Abuse & Neglect
- Advocacy Services
- Legal Representation
- Education & Outreach
- Public Policy Advocacy

Contact: (800) 342-1660 [Se habla español] disabilityrightstn.org