



UCEDD

UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE
IN DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

The Vanderbilt Kennedy Center (VKC) University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) provides innovative leadership in education, research and discovery, interdisciplinary training, and service to promote the independence, self-determination, community integration, and inclusion of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities across the lifespan and supports their families.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS

Although the VKC UCEDD addresses many issues affecting the lives of people with disabilities across the life span, we emphasize four areas: Education and Early Intervention, Employment, Health and Mental Health, and Quality of Life. In all four areas of emphasis, our faculty and staff are engaged in training, technical assistance, research, and dissemination.

EDUCATION AND EARLY INTERVENTION

We have innovative programs to promote learning and development in inclusive settings. Other programs focus on supporting persons and families at transition points across the life span. Model programs include:

- Britt Henderson Training Series for Educators
- Learning Assessment Clinic
- Next Steps at Vanderbilt
- Treatment and Research Institute for Autism Spectrum Disorders (TRIAD) Training

- Vanderbilt Consortium LEND
- Volunteer Advocacy Project

EMPLOYMENT

Individuals with disabilities have high rates of unemployment and underemployment. We collaborate with State agencies, community agencies, disability advocacy organizations, and natural partners to promote community-based meaningful employment and volunteer work for youth and adults with disabilities. Programs and activities include:

- Advocating for SupportS to Improve Service Transition (ASSIST) Program
- Charting the Course of Autism in Adulthood
- Employment Pathways Project
- Tennessee Inclusive Higher Education Alliance
- Transition Tennessee

HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH

Many people with developmental disabilities face physical and mental health challenges. The Center sponsors or partners with clinics and other programs to address these challenges. Model programs include:

- ACM Lifting Lives Music Camp for People with Williams Syndrome
- Daily Experiences and Mental Health Study
- Down Syndrome Clinic
- IDD Healthcare E-Toolkit
- Rett Syndrome Program
- SENSE Theatre Program
- Tennessee Visual Impairments Virtual Academy (TN VIVA)



UCEDD

**UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE
IN DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

QUALITY OF LIFE

Persons with disabilities and families do not need to face challenges alone. We provide model services to families, including those from culturally diverse groups, and from low-income or rural areas. We provide training and share these practices by involving college students and practicing professionals. Model programs include:

- Tennessee Adult Brothers and Sisters (TABs)
- Tennessee Disability Pathfinder
- Tennessee Kindred Stories of Disability
- Vanderbilt Autism Resource Line
- Autism Care Network at Vanderbilt
- VKC Arts Program
- VKC Community Engagement

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

The VKC UCEDD is advised by a Community Advisory Council made up of individuals with disabilities, family members, and professionals and is a full partner in planning, implementing, and evaluating activities.

The VKC UCEDD is part of the Tennessee Developmental Disabilities Network, a partnership with the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities, the University of Tennessee Center on Developmental Disabilities, and Disability Rights Tennessee. The Network aims to improve our state's

services and supports for people with disabilities and promote the goals of the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act).

The VKC UCEDD is one of 67 centers in a national network. This network of centers has played key roles in every major national disability change in policies and practices over the past 45 years. UCEDDs work together to provide training, develop model services, conduct research, and disseminate information.

LEADERSHIP

UCEDD CO-DIRECTORS

Pablo Juárez, M.Ed., BCBA, LBA
Julie Lounds Taylor, Ph.D.

UCEDD CORE DIRECTORS

Community Service and Technical Assistance: Laurie Fleming
Training: Evon Lee, Ph.D.
Research: Robert Hodapp, Ph.D.
Dissemination: Courtney Taylor, M.Div.
UCEDD Program Manager: Laurie Fleming

CONTACT US:

UCEDD@vumc.org

The VKC UCEDD is funded by the Administration For Community Living Grant #9DDUC0077. Vanderbilt University Medical Center is committed to principles of equal opportunity and affirmative action. March 2024