

University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (UCEDDs)

Generating knowledge to support the independence and inclusion of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in all aspects of community life

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UCEDDs

At least one in every state and territory.

Affiliated with leading universities.

Each UCEDD leverages the knowledge of the others in its work. Their strength is their collective knowledge as a network.

To achieve the vision of the Developmental Disabilities Act, UCEDDs:



CREATE

more inclusive communities through best practices that improve community systems to meet the needs of people with I/DD.



WORK

side by side with people with I/DD, their families, and communities to drive change.



SHARE

research and knowledge to foster impactful collaboration.



TEACH

the next generation of professionals who can and will make a difference.

A SOUND INVESTMENT

UCEDDs use federal funding for operations and generate **7 times** that amount through partnerships and grants that fund their work.

Source: Association of University Centers on Disabilities



RESEARCH AND PRACTICES

To support the work of our partners

- **State Councils on Developmental Disabilities** use UCEDD data to advocate for inclusive state policy.
- **Protection & Advocacy Systems (P&As)** use UCEDD research in legal advocacy.
- **Projects of National Significance (short-term discretionary investments for creative problem-solving)** use UCEDD knowledge to address emerging needs.
- **Communities** use UCEDD research to inform advocacy related to policies impacting people with I/DD and their families.

EDUCATION

To support communities, UCEDDs:

- **Teach** future professionals, in classroom and clinical settings, to serve people with I/DD.
- **Recruit and train** professionals across a wide range of disciplines, to serve as peer educators on the needs of people with I/DD.
- **Disseminate** critical information to increase accessibility and inclusion.

SERVICES

To directly support people with I/DD, UCEDDs:

- Provide diagnoses, screenings, vaccinations, and therapies through clinics.
- Offer early childhood education programs to promote learning and social engagement.
- Promote exercise and wellness in recreational settings for youths and adults.
- Share information and assist with disaster planning, response, and recovery.
- Provide opportunities for people with I/DD to influence policies and programs intended to support them.



People with I/DD advance the work of UCEDDs by:

- Serving on advisory councils and helping to set priorities.
- Participating in research.
- Teaching and training others.

SNAPSHOT OF SUCCESS: HOW GEORGIA'S UCEDD HELPED EVERY CHILD WITH I/DD LEAVE INSTITUTIONS AND SUPPORTED THEM IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

After research found that children with I/DD were living in institutions because their families lacked the supports they needed to care for them at home, the Institute on Human Development and Disability at the University of Georgia (a UCEDD) and others in the GA DD network moved to action. In partnership with other disability organizations, they created the Children's Freedom Initiative (CFI). The collaboration's purpose is to ensure all children with disabilities in Georgia can live in permanent, loving homes.

Leveraging data from a Georgia UCEDD study, which examined the number of children residing in nursing homes, CFI successfully advocated to increase

Medicaid waiver funding and put new policies in place to support families. The resulting impact was that every child residing in Georgia's state institutions was moved to a home in the community, and policies were put in place to ensure they wouldn't go back.

Georgia's DD network shared a vision that no child should live in an institution. The strategies CFI used to realize that vision were many — litigation, coalition building, telling children's stories, elevating the issue in communities — and the UCEDD played a critical role, using research and data to reveal the issue and monitor change over time.

“As a person with a disability, I encounter barriers and discrimination every day. I could spend my whole day complaining, but I don't. UCEDDs are continuing to build the knowledge base we need, building leaders of tomorrow, and focusing on a future where we can live, work, and play like everyone else.”

Executive Director, Association of University Centers on Disabilities



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ACL is an operating division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Learn more at [ACL.gov](https://www.acl.gov).

To find a UCEDD, call the Disability Information and Access Line at 888-677-1199 or search by ZIP code at [DIAL.ACL.gov](https://dial.acl.gov).