

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council's mission is "To advocate and promote meaningful participation in all aspects of life for Floridians with developmental disabilities."

The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council's Purpose:

We are committed to advocating and promoting programs, practices, and innovative initiatives that enhance the independence, productivity, inclusion, and self-determination of individuals with developmental disabilities in all aspects of life.



INTRODUCTION

In 2021, The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council achieved many positive outcomes through collaborative outreach, communications, and advocacy.

The Council's work helped policymakers understand issues and make 1.2 billion in funding available for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) to live inclusive lives in their communities.

\$1.2

**billion in
funding!**



The areas the Council worked on in 2021 were:

- **Transportation**
- **Employment**
- **Elementary through Postsecondary Transition**
- **Self-Advocacy Leadership**
- **Housing**
- **Workforce (Direct Support Providers)**
- **Broad Systems Change**



TRANSPORTATION

The Council launched 2 Transportation Voucher Expansion Projects in 2021 and is planning a third next year. These projects provide on-demand, door-to-door transportation to people with I/DD.

1. The Treasure Coast project is operated by the Senior Resource Association. It serves St. Lucie, Okeechobee, Indian River, and Martin Counties.
2. The Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority project serves Pinellas County.
3. The Collier Area Transit project will begin providing transportation services to people in Collier County in 2022.

As of September 2021, these new projects had provided more than 37,000 trips!



EMPLOYMENT

The Council's Employment First Partners continued to educate the legislature and advocate for employment. This contributed to \$1 million of legislative funding for the Agency for Persons with Disabilities' (APD) Employment Enhancement Program.

This will help people who are on the Medicaid waiver waiting list to find and keep good jobs if they want them.

- Florida's Employment First efforts helped increase the number of people who got jobs at or above minimum wage by 48% since 2014.
- The Florida Project SEARCH Adult Model was started in Martin, Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Putnam Counties. Non-paid internships leading to jobs will be provided at:
 - Pirates Cove and Resort Marina in Stuart
 - Zoo Tampa
 - Casa Celeste (an assisted living facility in Clearwater)
 - Beck Automotive in Palatka

Based on the work of these organizations:

- The Florida Developmental Disabilities Network Cadre, with support from the following DD Network partners:
 - The Florida Developmental Disabilities Council
 - Disability Rights Florida
 - The Mailman Center (University of Miami)
 - The Florida Center for Inclusive Communities (University of South Florida)

The following new resources are now available:

- Core Competencies for Employment Specialists
- Employment First Florida Toolkits with Scorecards at 2 reading levels

ELEMENTARY THROUGH POSTSECONDARY TRANSITION

House Bill 173, supported by the Council, made the greatest changes to secondary transition requirements in more than 20 years! Key changes:

- *The bill lowered the age for some transition services requirements to 12 years old or 7th grade, whichever comes first.*
- *For students who meet the requirements for a standard high school diploma, the bill required new ways to inform students and parents of the option to defer the diploma.*

433

INCREASE
in Hispanic/Latino
ASD students
in Florida colleges

Project TOPS

- *Project TOPS enrolled 24 students in 2021; 14 were career and technical education (CTE) program completers; 7 continued in the program.*
- *98% of these students achieved Satisfactory Academic Progress.*
- *A replication guide can be found on the Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities (FCSUA) website.*

Postsecondary Models

- *The Council's Postsecondary Models project managed by Think College created a 5-part "College Matters" speaker series. Through this project, promising practices briefs and 2 online modules will be available in 2022 on the Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities website.*
- *593 people were trained or educated through this project.*

Improving Postsecondary Outcomes - Targeted Disparity

- *The Council's Improving Postsecondary Outcomes - Targeted Disparity project developed resources to help people understand and support students who identify as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Hispanic/Latino. This project will help people get into and complete postsecondary education, particularly in Florida colleges. The University of Central Florida Center for Autism and Related Disabilities managed the project.*
- *The project trained 625 people in 2021. As a result, the number of students who identified as Hispanic/Latino ASD in the Florida College System (FCS) rose to 433, an increase of 198% since 2017.*

SELF-ADVOCACY LEADERSHIP

- **Florida Self-Advocates Network'D (Florida SAND)**
 - *The Florida SAND Fellows Program trained 4 self-advocate leaders. These in turn trained over 350 waiver support coordinators to help people with I/DD advocate for themselves with direct care providers.*
 - *Florida SAND worked to design, plan, and coordinate the Florida SAND conference, Mission Inclusion. The number of self-advocates who presented at the conference grew to 15 in 2021.*
 - *40 members of Florida SAND reported serving on at least 41 different boards or councils.*
- **Partners in Policymaking (PIP)**
 - *PIP continues to develop strong self-advocates and advocates throughout Florida. 20 family members and 6 self-advocates completed the program in 2021.*
 - *All 26 graduates contacted their elected officials to advocate for issues important to them. These issues included ending restraint and seclusion and increasing supported decision-making, school choice, and higher wages for direct support providers.*

40

members of Florida SAND reported serving on at least 41 different boards or councils.



HOUSING



In 2021, the “Framework for Effectively Engaging Individuals with Disabilities in the Consolidated Planning Process,” was completed. Virtual training was held for 82 people.

- *The Framework can be found on the Florida Housing Coalition's website.*
- *The training will help local government know how to better include people with disabilities in the Consolidated Planning process.*
- *Participants learned how to engage individuals with disabilities, families, and stakeholders effectively in local planning processes surrounding HUD funds. They also learned how to advocate for long-term policy change in Florida.*
- *Those who participated in training included:*
 - *51 local government staff representing 30 entitlement communities and 20 counties across the state*
 - *24 additional stakeholders*
 - *7 stakeholder workgroup members*



WORKFORCE (DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS)

In 2021, as part of a new training for direct support providers (DSPs), the Workforce Collaborative Training Initiative developed 6 new modules:

- *Practical Personal Care*
- *Florida DSP Professional Development*
- *Service Documentation*
- *Safety*
- *Technology*
- *Supporting Rights*



The complete training package was piloted with 40 participants, and 30 completed the entire curriculum. 96% recommend the training to new DSPs. The Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) is considering making at least 10 of the courses eligible for in-service points.

BROAD SYSTEMS CHANGE

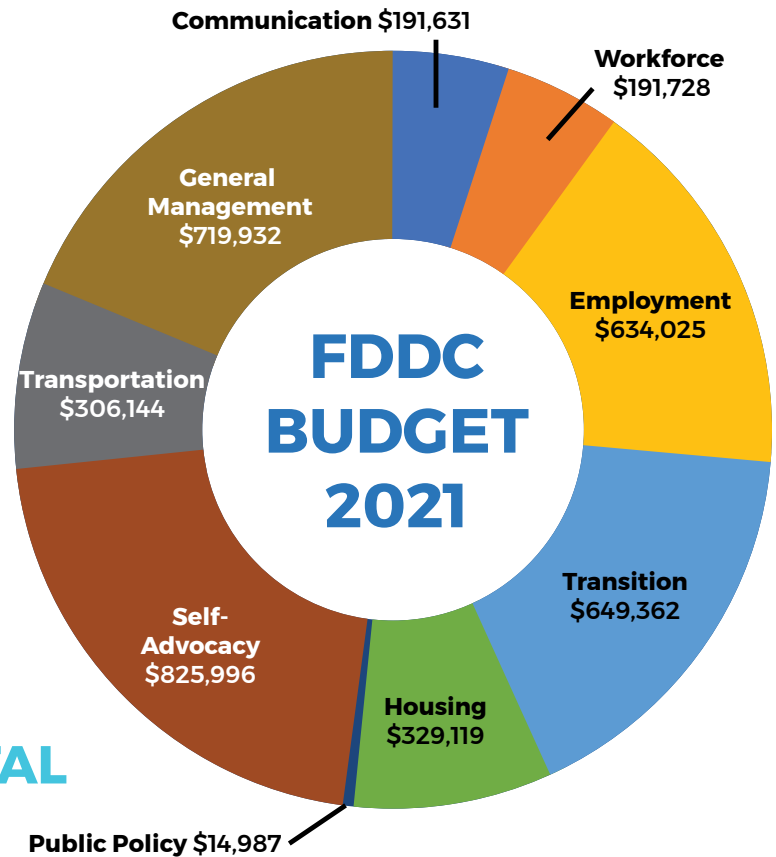


Through the Council's "Save and Preserve the iBudget" efforts, Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day, and legislative support (APD), over \$95 million was secured in 2021 to bring people off the iBudget Waitlist!

The Council helped people understand how important funding from the Federal Rescue Act was for people with I/DD. Florida applied for funding and \$1.1 billion was conditionally approved for home-and community-based services!

\$95 million
to bring people
off the iBudget
Waitlist!

FLORIDA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL BUDGET



FLORIDA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL

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