

2022 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

**At least 36
people with
I/DD and
their family
members
helped
educate
legislators,
resulting in**

\$490

**million in
funding.**

In 2022, the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council (FDDC) made good progress with the first year of its new 5-year state plan that began in October of 2021 and will end in September of 2026.

Through outreach, communication, and advocacy, the Council helped people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) live inclusive lives in their communities.



The Council's 2022-2026 goal areas are:

- **Access to Services**
- **Home- and Community-Based Delivery Systems**
- **Aging Caregivers**
- **Self-Advocacy Leadership**
- **Broad Systems Change/Emerging Needs**



ACCESS TO SERVICES

Advocacy and education led to Florida changing exceptional student education eligibility laws for children identified as having a developmental delay.

Before these changes, children with developmental delays in Florida could only receive services “until Age 6.” Now, these children will be able to receive services “through Age 9 or completion of Grade 2, whichever occurs first.”

This change in ESE eligibility will help families in Florida access services and earlier intervention for more children who have developmental delays.

HOME- AND COMMUNITY-BASED DELIVERY SYSTEMS

2022 saw important outcomes achieved through Council activities:

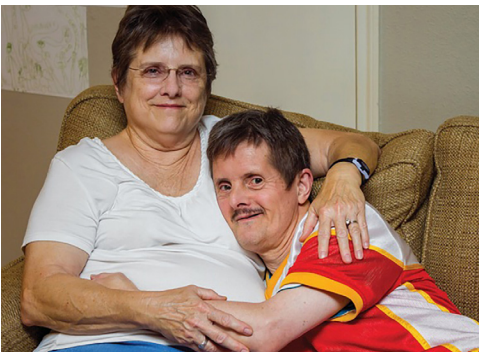
- **Direct Service Rate Increase:** *Pay Fair for My Care* advocacy helped support a rate increase to \$15 per hour for direct support workers. This was funded with over \$160 million of Florida General Revenue Funds and a federal match of nearly \$243 million.
- **Reducing Waitlist:** Over \$59 million was budgeted for the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD) to serve 1,100 individuals with I/DD on the iBudget waiver waitlist.
- **Greater Dental Services:** \$8.5 million was budgeted to provide dental services to individuals with I/DD.
- **No Patient Left Alone Act:** This new law allows people with I/DD to have someone with them in a hospital or nursing home to provide care and comfort.

HOME- AND COMMUNITY-BASED DELIVERY SYSTEMS CONT.

- ***Expanding Behavior Support: Registered Behavior Technicians (RBTs) can now provide service in a school at private expense without needing a Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) on site. This is important because most insurance companies will only pay for a small number of hours of supervision by a BCBA, but will pay for up to 40 hours per week of an RBT.***
- ***Prohibiting Mechanical Restraint: School personnel can no longer use mechanical restraints on elementary students in public schools. Only school resource officers, school safety officers, school guardians, or school security guards can use them with students in Grades 6 - 12 under limited conditions.***
- ***Planning to Improve Services for Dual Diagnosis: The Council funded a study to learn how to best help people who have both I/DD and mental health conditions. This led to a project that will develop training for schools, agency personnel, and families. It also led to a project that will develop training for first responders.***

AGING CAREGIVERS

- *The Council's work brought together representatives from the Aging and Developmental Disability communities. These teams focused on improving how they work together.*
- *To learn more about issues in aging, interviews were held with 38 people with I/DD who have aging caregivers and 60 professionals representing state agencies, providers of aging and DD services, advocacy groups, and regional or county groups.*
- *The area that most people interviewed thought needed improvement was the issue of paid caregivers.*



SELF-ADVOCACY LEADERSHIP

- *Florida Self-Advocates Network'D (Florida SAND) Fellows trained 5 new self-advocate leaders who then provided training for at least 86 self-advocates and 151 DD Awareness Day participants.*
- *The 2022 Partners in Policymaking (PIP) program included 3 self-advocates and 20 family members who learned more about self-advocacy, public policy, leadership, and self-determination.*
- *Both Florida SAND Fellows and PIP graduates took part in the virtual 2022 DD Awareness Day. At least 36 participants scheduled meetings with state legislators to provide awareness of issues important to people with I/DD.*

**PIP continued
to increase
self-advocacy
with**

105

**past program
graduates,
including 15
self-advocates
and 90 family
leaders.**

BROAD SYSTEMS CHANGE/ EMERGING NEEDS

Great progress was made in achieving systems change outcomes that will increase community inclusion for people with I/DD. A few examples include:

Transportation

- ***The Treasure Coast Transportation Voucher Project, serving St. Lucie, Martin, Okeechobee, and Indian River counties; and the Pinellas County Mobility on Demand Project, serving Pinellas County, secured over \$4 million to continue new transportation options.***

Employment

- ***Employment First Florida and the Employment First Collaborative Training Initiative will be continued in Florida in different ways. Four Florida Project SEARCH Adult Model sites started in 2022 will continue in 2023.***

28

people completed the Florida Project SEARCH Adult Model program, 12 of whom obtained jobs.

- ***\$1 million of APD funding was secured for the Employment Enhancement Program (EEP).***
- ***The Council worked with the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) on the Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment (SWTCIE) project that resulted in Florida VR successfully securing a \$13.1 million award.***

BROAD SYSTEMS CHANGE/ EMERGING NEEDS CONT.

Elementary through Postsecondary Education

- *The number of students who identified as Hispanic/Latino Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the Florida College System grew to 475 in 2020-21, an increase of 91%. Program completers increased from 64 in 2017 to 92 in 2021.*
- *The Council's Improving Postsecondary Outcomes – Targeted Disparity project produced webinars, resources, and systemic changes that will help students, families, and secondary and postsecondary educators who wish to improve access and completion for students who identify as ASD and Hispanic/Latino. The University of Central Florida Center for Autism and Related Disorders (UCF CARD) will maintain a website housing these resources.*
- *The Council's Postsecondary Models initiative, with the work of Think College and support of the Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities (FCSUA) at UCF, produced two comprehensive training modules for secondary educators and postsecondary instructors that will be maintained by FCSUA.*
- *FCSUA awarded over \$1.2 million in scholarships to 212 students enrolled in the 19 approved Florida Postsecondary Comprehensive Training Programs (FPCTPs) across 25 campuses. FPCTPs include 6 at universities, 6 at state colleges, and 7 at career and technical colleges, serving 216 students.*

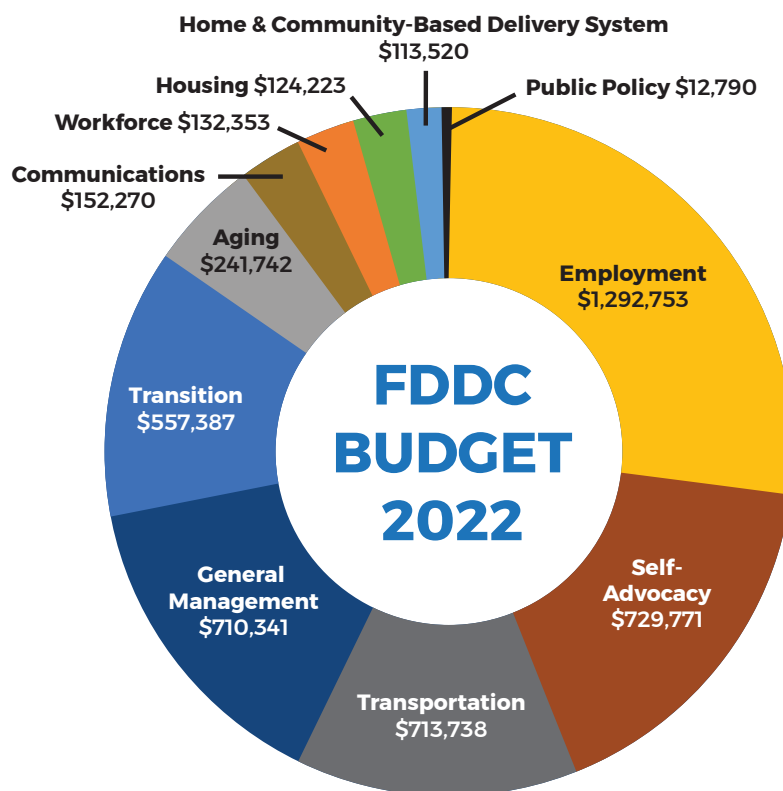
At least

4,056

individuals with I/DD and 179 family members participated in Council activities. At least 1,928 stakeholders, excluding individuals with I/DD and family members, were trained or educated through Broad Systems Change activities.



FLORIDA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL BUDGET



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