

Since 1963, Congress has recognized that the University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD): Education, Research, and Service are critical to improving services and supports for people with developmental disabilities and their families. The 68 federally designated UCEDDs are interdisciplinary, independent university-based Centers authorized by the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (DD Act) (Section 156 of P.L.106-402, Subtitle D). The purpose of the DD Act is to ensure that people with developmental disabilities and their families can design and access individualized community services and supports that promote self-determination, independence, and inclusion in community life.

In Alabama, the UCEDD faculty collaborated with the Department of Rehabilitation Services to provide training and support for Early Intervention providers to be able to screen for and identify children at high risk for having autism and provide evidence-based interventions. The screening process was developed collaboratively between the UCEDD & other University and agency partners. It screened 400 children (18-30 months of age) in 7 early intervention programs.



The UCEDDs provide training and technical assistance; conduct research, evaluation, and the analysis of public policy; and share information and resources with people with developmental disabilities, their families, government agencies, and providers. The UCEDDs are also a national resource for increasing knowledge about the needs of people with developmental disabilities and their families, identifying barriers to community living and addressing them, and increasing our nation’s capacity and capability to support people with developmental disabilities. The UCEDDs have directly improved services and supports in the states and territories in early intervention, healthcare, public health, community-based services, education, employment, housing, assistive technology, emergency response and recovery, and transportation.

The core funding from the DD Act supports the basic operating costs for each UCEDD. Each UCEDD leverages that funding to secure additional funding to carry out the purpose of the DD Act. In Fiscal Year 2023, the UCEDDs and Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities Programs (frequently located in UCEDDs) leveraged \$716,269,557 dollars from additional local, state, federal, and private funding to meet the needs of local communities.

**FY 2025 Funding Request:**

AUCD requests Congress appropriate \$47 million for the UCEDDs within the Administration for Community Living in the Labor-Health-Human Services-Education-Related Agencies appropriations bill.

**Funding History (in millions):**

FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25 Request
\$40.6	\$41.6	\$42.1	\$42.1	\$43.1	\$43.1	\$47



## Justification:

The increased level of funding will provide UCEDDs with the resources necessary to continue to implement the DD Act and meet the increased demand for training and technical assistance. In FY 2023, the UCEDDs and Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities Programs (frequently located in UCEDDs) reached 1.4 million people through training and technical assistance and the UCEDDs trained over 3,330 professionals that work with people with disabilities.

The funding provided to the UCEDDs also funds the UCEDD Resource Center. The Resource Center provides innovative, efficient, effective, and outcome-driven training and technical assistance that is responsive to UCEDD requests. This training and technical assistance greatly increases the impact of the UCEDDs in every state and territory. In FY 2023, every UCEDD requested technical assistance and the UCEDD Resource Center responded to 380 requests for information and assistance, developed and/or disseminated 67 unique products in response to emerging technical assistance needs, acted as the catalyst for 89 collaborations, and hosted 17 technical assistance events. In next year, the Resource Center will also continue to advance its work improve accessibility of all training and technical assistance, and further develop and increase awareness of resources.



In West Virginia, the Specialized Family Care (SFC) program is a foster care program for children and adults with intellectual and/or

developmental disabilities that has been in place since 1981. SFC homes are specially screened, trained and state-certified to provide care. The SFC program allows a person to continue living in the community in safe, loving family units, rather than in an institutional setting or left unattended without care in the community. SFC also gives help to families who care for their loved ones at home by providing part-time respite care for their family member over short periods of time, and then have their loved one returned to their own homes. There are currently more than 185 provider homes statewide with many more needed. This successful program has had over 100 people in placement with the same family for 10 years or more and several others who have been with the same family for over 30 years. Targeted assistance in a welcome, community setting improves community living outcomes and saves money.