

NH Council on
Developmental
Disabilities

2024 Annual
Report



nhcdd

NH Council on Developmental Disabilities

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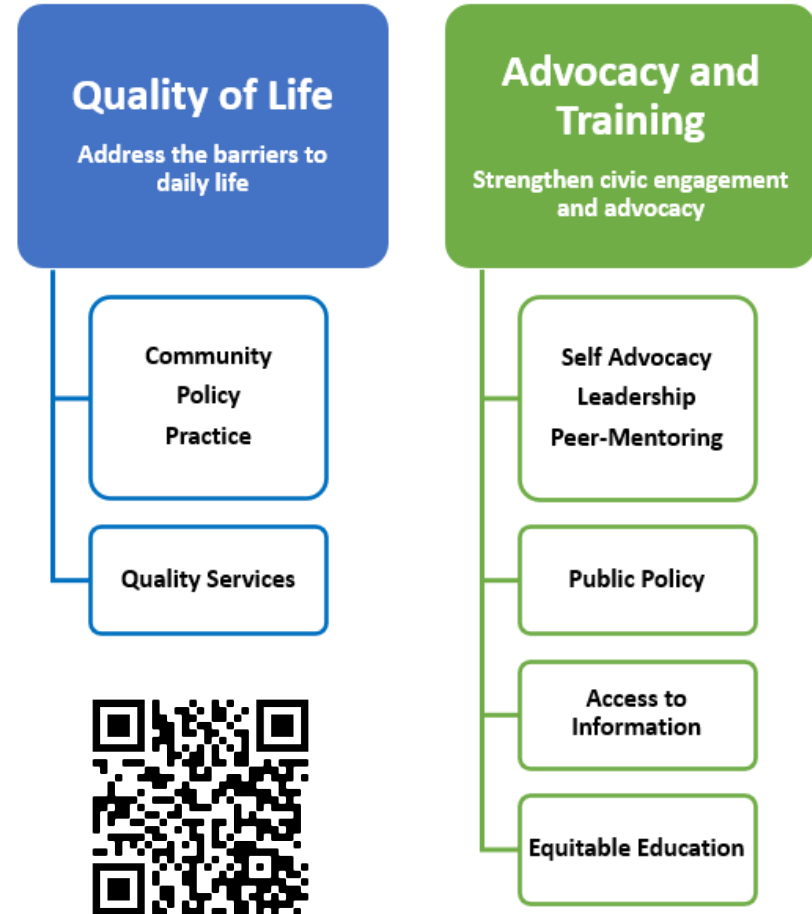
Our mission

We are dedicated to

- The pursuit of dignity and justice,
- Authentic community inclusion,
- Cultural competency, and
- Self-determination.

for all Granite Staters living with developmental disabilities.

Our 5-year plan





A message from our Council's Chair, Tim Houle

Hello everyone, it's been a pleasure being on the Council as chair. I have learned so much over the last year being Chair. It has been a great experience for me. We have implemented multiple procedures and multiple [grants for community projects] including things like changing tables and inclusive playgrounds. I think these are great ideas that we have as a Council.

I've enjoyed attending events as Chair and learning a lot from our other partners. During these events, it was great to talk to other people about what our Council does and our visions for the future. I'm glad we are successful in doing multiple things and as Chair, it has been great to see what these are.

For future goals, I would like to see more inclusive housing and inclusive education as I believe these are important to the disability community. There are a lot of barriers that need to be removed for accessibility that still need to be worked on, which I am happy with. I know it takes time, but we will get there. I am happy with the direction the Council is going in. It has been fantastic to both be a Chair and member of this Council. I am so proud of everyone and am thankful for a Council that supports disability.

Council staff

Executive Director

Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre

Policy and Planning Director

Vanessa Blais

Executive Assistant

Pamela Stiles

Policy and Planning Coordinator

Chase Eagleson

Senior Account Tech

Elizabeth Page

Social Media Outreach Assistant

Blake Tyler

Council members

Leadership

Tim Houle, Council Chair, Newmarket, NH
Jean Crouch, Council Vice-Chair, Bureau of Aging and Adult Services

Community Representatives

Alyssa Antman, Concord, NH
Kelly Ehrhart, Nashua, NH
Caitlyn Fulton, Dover, NH
Nicole Mello, Henniker, NH
Tammy Mills, Plainfield, NH
Michele Petersen, New Boston, NH
Jim Piet, Concord, NH
Milo Van De Water, Goffstown, NH
Patricia Vincent-Piet, Concord, NH
Frank Vinciguerra, Manchester, NH

Agency and Organization Representatives

Suzanne Austin, Center for Life Management
Abigail Conger, Bureau of Developmental Services, DHHS
Stephanie Patrick, Disability Rights Center NH
Danielle Pelletier, Bureau of Student Services
Jennifer Pineo, NH Family Voices
Sarah Sadowski, Institute on Disability/UNH
Alexis Wayland, Crotched Mountain Foundation
Meryle Zeoli, NH Department of Education Vocational Rehabilitation

Policy

Civic Engagement and Advocacy

The council aims to build stronger relationships with policy makers by engaging in legislative and administrative education. The council provides training and information in best practices to inform policies that have a positive impact on the lives of all individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families across the lifespan. The council supports advocates with lived experience in testifying to legislators and other policy makers on the impact that policies have on their lives.

Legislative Successes

- **Voting Accessibility (HB 1264)**
 - This bill mandates that all local and municipal elections throughout the state must provide an accessible voting machine for use by all voters.
- **Finding Solutions to the Disability Housing Crisis (HB 1168)**
 - This bill establishes a committee to study the impact of the housing crisis on people with disabilities. The committee is charged to find information on and offer solutions to the disability housing crisis in NH.
- **Oversight of Residential Placement of Children (HB 1573)**
 - This bill requires court-ordered residential treatment programs for children to be licensed and certified by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). It directs DHHS to establish certification teams to monitor these programs and ensure compliance with certification criteria.
- **Law Enforcement Reporting on Bias Crimes (SB 315)**
 - This bill requires law enforcement agencies operating within New Hampshire to submit crime reports related to hate crimes (known as "bias crimes") to the Department of Safety every 6 months.

Supporting Advocacy

NH Leadership Series

The Council continues to support the Institute on Disability/UCED and its leadership program through scholarships and as a resource for attendees. The training series uses the Partners in Policymaking model. The program helps to develop and strengthen advocacy skills for people to bring about systemic change in their communities.

Advocacy Groups

People First of NH and SALT	Rainbow Connection	ABLE NH	CBVIV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council's support for People First of NH (PFNH) and Self Advocacy Leadership Team (SALT) includes grant funding for facilitator compensation, programs, trainings, and activities. Other support includes transportation for advocates to attend meetings at the council office and making office space available for meetings and work. The Council sponsored and supported advocates attending the PFNH retreat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Rainbow Connection is a support group for LGBTQ+ self-advocates who identify as living with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Council co-hosts and helps facilitate both in-person and online Rainbow Connection Support Group meetings alongside ABLE NH. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABLE NH was established through the efforts of the Federal DD Act partners to meet the need for an organized state-wide advocacy presence. The Council provides sponsorships for ABLE's annual membership event and other initiatives. The council also provides office space, meeting space, and occasional administrative support to the group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Coalition of Blind and Vision Impaired Voters (CBVIV) is an organization made up of consumer-advocates as well as advocacy groups including Future in Sight, Granite State Independent Living, and Disability Rights Center-NH. The Council supports CBVIV

Grants and Sponsorships

- The Council carries out its mission through education, advocacy and the funding of innovative projects that make a difference in the lives of NH citizens with intellectual/developmental disabilities.
- The Council regularly collaborates on, and distributes small grants for projects, trainings, and conferences that address goals identified in the Five-Year State Plan.

Personal and Community Grants

- The NH Council on Developmental Disabilities offers a variety of grants to individuals and their families or groups to support disability related activities, initiatives, and personal goals. Priority is given to individuals who have not previously applied for a grant from the Council. The Council is unable to cover DSP/support and travel costs.

Large Demonstration Grants

- The NHCDD occasionally solicits RFPs (Request for Proposals) to assist in projects or programs with the goal of increasing capacity and developing best practices in eliminating barriers for people with disabilities in areas such as managing health care, education, transportation, and advocacy, or any other goal that aligns with the current state plan.

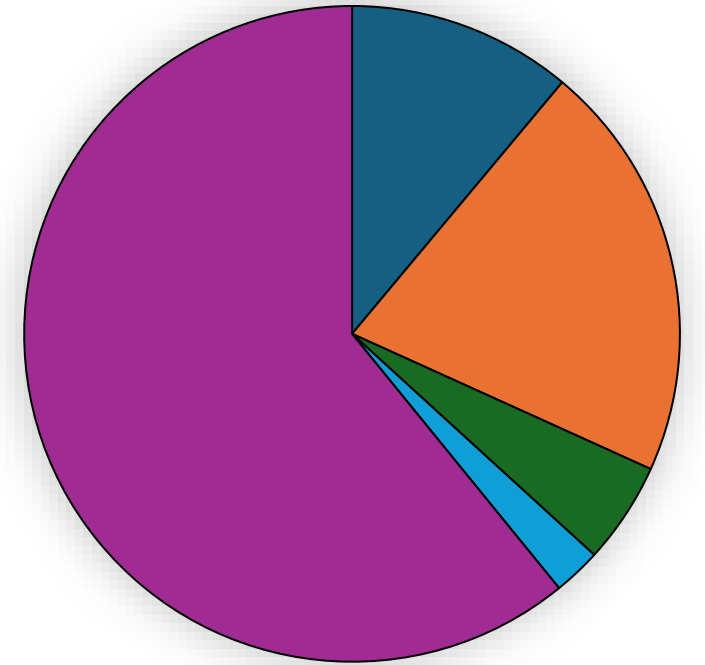
Grant information can be found using the QR code (right) or by visiting

<https://www.nhcdd.nh.gov/grants>



Grants and Sponsorships

- **Personal Education & Leadership Grants (\$3,749 granted)**
 - Transition Summit
 - Apraxia Kids Natl Conference
 - Hydrocephalus Conference
 - Fleming Grant - Best Buddies
 - Best Buddies Conference
 - NH Leadership Series
- **Community Projects and Education Programs (\$7,000 granted)**
 - Caregiver Access Community Project
 - Support Flame the Band
 - ADA Access Pathway
 - Table at Portsmouth Pride
 - Disability Community Advisory Board Magazine
 - Meredith Adaptive Launch Project
 - Upper Valley Neurodiversity Playground
- **Employment and Education Grants (\$1,695 granted)**
 - Business: Lindy's Goodies
 - 1 Year ASL Course
 - Drivers' Education
- **Accessibility Grants (\$795 granted)**
 - Davinci Resolve software for videos
 - Portsmouth Pride Interpreters
- **Innovation Grants (\$20,600 granted)**
 - Arts Intensive grant
 - Food Farm and Friendship at Dusty's Garden (Coopers Crossroad)
 - Adaptive Sports
 - STEAM Camps at PSA



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- Community Projects and Education Programs (\$7,000 granted)
- Employment and Education Grants (\$1,695 granted)
- Accessibility Grants (\$795 granted)
- Innovation Grants (\$20,600 granted)

Innovation Grants

Positive Street Art



- An artist in residency programming with Opportunity Networks 10 Week intensive covering aspects of mark making and placemaking.
- Supporting disabled artists in elevating their facilitation skills in the creative economy in order to lead their own creative programs. Aspiring artists are given the tools needed in order to secure resources, platforms, utilize networks and create body of work in order to exhibit their own series. Clients and assistant artists learn to own their own space and boundaries within the creative networks. while uplifting their own perspective. Clients and supporting artists learn the basics in creating bodies of work and submitting for exhibitions.

Cooper's Crossroad



- A project for people with and without different kinds of disabilities to be able to increase social interaction, collaboration and food access.
- The Food, Farm and Friendship Program at Dusty's Garden will provide education and engage participants in growing fresh vegetables and perennials. The beds will be a variety of heights, including raised beds that allow people to use them while kneeling, standing, or sitting. The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), a uses visual symbols that facilitates intentional, functional communication and allows users to communicate their wants and needs and to engage with others in a meaningful way, will be used.

MNLL Adaptive Sports



- MNLL, also known as Manchester North Little League, is a community-focused non-profit organization in Manchester, New Hampshire.
- MNLL strives to create an atmosphere of inclusivity and respite for people with disabilities, homelessness, food insecurity, and a variety of demographics in need. They currently run an Adaptive Sports department that encompasses a variety of different sports program. Their sports program has also had success in implementing successful events for the Blind Soccer and our Amputee Soccer programs.

Pledge to Get the Word Out

DD Council Partnership

The Stop Special Campaign

- The Stop Special Campaign is a collaboration between the 3 DD Act partners: The Council, the UNH Institute on Disability (IOD), and the Disability Rights Center NH.
- The Campaign’s goal is to reduce the stigma tied to disability by eliminating the use of the word “special” from everyday language, conversation, services, and policy on disability-related issues.
- The Campaign asks people and organizations across the country to act by pledging to stop their use of the word “special”.
- Organizations that have agreed to take the pledge include:

603 Legal Aid	Waypoint	Northeast Passage
NH Council of Churches	Office of the Child Advocate	Kent Street Coalition
The Arc Michigan	Disability Rights Maine	New Futures
NH Legal Assistance	NJ DDC	Ocean County College



Sponsorship/Collaboration Highlights

Beachability at Hampton Beach



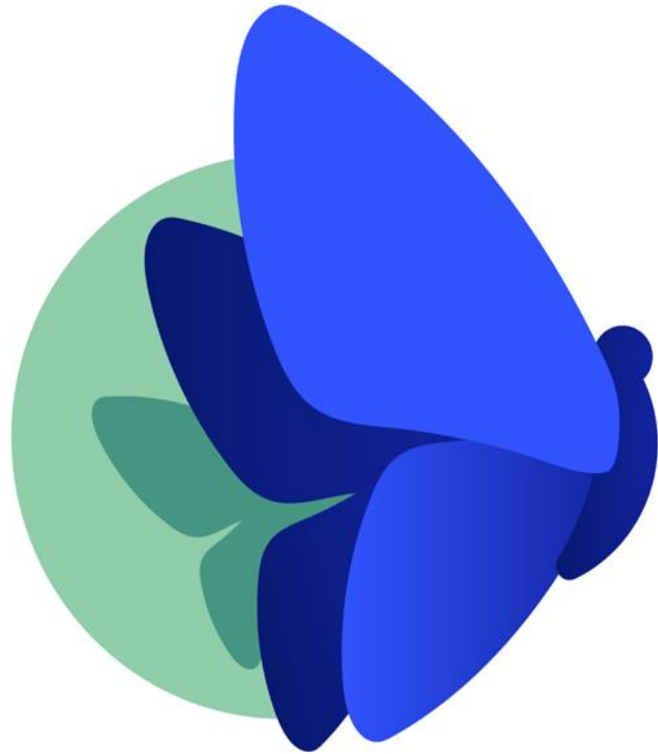
The Council partnered with ACLU NH, The NH State Parks Department, GSIL, and over 10 other NH-based organizations to put together this all-day event. Beachability focused on making Hampton Beach State Park more accessible and inclusive for everyone. Included in the event were speakers, demonstrations, accessible beach entertainment, arts & crafts, and the opportunity for attendees to share their thoughts with the State Parks Department on how to make Hampton Beach State Park more accessible.



Participating Organizations



...AND MORE!!!



THAT'S INCLUSIVE!

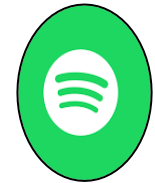
presented by the New Hampshire Council on
Developmental Disabilities

That's Inclusive! Podcast

Where we talk about disability and what it means to live a full life, engaging in our communities. What does that look like? And how can we work together to make our world a more inclusive place?

Topics include:

- Disability culture
- Access to science
- Adaptive sports
- Storytelling
- Mental health
- Including disability in DEI
- AND MORE!



Find us on
Spotify and YouTube!



That's Inclusive! is made possible with the support of Josh Hardy and Concord TV. The views of our guests are personal and do not necessarily represent those of the DD Council. If you have suggestions for topics or would like to join us, please contact Vanessa Blais at Vanessa.A.Blais@ddc.nh.gov.

Supported Publications

The Disability RAPP (DRAPP)

[DRAPP Winter/Spring 2024 Edition: Words Matter](#)



The council continues to collaborate with the Institute on Disability (IOD) and the Disability Rights Center-NH (DRC) on Disability RAPP magazine. This magazine encourages conversation around the barriers to inclusive living and how to address those barriers through collaboration and innovation.

Stepping Stones Magazine

[Stepping Stones 2023-24](#)



Stepping Stones Magazine is our annual publication that aims to show what authentic, integrated community living really looks like. This is done in collaboration with Business NH Magazine.

Key Partners

<p><u>Disability Rights Center-NH</u> protects, advances, and strengthens the legal rights and advocacy interests of all people with disabilities.</p>	<p><u>Institute on Disability/UNH</u> provides a university-based focus for the improvement of knowledge, policies, and practices related to the lives of people with disabilities.</p>	<p><u>People First of NH/SALT</u> multi-cultural champions of equality who advocate for people with disabilities to achieve their full potential.</p>
<p><u>ABLE NH</u> advocates for the civil and human rights of children and adults with disabilities.</p>	<p><u>NH Governor's Commission on Disability</u> provides technical assistance relative to the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and other disability laws.</p>	<p><u>NH Department of Education</u> committed to helping students, parents, and educators meet the educational needs of each student.</p>
<p><u>NH Family Voices</u> works to assist parents and professionals in navigating the systems of care that deliver services.</p>	<p><u>Parent Information Center</u> guides and encourage families in supporting the unique learning potential of their children, including children with disabilities.</p>	<p><u>Community Support Network, Inc.</u> supports agencies that serve individuals with developmental disabilities and acquired brain disorders.</p>
<p><u>Granite State Independent Living</u> assist people with tools for living life independently, so they can change their lives for the better.</p>	<p><u>Brain Injury Association</u> works for a better future through brain injury prevention, education, advocacy, and support.</p>	<p><u>Private Provider Network</u> represents private agencies that provide community-based supports to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and acquired brain disorders.</p>

What's Next?

Trailability	Stop Special Task Force	NHCDD Policy Platform	The Next 5 Year Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council is in beginning talks to develop the next event in the Beachability series.• This next event is planned to focus on accessibility in trail hiking and forestry recreation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Stop Special Taskforce, consisting of members of the 3 DD Act partners and outside informants, will be continuing their work to stop the use of the word “special” in relation to individuals with disabilities.• More and more individuals, non-profits, government agencies, direct support service agencies, and others continue to sign the pledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The NHCDD Policy Committee created a subcommittee Policy Platform Taskforce whose goal is to develop the policy platform for the Council’s Policy Committee to follow for upcoming years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council is currently working on developing its next 5-Year State Plan.• The current 5-Year Plan that the Council is working under ends in 2026.• The next Plan is planned to guide the initiatives, projects, activities, and policy decisions of the Council through 2031.

