

## FREE INFORMATION & REFERRAL

The Tennessee Developmental Disabilities Network and the Tennesseans it serves are supported by a statewide information and referral service, a project of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center and the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities. Our Network organizations also provide information and referral.

## TENNESSEE DISABILITY PATHFINDER

### Mission:

To provide information and referral to persons with disabilities, family members, service providers, and advocates

### Activities:

- Toll-free phone access to experienced disability information specialists. Bilingual (English & Spanish) staff and Interpreter Services available for all other languages.
- A website with extensive state and national information resources, including a database of 2,100 Tennessee agencies easily searched by county and type of service.
- Disability Community Calendar of events searchable by region, disability, and event type. Posting open to Tennessee disability organizations.

### Contact:

Toll-free (1-800) 640-INFO [4636]

E-mail [TNPathfinder@vumc.org](mailto:TNPathfinder@vumc.org)

Website [www.familypathfinder.org](http://www.familypathfinder.org)

[www.caminoseguro.org](http://www.caminoseguro.org) (Español)

*Website of disability and social service agencies with Spanish-speaking staff*

## Tennessee Developmental Disabilities Network



Disability Rights Tennessee • Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities • University of Tennessee Boling Center for Developmental Disabilities • Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

Working with you! Working for you!

## TENNESSEE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES NETWORK

“Disability is a natural part of the human experience . . . .”  
—The Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act

Four statewide organizations in Tennessee partner with one another and with individuals with developmental disabilities and family members to ensure that they receive the services and supports they need—and jointly they take part in planning those services. Together we are working to promote principles of—

- Independence
- Inclusion
- Integration
- Productivity
- Self-Determination

The federal Developmental Disabilities Act creates State Councils, Protection and Advocacy Systems, and University Centers for Excellence in every state and U.S. territory. The Act guides each agency’s activities and promotes efforts to work collaboratively on statewide issues. The four Tennessee Network members are part of this national network, which is supported by the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, U.S. Health and Human Services.

## DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY

A developmental disability is a condition that is significant and ongoing, begins before age 22, and substantially limits functioning in daily activities of living. Examples include autism, brain or spinal cord injury, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, fetal alcohol syndrome, intellectual disabilities, Prader-Willi syndrome, spina bifida, and Williams syndrome. There are approximately 4.5 million individuals with developmental disabilities in the United States.

The Network also serves persons with all types of disabilities, including those whose disabilities occur after age 22.

## HOW THE NETWORK WORKS TOGETHER

The principles of the Developmental Disabilities Act unite our organizations as a network. The Developmental Disabilities Act states that, with support, individuals with developmental disabilities can:

- Make informed choices and decisions about their lives
- Live in homes and communities where they can exercise their rights as citizens
- Pursue meaningful and productive lives
- Contribute to their families, communities, states, and nation
- Have friendships and relationships with other persons
- Live free of abuse, neglect, financial and sexual exploitation, and violations of their legal and human rights
- Achieve full integration and inclusion in society, in an individualized manner, consistent with the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, and capabilities of each individual.

The agencies of the Tennessee Developmental Disabilities Network work independently and together to achieve these goals for Tennesseans with developmental disabilities and their families. We accomplish more by working collectively. We have joined together to improve transition services in Tennessee for students with disabilities in special education, to promote postsecondary education opportunities for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, to improve employment of adults with disabilities, and to support self-advocates.

For current information on joint projects, products, and other announcements, visit the Network website at [www.tennddnetwork.org](http://www.tennddnetwork.org)

All Tennessee Developmental Disabilities Network partners are active on social media. Search for us on Facebook and Twitter.

## DISABILITY RIGHTS TENNESSEE (DRT)

Disability Rights Tennessee is the designated federal Protection & Advocacy System for people with disabilities in Tennessee. DRT provides FREE legally based advocacy services to protect the civil and human rights of Tennesseans with disabilities.

### **Mission:**

To protect the rights of Tennesseans with disabilities.

### **Activities:**

DRT concentrates its work in three areas: freedom from harm, freedom from discrimination, and freedom to participate in the community. DRT collects input from community members to identify areas of work under each strategic area. The Areas of Work help determine the types of direct advocacy and legal cases DRT can accept. Services DRT offers include:

- Information & Referral
- Investigation of Abuse & Neglect
- Advocacy Services
- Legal Representation
- Education & Outreach
- Public Policy Advocacy

### **Contact:**

Phone (1-800) 342-1660  
Español (1-800) 287-9636 x 126  
E-mail [gethelp@disabilityrightstn.org](mailto:gethelp@disabilityrightstn.org)  
Website [www.disabilityrightstn.org](http://www.disabilityrightstn.org)

## TENNESSEE COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

The Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities is an independent state office that works to improve disability policies and practices in Tennessee.

### **Mission:**

To provide leadership to ensure independence, productivity and inclusion of individuals with disabilities in their communities.

### **Activities:**

The Council provides the state with a central point of expertise on disability data, service system trends and most promising practices. One role of the Council is to link programs and services that support individuals with developmental disabilities in more efficient and effective ways. Citizens with developmental disabilities and their families participate in the work of the Council, providing direct input into policies and practices that impact their lives.

Our responsibilities include:

1. Conducting comprehensive review and analysis of state disability services
2. Identifying state policies and practices that will improve outcomes for Tennesseans with developmental disabilities
3. Developing goals to address unmet needs of Tennesseans with developmental disabilities using strategies that include:
  - Educating policymakers and the public
  - Demonstrating new approaches to services and system design
  - Facilitating interagency collaboration and coordination
  - Assuring citizen participation in government

### **Contact:**

Phone (615) 532-6615  
E-mail [tnddc@tn.gov](mailto:tnddc@tn.gov)  
Website [www.tn.gov/cdd](http://www.tn.gov/cdd)

## UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE BOLING CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service support interdisciplinary training, exemplary services, research, technical assistance, and information dissemination.

### **Mission:**

To promote, support, and enhance the independence, productivity, integration, and inclusion of individuals with disabilities and their families in the community.

### **Activities:**

- Interdisciplinary family-centered clinical services for children and families covering entire spectrum of developmental disabilities, including attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, autism spectrum disorders, intellectual and other developmental disabilities
- Interdisciplinary graduate-level leadership training in developmental disabilities
- Family-centered programs supporting children in relative care and in state custody (foster care)
- Parenting programs and sibling groups; support groups for children with Asperger's disorder and for adults with intellectual disabilities
- Broad collaboration with community advocates and intervention consortia to support community living
- Sponsorship of and presentations at local, state, regional, national, and international disability-related conferences
- Support of the Center for Literacy Education and Employment, University of Tennessee-Knoxville, in provision of training, resources, and support for employment and lifespan issues

### **Contact:**

Phone (901) 448-6511  
Toll-free (888) 572-2249; TTY (901) 448-4677  
E-mail [bcdd@uthsc.edu](mailto:bcdd@uthsc.edu)  
Website [www.uthsc.edu/bcdd](http://www.uthsc.edu/bcdd)

## VANDERBILT KENNEDY CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (VKC UCEDD)

### **Mission:**

To provide innovative leadership in education, research, and service to promote the independence, self-determination, productivity, integration, and inclusion of individuals with developmental disabilities across the lifespan and to support their families.

### **Activities:**

Across all four VKC UCEDD areas of emphasis, faculty and staff are engaged in: Training (for pre-service and community professionals), Service and Technical Assistance (evidence-based services and supports, model programs, diagnosis and intervention), Research (program evaluation, needs assessments, public policy information), and Dissemination (Tennessee Disability Pathfinder; Vanderbilt Autism Resource Line; practical guides, tip sheets, toolkits). Areas of Emphasis include:

- Education and Early Intervention: Promoting learning in inclusive settings through Treatment and Research Institute for Autism Spectrum Disorders, Learning Assessment and Reading Clinics, training for educators, providers, and families.
- Employment: Providing and promoting postsecondary education programs and collaborating with State and community agencies on employment systems change.
- Health and Mental Health: Partnering with people with disabilities, families, and health care providers to promote high-quality care for children and adults with genetic syndromes, autism, and other disabilities.
- Quality of Life: Providing model, culturally diverse services and supports for children and adults with disabilities, parents, and siblings.

### **Contact:**

Phone (615) 322-8240  
Toll-free (1-866) 322-VUKC [8852]  
E-mail [UCEDD@vumc.org](mailto:UCEDD@vumc.org)  
Website [vk.vumc.org](http://vk.vumc.org)