



# focus facts on community living

OKLAHOMA'S FEDERALLY DESIGNATED UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (UCEDD)

December 2023

Access our website at: <https://ouhsc.edu/thecenter>

The Center for Learning and Leadership wishes you and yours a very happy holidays and happy new year!



## Support Oklahoma Family Support 360° Center Families This Holiday Season

Each year, the [Family Support 360° Center](#) provides a Holiday Assistance Program for families in need during the winter holiday season. Items for families include winter clothes, culturally appropriate toys, food baskets, and emergency kit items. Please consider [making a donation](#) through the OU Foundation to help families with children with disabilities or special health care needs this holiday season. Your donation may be tax deductible and will be used to help when we cannot use federal or state money to assist a family in need. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

## Featured Spotlight: Kodey Toney

Kodey Toney is in [The Center for Learning and Leadership's Family Leadership Network](#), an [OKLEND Family Mentor](#), a [Partners in Policymaking graduate](#), and the [Executive Director of the Pervasive Parenting Center](#) in Poteau, Oklahoma. Recently, Kodey was recognized for his leadership work in advocacy by receiving two awards. In October, Kodey was honored with the [the Judy Pluess Excellence in Autism Award from the Oklahoma Autism Network](#). In November, he received the 2023 Rural Health Advocate of the Year Award presented by [The Rural Health Association of Oklahoma](#). This honor is given in recognition of outstanding leadership and services to rural Oklahoma communities. Congratulations and thank you for all of your advocacy work in Oklahoma, Kodey!

## Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) - [OKDHSLive! Instruction Video](#)

[LIHEAP is a federally funded program that provides financial assistance to low-income Oklahoma households each year to help meet the cost of home energy.](#) The assistance program helps families with a one-time payment for winter heating and/or summer cooling costs. The Energy Crisis Assistance Program (ECAP) is also available throughout the year based on available funding for households with a member who has a life-threatening medical condition requiring heating, cooling, or electricity. To be eligible for ECAP, you must have a note from a certified physician regarding your medical equipment not being operational without the energy source, and an active cut-off date on the notice from your utility provider. To learn more about the LIHEAP programs and see how to apply, visit the [OKDHS Utility Services LIHEAP Main page](#). For more information, [contact your local DHS county office](#) or case worker.

## Update Your Waiting List Information

Is your family member on the Oklahoma [Developmental Disabilities Services Waitlist](#)? Their website offers an easy way to [update your phone number, address, and email](#) so that when it's time to be contacted, they have all your most up-to-date information. Do you have specific questions regarding your loved one's wait time? Please contact [TellDDS@okdhs.org](mailto:TellDDS@okdhs.org). To apply for DDS Waiver Services, call 405-500-1866, email [DDSintake@libertyhealth.com](mailto:DDSintake@libertyhealth.com), or [complete an application online](#).

## Announcements & Events

### January 16<sup>th</sup> | Waiver Basics and Planning for Waiver Services | 12pm | Virtual and FREE

[The Center for Learning and Leadership/UCEDD](#) and the [Oklahoma Disability Law Center](#) invite you to the community training on Waiver Basics & Planning for Waiver Services. The goal of this training is to help you understand Oklahoma's Home and Community Based Services waiver for people with disabilities living in Oklahoma. We will be offering a basic overview of waivers, explain what a waiver is and what a person is waiving along with and what supports are available on the waivers. [Pre-registration required](#).

### January 16<sup>th</sup> Broken Arrow & January 17<sup>th</sup> OKC | DDS Regional Family Meetings | 10am-2pm

Oklahoma Developmental Disability Services (DDS) invites you to their [regional family meetings in January](#). There will be one in Broken Arrow on Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup> and one in OKC on Wednesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>. Find out more about moving off the DDS waitlist and get your questions answered at one time, in one place. [Register HERE](#)

### January 24<sup>th</sup> | Service and Emotional Support Animals | 2pm | Virtual - FREE

Join the [Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council](#) on Wednesday, January 24, 2024, 2:00 p.m. to learn about Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals with the [Southwest ADA Center](#). This training will be on Zoom and is free to attend, [but you must pre-register](#).

### January 30<sup>th</sup> | Using LifeCourse to Plan for Waiver Services | 12pm | Virtual and FREE

[Register now](#) to join the [Center for Learning and Leadership/UCEDD](#), [Oklahoma Family Network](#), and the [Oklahoma Disability Law Center](#) training on Using Life Course to help prepare for waiver services. You will learn about Charting the Life Course tools and how they can help you prepare for long-term support. [Pre-registration required](#).

### February 9<sup>th</sup> | Night to Shine | Multiple Locations Statewide

The [Tim Tebow Foundation's annual Night to Shine prom event](#) will take place on Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup>. This is a worldwide event with multiple events being held across Oklahoma including [OKC \(Moore\)](#), [Stillwater](#), [Tulsa](#), [Eufaula](#), and [OKC \(Edmond\)](#). Please select your desired event location for more information.

## We want to hear from you!

Do you have news or an event to share? Please send all information including a link (if applicable) to [learn2lead-ucedd@ouhsc.edu](mailto:learn2lead-ucedd@ouhsc.edu). All submissions should be in no later than the fourth Friday of the month before publication (ex: 4<sup>th</sup> Friday in June for July's newsletter).

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The University of Oklahoma advances a diverse, equitable, and inclusive university community by embracing each person's unique contributions, background, and perspectives. OU Norman, OU Tulsa, and the Health Sciences Center recognize that fostering an inclusive environment for all, with particular attention to the needs of the historically marginalized populations, is vital to the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of our institutional mission and enhances the OU experience for all students, faculty, and staff. *focus facts* is published for the University Affiliated Developmental Disabilities Network members. Its purpose is to highlight specific information and data items relevant to developing and sustaining positive community environments. Individual information items are provided for use in this form, or for further circulation. When re-printing information please reference *focus facts* and the month of issue noted below the banner at the top of this page. The name of a contact person for additional information on items referenced in the newsletter is provided for your convenience. If you have data, information or a story to report relevant to community living, please send it to *focus facts* Editor at the Center for Learning and Leadership/UCEDD OU Health Sciences Center, PO Box 2690, Oklahoma City, OK 73126. Please include the information source, by title, a one paragraph (or less) description or story, a contact name who can provide additional information on the subject, and a daytime or evening telephone number for the contact.

If you have questions regarding the format for submissions, please call the Center for Learning and Leadership/UCEDD Headquarters Office at (405) 271-4500. The University Affiliated Developmental Disabilities Network is open to membership by any organization or individual who shares the interests of Network members. The Network is dedicated to identifying opportunities for collaboration and information exchange among its participating members, which leads to improving our statewide, regional or local capacity to provide a better living environment in Oklahoma for people with developmental and other disabilities and their families. The Network is partially supported through a grant from the U.S. Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Department of Health and Human Services, and by the Offices of the Designated Representatives of the Center for Learning and Leadership/UCEDD Collaborating Partners.

If you have a disability (Deaf/hard-of-hearing, Blind/low-vision, mobility, cognitive, etc.), and require accommodations, please reach out to [Learn2Lead@ouhsc.edu](mailto:Learn2Lead@ouhsc.edu). It is helpful if you share what type of accommodations will be needed to ensure that you are able to use the resource materials.