



focus facts on community living

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

March 2022

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

March is Developmental Disability Awareness Month

A 2022 proclamation was made by Governor Kevin Stitt to designate March as Developmental Disability Awareness Month in Oklahoma. [Read the full proclamation.](#)

New Guidance for Health Care Providers on Civil Rights Protections for People with Disabilities

The US Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) has “issued guidance to health care providers on civil rights protections for people with disabilities. The guidance, issued by the HHS Office for Civil Rights, makes clear that in light of the continuing public health emergency, when resources can be scarce, it is vital that individuals with disabilities are not prevented from receiving needed health care benefits and services as this violates federal civil rights laws.” Read the full press release: [new guidance from HHS.](#)

CLL/UCEDD Donates KN-95 Mask across Oklahoma

[The Center for Learning and Leadership](#), Oklahoma's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), in partnership with the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center and OU Health, was able to distribute 150,000 KN-95 mask to more than 25 CLL Connected community-based providers, academic partners and community organizations to help protect Oklahomans with disabilities and those who care for them. Read more about the [CLL/UCEDD mask distribution as published by the Association of University of Centers on Disabilities \(AUCD\).](#)

Autism Foundation of Oklahoma (AFO) Launches Sensory Kits for First Responders

The AFO is donating sensory kits to Oklahoma police departments to help police officers better work with people with developmental disabilities, including autism. The kits contain items such as headphones, sensory toys, and communication cards. To fund the kits, Emily Scott, Executive Director for the AFO, reports receiving generous donations from Walmart locations in and around the OKC metro area, along with gifts from Baker Speech Clinic, the Masonic Charity Foundation of Oklahoma, MUDD Printing and the St. Louis Cardinals. Read more about the AFO Sensory Kits from [the City of Norman](#), [Oklahoma press release](#) and the [Oklahoma New9 news report](#).

Making Transition after High School Better for Students with IDD

In a recent editorial in the *Oklahoman*, Oklahoma State [Senator Julie Kirt](#) (SD 30) and [Dr. Jennifer Jones](#) write, “Everyone benefits when individuals with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities can live, work, learn and play alongside one another.” An interim study at the Oklahoma legislature held by Sen. Kirt confirmed there are limited supports available for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They call for policies to “build a more inclusive state where all Oklahomans can thrive, belong and make meaningful contributions to our communities. By making sure our state supports strong post-high school transitions for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, we all benefit.” Read the full opinion piece: [“Viewpoint: We all benefit by making Oklahoma a place where all people can thrive”](#)

Announcements/Events

Annual Autism Advocacy Day

The Autism Foundation of Oklahoma in coordination with other state and local agencies, will hold the 6th Annual Autism Advocacy Day at the Oklahoma State Capitol. For more [information on the Autism Advocacy Day check out the Facebook event.](#)

Beeping Easter Egg Hunt

The **Heartland Council of the Blind** will host the “Beeping Easter Egg Hunt for the Blind and Special Needs Children plus their Siblings.” The event is scheduled for Saturday, April 16, 2022, from 1:00-2:00 PM. Children are asked to bring their own Easter baskets. Reservations are required and donations are accepted. Please call (405) 642-1068

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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 other 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. It is helpful if you share what type of accommodations will be needed to ensure that you are able to use the resource materials.