



SDBP Statement on the Proposed FY27 Federal Budget

On behalf of the **Society for Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics (SDBP)**, we are expressing our strong opposition to the proposed FY27 budget cuts to programs that support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

At least 6.3 million children in the U.S. ages 3-17 have a developmental disability. They live in every state and are supported by caregivers from a broad range of backgrounds and beliefs. Regardless of political affiliations, these families deserve meaningful opportunities for community engagement and independence. However, the President's FY2027 Federal Budget Proposal, released on April 3, 2026, includes a 12.5% cut to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. This includes the elimination of the Administration for Community Living (ACL), an agency central to the mission of SDBP that supports critical programs and services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Under the proposed elimination of ACL, several disability-related programs will be incorporated into a new HHS agency: the Administration for Children, Families, and Communities (ACFC). Other programs will be completely dismantled, including Preschool Development Grants, Voting Access for People with Disabilities, and University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs).

Since the 1960s, UCEDDs have advanced the engagement and value of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities by expanding employment opportunities, supporting caregivers and service providers, and promoting training and research across systems and communities. Today, more than 60 UCEDDs operate nationwide, with at least one in every state. As an example of its impact, in FY23, UCEDD-supported programs reached over 600,000 trainees, delivering disability-related education in areas such as childcare, health care, education, employment, housing, and transportation.

The proposed FY27 budget would also decrease funding to two key programs that, like UCEDDs, have supported people with disabilities since the 1960s: Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Other Related Disabilities (LEND) programs and the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD). LEND programs provide interdisciplinary training for professionals, family members, and self-advocates who are dedicated to working with individuals who have intellectual and developmental disabilities. In 2022 alone, more than 1,350 individuals completed LEND training across 60 US LEND program sites.

The NICHD provides direct funding for the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Centers (IDDRCs). The 15 current IDDRCs are the cornerstone for convergence of basic science, clinical, and translational research related to intellectual and developmental disabilities. Between 40-100 research projects are supported on an annual basis through IDDRC funding that advance our understanding of development and disability, including how to improve outcomes for youth and their families.

Given the prevalence of developmental disabilities across the United States and the significant support UCEDDs and IDDRCs have provided these individuals for decades, we strongly believe that the dismantling of the ACL will have a detrimental effect on children with developmental disabilities and their families. The consequences of these funding cuts will include:

- **Reduced independence** among individuals who have developmental and intellectual disabilities, driving higher long-term costs across healthcare, education, and social services.
- **Greater caregiver burden** due directly to decreases in family supports, which includes threatening economic productivity by limiting caregivers' ability to maintain their own employment.
- **Elimination of training programs** in developmental disabilities that will reduce access to qualified developmental-behavioral health professionals and threaten the future of workforce capacity.

SDBP strongly urges Congress to continue to support children with disabilities and their families by rejecting the proposed changes to the HHS budget in the President's proposed FY27 budget.

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SDBP Mission Statement: Optimizing the development and behavioral health of all children and families through interprofessional collaboration.

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