

ANNUAL REPORT

OCTOBER 1, 2023 -
SEPTEMBER 30, 2024



**INDEPENDENCE
CENTER**

About the Endependence Center



The Endependence Center, Incorporated (ECI) is a consumer controlled, community-based, cross-disability, non-residential, private, non-profit Center for Independent Living (CIL) operated by and for individuals with disabilities in South Hampton Roads, including the cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach and the counties of Isle of Wight and Southampton.



Chesapeake, Franklin City, Isle of Wight, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Southampton, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach

ECI provides an array of independent living services to individuals with disabilities and to the community.

Our goal is to prepare individuals and to prepare the community for the full integration of people with disabilities into society.

Message from Executive Director

As we reflect on another incredible year, we are proud to celebrate 43 years of promoting independent living, equal rights, and access for people with disabilities throughout South Hampton Roads. Since 1981, the Endependence Center, Inc. (ECI) has been steadfast in our commitment to advocating for the disability community and empowering individuals to lead independent, fulfilling lives.

We want to take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt thanks to our community partners, ECI participants, Board Members, and dedicated staff. Your unwavering efforts and support has been instrumental in making this another successful year. Together, we have strengthened our ability to advocate for disability rights and provide vital services to the community.

A cornerstone of our mission is ensuring that people with disabilities have access to the services and resources they need to live independently in their communities. Every service we offer is rooted in the independent living philosophy, which emphasizes equal opportunities in all aspects of life.

As we enter 2025, we recognize that while much progress has been made, there is still more work to do. Access, inclusion, and advocacy will continue to be our priorities, and we are committed to addressing these challenges with the same passion and determination as in years past.

Thank you for being an essential part of our journey. We look forward to continuing this important work together and building a future where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Nichole Davis, Executive Director

Independent Living

Core Services

As a Center for Independent Living, ECI provides five Core Services:

Number of
People
Receiving
Service:

Peer Mentoring Connecting with other people with disabilities for support and opportunities to share valuable life experiences – this model is based on the belief that a Peer Mentor with shared disability related experiences is the best guide to independence.

112

Independent Living Skills Training Participants identify training needs to gain skills for living independently. Monthly workshops with rotating topics are offered as well. Participants who set personal goals and choose to work with a Peer Mentor also gain independent living skills throughout the mentoring process.

56

Transition ECI staff coordinates resources and services to help prevent individuals with disabilities from going into a nursing facility or institution and to enable individuals with disabilities to leave nursing facilities or institutions. For youth (14 to 24) with disabilities, ECI provides independent living services that empower youth to achieve self-determination and independence in the community.

78

Information and Referral ECI connects individuals with resources and services in the community, including transportation, healthcare, and legal assistance.

187

Advocacy Assistance is provided to individuals with disabilities to resolve discrimination complaints. Staff members participate in various activities that result in positive changes and greater accessibility and are involved in a number of systems advocacy efforts locally, regionally and across Virginia.

223

Additional Services

- Assistive technology for people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Career supports
- Community education
- Technical assistance
- Virginia Housing home modifications for renters, homeowners, and military veterans.
- Services facilitation for people using Medicaid consumer-directed home and community-based services
- Pre-Employment Transition Services for youth with disabilities

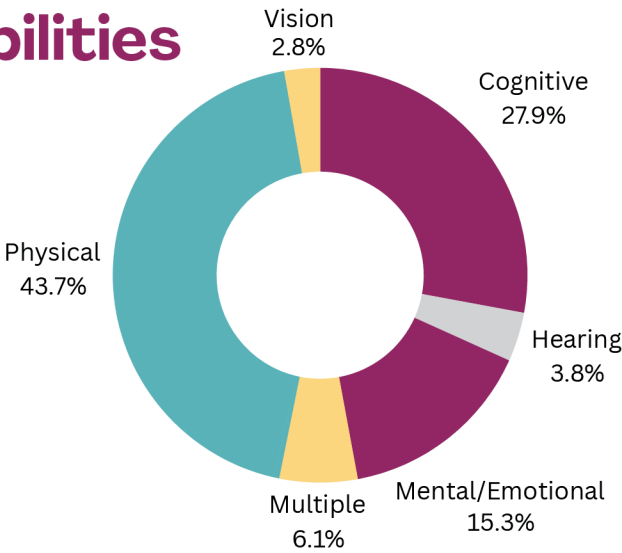
Who We Serve

Participants

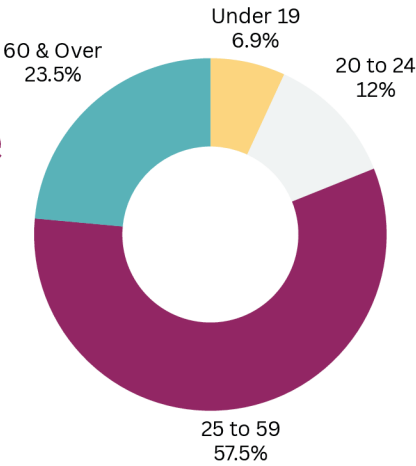
756

Participants engaged with ECI

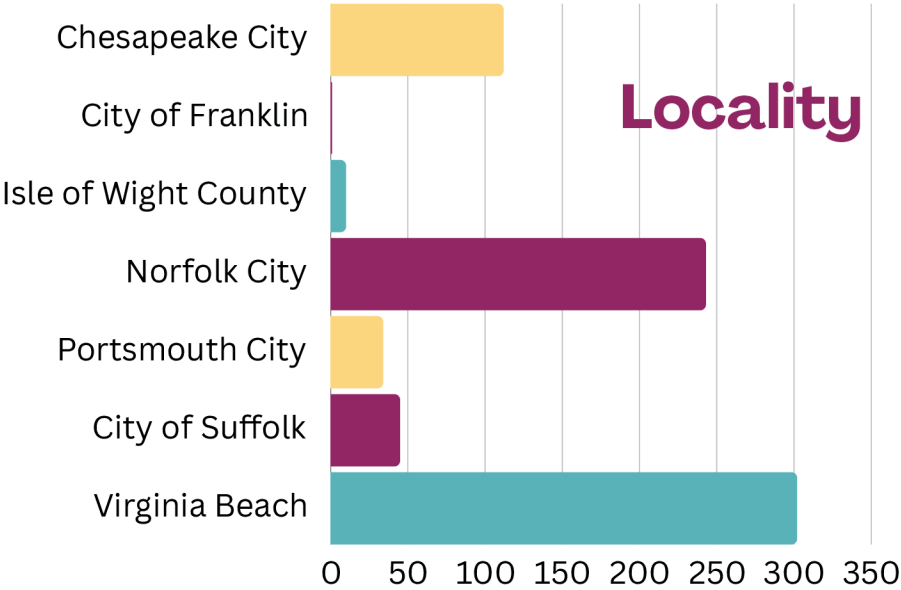
Disabilities



Age

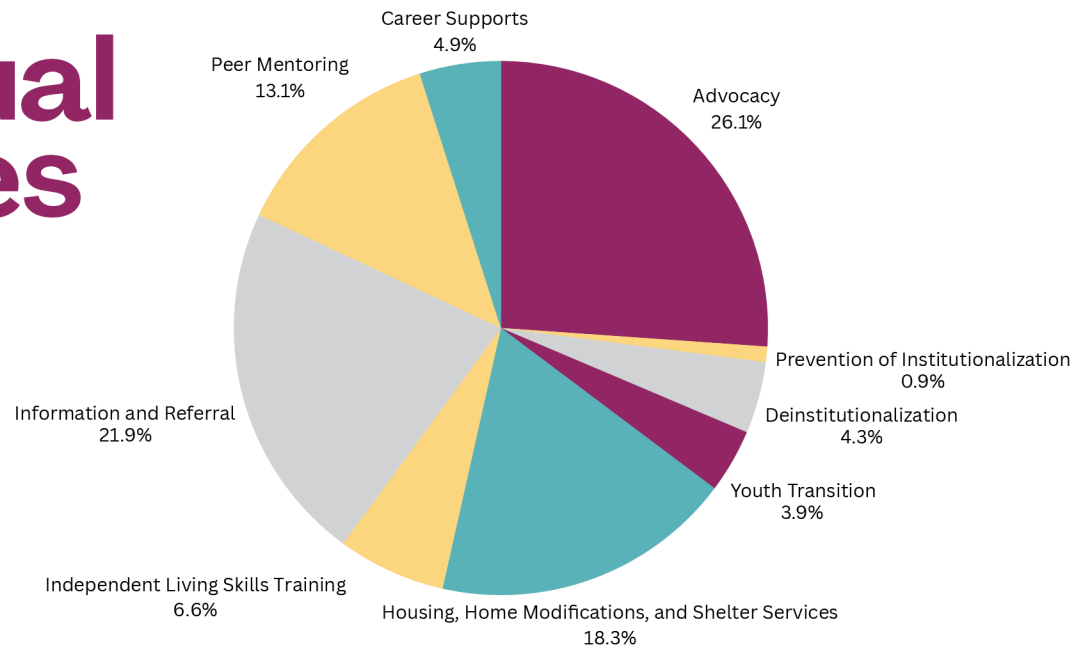


Locality

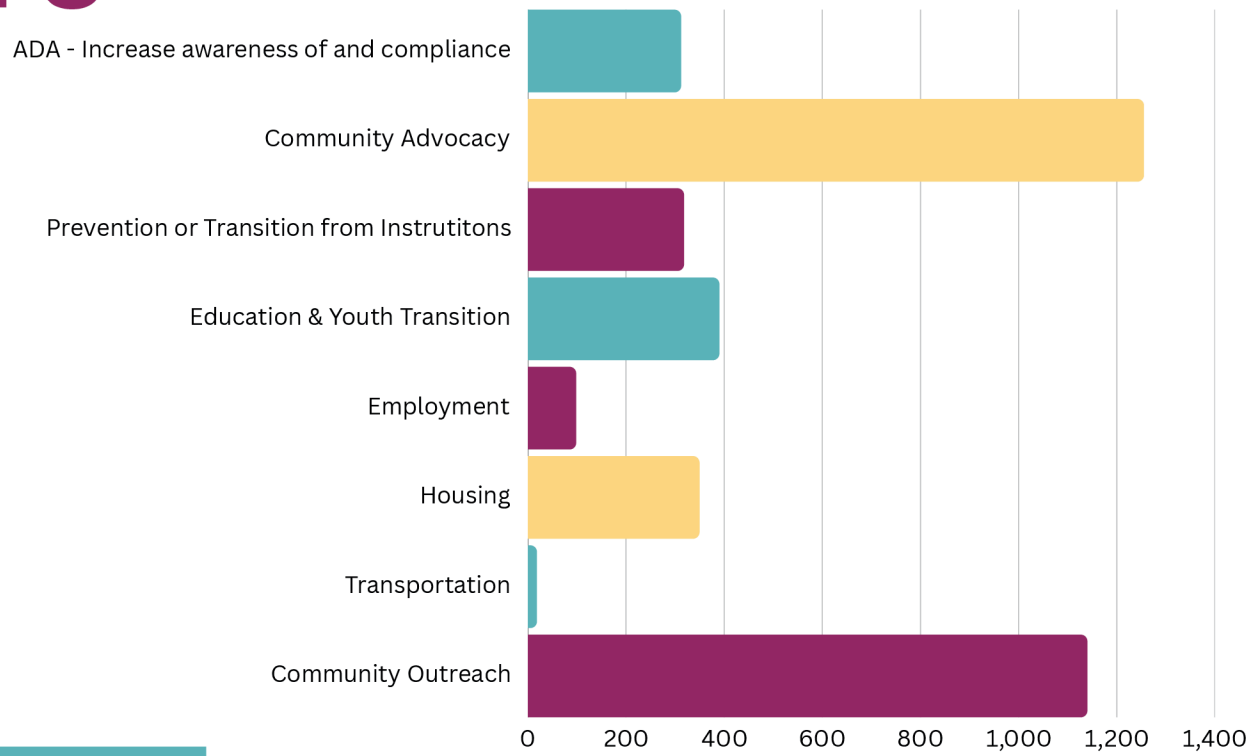


Service Data

Individual Services



Community Hours



3,072 community contacts

Accomplishments

Highlights

Delores successfully made the transition from a nursing facility to independent community living. Her journey was not without its challenges. One of her significant hurdles was obtaining crucial identification documents to be able to even apply for housing. After applying to several different subsidized housing complexes and spending a full year on the waitlist for affordable housing, Delores moved into her new home.

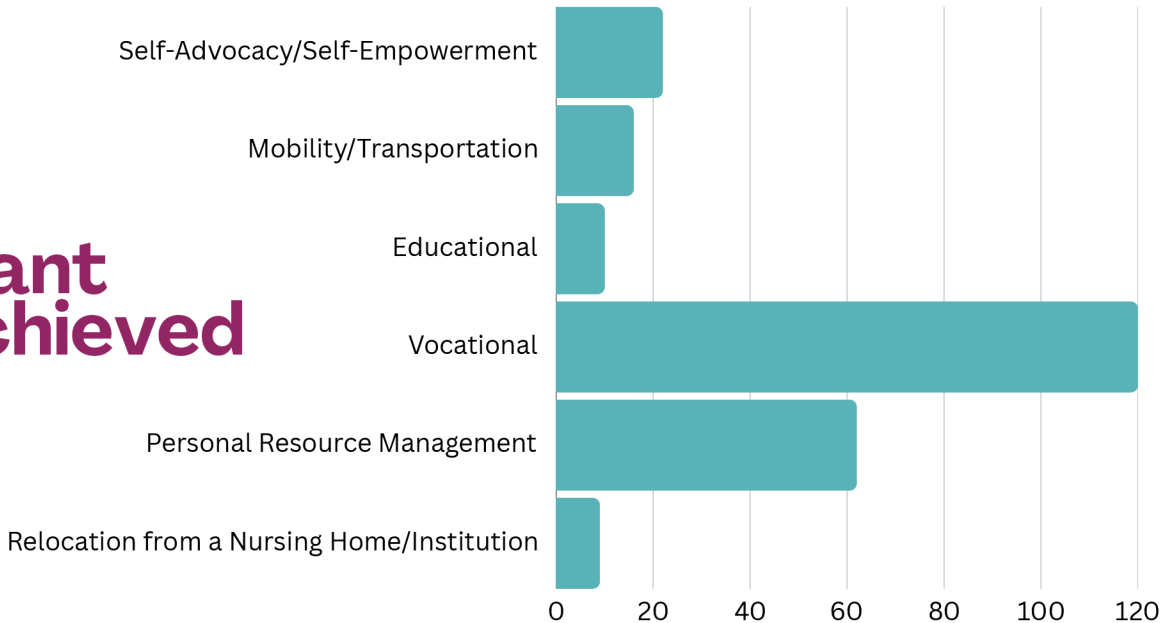
Once Delores moved into her new home, she encountered further setbacks related to her paperwork from the facility and issues with her insurance provider. These challenges made her initial adjustment to independence more complicated. Despite these obstacles, Delores has now been living in her own apartment for the past six months and is actively working on maintaining her independence while adjusting to the intricacies of community living. She is taking steps to integrate herself fully into her neighborhood, forming connections and establishing a routine that promotes her autonomy and well-being.

Gigi has been an active participant at the Endependence Center for many years. Five years ago, she faced homelessness, relying on the support of family and friends for shelter, often sleeping on their couches or in her RV while waiting for stable housing.

Determined to find a permanent home, Gigi applied to numerous subsidized housing programs. However, her dream was always to live at Sullivan House. After years on various waiting lists, she finally received a letter from Sullivan House requesting additional documentation to proceed with her application. She was prepared and able to submit all necessary paperwork without delay.

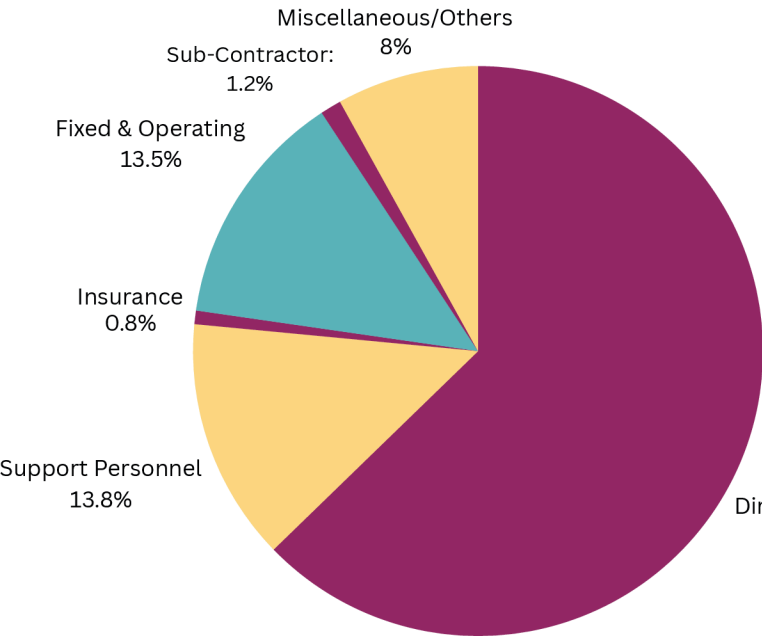
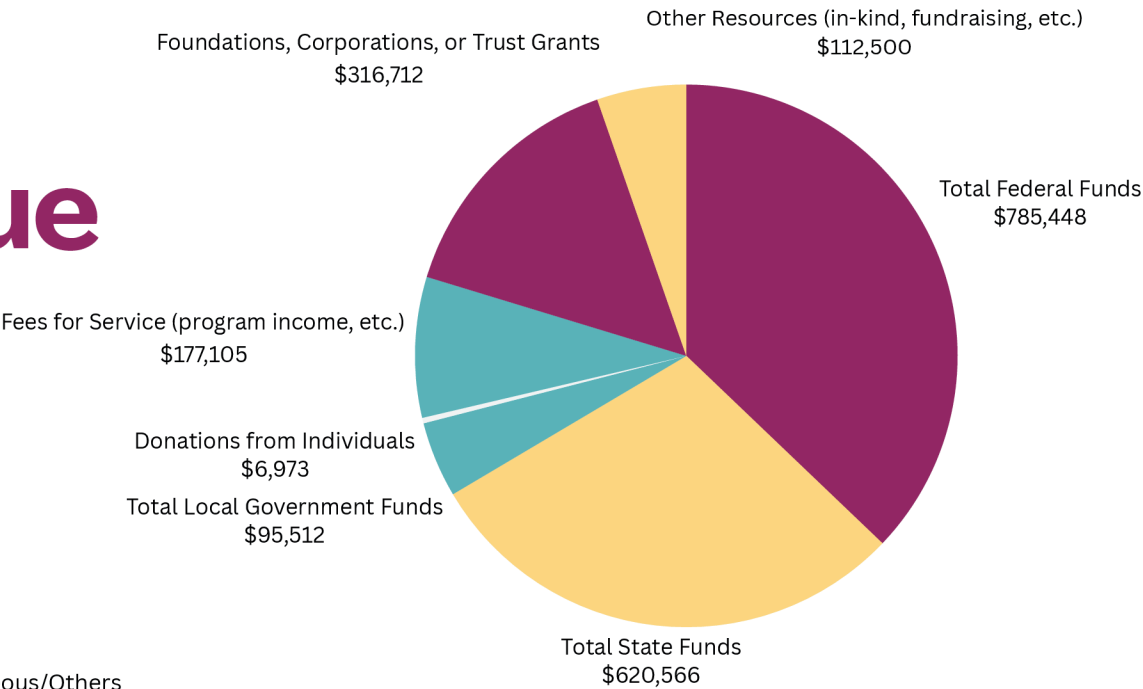
A few weeks later, Gigi received the life-changing news—she had been approved for housing. Her journey was long and filled with challenges, but she never gave up. Through perseverance and determination, she achieved her goal of securing a home, demonstrating the power of resilience and the importance of accessible housing resources.

Participant Goals Achieved



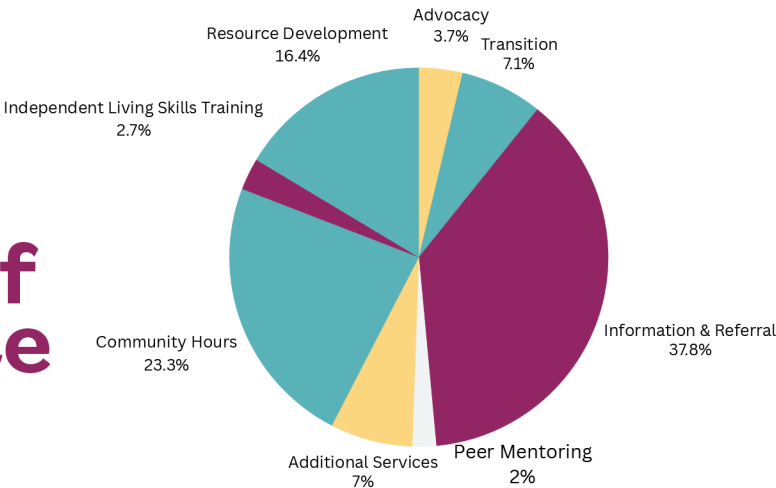
Financial Information

Total Revenue



Total Expenses

Breakdown of Direct Service Provision



Board of Directors for Reporting Period

Lisbet Dula, President
Nancy Perry, Vice President
Cee-Cee Simmons, Treasurer
Claudia Godoy
Deon Latham
Erika Neville
Deanna Smith
Malcolm Higgins
Kambria Lannetti
Ed Turner

Staff List for Reporting Period

Nichole Davis, Executive Director
Sarah Bailey, Youth Independent Living Coordinator
Matt Ballard, Administrative Assistant
Olivia Brichter, Youth Independent Living Coordinator
Maureen Chappell, Employment Coordinator
Felicia Brown, Facilitation Coordinator
Jackie Brown, Receptionist
Vantoria Clay, Housing Coordinator
Frances Durham, Community Work Incentives Coordinator
Jeanette Flanders, Community Work Incentives Coordinator
Catrina Flowers, Bookkeeper
Emily Hoapili, Operations Manager
Shernika Holley, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Outreach Coordinator
Maureen Hollowell, Director of Advocacy & Services
Linda Johnson, Director of Employment Programs
Katherine Keesler, Personal Care Attendant
Rena Lewis, Independent Living Coordinator
Tammy Manno, Administrative Assistant
Amy Ouellette, Independent Living Coordinator
Carol Robinson, Employment Coordinator
Montrell Rodgers, Independent Living Coordinator
Amadeo San Antonio, Finance Director
Paige Shaw, Independent Living Coordinator
Cheryl Simpson, Director of Operations & Employment Programs
Ben White, Employment Coordinator
Travis Webb, Independent Living Coordinator
Latoshia Wilson-Nixon, Independent Living Coordinator



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