



CONNECTIONS

Challenge Barriers. Build Independence.

ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2025



[Image Description: A young woman smiles while standing close to a chestnut horse outdoors under a bright blue sky, during the Youth Equity Summer Program.]

Who We Are.

Connections provides much needed services that assist people with disabilities to remain independent in their community. Connections is one of nine state certified Independent Living Centers providing services in Colorado since July 5, 1985.

Serving consumers in northeastern Colorado including Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, Weld, and Yuma Counties, we also provide additional services and programs in parts of Nebraska and Wyoming. Our services are no-cost and voluntary for our participants.

Connections challenges barriers, both physical and attitudinal, which restrict the rights and personal development opportunities of people with disabilities. Our mission is to promote the full inclusion and integration of people who live with all types of disabilities into all levels of society.

Our staff and board of directors include multiple persons who live with disabilities; through personal knowledge and experience, we are effective in promoting independent living and empowerment.

Core Services:

Advocacy, Independent Living Skills, Information & Referral, Peer Support and Transitions



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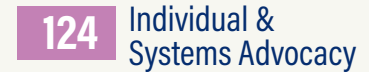
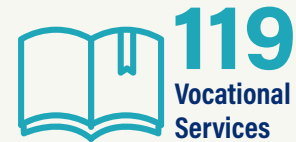
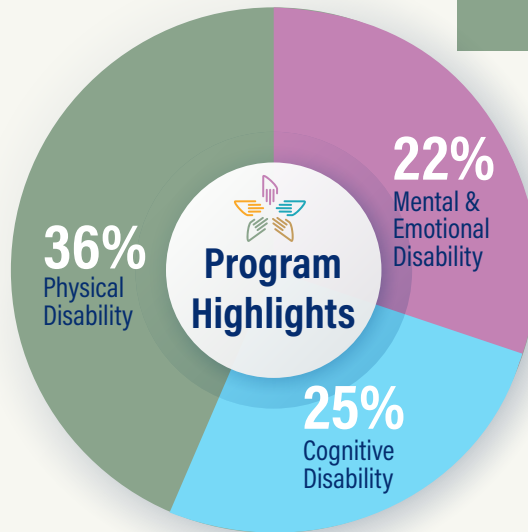
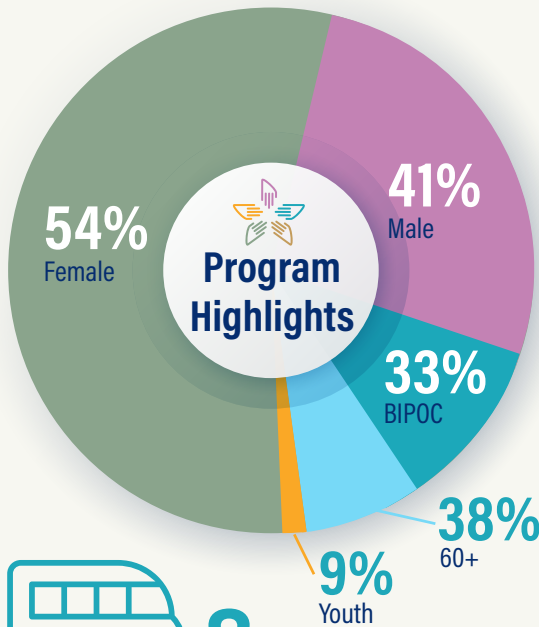
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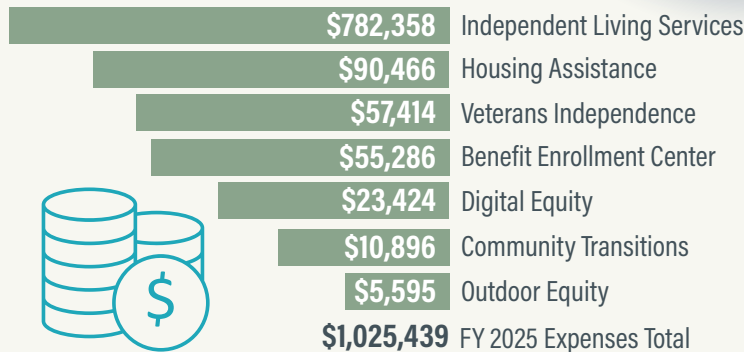


2025

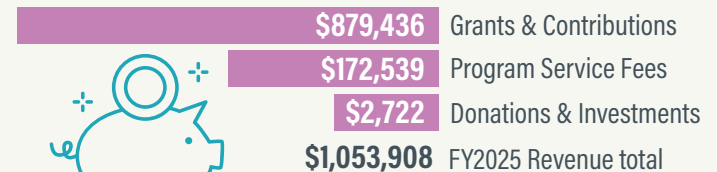
By the Numbers



Expenses: Fiscal Year 2025



Revenue: Fiscal Year 2025





Consumer Success Stories:

Building Safety and Confidence Through Language Access

In 2025, Connections supported a single parent who was facing ongoing safety concerns at home that affected both him and his children. As an English-language learner, he struggled to communicate with his landlord and felt unsure how to advocate for his family.

When he contacted Connections, staff member Alexis provided translation support, helping him clearly explain his concerns and understand his options. With support from his Independent Living Specialist and Housing Coordinator, he developed a plan, explored resources, and took steps to create a safer living environment.

The consumer later reported that the safety issues had stopped and that he now feels more secure in his home. Encouraged by this progress, he continued working with staff on new goals, including completing annual housing paperwork to maintain stable housing.

This story highlights the importance of language access in independent living services. When communication barriers are removed, consumers can advocate for themselves, protect their families, and move forward with confidence.

A New Home and Renewed Safety

During FY 2025, Connections supported a consumer who was working to secure safe, stable housing while facing significant barriers, including disability-related challenges, discrimination, and concerns for her personal safety. At the same time, she remained committed to completing her degree in Early Childhood Education.

When she requested help relocating, our Housing Coordinator and Director of Programs worked together to provide immediate support. They helped her create a plan that prioritized both her safety and her long-term goals.

With their assistance, she successfully transferred her housing voucher to a new community, secured an apartment, and completed the move under a tight deadline. Staff also coordinated a last-minute housing inspection to ensure her voucher remained active and her transition stayed on track.

As a result, she obtained a safer home, maintained her job, and continued pursuing her degree. Although she has since moved outside our service area, we are grateful to have supported her during such an important time. Her determination and resilience continue to inspire us.

Groups & Workshops at Connections - Free for Consumers

- Employment Group, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m., (1st & 3rd Wednesdays)
- My Social Security Account, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m., (2nd Tuesdays)
- Book a Librarian, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m., (2nd Wednesdays)
- Brain Injury Group, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m., (2nd Wednesdays)
- PEAK Workshop, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m., (3rd Tuesdays)
- Community Circle Group, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m., (Last Wednesday)



{Image description: Three Connections Staff wearing volunteer shirts for Disability Rights Advocacy Day at the Colorado State Capitol.}



{Connections staff and an advocate smile for a photo inside the Colorado State Capitol for Disability Rights Advocacy Day.}

Advocacy & Legislative Impact



Budget cuts, restrictions, and shortfalls defined the 2025/2026 Colorado legislative session. In response, Connections alongside our many partners across the state prepared for challenges on multiple fronts to protect people with disabilities and the benefits that help them live independently.

It was a difficult year, as Medicare, Medicaid, and long-term services and supports faced significant threats. A budget shortfall of more than \$1 billion meant many of our most vulnerable community members were able to speak directly with legislators and the Governor's Office about how proposed cuts would affect their everyday lives.

Connections CEO, Rochelle Mitchell, testified before the Joint Budget Committee on behalf of all nine Centers for Independent Living in Colorado, emphasizing the importance of continued state funding. That funding allows Centers to provide no-cost services that empower people with disabilities to live independently and equitably in their communities.

During the FY26 session, Connections collaborated with the Colorado Association of Centers for Independent Living (ACCIL), of which we are an active member, to author and present HB26-1018, our first co-authored bill in more than 10 years.

The bill addresses barriers that often delay or prevent individuals from transitioning out of skilled nursing facilities and back into living independently. Too often, people with disabilities must navigate cumbersome and restrictive processes to regain their independence. ACCIL has worked for many years to identify solutions and remove these barriers.

Rochelle Mitchell drafted a substantial portion of the bill's penalty section and, alongside three other state directors, participated in countless hours of meetings to help move the legislation through the General Assembly. While the bill has since been converted into a year-long study, it will return in a future session as we continue working with the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy & Financing to address the systemic challenges faced by people with disabilities living in skilled nursing or congregate care settings.

Overall, it was an exceptionally busy legislative year. Connections and ACCIL supported, testified on, and engaged in more than two dozen pieces of legislation. We are proud to advocate for disability rights in this way and invite you to share your experiences and ideas for future policy priorities as we look ahead to 2027.

Consumer Survey Results

One hundred nine consumers participated in our annual consumer survey, which measures how well Connections serves consumers. Participants could choose to remain anonymous or provide identifying information. We welcome all forms of feedback as we continually work to enhance our programs, improve service delivery, and ensure consumers remain in control of their Independent Living Plans and personal goals.

Survey questions focused on consumer satisfaction with services (see Graphic 1), length of time with Connections (see Graphic 2), and how Connections helped consumers gain or maintain their independence (see Graphic 3).

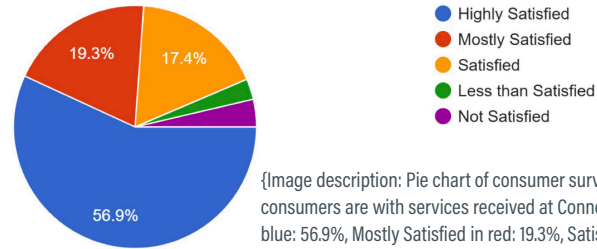
Eighty-five percent of surveyed consumers were referred to Connections by another agency, family member, friend, or person with a disability.

When asked what services they would like to see added or learn more about, consumers shared several ideas. Suggestions included additional support in navigating disability services within legal settings; expanded rural outreach, such as a satellite office or programs in communities outside the Greeley area; advocacy for medical issues; technology classes; information and referral services related to civil rights activism; protection against Social Security scams; and classes such as chair yoga, jewelry making, gardening, outdoor activities, and more social opportunities for seniors.

Graphic 1

Overall, how satisfied are you with the services you received at Connections?

109 responses

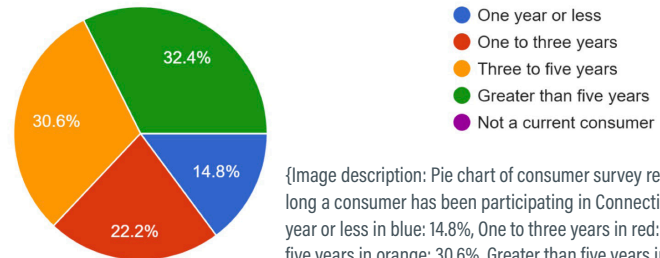


{Image description: Pie chart of consumer survey results on how satisfied consumers are with services received at Connections. Highly Satisfied in blue: 56.9%, Mostly Satisfied in red: 19.3%, Satisfied in orange: 17.4%, Less than Satisfied in green: 2.8%, Not Satisfied in purple: 3.7%}

Graphic 2

How long have you been a consumer with Connections? (Optional)

108 responses

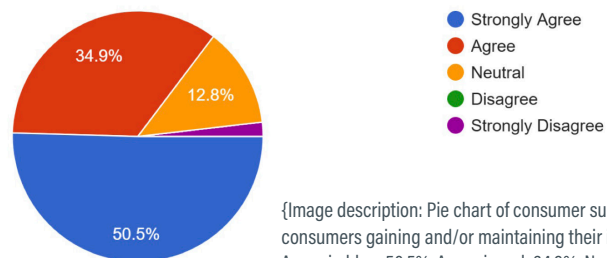


{Image description: Pie chart of consumer survey results on how long a consumer has been participating in Connections services. One year or less in blue: 14.8%, One to three years in red: 22.2%, Three to five years in orange: 30.6%, Greater than five years in green: 32.4%}

Graphic 3

Working with Connections has helped me be more independent or to maintain my independence.

109 responses



{Image description: Pie chart of consumer survey results regarding consumers gaining and/or maintaining their independence. Strongly Agree in blue: 50.5%, Agree in red: 34.9%, Neutral in orange: 12.8%, Disagree in green: 0%, Strongly Disagree in purple: 1.8%}

{Image description: A group of adults and youth stand in a semicircle inside a large open-air pavilion. An adult faces the group holding a pamphlet.}

Grants Received.



Thank you to CDOO! This funding supports our staff dedicated to benefits enrollment assistance for consumers.



Thank you to The Weld Trust! This funding supports the general operating expenses of our organization.



Thank you to the City of Dacono! This funding supports vehicle maintenance and mileage, helping our staff with travel and outreach efforts in Dacono.



Thank you to the Colorado Department of Outdoor Recreation, supporting our Outdoor Equity Youth Summer program! Youth with disabilities have opportunities to explore the outdoors and build leadership skills.



{Image description: Connections branded vehicle parked outside the office building.}



{Image description: A group of people launch paddleboards and kayaks from a rocky shoreline onto a calm lake on a sunny day.}



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1331 8th Ave, Greeley, CO 80631



{Image description: Two smiling staff members sit behind a "Connections" information table decorated with festive holiday accessories.}



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ConnectionsColorado.org  

Collaborations

