



CAPITAL AREA QUARTERLY

SUMMER NEWSLETTER FOR JUNE, JULY, AUGUST



2356 DRUSILLA LANE, BATON ROUGE, LA 70809

PHONE: (225) 216-7474 | FAX: (225) 216-7977

WWW.FHFGBR.ORG

HOURS: MONDAY TO FRIDAY 8 AM TO 4 PM



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Office Hours

Monday-Friday
8:00 am - 4:00 am



Office Closures

Independence Day: July 4, 2022
Labor Day: September 5, 2022

MEET OUR STAFF

Executive Director: Dr. Marilyn Thornton
mthornton@fhfgbr.org

Executive Administrative Assistant: Angel Matthews
amatthews@fhfgbr.org

Bookkeeper: Vicki Wall
vwall@fhfgbr.org

Receptionist: Mary Green-King
Receptionist@fhfgbr.org

Director of Inclusive Education: Cynthia Chesterfield
cchesterfield@fhfgbr.org

Early Steps Community Outreach Specialist: Debra Terrell
dterrell@fhfgbr.org

Empowerment Program Director: Deatra Peoples Blount
dpeoples@fhfgbr.org

Outreach and Resource Specialist: Keisha Hertzock
khertzock@fhfgbr.org

Outreach and Resource Specialist: Kimberly Smith
ksmith@fhfgbr.org

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The 4th Quarter of Families Helping Families Fiscal Year 2022 presents many interesting challenges for our Center as we return to in-person activities. We have a full schedule of activities, events, and webinars we are hosting and co-hosting this Quarter. Educational webinars will be offered each month to keep parents and families informed and connected to needed resources. As we surface from COVID lockdowns, isolations, and limitations; we are engaging and interacting more in and with our communities. There is still a need to be protective and careful of exposure to other variants of the viruses still existing in our environment. FHFGGBR will continue to research available resources for Region 2 that would help address problems our families face in the current COVID 19 "plus" environment. Let us know what are the pandemic challenges experienced by those with special needs in your family. We want to identify how we can better serve you.

FHFGGBR has noted the various awareness months related to people with disabilities coming this Quarter. April is Autism Awareness Month. Although we were not able to convene our famous Autism Walk and Run due to COVID, we look forward to this event occurring next fiscal year in a major way. Stay tuned for notices seeking volunteers and support from our communities. We are connecting with and supporting organizations and community partners who are sponsoring Autism Awareness Events this quarter.

May is noted as Mental Health Awareness month. FHFGGBR is seeking the engagement of our communities to help in reducing the stigma attached to Mental Health. Although everyone is impacted in some way by this condition, our communities and families are not seeking help. We are discovering there are a wealth of tools and resources that exist to support families with special needs children, youth, and young adults. FHFGGBR is here to help you access the information and referrals you may need. If you or someone you care about are struggling with issues related to your mental health, please seek help. While May is Mental Health Awareness month, it is important to focus on your overall health and mental well-being every day. See the useful information and articles on mental health included in this issue.

June is the month parents are seeking summer camps for their children. We have identified resources for this issue including special needs camps. We pray for a safe and rewarding summer for everyone. The FHFGGBR Center is open for in-person visits. We are looking forward to you visiting the FHFGGBR staff, hearing from you, and letting us know how we can better serve you in Region 2 parishes of East and West Baton Rouge, East and West Feliciana, Iberville, Pointe Coupee, and Ascension.

Peace, Love and Joy!

Dr. Marilyn Thornton



OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide the individualized services, information, resources, and support to positively enhance the independence, productivity, and integration of persons with disabilities into the community.

PARISHES WE SERVE

- East Baton Rouge
- West Baton Rouge
- East Feliciana
- West Feliciana
- Ascension
- Pointe Coupee
- Iberville



ESTABLISHED IN 1992, FHFGBR is a family driven resource center for individuals with disabilities and their families. Because we have a family member with a disability, we understand the importance of supporting others facing similar experiences. The three core services of FHFGBR are parent-to-parent support, education/training, and referrals to services both in-house and in the community. These services are accomplished through support calls, networking and workshops. Disability-related supports and referrals are available to anyone at any time. Understanding the importance of awareness and acceptance of individuals with disabilities in the community helps us achieve our ultimate goal of inclusion.

Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge is funded by many individuals, foundations, small businesses, and corporations.

Major Funders Include:



Louisiana Developmental
Disabilities Council



Thank you for your continued support!



HELLO FALL!

Handy Handouts®

Free informational handouts for educators, parents, and students

Back to School Basics

by Rynette R. Kjesbo, M.S., CCC-SLP

It's that time of year again! Summer is over and a new school year is beginning. Some students look forward to the start of the new school year. Others do not. Here are some tips you can use to get your children back into the swing of things and ready to take on the new school year.

Tips For the New School Year

• Establish a routine.

Children need plenty of sleep to be able to wake up ready for a new school day. Set a schedule for when your children will go to bed and when they will wake up, and stick to it! Getting enough sleep each night will ensure that your children are awake, alert, and ready to learn.



• Have a study space.

Set aside a workspace in the house where your children will study and do their homework. Make sure the space is quiet and has plenty of light. Put a box of supplies in the workspace so your children will have paper, pencils, erasers, etc. available to them, and they won't waste valuable work time looking for them.



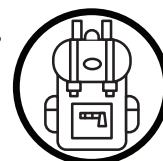
• Create a school calendar.

Sit down with your children and mark important school events for the year on a calendar. Mark parent conference nights, field trips, project due dates, report card dates, and holidays. This would also be a good time to talk to your children about what you expect from them (as far as grades, behavior, etc.) during the school year. Hang the calendar in a location where everyone can see it.



• Prepare the night before.

Mornings can be a stressful time, especially if you're not prepared. Pack backpacks the night before so your children have time to check that they have all of their books, notebooks, and homework assignments. Set the backpacks by the door so your children can grab them as they run out the door in the morning. Pack lunches the night before so they are ready to go in the morning. Let your children lay out their clothes at night so they know exactly what they'll put on the next day. Know what your children will eat for breakfast in the morning. Preparing for the next school day the night before can save you a lot of time and aggravation in the morning.



Preventing Bullying

What is bullying?

Bullying is a form of youth violence. CDC defines bullying as any unwanted aggressive behavior(s) by another youth or group of youths, who are not siblings or current dating partners that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated. Bullying may inflict harm or distress on the targeted youth including physical, psychological, social, or educational harm.¹

Bullying can include aggression that is physical (hitting, tripping), verbal (name calling, teasing), or relational/social (spreading rumors, leaving out of group). Bullying can also occur through technology and is called electronic bullying or cyberbullying.¹ A young person can be a perpetrator, a victim, or both (also known as “bully/victim”).

How big is the problem?

Bullying is widespread in the United States. While the magnitude and types of bullying can vary across communities and demographic groups, bullying negatively impacts all youth involved—those who are bullied, those who bully others, and bystanders.

- **Bullying is common.** 1 in 5 high school students reported being bullied on school property in the last year.²
- **Bullying is frequent.** Bullying is among the most commonly reported discipline problems in public schools. Nearly 12% of public schools report that bullying happens at least once a week. Reports of bullying are highest for middle schools (22%) compared to high schools (15%), combined schools (11%), and primary schools (8%).³
- **Bullying can happen online.** More than 15% of high school students report being cyberbullied in the last year.²

1 in 5 high school students reported being **bullied** at school in the last year.



Common types of bullying:

Physical

hitting, kicking, punching, spitting, tripping, pushing



Emotional

teasing, name calling, inappropriate sexual comments, or verbal or written threats



Social

excluding someone, spreading rumors, making embarrassing comments





• It's who we are. It's what we do. •

Teachers
+
Parents
+
Students
+
Community Partners
=
SUCCESS



Louisiana Bullying Prevention Law

Presenter:
Cynthia Chesterfield
Director of Education
FHFGBR

Webinar Date:

August 25, 2022
10:00 am -11:15 am

The content includes:

- Frequently used Acronyms & Bulletins
- Background on the law
- Bullying Statistics
- Louisiana's Policy
- Bullying Prevention Tips
- Resources

Please follow this link to register:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/rt/788520686262251791>



This training is made possible through a contract with the Louisiana Department of Education and LaPTIC

DID YOU KNOW THAT YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL IS SUPPOSED TO GIVE YOU PRIOR WRITTEN NOTICE OF ANY CHANGE IN HIS SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES?

Learn your Parental Rights by registering now for this free webinar.



THURSDAY
Sept 1st
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm



Registration Link:

<https://tinyurl.com/ParentRightsSept1>



Audience: Parents, Caregivers,
and Professionals of School-
Aged Children/Students.

ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATIONS
AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST FOR
LOUISIANA FAMILIES



Changing Lives Every Day

SPECIAL EDUCATION FAQ 3.0

WEDNESDAY
Sept 21st
12:30 pm - 1:30 pm

Accessibility Accommodations Available Upon
Request for Louisiana FAMILIES

Registration Link:

<https://tinyurl.com/FAQ3Sept21>



Audience: Parents,
Caregivers, and
Professionals of School-
Aged Children/Students.



Changing Lives Every Day

Join us for this **FREE interactive training** on the most frequently asked questions about the **transition process** from high school to adult life.

Co-Host:



TRANSITION SERVICES AND PLANNING

Disability Rights Louisiana (DRLA) is a statewide non-profit agency providing **FREE** legal services, advocacy, and other supports to children, adults, and seniors with disabilities.

What Are Transition Services and Planning?

Transition services are a set of services provided to the student by the school district and sometimes other agencies. These services assist the student as he or she moves from high school to independent living, higher education (including college, vocational school and trade school) or employment. This is called “transition.”

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), public school districts must help special education students and their parents make the transition from high school to life after school.



Transition planning is determining what services, education, employment, and even living skill activities will best help each student meet his or her needs. Individual Education Pro-grams (IEP's) must provide a transition plan for meeting the student's post-school goals.

Who Has the Right To Receive Transition Planning?

Every student with an IEP has the right to receive transition planning, no matter the student's skill level.

When Do Transition Services Start?

Transition services must start no later than the student's 16th birthday. Services sometimes start at a younger age. That is up to the student's IEP team. Transition planning takes place as a part of the IEP meeting.

Who Takes Part In the Transition Planning Process?

All IEP team members, including the student and parents, decide on transition services.

If you need help or have questions about Disability Rights Louisiana, call or visit us online:

TOLL-FREE: 1-800-960-7705 (Voice or Via Relay)
8325 Oak St. • New Orleans, LA 70118

disabilityrightsla.org
facebook.com/disabilityrightsla
twitter.com/disabilityrtsla
instagram.com/disabilityrightsla



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Top Tips for Effective IEP Meetings

This training provides tried and true tips for before, during, and after the IEP meeting. The content includes:

- Frequently used Acronyms & Bulletins
- Organizing Yourself for the meeting
- Top 5 IEP Tips for before meeting
- Top 5 IEP Tips for during meeting
- Top 5 IEP Tips for after meeting
- Resources

Presenter:
Cynthia Chesterfield
Director of Education
FHFGBR

Webinar Date:
August 18, 2022
10:00 am - 11:15 am

Please follow this link to register:
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/rt/8063759329311465485>



This training is made possible through a contract with the Louisiana Department of Education and LaPTIC



Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meeting Checklist for Parents

For best results, use this checklist with PACER's [IEP Team Meeting Planner](#).

Before the meeting

Before your child's annual IEP meeting, you may want to ask yourself the following questions. If you do not have the information you need, you can ask your child's IEP case manager before the meeting.

☐ **Review the 'Notice of Meeting'**

- What is the stated purpose of the meeting? If you have questions about why the IEP team is meeting, or concerns about what to expect and how to prepare, contact the IEP case manager.
- Who is invited? If you have questions about who is invited, or think it is important to include others with expertise about your child, contact the IEP case manager.

☐ **Gather and review documents that paint a picture of your child's needs and strengths**

- School records—current IEP, most recent evaluation report, IEP progress reports, report cards, results of district and state-wide assessments, work samples of assignments, tests, and projects your child has completed this school year, emails from teachers, and behavior reports
- Other records—private assessments, examples of your child's interests and hobbies, records related to your child's involvement with groups and activities in the community

☐ **Talk to your child**

- Ask what is going well at school and what is not going well, from their perspective
- If your child would like to attend part or all of the IEP team meeting, contact the IEP case manager to discuss how their participation can be appropriately supported

☐ **Plan your participation**

- Make a list of your priority concerns about current services and supports on the IEP
- Make a list of questions you have about the IEP or information you need about different options for your child's services and supports
- Make a list of the concrete outcomes you want to work toward at your meeting
- Send your concerns, questions, and goals for the meeting to the IEP case manager, and request they be included on the agenda

During the meeting

☐ **Set the table for success**

- Confirm that all the required IEP team members are present, and everyone expected to attend is at the table. Ask the IEP case manager for support with this.
- Request a district staff person take on the role of notetaker, to document the discussion and agreements reached at your meeting and then send the notes to all participants after the meeting
- Review the agenda with the IEP team and make sure it includes the priority issues to be addressed at the meeting



WWW.LACANADVOCATES.ORG

- Links lawmakers, individuals with disabilities and family members to make positive change in systems serving people with disabilities.
- Advocate for policies and systems that support inclusion everywhere people work, live, play, learn and grow!
- Support systems that help children and adults with disabilities to live in their own homes and be fully-included and participating members of their communities.
- LaCAN Leaders provide connection with a regional team of advocates, provide information on proposed policy changes and how those changes may affect you and others, provide training in skills to effectively advocate for systems change, and support you in linking with your policymakers!
- Complete our online membership form at www.lacanadvocates.org

MEMBERSHIP IS FREE! NO DUES. NO FEES.



www.facebook.com/LaDDCouncil



It's who we are. It's what we do.

2356 Drusilla Lane Baton Rouge, LA 70809
225-216-7474

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--|--|------------------|----------------|
| Chairperson: | Keith Keller | | | Director: | Kim Henley |
| Vice-Chairperson: | Kate Balfour McLean | | | Director: | Alec Reed |
| Secretary: | Todd Hymel | | | Director: | Matthew Talley |
| Treasurer: | Ana Elizabeth Angelloz | | | Director: | Vacant |
| Director: | Joshua Roy | | | Director: | Vacant |

2022-2023 BOARD MEETING CALENDAR DATES

Listed below are the scheduled meeting dates for 2022-2023. The Full Board meets every other month on odd months from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm. Meetings are the **3rd Wednesday** of each month.

2022-2023 FULL BOARD MEMBER MEETING DATES

11:30 am – 1:00 pm

| MONTH | DATE |
|---------------|-------------|
| August 2022 | 17 |
| October 2022 | 19 |
| December 2022 | 21 |
| February 2023 | 15 |
| April 2023 | 19 |
| June 2023 | 21 |

Meeting Location:

**Families Helping Families of
Greater Baton Rouge**
2356 Drusilla Lane
Baton Rouge, La 70809

LOUISIANA FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES AFFILIATES

| Region | FHF Center | Mailing Address | Phone Number(s) | Executive Director |
|--------|--|---|------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Families Helping Families NOLA | 2401 Westbend Pkwy, #3090 New Orleans, LA 70114 | 504-943-0343 877-243-7352 | Aisha Johnson ajohnson@fhfnola.org |
| 2 | Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge | 2356 Drusilla Ln. Baton Rouge, LA 70809 | 225-216-7474 866-216-7474 | Dr. Marilyn Thornton mthornton@fhfgbr.org |
| 3 | Bayou Land Families Helping Families | 286 Highway 3185 Thibodaux, LA 70301 | 985-447-4461 800-331-5570 | Dr. Charles Michel Bayoulandfhf@gmail.com |
| 4 | Families Helping Families of Acadiana | 100 Benman Rd. Lafayette, LA 70506 | 337-984-3458 855-984-3458 | Nicole Flores nflores@fhfacadiana.org |
| 5 | Families Helping Families of Southwest LA | 2927 Hodges St. Lake Charles, LA 70601 | 337-436-2570 800-894-6558 | Susan Riehn smriehn@fhfswla.org |
| 6 | Families Helping Families at the Crossroads | 2840 Military Hwy., Suite A Pineville, LA 71360 | 318-641-7373 800-259-7200 | Jim Sprinkle jamessprinkle152@bellsouth |
| 7 | Families Helping Families Region 7 | 215 Bobbie St., Suite 100 Bossier City, LA 71112 | 318-226-4541 877-226-4541 | Chanel Jackson cjackson@fhfregion7.com |
| 8 | Families Helping Families of Northeast LA | 5200 Northeast Rd. Monroe, LA 71203 | 318-361-0487 888-300-1320 | Stacey Guidry sguidry@fhfnela.org |
| 9 | Northshore Families Helping Families | 108 Highland Park Plaza Covington, LA 70433 | 985-875-0511 800-383-8700 | |
| 10 | Families Helping Families of Greater New Orleans | 700 Hickory Ave. Harahan, LA 70123 | 504-888-9111 800-766-7736 | Mary Jacob mjacob@fhfognola.org |

WE ARE HERE TO HELP



• It's who we are. It's what we do. •

**Does Your Child Have
Special Health Care Needs?**

**Do you care for
someone with a disability?**

**Need help with the
school system?**

We're here to help!

- Early Intervention
- Education Issues
- Health Concerns
- Home & Community-Based Supports and Services
- Resources
- And Much More!

***Talk with someone
who gets it...***

**Families Helping Families of
Greater Baton Rouge
2356 Drusilla Lane, Baton
Rouge, LA 70809**

Toll Free: 1-866-216-7474

Fax: 225-216-7977

info@fhfgbr.org

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