

CAPITAL AREA QUARTERLY

FALL NEWSLETTER FOR OCTOBER, NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER



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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

Veterans Day: November 11, 2022

Thanksgiving: November 24 - November 25, 2022 Christmas: December 19, 2022 - January 2, 2023

MEET OUR STAFF

Executive Director: Dr. Marilyn Thornton

mthornton@fhfgbr.org

Executive Administrative Assistant: Angel Matthews

amatthews@fhfgbr.org

Bookkeeper: Vicki Wall

wall@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

From the desk of the ED.

On behalf of Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge, I am pleased to extend warm greeting of Thanksgiving, Peace and Joy to the many families of individuals with disabilities we serve. October, November, and December 2022 represents the 2nd Quarter of our Fiscal Year and is inclusive of several major end of the year Holidays. This gives us an opportunity to send well wishes to all who observe these Holidays. It is also a time to acknowledge special awareness days and months concerning individuals with disabilities such as:

- World Cerebral Palsy Day October 6
- World Sight Day October 10
- World Mental Health Day October 10
- Invisible Disabilities Week October 17-23
- National Disability Employment Awareness Month October
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Awareness Month October
- Down Syndrome Awareness Month October
- Dyslexia Awareness Month October
- Epilepsy Awareness Month November
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities December 3
- Human Rights Day December 10

FHFGBR have an impressive list of Webinars, community events and activities to engage our families during these months. We hope you will take advantage of the training, information, and referrals to resources FHFGBR shared with the community of persons with disabilities and their families. The 2nd Annual Winter Fund Fest and Toy Drive is scheduled for November 12, 2022. Please plan to join with us in the Fun. We plan to distribute the toys collected early December. Make sure to contact FHFGBR for more details on how your children may receive a toy. We have included a few articles in this issue that will help families advocate effectively for individuals with disabilities.

Finally, we give God thanksgiving for our funders, supporters, partners and families of the community of those who care about the issues that offer accessibility, equity and inclusion. Without your support and generous donations, we cannot be successful in making a difference with the services we provide—thank you so much. Please do not forget us with your end of the year giving. Donate to this cause of Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge!

Kindness regards,

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:











Thank you for your continued support!



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See how many of these words you can find in the puzzle. The words can be forward, backward or diagonal.

Happy

9. Shopping 13. Santa

2. Holidays 3. Christmas

5. Family 6. Friends 7. Presents

10. Candy canes

14. Songs

4. Vacation

8. Decorations

11. Cookies 12. Milk

15. Movies 16. Fun

HOW TO HELP FAMILIES OF KIDS WITH DISABILITIES FEEL WELCOME AT HOLIDAY GATHERINGS

Julie McIsaac, PhD. November 21, 2022



Headed to someone else's home for the holidays? Share this with them before you go.

Holidays are a time for family and gratitude - and stress. This is especially true for families of kids who may have physical disabilities, cognitive disabilities, or sensory needs that make travel and change a challenge. It can be hard for family and friends we don't see often to understand our children's experiences and our unique experiences as parents of children with disabilities — and it can be easy for them to make judgments on us, our relationships with our children, and our parenting decisions. Here are some tips for family and friends hosting holiday gatherings to encourage more empathy, less stress, and more togetherness.

1. Assume I look tired because I am tired.

I know that already. There's no need to point it out. Travelling is exhausting for all families, and even more so for families with children who have a diagnosed or suspected developmental disability. You can assume that physically getting 'there' has not been easy. Travelling by car, plane or bus brings on new challenges for children who may like their routine, who may feel anxious about new things, or who may feel the stress of a parent trying to pack, prepare, and rally the troops to get to a family function. Assume that we have already done a lot of physical and emotional work before arriving at the door.

2. Assume the diagnosis is real.

Going through the diagnosis process with a child, whether we have accepted the diagnosis or not, is a complex journey that demands respect and space. Just because your child was late to talk but caught up eventually doesn't mean the same thing will happen for mine. Yes, children do develop differently and at varying paces, and yes, my child probably does things similar to your child. But that doesn't make them the same and that doesn't mean their challenges will play out the same way. Sharing your perspective is helpful. Questioning our child's diagnosis is not.

3. Assume we've heard your suggested solution before.

Once I had children, conversations started involving questions about sleep, school or social activities. This is normal! Be mindful that these questions can be hard for parents of children with a developmental disability. Although you may have an idea about a treatment you've just read about, a success story that you've watched, or a neighbor who had similar behaviors, wait and bring this up at a different time in a different place. As parents of kids with a disability, we've likely had these conversations before, and although almost always well-meaning, at times it can feel like we're being told that we aren't doing enough or doing it fight.

4. Assume there's a lot going on behind the scenes.

Things that seem easy to some people are challenging for others. For children who are autistic or who have sensory sensitivities, sounds may be overwhelming. For anxious children, the anticipation of the day may require some extra cuddles or support. Don't judge a parent for giving her son a screen to look at alone; she might be helping him to regulate his body to avoid a meltdown. The mother who carefully reads each ingredient listed on the packages is doing that because she knows what her child needs, not because she's being controlling.

Assume that your offers of help or accommodations are appreciated.

Families of idds with disabilities are used to scrambling to make things work for our children, and just asking how you can help feels helpful. And you might be surprised at how small efforts can make a big difference for our children. We might ask for fidget toys at the meal, or flexibility when a child wants to sit underneath the table (or even in another room), or a couple of volunteers to run around outside with our kids so we can sit and eat. Maybe we need you to identify a couple of people who can help us get our child's wheelchair up and down your front steps, or to make a few dairy-free dishes our child will enloy.

We may not need help at all, and our children may not need accommodations, but I can promise that when you ask the question, it feels like love.

6. Assume we are doing our best.

And then notice. Give us a hug, tell us that you appredate the travel, or let us know you think we're doing a good job. Sometimes we think those things are implied, but they're not always. Sometimes we just need to hear it from family and friends: "You're doing a great job, thank you for being here."

WHAT IS SELF-REGULATION AND HOW CAN IT HELP ME BE A BETTER PARENT?



Guys, last night I lost it.

My self-regulation skills went out the window. Within the span of 10 minutes, I cleaned up broken glass, burned the kids' dinner, and saw texts come through about a birthday party I was trying to plan for the next day. Then my youngest decided to do a project on my favorite rug (the one my mom thought I spent too much money on and I probably did but it makes me really happy in our mishmash home)...the project involved GLITTER GLUE. The glitter glue put me over the edge. I feel like you can relate.

Somehow, my version of 'lost it' was different than before, though. I really tried to think about what was going on for me and recognize that my stress was coming from many different places. I tried (really hard) to remember I'd rather have the gifter glue on the rug as a sign that my kids are being creative and playing than to have a pristine space. And then I left the house when my husband came home. I took a luxurious (I) trip to the grocery store. Even that mundane errand got me out of the house and gave me the perspective I needed to ground myself again. Because I know that when I'm grounded, my children can be grounded.

(I want to add that I fully appreciate that not everyone has a partner who is available to come home at a given time. It was not always like that for me and it was hard. Really hard. If you are trying to do this all on your own, please ask for help. For help finding local respite or parent support programs, call your local Parent Support Center, or use our Resource Directory if you live in Louisiana or Massachusetts. Also in Spanish.)

We are all dealing with self-regulation. It is a constant work in progress. As parents, we have the added job of thinking about our own self regulation as well as our children's (and partner's?!) regulation. I shared the following thoughts a few years back but they are just as relevant to share again today. Enjoy and ask yourself the questions at the end of each point. I hope it gives you a minute to reflect. And also, gifter glue should be an outside toy.

"He has difficulties with self-regulation." What does that mean?

I've been thinking a lot about self-regulation. It is a term I see more and more on IEPs, psychology reports, and in education forums. What is self-regulation and why is it so important?

Dr. Stuart Shanker, in his book Self Reg (2016), cities that the term "self-regulation" is used in hundreds of different ways. He describes self regulation as the "brain-body responses to stress." In other words, self-regulation is the ability to remain calm when experiencing stress. Stresses. Stresses. Stresses. Stresses. Stresses stresses stresses stresses stresses stresses stresses stresses.

- when the lights are too bright, or when one builb flickers every now and then in the corner of the room
- when you are putting your child on the school bus for the first time
- when you are getting on the school bus for the first time
- when you are not sure if there is enough money in the account for the grocery bill
 - when you can't stop thinking about an itchy tag on your skin
- when you are entering a playground with fast-moving children yet unsure how to join
- when your family has experienced a traumatic event, like a storm or accident

We all have stressors. They range from emotional to physical. But how do we deal with these stressors? It is in these moments of stress that we have the opportunity to learn to remain calm and focused; to remain self regulated and move forward.

CHECK YOUR MEDICAID PLAN



Medicaid will have six health plan options available for members beginning January 1, 2023. Some Medicaid members will have a different plan assigned to them, but members will have an opportunity to choose. Starting on November 8, 2022, members can choose their plan Check your mail for important updates about your Medicaid health insurance.



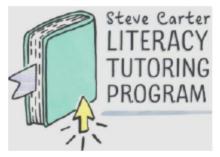
Louisiana had more than 600 suicides in 2020. If you or someone you love is in crisis, you don't have to go through it alone. Call, text or chat the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 to speak with a trained counselor at no charge.

November 10, 2022

The U.S. Department of Education released a Letter to State Directors of Special Education with resources, guidance, and important principles to help states, school districts, families and others ensure the rights of highly-mobile children with disabilities.

The purpose of this letter is to address concerns expressed by stakeholders regarding the unique educational needs of highly mobile children with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), provide an updated list of resources to support them, and seek your assistance in improving the educational stability of, and post-school outcomes for, these highly mobile children.

YOU CAN GET \$1,000 FROM LDOE SFOR TUTORING



The Louisiana Department of Education announced a new program to provide vouchers to give tutoring access to students that struggle with reading proficiency.

The Steve Carter Literacy Tutoring Program will provide eligible K-5 public school students with access to high-quality literacy tutors to battle the literacy gap that many Louisiana students are struggling to overcome.

The program will provide \$1,000 vouchers to families to cover the expense of tutoring. The LDOE will also provide a list of approved tutors allowing parents to choose the qualified provider of their choice.



FROM FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES
OF GREATER BATON ROUGE

WE WILL BE

CLOSED During the Holidays!

CLOSED DECEMBER 19TH - JANUARY 2ND



REOPENING TUESDAY JANUARY 3RD











MEET APRIL HAMPTON

April is our newest LaCan Advocate working with Families Helping Families to help individuals with disabilities and family members to make positive change in systems serving people with disabilities.

LOUISIANA COUNCIL'S ADVOCACY NETWORK 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 po icymakers!
- Complete our online membership form at www.lacanadvocates.org



Families Helping Families presents

E.P.S.D.T. & ACCESS TO CARE:

WHAT PARENTS & CAREGIVERS
NEED TO KNOW



GUEST SPEAKERS

Tresa Northington

Developmental Screening Coordinator (DSC) LA Bureau of Family Health

Julie Emory

Medical Home/EPSDT Coordinator LA Bureau of Family Health Did you know there is a health benefit for <u>all</u> Medicaid-eligible children and youth under age 21 that provides health care, screening, diagnostic services, treatment, and other measures to improve health outcomes? Join us to learn more.

This training will cover:

- Eligibility requirements, Screening Schedules & More
- What parents need to know about well-visits [Age newborn to 3] & why are they so important
- · How to get the most out of your visit

NOVEMBER 15, 2022 @ 12:00 PM

Register Here: https://tinyurl.com/yjhmnftz

CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES CENTER FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

FHF NOLA

504-943-0343 or 1-877-243-7352 www.fhfnola.org

FHF of SW Louisiana

337-436-2570 or 1-800-894-6558 www.fhfswla.org

FHF NE Louisiana

318-361-0487 or 1-888-300-1320 www.fhfnela.org

FHF Greater Baton Rouge

225-216-7474 or 1-866-216-7474 www.fhfgbr.org

FHF at the Crossroads of LA

318-641-7375 or 1-800-259-7200 www.fhfxroads.org

Northshore FHF

985-875-0511 or 1-800-383-8700 www.fhfnorthshore.org

Bayouland FHF

985-447-4461 or 1-800-331-5570 www.blfhf.org

FHF of Region 7

318-226-4541 or 1-877-226-4541 www.fhfregion7.com

FHF of Greater New Orleans

504-888-9111 or 1-800-766-7736 www.fhfofgno.org

FHF of Acadiana

337-984-3458 or 1-855-984-3458 www.fhfacadiana.org



2022 sunshine social





Dance the night away with BREC Adaptive and Families Helping Families as we host our monthly Sunshine Socials. Be creative and dress to match each months theme. Enjoy dinner, dancing, and door prizes.

SEPT. 16 • 😾 FIESTA TIME ······

OCT. 21 of it's the great pumpkin · · ·

NOV. 18 • FALL Y'ALL HOEDOWN · · · · ·

Dec. 16 • S FIRE + ICE BALL

Disc jockey DINNER PRIZES SOCIALIZATION and FUN!

To register and for more information:

BREC.ORG/ADAPTIVE

Registration limit of 100 individuals
(participants/family members/PCAsietc.)

MOLLY.ORR@BREC.ORG

JEFFERSON HIGHWAY PARK Every Third Friday /// 6-9 p.m. Ages: 16+ \$5 donation/month

> supports this program, including supplies and door prizes each contin

SPECIAL EDUCATION FAQ SERIES





Frequently Asked Questions 2.0 will cover the IEP process and Special Education.



THE SPECIAL EDUCATION FAO SERIES: 3.0

Frequently Asked Questions 0.0 will cover the transition process.





Registration link: www.firlubr.org



December 8, 2022 10:00 AM to 11:15 AM

Online Webinar

SEDUCATION.

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

For more information: 225-216-7474



Cynthia Chesterfield

Registration link: ever firlebr.org

December 15, 2022

10:00 AM to 11:15 AM Online Webinar

SEDUCATION.

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

For more information: 225-216-7474



People First Language





VIRTUAL WORKSHOP: MENTAL HEALTH - YOUR ROLE IN YOUR TREATMENT



This presentation is designed to explain MHR Treatment Purposes, to understand the expectations of treatment from the initial assessment to weekly visits, and to learn proactive steps for successful treatment.

Thursday December 8, 2022 from 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM

Presenter's Name: Katrina O. Boden MED, Executive Director Superior Counseling Services, LLC



REGISTER FOR THIS WORKSHOP

https://bit.ly/3ULh9xn

Audience: Parents/Caregivers, Families, and Professionals

For more information:

Email Deatra People: dpeoples@fhfgbr.org Phone: 225-216-7474







VIRTUAL WORKSHOP: CALMING WORKSHOP: HOW TO CALM YOUR CHILD NATURALLY



This presentation is designed to understand challenging behavior in young teenagers and young adults.

Wednesday January 27, 2023 from 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM

Presenter's Name:

Janice Huber
Supervisor BCBA, LBA
Parent Education at Touchstone
Applied Behavior Analysis



REGISTER FOR THIS WORKSHOP

https://bit.ly/3Up3V9r

Audience: Parents/Caregivers, Families, and Professionals

For more information:

Email Deatra People: dpeoples@fhfgbr.org

Phone: 225-216-7474







Funding for webinars provided from SAMHSA through a contract with the Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Behavioral Health.





SATURDAY NOV 12TH FROM 9:00 am to 2:00 pm FUN Run-Walk-Roll starts at 9:00 am



*WINTER FUNDFEST

AND TOY DRIVE

Seating: Bring Your Own Chair and Blanket Entrance Requirement:

One (or more) New Unwrapped Toy Sign up for Run.Walk. Roll with a \$10 donation

Play in the snow. Cookie & Ornament decoration.

Special Treats and Art Creations. Food. Door prizes. Photo on the sleigh.

Reindeer Games. Hot Chocolate Truck. and more!

9 AM to 2 PM AT INDEPENDENCE BREC PARK
 7500 INDEPENDENCE BLVD, BATON ROUGE, LA 70806
 WWW.FHFGBR.ORG







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

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

