



• It's who we are. It's what we do. •

CAPITAL AREA QUARTERLY

WINTER NEWSLETTER FOR JANUARY, FEBRUARY, AND MARCH 2026



As seen in *The Advocate* — Baton Rouge Facebook post (January 20, 2026)

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www.fhfgbr.org



CAPITAL AREA QUARTERLY

Winter Newsletter / January - March 2026

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

| | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|
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| VICE CHAIR | HANNAH DEATON HELTZ |
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| SECRETARY | SARA ELDRIDGE |
| DIRECTORS | ERICA MATTHEWS ALEC REED |
| EX-OFFICIO | KIM HENLEY JOSHUA ROY |



UPCOMING MEETINGS

February 19

11:00 AM - 12:30 PM @ FHFGBR office

BOARD MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.



• It's who we are. It's what we do. •

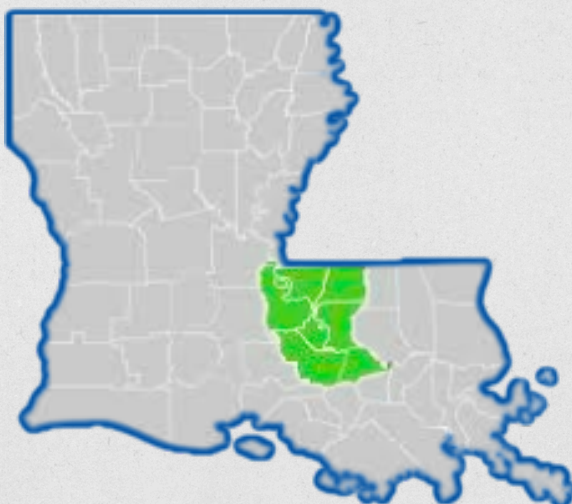


OUR VISION

**“Access Inclusion.
Empower Lives.”**

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

REGION 2:

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

OUR PROGRAMS



Bureau of Family Health
Family 2 Family Health Information Center
Inclusive Education
Louisiana's Council's Advocacy Network
Autism Spectrum Disorder Resource Program

OUR SERVICES

Education and Training - Families receive training and information on their rights, responsibilities, and protections under federal and state laws and policies so they can actively participate in planning and decision-making that affects their children; help educate youth and adults with disabilities to increase their capacity for self-advocacy. Our education and training provide opportunities for families and youth/adults to build on existing strengths to become stronger advocates and self-advocates.

Peer-to-peer Support - Parents who are raising a child with disabilities or special healthcare needs often feel overwhelmed, helpless and alone. Many parents say what helped them the most was talking to another parent. FHFGBR Center staff are parents of children/adults with disabilities. FHFGBR staff are a source of hope and inspiration. We know your child can succeed.

Information & Referral - Families need to be aware of the resources and services available to them in the community. We can assist by providing you with referrals and helping you navigate complicated service systems and provide ways to overcome challenges faced in these settings. We can answer questions and provide assistance for any disability, any age. Our information services provide opportunities for families to increase their knowledge and build their own capacity. We are a resource for the community to help educate, increase awareness and acceptance of citizens with disabilities.

Autism Spectrum Disorder Program – A comprehensive source of unbiased and factual information for families that have a member with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The program provides individualized services, information, parent-to-parent support, and family education on autism resources and offers referrals to available services. Individuals who work with the Autism Spectrum Disorder Program have resources and support that aim to positively affect the well-being of individuals with ASD and their families.

LACAN

LOUISIANA COUNCIL'S ADVOCACY NETWORK



APRIL HAMPTON

LaCAN Region 2 Leader

Serving Ascension, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Point Coupee, West Baton Rouge, and West Feliciana Parishes

Phone: (337) 522 6363 or (866) 216 7474

Email: ahampton@lacanadvocates.org

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 policymakers!
- Complete our online membership form at www.lacanadvocates.org

MEMBERSHIP IS FREE! NO DUES. NO FEES.

www.facebook.com/LaDDCouncil

Join the LaCAN Region 2 Legislative Roundtable

Your voice matters – and now is the time to use it.

The **LaCAN (Louisiana Citizens for Action Now) Region 2 Legislative Roundtable** is an opportunity for individuals with disabilities, family members, advocates, and community partners to come together and learn about key issues impacting our community during the upcoming legislative session.

This roundtable will focus on the **Council's 2026 Legislative Advocacy Agenda**, which includes critical priorities that directly affect individuals with disabilities and their families:

- **Emergency Alerts for People with Disabilities** – Ensuring emergency communication systems are accessible and inclusive for all.
- **Increasing Funding for Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS)** – Strengthening employment supports and opportunities for individuals with disabilities.
- **Increasing Home and Community-Based Waiver Rates and Direct Support Worker Pay** – Supporting quality services and addressing the direct support workforce shortage.
- **Families Helping Families – Restoring \$250,000 in Funding** – Protecting essential family support, training, and advocacy services that families across Louisiana rely on every day.

Advocacy starts with being informed. This session will provide valuable updates, explain how these issues impact families across Louisiana, and offer ways you can take action.



Whether you are a parent, self-advocate, professional, or community supporter, your participation helps strengthen our collective voice.

Date: March 5

Time: 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm

Registration Link: tinyurl.com/5n6w3y3p

We encourage everyone in Region 2 to attend and be part of the conversation. Together, we can help shape policies that support individuals with disabilities and the families who love and care for them.



CAPITAL AREA QUARTERLY

Winter Newsletter / October - December 2025

Resources



Tips for Parents: How to Build Inclusive Friendships

See the **POWER** in Friendship

No child needs to be without friends.
Tips on how to build inclusive friendships!



Making friends is hard for kids, but it can also be hard for parents. Parents of children with disabilities can be heartbroken when their child does not have many friends. Parents of children who are typically developing are often afraid of saying the wrong thing or not creating a safe environment.

Try these tips to help build inclusive friendships for your child:

CHECK YOUR OWN ATTITUDE

Can you see your child making inclusive friendships? **IT IS POSSIBLE.** Just be pro-active and let friendships bloom.

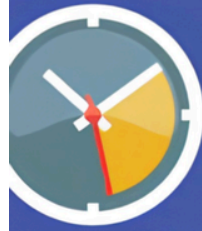


BE REAL WITH YOUR FEARS

Do not let your own fears be the roadblock to the power in friendship. Know that **all children want the same thing:** companionship and belonging.

PLAN PLAY WITH PURPOSE

Be intentional about creating time to play. Talk to the parents beforehand and meet in a neutral location like a playground.



GIVE IT EXTRA TIME

Build a little extra time in your playdate schedule so the children can warm up to and transition into different activities.

BE OPEN TO QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Every unanswered question is a detour on the road to friendship. Check out inclusionproject.org/friendship for tips on how to answer tough questions.



BE FORGIVING WITH YOURSELF, THE CHILDREN AND THE PARENTS

There are going to be mistakes. There are going to be awkward silences after an unintentionally insensitive thing is said. This friendship is more important than your pride. **You can do this!**



LET KIDS BE KIDS

Once you've planted these seeds, just step back and let them grow. You have intentionally set-up an environment for friendship. **Let it grow and bloom!**



To get more tips about how to harness the **Power in Friendship** for all children visit inclusionproject.org/friendship/.

Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs): A Roadmap for Positive Change



When a child experiences behavioral challenges at school, it can feel overwhelming for families and educators alike. A Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) is a powerful tool designed to bring clarity, consistency, and positive support to the process.

A BIP is not about punishment — it is about understanding behavior, identifying its purpose, and creating structured strategies that help a child succeed. When thoughtfully developed and consistently implemented, a BIP promotes meaningful behavioral change and strengthens collaboration between school teams and families.

What Is a Behavior Intervention Plan?

A Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) is a structured framework used by educators, caregivers, and support staff to address specific challenging behaviors in educational settings. It outlines clear strategies to:

- Understand why a behavior is happening
- Teach and reinforce positive replacement behaviors
- Ensure consistent responses from staff
- Track progress over time
- Actively involve parents or guardians

A well-developed BIP provides everyone with a clear roadmap — and most importantly, it centers on helping the student thrive.

Key Components of a BIP

A comprehensive BIP includes several essential sections:

1. Student Name & Start Date

This section personalizes the plan and documents when the intervention begins. Establishing a clear start date helps teams track progress accurately.

BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN

| | |
|---------------|-------------|
| STUDENT NAME: | START DATE: |
|---------------|-------------|

| SECTION | DESCRIPTION |
|------------------|--|
| Behavior | Detail the specific unwanted behavior to be addressed. |
| Function | Describe what the behavior accomplishes for the student. |
| Desired Behavior | Specify the positive behavior that should replace it. |
| Proactive Plan | Outline strategies to encourage the desired behavior. |
| Reactive Plan | Describe the steps to take when the undesired behavior occurs. |
| Reinforcers | List rewards or incentives that will motivate the student |
| Data Collection | Explain how and what data will be collected to assess the effectiveness of the plan. |
| Notes | Include any additional observations or relevant information. |

| GOALS & REVIEW | |
|------------------|---|
| Short-Term Goals | What immediate outcomes are expected? |
| Long-Term Goals | What are the broader objectives? |
| Review Dates | Set dates for reviewing the plan's effectiveness. |

| PARENT/GUARDIAN SUPPORT | TEAM INVOLVEMENT |
|--|--|
| Outline how parents/guardians can support the plan at home | Specify roles of others involved in the intervention |

2. Behavior

The behavior of concern is clearly described using specific, observable language. Instead of vague terms like “disruptive,” the plan defines exactly what the behavior looks like in the classroom setting.

3. Function

Understanding the function of the behavior is critical. Behavior serves a purpose — whether it is to gain attention, avoid a task, access a preferred activity, or communicate a need. Identifying the “why” helps guide effective interventions.

4. Desired Behavior

This section outlines what the student should do instead. Replacement behaviors are clearly defined and realistic, giving the student a positive, achievable target.

5. Proactive Plan

Proactive strategies are designed to prevent challenging behaviors before they occur. These might include visual schedules, structured routines, sensory breaks, clear expectations, or environmental adjustments.

6. Reactive Plan

This section ensures that all staff respond consistently if the undesired behavior occurs. A calm, predictable response reduces escalation and reinforces learning.

7. Reinforcers

Positive reinforcement motivates change. The plan identifies meaningful incentives or rewards that encourage the student to demonstrate desired behaviors. Reinforcers are individualized based on the student’s interests and needs.

8. Data Collection

Progress is monitored using data. Teams may track frequency, duration, or intensity of behaviors to determine whether strategies are effective and where adjustments are needed.

9. Notes

This section allows space for ongoing observations and adjustments as the plan evolves.

10. Goals & Review

- Short-Term Goals: Immediate, measurable steps toward improvement
- Long-Term Goals: Broader outcomes focused on sustained success
- Review Dates: Scheduled check-ins to assess progress and revise strategies as needed

Regular review ensures the plan remains responsive and effective.



11. Parent/Guardian Support

Family involvement is essential. This section outlines how parents or guardians can reinforce strategies at home and stay engaged in communication with the school team.¹

2. Team Involvement

A coordinated approach strengthens success. The BIP identifies each team member's role — including teachers, behavior specialists, administrators, therapists, and family members.

Why BIPs Matter

A Behavior Intervention Plan promotes:

- Consistency across environments
- Positive skill-building rather than punishment
- Clear communication between school and home
- Measurable progress
- A supportive learning environment for all students

When schools and families work together using a structured plan, children are better positioned to develop self-regulation skills, improve classroom engagement, and build confidence.

Need Support?

Understanding your child's Behavior Intervention Plan — or requesting one when appropriate — can feel complex. Families do not have to navigate this process alone.

If you would like assistance understanding a BIP, participating in a team meeting, or learning how to advocate effectively for your child, our team is here to help.

Because at the heart of everything we do, we are families helping families.

LOUISIANA WIC PROGRAM



WHAT IS WIC?

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a supplemental nutrition program that provides:

- Healthy Nutritious food
- Breastfeeding Support and Education
- Nutrition Education and Counseling
- Referrals to other health/social service programs
- Access to a variety of resources through mobile apps

HOW CAN PEOPLE APPLY?

There are multiple ways a participant can begin their application process for Louisiana WIC

- 1 Visit LouisianaWIC.org and fill out the myWIC interest form, and someone from our clinics will get in touch with you
- 2 Use our **Clinic Search Tool** on our website to locate the clinic closest to you, and call them to schedule your first appointment.
- 3 Call our Baby Line at **1-800-251-BABY** (251-2229) to get more information

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- Pregnant women
- Breastfeeding women
- Postpartum women
- Infants and children up to their fifth birthday, including foster children
- Any of the above audiences who also meet income requirements and are residents of Louisiana

Individuals enrolled in Medicaid, SNAP, or TANF automatically meet income requirements.

SCAN TO VISIT
OUR WEBSITE



Children's Special Health Services Regional Resource Guide, Region 2: Ascension, East and West Baton Rouge, East and West Feliciana, Iberville, Pointe Coupee

PHYSICAL/MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS & INSURANCE ACCESS

| Organization | Services | Eligibility | Contact |
|--|---|---|--|
| Dental Services | Dental Provider Locator | Medicaid member | 855-702-6262 mcna.net 800-685-0143 DentaQuest |
| Medicaid | Medicaid Insurance Information | Financial | 888-342-6207 |
| Medicaid Managed Care Organization (MCO) | Louisiana Medicaid MCO Plans, service approvals, prior authorizations, help with access to health providers, complaints | Aetna Amerihealth Caritas Healthy Blue Humana LA Healthcare Connect United Healthcare | 855-242-0802 888-756-0004 800-448-3810 844-521-6941 866-595-8133 866-675-1607 |
| Medical Transport | Non-emergency medical transportation to/from medical appointments. Has to be scheduled 2 days before appointment | Aetna Amerihealth Caritas Healthy Blue Humana LA Healthcare Connect Medicaid Legacy United Healthcare | 877-917-4150 888-913-0364 866-430-1101 844-613-1638 855-369-3723 855-325-7626 866-726-1472 |
| Personal Care Services | In-home Medicaid PCS | Financial/medical | 877-456-1146 |
| Capital Area Human Services District | Mental health/addiction treatment, developmental disabilities services | Call for eligibility screen | Child: 225-922-0445 Adult: 225-925-1906 Crisis line: 225-256-6604 Cahsd.org |
| Coordinated System of Care (CSoC) | Helps children/youth at greatest risk for out of home placement | Age; 5-20 years old | Healthy Louisiana Plan or 1-800-424-4489 |

EARLY INTERVENTION/SPECIALITY SERVICES

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs Programs | Early Hearing Detection Lead Poisoning Prevention Genetic Diseases Screening | All newborns All children All newborns | 504-599-1086 ldh.la.gov/ehdi 888-293-7020 ldh.la.gov/lead 504-568-8254 ldh.la.gov/genetics |
| EarlySteps – Early Intervention Services | Evaluation for developmental delays: ST, OT, PT, special instruction | Medical diagnosis and/or evaluation Children under 3 | 225-925-2426 866-925-2426 ldh.la.gov/earlysteps |
| Child Search Educational Assessments | Special education pre-k -12 th grade; speech, occupational, physical therapies | Assessments for children over age 3 | East Feliciana 225-683-5638 Iberville 225-687-4341 Pointe Coupee 225-638-8674 West Baton Rouge 225-343-8405 West Feliciana 225-635-3891 |

2025

FAMILY SUPPORTS

| Organization | Services | Eligibility | Contact |
|--|---|---|---|
| Family Resource Center – Statewide | 8-4 M-F, community referrals, resource linkage, transition | All families | 504-896-1340 BFH-FamilyResourceCenter@la.gov |
| Child Care Assistance Program | Child care assist for children <13, or <18 with a disability | Financial – work or school requirements | 877-453-2721 louisianabelieves.com |
| Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge | Peer-to-peer support, parent trainings, school accommodations | All youth/families | 225-216-7474 866-216-7474 Fhfgbr.org |
| Hands and Voices/ Guide By Your Side | Family peer support for children who are deaf/hard of hearing | Open | 337-515-5774/504-388-5712 lahandsandvoices.org |
| Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) | Food assistance and education (common name food stamps) | Financial, <18 years | 888-524-3578 dcfs.la.gov |
| Women Infants and Children (WIC) | Food and formula, breastfeeding support, nutrition education | Financial | 800-251-2229 louisianawic.org |
| VIALINK/211 | Health/human service resources | All families | 211/or 800-749-2673, 24/7 |

DISABILITY SERVICES

| | | | |
|---|--|-----------------------------|--|
| Exceptional Lives | Online disability services and benefits linkage | Open | 844-354-1212 exceptionallives.org |
| Louisiana Vocational Rehab (LRS) | Career development program for individuals with disabilities | Medical/disability criteria | 225-295-8900/800-737-2959 laworks.net |
| Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities | Eligibility/needs assessments, family supports and services, waiver services | Medical/disability criteria | 225-925-1910/866-628-2133 Cahsd.org |
| Social Security Benefit | Financial support | Disability/financial | 800-772-1213 |

CRISIS HOTLINES & HELPLINES **Call 911 for immediate danger*

| | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mobile Crisis Response | Crisis intervention | Region 2 | 211, 800-724-2673, 24/7 |
| Domestic Violence | Crisis intervention | Statewide | 1-888-411-1333 |
| VIALINK/211 | Crisis counseling | 504, 985, 337 area codes | 211/1-800-273-talk , 24/7 |
| 988 Lifeline | Suicide, Hotline | Nationwide | 988, Call or text |

LEGAL

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Disability Rights Louisiana | Legal services, advocacy, outreach | Physical/medical disability | 800-960-7705 disabilityrightsla.org |
| Child Protection | Child abuse/neglect investigation | Newborn to 17 years | 855-452-5437 |

Louisiana Department of Health | Office of Public Health | Bureau of Family Health
Family Resource Center | ldh.la.gov/family-resource-center | (504)896-1340

Parent Guide: *Preparing for Mediation*

with the Louisiana Department of Education

Mediation is a voluntary, confidential process designed to help resolve disagreements between parents and schools about your child's education, including identification, evaluation, placement, services, or providing FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education) to a student with an exceptionality.

Mediation is one of the **less adversarial and uncomplicated** alternative dispute methods. With a trained, impartial LDOE attorney-mediator facilitating, mediation can help resolve disagreements efficiently and collaboratively—at **no cost** to parents.



Tips for a Successful Mediation



Understand the Purpose

- Resolves disputes about special education services without formal hearings.



Ask Questions and Clarify

- The mediator does not provide legal advice or make decisions.



Know Your Legal Rights

- Review your rights under IDEA, including 'stay put' rights.



Review Your Child's Records

- IEPs, 504 plans, evaluations, progress reports, behavior plans, and communications.



Prepare an Opening Statement

- Draft a 10-minute statement highlighting:
 - Your goals for your child.
 - Your child's progress.
 - Facts supporting your position



Identify Your Concerns and Desired Outcomes

- Be specific, student focused, and prioritize solutions.
- Think of alternatives or compromises in case your first request isn't possible.



Bring Support if Needed

- Advocate, family member, or professional familiar with your child.



Plan for Duration

- Mediation sessions may last at least 3 hours or longer.



Be Open to Compromise

- Focus on solutions that support your child's education.

Parent Mediation Preparation Checklist

✓ Before Mediation

- ✓ Gather school records and communications.
- ✓ Write key concerns and questions.
- ✓ Draft your 10-minute opening statement.

✓ During Mediation

- ✓ Bring notes and records.
- ✓ Stay calm and student focused.
- ✓ Ask questions for clarification.

✓ After Mediation

- ✓ Review and sign the written agreement.
- ✓ Keep a copy for your records.
- ✓ Follow up with the school to implement the plan.

Tip: *Preparation* + clear communication + understanding your rights = stronger advocacy



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

What is the EarlySteps Program?

EarlySteps is Louisiana's Early Intervention System for children with disabilities and developmental delays ages birth to three and their families. By providing resources and support during those critical years, EarlySteps helps children get off to a great start.

Who is eligible?

Children with medical conditions likely to cause disability or developmental delay, or with delays in the following areas, may be eligible: physical development, cognitive development, social and emotional development, adaptive development and/or communication. We would like to invite you to our RICC and SICC meetings.

Anyone can refer a child to Early Steps

If you know of a child that would benefit from receiving services from EarlySteps please call 225-925-2426. It's never too soon to ask questions about your baby's development.



Services Provided by Early Steps:

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| * Audiology | * Special Instruction | * Health Services | * Family Training |
| * Speech-Language Therapy | * Assistive Technology | * Nursing Services | * Transportation |
| * Occupational Therapy | * Service Coordination | * Vision Services | * Psychological Services |
| * Physical Therapy | * Nutrition services | * Medical Evaluations | * Social Work services |



State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC)

The mission of the SICC is to work in collaboration with the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, in an advisory capacity, to design and oversee the implementation of a family-centered, community-based, comprehensive, interagency service delivery system for infants and toddlers (birth through two) who are eligible for Part C services, and their families. The SICC meets quarterly on the second Wednesday of the month. All meetings are open to the public and held in accordance with the Louisiana Open Meeting Laws.

Regional Interagency Coordinating Council (RICC)

The Regional Interagency Coordinating Council (RICC) is an essential component of the Part C early intervention system at the local level. The group's membership includes family

members of children with disabilities, as well as service providers, community leaders, and agency representatives. The RICC meets quarterly. All meetings are open to the public and are held in accordance with the Louisiana Open Meeting Laws.

The Early Steps Region 2 office is located at 566 Lobdell Ave in Baton Rouge.

LOUISIANA WAIVER SUPPORT SERVICES

Supporting Children & Youth with Special Healthcare Needs

Raising a child with special healthcare needs can be challenging—but Louisiana offers Medicaid waiver programs that provide essential services to support children and youth in home and community settings.

Children's Choice Waiver (CCW)

Supports children birth–20 years with services up to \$20,200/year:

- Support Coordination
- Physical, Occupational, & Speech Therapy
- Family Training
- Respite Care
- Environmental Modifications
- Learn more: <https://ldh.la.gov/office-for-citizens-with-developmental-disabilities/childrens-choice-waiver>

Supports Waiver (SW)

For individuals 18+, focuses on independence and employment:

- Supported Employment & Prevocational Services
- Day Habilitation & Habilitation Services
- Respite
- Learn more: <https://ldh.la.gov/office-for-citizens-with-developmental-disabilities/supports-waiver>

Residential Options Waiver (ROW)

Supports individuals of all ages with home & community-based services:

- Community Living Supports
- Companion Care
- Host Home & Shared Living Options
- Environmental Modifications
- Learn more: <https://ldh.la.gov/office-for-citizens-with-developmental-disabilities/residential-options-waiver>

Children's Special Health Services (CSHS)

Ensures children with special healthcare needs have access to:

- Specialty Medical Care
- Care Coordination
- Youth Health Transition Support
- Developmental Screening
- Learn more: <https://ldh.la.gov/bureau-of-family-health/childrens-special-health-services>






Tip for Families: Start early! Work with your child's school and healthcare team to develop a plan tailored to your child's needs.

MEDICAID MEMBERS

Don't risk losing your health coverage.

Keep your contact information up to date, including your address, phone number, cell phone number and email. Choose the way that is easiest for you:

-  Online at mymedicaid.la.gov
-  By email at mymedicaid@la.gov
-  By calling Louisiana Medicaid toll-free at 1-888-342-6207, or by calling your health plan
(your plan's number is on your insurance card)

Don't miss important updates about your health insurance. If you do get a letter in the mail, follow the instructions and respond to Medicaid.



www.healthy.la.gov



CAPITAL AREA QUARTERLY

Winter Newsletter / October - December 2025

Events



2026 SPRING Sunshine Social Calendar

Jan. 16 : *All Mixed Up* [Blending of Holidays]

Feb. 20 : *Be Mine Bash* [Valentine's]

March 20 : *Luck of the Irish* [Green Attire]

April 17 : *Spring Fling* [90s Throwback]

May 15 : *Prom: A Night in White* [White Attire]

DISC JOCKEY
dinner **PRIZES**
SOCIALIZATION
and fun!

For more information:



[BREC.ORG/ADAPTIVE](https://www.brec.org/adaptive)



RECADAPTIVE@BREC.ORG

MILTON J. WOMACK PARK BALLROOM
6-9 p.m. / Ages: 16+ / \$5 per person

[individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities + their families]

SIB SOCIETY SATURDAY GAME DAY!

FOR SIBLINGS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AGES 6 - 12

BOARD GAMES - TASTY BITES & COOL
DRINKS - MOVIE - PRIZES

FEBRUARY 28
11 AM - 1 PM

2356 DRUSILLA LANE, BATON ROUGE



REGISTER:

[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/SIBSOCIETYFEB28](https://tinyurl.com/sibsocietyfeb28)

OR SCAN THE QR CODE

Understanding Adversity and Building Resilience

March 10, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Zoom Webinar

Speakers:

Nicole "Nikki" Bell, MSW, MBA, Lead for Health Equity and Population Health within Humana Healthy Horizons

Nichole Bevrotte, M. Ed., MBA, Director of Health Equity, Population Health, and Community Engagement for Humana

Nicole Flores, Families Helping Families Region 4 Executive Director



Join us for an introduction to key concepts of adversity, trauma, and building resilience.

This webinar will provide insight into the body's response to toxic stress and real-life strategies to create protective factors against the potential lifelong effects of childhood adversity. We will also discuss ways individuals and communities can take actionable steps to build resilience and discover the supports available to families through Families Helping Families networks.



Two no-cost Continuing Education Contact Hours for nurses and social workers

Register today! Scan the QR code.

The Bureau of Family Health is approved as a provider of nursing continuing professional development by the Louisiana State Nurses Association. LSNA Provider No. 4003257. The event planners, presenter(s), and individuals controlling the content for this activity have no relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies to disclose. Nurses must attend the entire event and complete an evaluation to receive a continuing education (CE) award.

The activity has been submitted for approval to the Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Public Health, Bureau of Family Health for two general contact hours of Social Work Continuing Education. The Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Public Health, Bureau of Family Health is an authorized approval organization of the Louisiana Board of Social Work Examiners. Presenters have no conflicts of interest to disclose. Social Workers must attend the entire event and complete an evaluation to receive a continuing education (CE) award.

The views and information expressed by the presenter(s) of this training/event and any supplemental information provided by the presenter(s), in print or electronic form, should not be construed as legal advice or final determinations of the Louisiana Department of Health and do not necessarily represent the opinions or policies of the Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Public Health, or the Bureau of Family Health.

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provided financial support for this project. The award provided 100% of total costs and the award totaled \$13,152,546. The contents are those of the author. They may not reflect the policies of HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government.





Sensory Play Workshop

Join us for a fun play and informational session with Francheska Peterson from Families Helping Families. We will learn some dynamic ways to engage children and have family play time.

Saturday, March 21st
10:00 a.m. - Main Branch

Main Branch
830 N Alexander Ave.
Port Allen, La 70767
(225) 342-7920
www.wbrpl.com



• It's who we are. It's what we do. •





SENSORY BUNNY

Does standing in line or traditional visits with the Easter Bunny prove to be difficult for your family? If so, hop on over for this special event where families with children and adults with disabilities are invited to join BREC and Families Helping Families trained staff for activities and pictures with the Easter Bunny, while avoiding long wait times.

Zachary Community Park

MARCH 27 | 6-8 PM

FREE FOR ALL AGES
with cognitive + sensory processing disorders

PREREGISTER + MORE INFO

 recadaptive@brec.org

 brec.org/sensorybunny

ACTIVITIES:

- + Arts/Crafts
- + Snacks
- + Games
- + Easter Bunny Photos



BREC does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, veteran status or sexual orientation in its programs and activities.

#AFA2026

ACTIVE FOR AUTISM

FHFGBR.ORG

5K RUN/WALK AND FUN FEST

BENEFFITING FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES OF GREATER BATON ROUGE



25
APRIL

SATURDAY

2026

LOCATION:

Pennington Biomedical Research Center
6400 Perkins Rd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

8:00AM TO 12:00 PM

☀️ **Calling All Community Partners!** ☀️

Join us as a sponsor, vendor, or volunteer and be part of this fun-filled day supporting families.

Email fpeterson@fhfgbr.org for details.

SCAN HERE



QUARTERLY CALENDAR



Thursday, **January 1** -
Friday, **January 2**

New Year's Holiday



Tuesday, **January 13**
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Your Rights in Special
Education

Free Webinar
Zoom Link



Friday, **January 16**
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Sunshine Social: All Mixed Up
Ages 16+/\$5 per person

Milton J. Womack Park
Ballroom, Baton Rouge



Monday, **January 19**

Dr Martin Luther King Jr. Day



Tuesday, **January 27**
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Step Into Early Steps

Free Webinar
tinyurl.com/EarlyStepsJan27



Monday, **February 16** -
Tuesday, **February 17**

Mardi Gras



Thursday, **February 19**
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Full Board Member
Meeting

FHFGBR Office

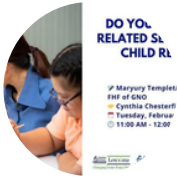


Friday, **February 20**
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Sunshine Social: Be Mine
Bash
Ages 16+/\$5 per person

Milton J. Womack Park
Ballroom, Baton Rouge

QUARTERLY CALENDAR



Tuesday, **February 24**
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Related Services Webinar

Free Webinar
tinyurl.com/22426RelatedServices



Saturday, **February 28**
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Sib Society Saturday Game Day

FHFGBR Office



Thursday, **March 5**
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Region 2 Legislative Roundtable

Online Meeting
tinyurl.com/5n6w3y3p



Tuesday, **March 10**
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

RIW: Understanding Adversity & Building Resilience
2 Free CE's for Nurses & Social Workers

Free Webinar
tinyurl.com/121525IEPv504



Tuesday, **March 10**
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

How to Have an Effective IEP Meeting

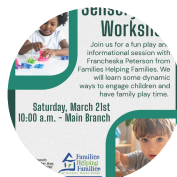
Free Webinar
tinyurl.com/031026EffectiveIEP



Friday, **March 20**
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Sunshine Social:
Luck of the Irish
Ages 16+/\$5 per person

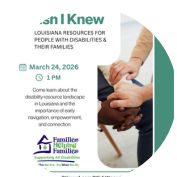
Milton J. Womack Park
Ballroom, Baton Rouge



Saturday, **March 21**
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Sensory Play Workshop

West Baton Rouge Parish
Library - Main Branch



Tuesday, **March 24**
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Things I Wish I Knew

Free Webinar



DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH

MARCH

March is National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month (DDAM) — a time to recognize the strengths, contributions, and achievements of individuals with developmental disabilities and to promote inclusion in every part of community life.

For families across our region and state, this month is more than awareness. It is about visibility, opportunity, respect, and belonging.

Individuals with developmental disabilities are students, employees, artists, leaders, neighbors, and friends. They enrich our schools, workplaces, churches, and communities in meaningful and powerful ways. When communities remove barriers and create inclusive spaces, everyone benefits.

What This Month Means for Families

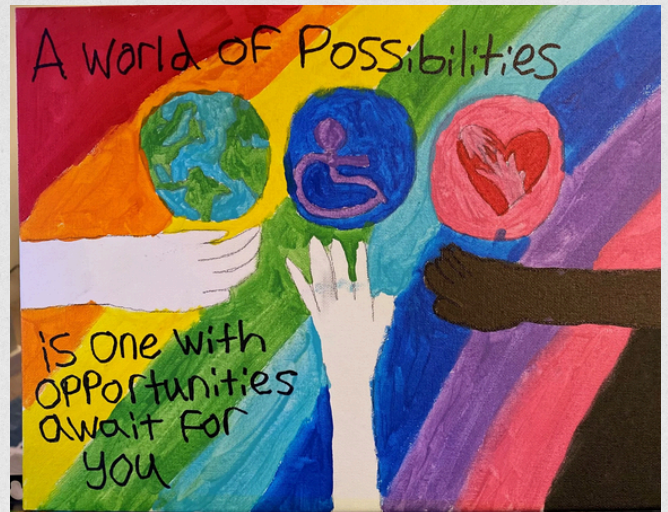
National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month is a reminder that:

- Inclusion should be the expectation — not the exception.
- People with disabilities deserve equal access to education, employment, healthcare, housing, and community life.
- Families should have the information and support they need to help their loved ones thrive.
- Self-advocates deserve to be heard, respected, and empowered to make their own choices.

At Families Helping Families, we see every day what happens when families are supported and individuals are given the tools and opportunities to succeed. We believe in building communities where people with developmental disabilities are not just present — but fully included and valued.

How You Can Celebrate

- Learn about disability rights and advocacy efforts in Louisiana.
- Support inclusive businesses and organizations.
- Invite individuals with disabilities into leadership roles and decision-making spaces.
- Share stories that highlight ability, resilience, and achievement.
- Practice person-first and respectful language.
- Most importantly, listen to and uplift the voices of individuals with developmental disabilities.



We Are Families Helping Families

Our mission remains rooted in empowerment, connection, and education. During this month — and every month — we stand alongside families as they navigate systems, advocate for services, and build brighter futures for their loved ones.

Because inclusion is not just a goal. It's a commitment. Together, we can create communities where everyone belongs.

AWARENESS CALENDAR

JAN 26

Birth Defects Prevention Month
Glaucoma Awareness Month
Thyroid Awareness Month

4 [World Braille Day](#)
24 [Moebius Syndrome Awareness Day](#)
26 [Kawasaki Disease Awareness Day](#)
26 [World Leprosy Day](#)
30 [Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy \(CTE\)](#)

FEB 26

American Heart Association Month
Black History Month
Jewish Disability Awareness & Inclusion Month
National Cancer Prevention Month
Turner Syndrome Awareness Month

2 [Rheumatoid Arthritis Awareness Day](#)
2-8 [White Cane Week](#)
4 [World Cancer Day](#)
7 [National Wear Red Day \(AHA\)](#)
7-14 [Congenital Heart Disease \(CHD\) Week](#)
15 [International Childhood Cancer Day](#)
22 [National Heart Valve Disease Awareness](#)
24-3/2 [National Eating Disorder Awareness Week](#)
28 [Rare Disease Day](#)

MAR 26

Cerebral Palsy Awareness Month
Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month
Bleeding Disorder Awareness Month
Brain Injury Awareness Month
Endometriosis Awareness Month
Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Awareness Month
National Developmental Disabilities Month
Trisomy Awareness Month

1 [Disability Community Day of Mourning](#)
1 [Self-Injury Awareness Day](#)
3 [World Hearing Day](#)
3 [Int'l Dyscalculia Awareness Day](#)
9-15 [MS Awareness Week](#)
17-23 [Neurodiversity Celebration Week](#)
18 [National Trisomy 18 Awareness Day](#)
25 [National Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day](#)
25-26 [Purple Days for Epilepsy](#)



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



Parents & Caregivers... You're not alone.

If your child has a developmental or learning disability, **we can help.**
Resources. Information. Peer support from those who understand.



Parishes we serve...

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



We're here for you—reach out today! Check out our website or social media for events, resources, and support for your family.

2356 Drusilla Lane, Baton Rouge, LA 70809
225.216.7474 • info@fhfgr.org • www.fhfgr.org

save the date
04.25.26

ACTIVE FOR AUTISM

Annual 5k Run/Walk & Fun Fest



Families Helping Families (FHF)

is the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council's statewide network of ten family-directed and family-staffed regional resource centers which provide information on all types of services, goods, technologies, and activities that improve the quality of life in the community; help individuals understand their rights and how to advocate for themselves; and lend support from someone "who has been there."

REGION 2 – FHF of Greater Baton Rouge, Inc.

Serving parishes of East and West Baton Rouge, East and West Feliciana, Iberville, Pointe Coupee, Ascension
Dr. Marilyn Thornton, Executive Director
2356 Drusilla Lane
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809
225-216-7474 or 1-866-216-7474, 225-216-7977 Fax
Email: info@fhfgr.org
Website: www.fhfgr.org

Region Map



REGION 3 – Bayou Land FHF, Inc.

Serving parishes of Assumption, Lafourche, St. Charles, St. James, St. John, St. Mary, Terrebonne
Jacki Pierce, Executive Director
286 Hwy. 3185 Thibodaux, Louisiana 70301
985-447-4461 or 1-800-331-5570, 985-447-7988 Fax
Email: jpierce@blfhf.org
Website: www.blfhf.org

REGION 4 – FHF of Acadiana, Inc.

Serving parishes of Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, Vermillion
Nicole Flores, Executive Director
100 Benman Road
Lafayette, Louisiana 70506
337-984-3458 or 1-855-984-3458, 337-984-3468 Fax
Email: info@fhfacadiana.org
Website: http://www.fhfacadiana.org/

REGION 5 – FHF of Southwest Louisiana, Inc.

Serving parishes of Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jeff Davis
Susan Riehn, Executive Director
324 W. Hale St.
Lake Charles, Louisiana 70601
337-436-2570 or 1-800-894-6558, 337-436-2578 Fax
Email: info@fhfswla.org
Website: www.fhfswla.org

REGION 6 – FHF at the Crossroads of La., Inc.

Serving parishes of Avoyelles, Concordia, Catahoula, Grant, LaSalle, Rapides, Vernon and Winn
Jim Sprinkle, Executive Director
Kristen Reed, Deputy Director
2840 Military Hwy., Suite A
Pineville, Louisiana 71360
318-641-7373 or 1-800-259-7200, 318-640-4299 Fax
Email: fhfxroads@gmail.com
Website: www.fhfxroads.com

REGION 7 – FHF of Region 7, Inc.

Serving parishes of Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, Desoto, Red River, Natchitoches, Sabine, Webster
Chanel Jackson, Executive Director
215 Bobbie Street, Suite 100
Bossier City, Louisiana 71112
318-226-4541 or 1-877-226-4541, 318-425-8295 Fax
Email: info@fhfregion7.com
Website: www.fhfregion7.com

REGION 8 – FHF of Northeast Louisiana, Inc.

Serving parishes of Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Jackson, Lincoln, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union, West Carroll
Stacey Guidry-Little, Executive Director
5200 Northeast Road Monroe, Louisiana 71203
318-361-0487 or 1-888-300-1320, 318-361-0417 Fax
Email: info@fhfnela.org
Website: www.fhfnela.org

REGION 9 – Northshore FHF, Inc.

Serving parishes of Livingston, St. Helena, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Washington
Karen Artus, Executive Director
108 Highland Park Plaza, Suite 108
Covington, Louisiana 70433
985-875-0511 or 1-800-383-8700, 985-875-9979 Fax
Email: info@fhfnorthshore.org
Website: www.fhfnorthshore.org

REGION 1&10 – FHF of Greater New Orleans, Inc.

Serving Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, and Jefferson Parish
Laura S. Nata, Executive Director
700 Hickory Avenue Harahan, Louisiana 70123
504-888-9111 or 1-800-766-7736, 504-353-2350 Fax
Email: info@fhfogn.org
Website: http://www.fhfogn.org/



OFFICE CLOSURES

New Year: January 1 - 2

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day: January 19

Mardi Gras: February 16 - 17

Office Hours: Monday to Friday 8 am - 4 pm

FHFGBR is funded by many individuals, foundations, small businesses, local governmental entities, state government departments, and corporations. Major funders include Bayouland Families Helping Families, Capital Area Human Services, Early Steps, the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council, Louisiana Department of Education, the Louisiana Department of Health Office of Behavioral Health and the Louisiana Department of Health, Bureau of Family Health.

FHFGBR does not endorse or promote any legislation, institutions, individuals, or methods of treatment or therapy.