



Families Helping Families

Region 7

Serving: Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, DeSoto, Natchitoches, Red River, Sabine, and Webster



Congratulations to our Executive Director, Chanel Jackson

Way to go Chanel!! We are so proud of you!!



Forty young professionals under the age of 40 were honored at the 9th annual Northwest Louisiana Young Professionals Initiative Gala December 5, 2015 at the Shreveport Convention Center.

Hundreds of professionals showed up in support of this year's 40 Under 40 honorees. The event drew a crowd of more than 575 guests.

Out of 170 nominees only 40 professional were chosen. The 2015 40 Under 40 class represents a very diverse group that not only excels in the workplace, but makes a valuable impact on our community through philanthropic involvement. YPI was honored to celebrate the accomplishments of these 40 talented, innovative and dynamic young professionals with this prestigious award."

Outstanding young entrepreneurs, executives, managers and professionals in public, private or non-profit sectors are nominated annually. Winners are chosen based on achievement, experience and innovation, vision, leadership, and community involvement.

40 Under 40's presenting sponsor is The Forum. The Times is YPI's corporate sponsor for the year.

Thank you Chanel for your leadership and bringing more awareness to Families Helping Families Region 7 and the disability community.

Who?

A family directed resource center for all individuals with disabilities and their families

What?

Providing information, referral, and support through a network of services and assistance throughout Region 7

When?

8:30 am – 5:00 pm
Monday – Friday

Drop-ins are always welcome!

Where?

2620 Centenary Boulevard
Building 2, Suite 250
Shreveport, LA 71104
318.226.4541
877.226.4541
info@fhfregion7.com
www.fhfregion7.com

What is Long Term Personal Care Services?

Long Term Personal Care Services Program is a home and community based waiver offered by Office of Aging and Adult Services. If you are eligible for OCDD services and currently on a waiver waiting list, LT-PCS will provide services to help with activities of daily living for persons who qualify for assistance under the program guidelines.

To qualify individuals must receive Medicaid **AND** are 21 years or older, meet Nursing Facility Level of Care, require at least limited assistance with one Activity of Daily Living and be able to direct their care independently or through responsible representative. Meet **ONE** of the following: be in a nursing facility and be able to be discharged if community-based services were available; **OR** be likely to require nursing facility admission within the next 120 days; **OR** have a primary care-giver who has a disability or who is least 70 years old.

If you qualify, services from this program will help with eating, bathing, dressing, grooming, moving from one surface to another (transferring), walking or using a wheelchair, toileting, or changing positions in bed (bed mobility). Other services are light housekeeping, preparing and storing meals, shopping, laundry, reminders about taking medicines, help finding transportation for medical appointments.

Services not covered by this program are specialized or skilled nursing, giving medicine, rehabilitation services, specialized aid services, help that is already given by family, others in the community or through another assistance program, cleaning areas of the home the applicant does not stay in, food preparations or laundry for anyone other than applicant, companionship, sitter services, and supervision not related to activities of daily living.

This program does not, by itself or in combination with other OAAS programs, provide supports 24 hours a day.

To apply or for more information, call Louisiana Options in Long Term Care at 1-877-456-1146, Monday-Friday, 8:00AM-5:00PM.

For more information about Long Term Personal Care Services please contact Mary Russell at Families Helping Families Region 7 Region 7 at (318) 226-4541/877-226-4541.

5 simple stages that can help your child manage his ADHD at school

By Laura Rivas

I was diagnosed with ADHD when I was 6. At the time, my parents received too many complaints about my behavior. "She is incredibly smart and her grades are top of her class," my teachers would say. They would follow with problems with my conduct. I couldn't sit still or stop talking. I tried helping others because I was restless all the time. Even doing sports every afternoon did nothing to lower my hyperactivity.

My mother was soon referred to a behavioral therapist because she said I was never to be medicated. Another issue was money. We didn't have much so we couldn't afford weekly sessions or frequent follow ups. The behavioral therapist decided she would instruct my mother how she would help me through a simple exercise. It's completely free and it can be done at home.



I want to share this exercise with you because maybe your family is in a similar predicament. Maybe you can't afford treatment like my parents or you want to be more involved in your child's care. Whatever the reason I know you want the best for your child.

Disclaimer: Today, I'm a clinical psychologist and I've never seen this exercise in any book. I asked teachers throughout college and none of them recognized it but they said it should work. This exercise worked for me and it could also help your child.

Discuss any changes in his current treatment course with your child's primary caregiver. Intended for children ages 6 or up.

Instructions: Place your child in a room to do his homework. Give him math or spelling exercises if he didn't get homework that day. You may want to ask the child's teacher or homeschooling mothers for age-appropriate material. Explain you will be right outside and he is not to leave his seat unless he is done with work.

Children will advance through stages when they can complete their assignment in the allotted time. Initially, sessions should last 15 minutes. Increase 15 minutes whenever the child reaches the following stage.

Objective: Child will be able to focus on assignments despite of stimuli for up to 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Stage 1

Place the child in a room with as little stimuli as possible. Remove all objects that could become a distraction for your child. As an ADHD parent you probably recognize almost all objects that fit the bill. Don't be frustrated if your child finds new things that distract him. I would focus on nails, floor tiles and even the fan. Give him homework that can be completed in 15 minutes.

Stage 2

Include a painting or image in the room. The objective is that the child focuses on his work despite the image. It's normal for the child to stare at the painting in the first few days because it's suddenly interesting. The assignment should take 20-30 minutes to be completed.

Stage 3

Place a phone close to the child. Instruct him he is not to pick up while he is doing his homework. You may want to say that you know he is trying to help Mommy but that this time is only for homework. Ask a friend to call the house at least once while he is doing homework. Assignment should take about 45 minutes to be completed.

Stage 4a

Include a radio in the room with the child. Instruct the child that the radio needs to stay off while he is working. He can only turn it on after he is done with his work. This rule should be in place for at least

4 weeks. Advance to Stage 4b when the child can follow this instruction and finish his assignment within an hour.

Stage 4b

Turn on the radio while he works. This stage was hard for me because I would spend more time changing the station than working. I failed my deadline for almost two months while the radio was on. Advance to the final stage when the child can finish the assignment within an hour.

Stage 5

The final stage can prove to be the hardest. Interrupt your child at least once while he is working. Interruptions can be as long or as short as you want. The child is allowed to answer but not to put his work away to dedicate his attention to the person. The final goal is for the child is to say "Let me finish my work and I'll pay attention to you" or something similar. He is also required to finish his work in an hour and fifteen minutes.

This exercise will take months. I'd be hurting you if I hid it from you. There will be hurdles along the way, frustrated afternoons and even tears from your child. My mother said it was one of the toughest things she had to do for me, second only to letting me cry it out. Would she do it again? You better believe it. I'm proud to say I survived high school with no complaints and graduated college with honors. Am I still hyperactive and a little distractible? Sometimes but I'm able to sit down and write this post without a standing up every 10 minutes. I can say this exercise saved my life.

Article reprinted from Special Education Advisor www.specialeducationadvisor.com

For more information and advocacy please contact Families Helping Families Region 7 Education Specialist Ester Drakes at (318)226-4541/877-226-4541 or email her at edrakes@fhfregion7.com.

Tips for Developing Self-Advocacy Skills

Understanding His Learning Problems Young people say they need to understand how they learn and be able to express this information in "plain English." Your teenager must be aware of his strengths and needs in the learning process, strategies that help him succeed, accommodations that bypass limitations, and the type of environment that facilitates learning. To gather this information, he should review assessment results with the specialists who tested him; talk to his teachers and/or tutors; and reflect on his own learning challenges, successes, and preferences.

Practicing Communication A key component of self-advocacy is knowing how to communicate this self-knowledge about the learning process to others. Your child must be clear in his requests and prepared with explanations. The manner in which he communicates can either get others on his side or push them away. To many, what he's asking for may be new. Your teenager may need your help preparing ahead of time, planning what he will say, and making notes to take with him. Role playing is a great way to practice communication skills. By helping him anticipate different situations, you can raise his level of confidence.

Identifying Supporters It's important to help your child identify his support system early on. Whom does he trust and feel comfortable talking to – parent, relative, teacher, administrator, counselor,

mentor, tutor? He needs to have people he can turn to for help, especially once he leaves home. This way he won't have to feel alone as he navigates through life.

Meeting with Teachers High school is a great place to begin practicing communication with teachers and other school staff. Encourage your child to set up conferences with his teachers. This gives him an opportunity to discuss what's going well and what isn't, to get feedback, and to work out a plan to do better. After all, once he leaves high school and enters the workplace or college, he'll have to do this for himself. You won't be able to call his professor or boss; you have to pass on the advocacy baton.

Knowing His Rights If your child has been formally identified with a learning disability (LD) or diagnosed with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD), he may be protected under federal law. Your teenager should learn whether he is covered under any of these laws and, if so, what his entitlements may be.

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is an education law guaranteeing special education and related services to eligible children with disabilities.
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is a civil rights law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of a disability in programs that receive federal monies.
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a civil rights law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, public services, and accommodations.

If he's eligible under any of these laws, your child has certain rights and responsibilities. A child with a learning disability who has an IEP and receives special education services is protected under IDEA until he graduates from high school with a diploma. Section 504 and ADA may protect him in college by providing "reasonable accommodations." In the world of work, an adult with a disability is most likely protected under ADA.

Participating Actively A great way for a teenager to build self-advocacy skills is for him to attend and participate in meetings to develop his Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan. He'll learn how the school plans to help him succeed and hear the reasons behind their recommendations. These meetings give him an opportunity to share his own goals and have them included. With you present, these meetings can be a safe testing ground for discussing his strengths, interests, talents, and needs with school staff. Educating Others Throughout high school and beyond, your child will face many situations where he'll be required to educate others about his learning disability. Peers will ask questions about his "special attention" at school. Teachers unfamiliar with his needs must be taught more about how he learns. On the job, he may require a specific work-related accommodation. At times, these situations may feel uncomfortable for your child. But the more self-knowledge he has, the better he'll be at advocating for himself.

Ongoing Evaluation By empowering your teenager to self-advocate, you'll help him develop skills necessary for success in learning and life. Encourage him to take time regularly to reflect on what's going well for him and what isn't. Making a list of "positives" on the left side of the paper and "**improvable**" on the right side can help him put things in perspective. If something isn't going right, he can decide what action to take next. After all, self-evaluation often is where the greatest learning takes place.

Article reprinted from www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/self-advocacy

For additional information about transition please contact Comeaka James, Transition Specialist at (318)226-4541/877-226-4541 or email her at cjames@fhfregion7.com.



ESSA Impact on Students with Disabilities in Louisiana

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 received the seventh, and long overdue, reauthorization with the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) last week. ESSA marks more changes than just a new name for ESEA, more commonly referred to by the previous reauthorization, No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, but what do these changes mean for students with disabilities?

Since laws that apply to all students also apply to students with disabilities, parents of students with disabilities need to understand EVERYTHING about how the new law impacts students AND how certain provisions may impact students with disabilities. This article will merely touch on a few of the interesting and significant changes to how the law may impact students with disabilities in Louisiana. The operative word here is 'may' since how the changes to law really impact students will depend on various interpretations such as rules, guidance, implementation and enforcement are carried out at the federal, state and local levels. And of course, differences in interpretation will ultimately be decided by the courts. So perspectives shared here are certainly not final or binding. With that perspective, a few interesting and significant changes ESSA makes regarding students with disabilities in Louisiana include:

Louisiana Alternate Assessment - Level 1 (LAA-1)

ESSA changes the requirement related to how many students can be tested on alternate academic achievement standards, which in Louisiana is the LAA-1. Previously, federal law (i.e., ESEA/NCLB) only allowed one percent of students at each grade level to be COUNTED as proficient on the LAA-1. The new federal law (ESEA/ESSA) limits the students who can TAKE the LAA-1 to one percent of students at each grade level.

A few problems are anticipated with this shift in limiting who can take the LAA-1 to a certain percentage of students, particularly in Louisiana. First, another federal law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), authorizes a student's Individual Education Program team to decide whether a student is eligible to participate in an alternate test (i.e., LAA-1). So it is not clear how a decision made at the student level in one federal law can be deemed inappropriate relative to meeting a quota or limit (cap) on participation. Interestingly, this shift seems at odds with the general movement of ESSA seeking to give more authority and decision making power to people closest to the child.

Second, each state determines criteria IEP teams must use in determining which students are eligible to take alternate assessments. In the middle of last school year, 2014-2015, Louisiana expanded LAA-1 eligibility criteria, allowing more students - likely more than one percent of students at each grade level - to qualify for the LAA-1. Louisiana will likely shift eligibility criteria back to more restrictive requirements for LAA-1 to align with this ESSA participation cap. It is not clear what will happen to all the students just deemed eligible for LAA-1 by their IEP teams. To meet the one percent rule will the state require these IEP teams to reverse the decision they just made?

Will enforcing the cap on how many students can take the alternate assessment, LAA-1, violate decisions made by the IEP team?

Diplomas and Accountability

ESSA continues to grant states the right to define requirements for earning a diploma, but separates out a state-defined alternate diploma from a regular diploma, somewhat. While there are some concerns regarding the wording related to requirements for both alternate and regular diplomas in ESSA, or for an alternate diploma at all, it is an historic shift for Congress to formally recognize that students with the most significant disabilities can exit with a diploma, albeit an alternative one. The significance of this development for an exit option reveals an awakening of a vision for all students, a vision which was lost and may get clouded when applying norm-referenced standards to define success or failure. Now states and schools will be able to get credit for every student earning a diploma. Prior to language provided by ESSA there were questions about whether students with the most significant disabilities could be counted in the diploma rates and indices. Considering in Louisiana half of high school performance scores are comprised of diploma rates and indices, and ESSA will require diplomas to be part of school accountability, it matters that some students were not able to earn a diploma by virtue of having a disability and schools lost points for serving them. While Act 833 of 2014 generated dialogue and changes to the accountability in Louisiana, it is a positive step for Congress to recognize and place value on outcomes for students with the most significant disabilities.

ESSA definitions of both the alternate and regular diploma contain some language that is likely to generate further dialogue and discussions regarding diploma requirements both in Louisiana and across the nation - dialogue that is long overdue. It seems clarity is needed in defining 'alignment' as this is expected to be the root of discussions and decisions related to diploma requirements. Alternate diplomas are to be standards-based and aligned with the state requirements for a regular high school diploma. A 'regular high school diploma' is 'the standard high school diploma awarded to the preponderance of students in the State that is fully aligned with State standards, or a higher diploma, except that a regular high school diploma shall not be aligned to the alternate academic achievement standards...' How rules and guidance on interpreting whether a diploma is 'fully aligned' with State standards has huge implications for not only Louisiana, but for most of the nation.

Currently there is incredible variability across the states in requirements for earning a high school diploma, particularly considering pathways available for students with disabilities.¹ Dialogue and advocacy for a vision for every student, including students with disabilities, to be equally valued will be necessary as success is further defined in our education accountability structures, support systems, and outcomes through the rule making and policy guidance of ESSA.

Bullying and Restraints and Seclusion

ESSA will require states to support local school systems to reduce the use of aversive behavioral interventions, including the use of restraints and seclusion. Although Louisiana passed a law (Act 328 of 2011) to govern the use of restraints and seclusion in schools, it has become evident recently that increased attention and oversight of these practices is needed by the Louisiana Department of Education.



Save the Date

TAKE YOUR SEAT AT THE TABLE

Wednesday, January 27, 2016
9:00 am - 11:30 am

Bossier Instructional Center
2719 Airline Drive
Bossier City, LA 71111

RSVP to Duane Ebarb
318-226-4541 or dke1949@bellsouth.net



A Note from your LaCAN Leader

Another year is coming up on us. First off I wish to THANK ALL of the people who did the Action Alerts and contacted your Legislators to fund the Waiver Slots, EarlySteps, and funding the 9 FHF Centers across the state. All the trips to the Capital for testimony before the House Appropriations Committee and Senate Finance Committee and your advocacy sure made a difference.

Legislators heard the voices of LaCAN members and responded in this year's legislative session. Thanks to your persistent advocacy efforts, the legislature passed the State Budget for Fiscal Year 2016 with \$3.5 Million in state funds (\$9.25 Million total) to fill all frozen home and community-based waiver slots for individuals with developmental disabilities, \$170,000 restored to Families Helping Families, and an additional \$500,000 for EarlySteps.

As we celebrate this success, we will continue to monitor the budget situation closely and keep you informed. There continues to be on-going concerns about the budget and insufficient funding for Medicaid. Mid-year cuts are predicted that would once again put funding for DD services in jeopardy.

LaCAN Members had a Meet & Greet in September to just socialize and visit with some Legislators who came.

Well since the end of the 2015 Legislative Session LaCAN was successful in getting what we advocated for. The following has happened.

The Governor froze all of the waiver slots in October, he didn't cut the \$170,000 for the Families Helping Families Centers and we got DHH to move the \$500,000 from Early Steps to an Individual and Family Support pool of money for the Districts and Authorities could write grants for.

We as LaCAN Members will be Advocating for:

- Funding for 1000 additional waiver slots (250 New Opportunities Waiver, 250 Children's Choice Waiver, 250 Supports Waiver and 250 ROW Waivers) **TESTIMONY NEEDED:**

Individual on waiting list who are at high-risk for institutionalization -- most compelling stories you can find.

- An increased rate for Districts and Authorities to a \$1.60 per capita as a minimum, **TESTIMONY NEEDED:** Families who are having difficulty receiving IFS funds. We need the most compelling stories.
- 100% funding from State General Funds for LRS to draw down Federal matching funds to help put more people with disabilities to work.

The issues listed above will be our issues during the 2016 Legislative Session. If you would like to testify on any of these issues contact me dke1949@bellsouth.net or 318-688-4830.

If you are not a LaCAN Member and you would like to be an advocate with thousands of other families for funding for services for your loved one or yourself come join us at www.lacanadvocates.org.

We will have our Legislative Roundtable again inviting with our Legislators, LaCAN and LaTEACH members to talk about the information above, on Wednesday, January 27th, 2016 at the Bossier Instructional Center at 2719 Airline Dr., Bossier City, LA from 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM. If you plan to attend please contact me to **RSVP!**

In the spring around April we will have our Disability Rights Day at the Capitol, let us know if you wish to go on the Charter Bus and visit again with your Legislator and other Legislators and LaCAN members from across the State.

If you know of anyone who wishes to join our LaCAN Team have them contact me Duane Ebarb at dke1949@bellsouth.net or 318-688-4830/318-226-4541.



LaTEACH (Louisiana Together Educating ALL Children) is an initiative of the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council. We were formed to effect systems change in the education system that promotes inclusive education for students by using best practices and research based methods.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

"LaTEACH promotes appropriate, inclusive education for all students. We work to make parents, educators, the general public, and state leadership informed and supportive of research based and effective practices used appropriately for each student."

We believe all students, with or without disabilities, should be provided the same opportunities to be educated in neighborhood schools as their sisters, brothers, friends and neighbors.

We believe all students, with or without disabilities, need and should be provided with the support to learn together effectively, involving family, school and community.

We believe all educators should be provided with the training and resources to teach students with diverse learning styles and needs.

We believe all students, with or without disabilities, need and should be provided educational opportunities which address their individualized needs, use research based practices, result in meaningful outcomes, and prepare them for productive and satisfying lives.

We believe all parents should take the lead through active participation and be given the training and resources to address their child's individualized needs, use research based practices, result in meaningful outcomes, and prepare them for productive and satisfying lives.

We believe that ALL students are valued members in society and can and should become fully participating and contributing citizens.

Who should join? Students, Parents, Family Members, Educators, Administrators, or any interested person in inclusive education.

For more information about LaTEACH or to become a member of LaTEACH please visit their website at www.lateach.org.



What to expect from an EarlySteps Provider

EarlySteps-enrolled providers are trained and credentialed in their specialty areas. They are there to educate and support parents and caregivers on strategies and skills that encourage positive development.

By working with the parent, the provider can teach the parent skills they can use in their child's daily activities. Using the activities between visits is equally important as the visit itself, this is where progress occurs. At this age children learn best from their parents or caregivers during their everyday routines. It is important that there be open communication between the parent and provider. The parent must keep the provider updated on any changing needs or concerns of the child and family.

Children also learn best through repetition and in the environment where the activity occurs. Early intervention services should be provided during the child's daily routine and in the natural environment. Research shows that babies learn best through play and in an environment that they are familiar with.

EarlySteps is currently recruiting providers for infants and toddlers in Natchitoches, Sabine, Desoto, Red River, Bienville, Webster and Claiborne Parishes. OT, PT, SLP, COTA, PTA, SLP-A, and Certified Early Interventionists. Flexible hours, competitive pay, home/childcare based therapy supports (travel required). Please contact April Hearron, EarlySteps Regional Coordinator at 318-741-7149 or email her at april.hearron@la.gov.

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 two areas, may be eligible: physical development, cognitive development, social and emotional development, adaptive development and/or communication.

Anyone can refer a child to EarlySteps

If you know of a child that would benefit from receiving services from EarlySteps **please call 318-226-4541/877-226-4541 and speak with Monica Stampley, EarlySteps Community Outreach Specialist.** It's never too soon to ask questions about your baby's development.

Services Provided by Early Steps:

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



Power of the Parent Support Group

Power of the Parent aka P.O.P. is Families Helping Families Region 7 support group for parents or caregivers of individuals with disabilities. Parents and family members of children with disabilities or special needs are encouraged to come, share, and learn with other parents. Power of the Parent meets every third Wednesday of the month at the Families Helping Families Region 7 Center conference room from 5:30pm – 6:30pm.

Please feel free to contact Monica Stampley at (318)226-4541/877-226-4541 for additional information or directions

Hanging with Friends Socialization Group

Hanging with Friends aka HWF is Families Helping Families Region 7 socialization group for self-advocates over the age of 18 or out of the school system. Hanging with Friends was birthed out of the idea that all people should have friends as well as being active and included in their community. We get together one a month to have fun, meet new people, and participate in community activities. Some activities include bowling night, movie night, sweetheart dance, community festivals, and holiday celebration plus much more. As a group we are serious about self-advocacy issues, but we also want to make you laugh and feel good about life. Join us to celebrate the strengths of self-advocates. Most of all, let's work together to help people live the life they want with the support they need. **All HWF activities can be found on our website at www.fhfregion7.com or you can contact Mary Russell at (318)226-4541/877-226-4541 for additional information.**



Children's Special Health Services Medical Transportation Project

In continuing our spirit of partnership, Families Helping Families and Children's Special Health Services have joined to provide travel assistance through the CSHS Medical Transportation Project. Our agencies are working together to provide eligible families with financial assistance for the costs of travel to out-of-town medical appointments or services. **Please contact Families Helping Families Region 7 at (318)226-4541/877-226-4541 to find out more. Many families have benefited from this help with their expenses.**

Families Helping Families Dash for disABILITIES 5k/Walk



Our 1st Dash for disABILITIES, a 5K Walk/Run through the streets of Downtown Shreveport was held Saturday, November 21st, 2015 at 9:00 AM. This family friendly event started in the Red River District under the Texas St. Bridge, and was a fundraiser to support the family activities at Families Helping Families Region 7.

The event drew more than sixty runners/walkers as well as families who receive services from Families Helping Families Region 7.

All participants received a race T-shirt and race packet, and were invited to enjoy the after race festivities in the Red River District. Fruit, cookies, and popcorn were served after the race, while participants enjoyed music, informational booths, games, raffles, and a drawing for ten Thanksgiving Dinner giveaways.

Awards were presented to the overall male and female winners, along with age category winners.

This year's sponsors include Sportspectrum, Little Works in Progress, Yokem Toyota, Aetna Better Health of Louisiana, and The R.O.L.E. Foundation.



Families Helping Families Region 7 Annual Christmas Dinner and Dance

Families Helping Families Region 7 Annual Christmas Dinner and Dance in collaboration with SPAR Therapeutic and Recreation Division was held on December 18, 2015 at The Southern Hills SPAR-Gym. The sponsor for this event was AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana as well as funds raised from our 1st Dash for disABILITIES which was held on November 21, 2015, and Byrd High School Beta Club. We provided gifts to over one hundred kids and fifty adults with disabilities. We were also able to give away over forty-five donated door prizes to the parents and caregivers that attended.

For most of the families the event was the highlight of their holiday season. The event also included a traditional Christmas dinner with all the trimmings, and all families also went home with a family portrait to remember the joy filled evening.

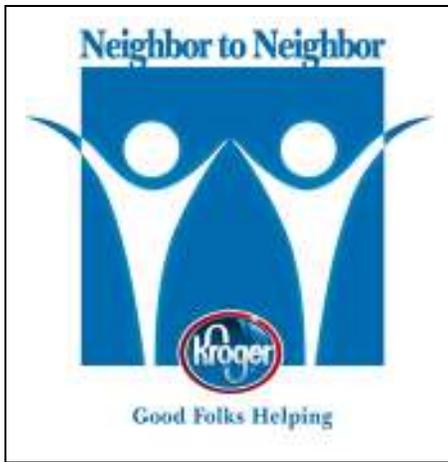


Ways to Give Back to Families Helping Families Region 7



Support Families Helping Families Region 7 by starting your shopping at smile.amazon.com. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know and love. Same products, same prices, and same services.

Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to Families Helping Families Region 7 whenever you shop on AmazonSmile.



Families Helping Families Region 7 is proud to announce their participation in the Kroger Neighbor to Neighbor Donation Program. If you shop at Kroger and use a KrogerPlus Card this is an easy and fast way to donate money to Families Helping Families Region 7 without coming out of your pocket. Kroger will donate money Families Helping Families Region 7 every time you use your card.

- You can sign up for a Kroger Community Rewards Account by entering your zip code, clicking on favorite store, enter your email address, create a password, and agree to the terms and conditions.
- You will get a message to check your email inbox and click on the link within the body of the email.
- You will click on My Account and use your email address and password to proceed to the next step.
- You will click on Edit Kroger Community Rewards information and input your Kroger Plus card number.
- You will update or confirm your information.
- You will enter our **NPO number 90225** or our **name Families Helping Families Region 7**, or select **Families Helping Families Region 7** from list and click on confirm.

To verify you are enrolled correctly, you will see Families Helping Families Region 7 name on the right side of your information page.

REMEMBER, purchases will not count for Families Helping Families Region 7 until after member(s) register their card(s).

Let the Donating BEGIN!

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council's Mission

To ensure all individuals with disabilities benefit from supports and opportunities in their communities so they achieve quality of life in conformance with their wishes.

Through the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act Congress funds and authorizes the Developmental Disabilities Council to conduct advocacy, capacity building and systems change activities. The Council's efforts are designed to promote the increased self-determination, independence, productivity, integration and inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in their communities.

The Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC) is made up of people from every region of the state who are appointed by the governor to develop and implement a five year plan to address the needs of persons with developmental disabilities. Membership includes persons with developmental disabilities, parents and representatives from public and private agencies. Several members rotate off the Council each year in October and nominations for new members are always welcomed.

You may contact the DDC by calling 1.800.450.8101 or visit their website: www.laddc.org

Families Helping Families Region 7 programs and this newsletter are supported by the F2FHIC, Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council Louisiana State Department of Education, and Office of Citizens with Development Disabilities

Board of Directors

Renata Bradberry-Secretary
Self-Advocate

Charles Spearman
Self-Advocate

Shaina Newton- Chair
Caregiver

Chanel Jackson
Executive Director

All Board Meetings are held the last Thursday of the month at 5:00pm in the Families Helping Families Region 7 Conference Room.

**Dates are subject to change, please contact the office for confirmation prior to attending.*



Families Helping Families
Region 7
2620 Centenary Boulevard
Building 2, Suite 250
Shreveport, LA 71104