



# Families Helping Families

## Region 7

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



### The Perfect Child

I sat near a young mother recently. Though I didn't mean to, I found myself listening to her conversation. Clearly delighted by her child, she extolled his brilliance and charm. At the risk of bragging, she admitted her son was well beyond all his peers. He may even have leapt a tall building in a single bound, though I am not positive she said that. I am certain in the ensuing weeks he's learned twelve languages. Or more.

I couldn't help but smile at the little cherub nearby who sat blissfully unaware of his great prowess. That mother's delight in her child made me smile too. I hope he is every bit as brilliant she thinks. I hope he can perform magical feats. One day he may hold our collective futures in his hands. I'd be foolish to hope otherwise.

I have a favor to ask of you, mother of the perfect child.

I ask you instill in your child a compassionate heart as well as an open and inquisitive mind. Teach him to be patient and kind and to fearlessly pursue all that is right. Bless him with acceptance of all people regardless of origin and ability. Show him how to appreciate their achievements no matter how small. Help him develop an eye for beauty in even the smallest of things. Stress the importance of giving back as much as he takes. Share with him the value of a smile.

Teach him to treasure each living creature and to value every life. Let him know it is ok to make a mistake and honorable to admit and learn from it. Help him to understand he won't become more by making another less. Teach him to resist judging what he doesn't understand and perhaps even what he does. Let him know he is no better – or worse – than anyone else.

Teach him to use his gifts wisely. Whether his accomplishments are grand or small, provide him with the tools to leave our world a better place. A place where your son and my son might one day peacefully co-exist. Maybe even be friends. You can show him the way, mother of the perfect child. I know you can.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart,  
Sam's mom

*This blog post is by Janet Amorello. Her son Sam has autism and she writes about her experiences on her blog, [Blending with Autism](#).*

Who?	What?	When?	Where?
A family directed resource center for all individuals with disabilities and their families	Providing information, referral, and support through a network of services and assistance throughout Region 7	8:30 am – 5:00 pm Monday – Friday  Drop-ins are always welcome!	2620 Centenary Boulevard Building 2, Suite 250 Shreveport, LA 71104 318.226.4541 877.226.4541 info@fhfregion7.com www.fhfregion7.com



**Managed Care Could be Coming for Individuals  
with Developmental Disability Waivers**

By: Karen Scallan, Program Director

From the Louisiana Parent to Parent Health  
Information Center

*A statewide program of  
Bayou Land Families Helping Families*

The state is currently investigating the feasibility of instituting managed care for waiver services in Louisiana. Last November, DHH issued a **“Request for Information”** (RFI) for ideas on what a managed-care program for long-term care (including Developmental Disability waiver) services would look like. The state received 16 responses. Most were from large agencies. Some provided these managed care services in other states. Some did not. You can view all 16 responses and the RFI by visiting: <http://dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/newsroom/detail/2749>.

Many who heard of the RFI were concerned that NOW waiver services would be moved into managed care immediately, but in our discussions with **Dr. Laura Brackin, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD)** and **Kathy Kliebert, Deputy Secretary for the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH)**, we were assured this process will involve extensive consideration and stakeholder input if the state decides to move toward managed care. Kathy Kliebert also indicated that there is no possibility of a move to managed care for waiver services this fiscal year (beginning July 1, 2013) and that the state had not even made any decisions on whether or not to move forward at the time of this writing.

The key thing to remember is whether or not the state moves to managed care for long-term supports and services, no one will truly know what that will mean until after the stakeholder input and a Request for Proposals is issued. The possibilities are many if they decide to move forward. A wide variety of services could be included, including institutional care, home and community based care, health care and/or mental health care.

The Louisiana Family to Family Health Information Center has taken an active collaborative approach to working with state officials and other agencies so that families are represented in the stakeholder process. Online trainings are being held now for families on managed care and how it works so that we can be fully-participating members of the stakeholder groups involved. We will schedule additional webinars as stakeholder meetings are held to update families on the progress of the meetings and where we stand. Watch LaDisabilityTalk and the F2FHIC Facebook page for announcements of dates and times. Check out our Upcoming Events Calendar in this newsletter as well.

**For more Info, contact Karen Scallan, Program Director, La Family to Family Health Information Center, 1-800-331-5570 or [kcscallan@gmail.com](mailto:kcscallan@gmail.com). La F2FHIC facebook page is Laf2fhic Kidscomplexneeds.**

## Facts about the New Opportunity Wavier (NOW)

The mission of the NOW is to utilize the principles of Self Determination to supplement the family and/or community supports while supporting dignity, quality of life, and security in the everyday lives of people while maintaining the Recipient in the community. The NOW includes an array of services aimed at assisting people to live as independently as possible.

NOW services include residential support, respite, community integration and development, work-related supports, habilitation, environmental modifications and specialized equipment, professional services, as well as other services. Services are based on the need of the recipient and are developed using a person centered process. The person-centered process coordinated by the case manager will formulate an individualized plan for each recipient. NOW services are provided as a supplement to regular Medicaid State Plan services and natural supports. NOW should not be viewed as a lifetime entitlement or a fixed annual allocation.

Due to the demand for NOW services, there is a Request for Services Registry (RFSR) which lists people, who have a qualifying developmental disability (DD) according to the Louisiana DD definition, and their request date. The NOW is offered to people on the Registry on a first-come, first-served basis, with the exception of people who qualify for the NOW through emergency placement or other designated placements.

People who are interested in being added to the RFSR for the NOW should contact their local OCDD Regional Office/District/Authority. The application process does not begin until a waiver slot becomes available. At that time, medical and financial determinations will be completed simultaneously to verify that the person has a developmental disability and meets the financial and medical/psychological requirements for an Intermediate Care Facility for the Developmentally Disabled (ICF/DD).

The NOW is an appropriate option for people whose health and welfare can be assured through an Individual Support Plan (ISP) for community placement. The NOW is intended to provide specific, activity-focused services which enhance the quality of life for the person, rather than custodial care.

To qualify for the NOW, a person must:

- Be 3 years of age or older,
- Have a developmental disability, according to the Louisiana definition for DD, which manifested prior to age 22.
- Meet the ICF/DD level of care
- Additionally interested persons must meet the following financial criteria:  
Income may be up to 3 times the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) amount. For children, income of other family members is not considered if the child receives SSI. Parental income is counted toward minor children for the month of admission only. The income of the minor and the income of the parent(s) with whom the child lived during the month of admission are

counted together. Countable resources cannot be worth more than \$2,000 for a single person or \$3000 for a couple who needs ICF/DD level of care.

*Note: The financial limits are subject to change each year*

**For more information please contact Mary Russell OCDD Family Facilitator at Families Helping Families Region 7 at 318-226-4541/877-226-4541 or email her at [mrussell@fhfregion7.com](mailto:mrussell@fhfregion7.com).**

*This article was reprinted from [www.dhh.louisiana.gov](http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov).*

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### **A Note From Your EarlySteps Community Outreach Specialist**

Greeting EarlySteps families my name is **Monica Stampley**, and I am the Community Outreach Specialist for Region 7 which includes: Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, Desoto, Natchitoches, Red River, Sabine, and Webster Parishes. I am the parent of 2 young children with disabilities, who have both received early intervention services. My role is to assist you with understanding your rights and responsibilities within the EarlySteps system, and assist you with finding resources in the community that may benefit your family, such as support groups, pediatricians, providers, trainings, workshops, and etc.

I regularly provide trainings to parents and other interested individuals at no cost. Training topics have included EarlySteps Parent Orientation, Parent Resources; "Things I Wish I Knew", and Transition at Age Three. Other training topics have been Infant and Toddler Safety, Playing with your Child, and Challenging Behaviors. A schedule of upcoming trainings can be found at [www.fhfregion7.com](http://www.fhfregion7.com). I am also available to answer any questions you may have about EarlySteps.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to our Regional Interagency Coordinating Council (RICC) meetings. EarlySteps providers and community partners, as well as EarlySteps families attend the RICC meetings. It is an opportunity to learn more about EarlySteps and other supports & resources in the community that could help strengthen your family.

**If you have any questions, need more information, or if you would like to be notified of any upcoming meetings and events, please contact me, Monica Stampley, EarlySteps Community Outreach Specialist at Families Helping Families Region 7 at 318-226-4541/877-226-4541 or email her at [monica.stampley@la.gov](mailto:monica.stampley@la.gov).**

## The Uncertainties of Continuing Tutorship

*“Continuing tutorship is an alternative to the harsh remedy of interdiction proceedings.”*

Many parents of children with intellectual disabilities choose continuing tutorship to maintain guardianship and legal authority over their child after he/she reaches the age of 18. Because of a less stringent legal requirement, continuing tutorships are typically considered cheaper and easier than formal interdiction proceedings. Unlike a full interdiction, the subject of the continuing tutorship retains some rights.

Recently, however, due to a revamping of the continuing tutorship laws in Louisiana, those rights are not clearly defined. State law references statutes that define rights, but unfortunately, those statutes are missing. The effects of this inconsistency are uncertain, as no one has challenged the statute in a court of law.

Before this change, it was clear that a continuing tutorship restricted a person’s right to contract, to marry, to vote, to sue or be sued and to consent. Now, it is unclear whether an individual under a continuing tutorship retains, or even loses, any rights at all.

In addition, the constitutionality of the continuing tutorship process is questionable. If the tutorship proceedings began before age 18, individuals with disabilities are not entitled to legal representation or formal court proceedings during the process. Rather, the judgment is based entirely on the results of an IQ test, no matter how outdated or questionable. Once an individual reaches the age of majority, there is no review process to ensure a continuing tutorship is appropriate.

Advocacy Center staff is investigating the legalities of this procedure.

To learn more about continuing tutorships, interdictions and other legal status issues, read *Legal Status in Louisiana: A Guide to Full Interdiction, Limited Interdiction, Continuing Tutorship, Representation and Mandate (formerly Power of Attorney) and Representative Payment*, published by the Advocacy Center and <http://www.advocacyla.org/index.php/publications-selfdetermination-93.html>.

**To request help from the Advocacy Center, call 1-800-960-7705 (Voice or via 711 Relay) or 1-855-861-3577 (TTY) or email [advocacycenter@advocacyla.org](mailto:advocacycenter@advocacyla.org). The intake specialist will contact you within 1-2 business days to discuss your issue in detail and determine if AC can help.**

*This article was reprinted from [www.advocacyla.org](http://www.advocacyla.org).*

## People with Disabilities in America's Workforce: Time for Fresh Thinking

By Derek Nord

The American economy is undergoing dramatic changes that will alter the employment landscape for generations to come. New and emerging fields are taking root and the need for skilled workers in these fields is growing. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects dramatic growth during the current decade in many industries and occupations in which people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have not typically been represented, including information technology, health care, scientific, and green jobs (2010). As the business community and the labor force respond to the changing economy, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities must be not only part of the economic conversation, they also must be active participants in filling the increased need for skilled workers.

As of January 2013 only 20% of people with disabilities were either working a paid job or seeking employment in the national labor force, compared to 69% of the general population (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). People with intellectual and developmental disabilities face some of the largest hurdles to entering the workforce and as a result experience the highest unemployment rate (Butterworth et al., 2011). When people with intellectual and developmental disabilities do obtain jobs, they are often entry-level positions in the service industries with low wages and few hours (Butterworth et al., 2011; Mank, Cioffi, & Yovanoff. +, 2003). These challenges present opportunities for fresh thinking about how job seekers with disabilities can participate in the American workforce in new ways that present more options for meaningful, gainful employment.

That fresh thinking calls for use of a suite of approaches and advancements that can facilitate opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to learn about and obtain advanced skills, find and create new types of employment, and enter careers of their choosing, including careers in emerging fields. The remainder of this article discusses strategies that can support these job seekers in pursuing new types of employment in the workforce of today and tomorrow.



Career exploration is a great way to facilitate a deeper understanding about what is possible and what matches a job seeker's attributes. Career exploration approaches span a spectrum. For some it can be a highly involved process and include strategies such as internships and job tryouts that provide not only opportunities to learn about a field generally, but also to develop skills and perform tasks in the workforce. Initiatives have sprung up to encourage young adults with disabilities to engage in career exploration activities in the same fields as their nondisabled peers. For example, Entry Point! is a program for people with apparent and non-apparent disabilities offered through the American Association for the Advancement of Science; the program provides internship opportunities in science, engineering,

mathematics, computer science, and business. The National Business and Disability Council have an internship program for young adults with disabilities who are emerging leaders and seeking governmental or non-profit career experiences in Washington, D.C. Another example is the Camps to Careers program in Minnesota that offers young adults with and without disabilities the opportunity to come together to learn in-depth about a variety of growing fields and occupations, including renewable energy and health care. Career development supports span a spectrum of approaches that facilitate the acquisition of employment, including *competitive employment*, *supported employment*, and *customized employment*. Each has strengths and limitations for particular individuals.

Competitive and supported employment practices use more traditional job job-seeking techniques for currently existing jobs, such as resumes, applications, and interviews. Job seekers receive support through this process and upon hiring. This approach responds directly to the business by providing a supply of job applicants to meet hiring needs.

While some professionals dedicate their employment support practice to one approach over another, most see the benefit of understanding and utilizing both traditional job search and customized employment strategies. By having the skills needed to effectively use both strategies the professional on the ground can adapt their approach to best meet the needs of an individual job seeker. Some, such as people with more complex disabilities, may require the more labor- and resource-intensive job customization or self-employment approaches to meet their individual needs and preferences, whereas others may prefer an existing job and employment situation and thus require traditional job search support. Education is a vital link to participating and working in a quickly-changing economy. High school and transition programs have been, and continue to be, the primary launching pad for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities entering the workforce. Today, more than ever, it is important that employment preparation and skill development in these settings provide opportunities for gaining real work experience that directly links to new career pathways. It is also important to recognize that for many Americans, postsecondary education provides an avenue to develop knowledge and skills that lead to expanded career possibilities. Unfortunately, for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, postsecondary education has long been overlooked due to the historically limited access afforded to this population. Dramatic changes are underway. The 2008 reauthorization of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (PL 110-315) provides great opportunity for people with disabilities. Today, across the country, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are enrolled in vocational and technical colleges, as well as two- and four-year programs, completing credentials and degrees. The Think College Web site (<http://www.thinkcollege.net>) with its database of postsecondary programs for students with intellectual disabilities nationwide illustrates this new option for students, families, and educators to use to support participation in career preparation. Postsecondary opportunities are known to improve career possibilities, and increasing numbers of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities can now pursue advanced education as a mechanism to advance their careers. Today, there is a growing expectation that all people with significant disabilities can and should be employed in the community (Kiernan, 2011; Wagner, Cameto, & Newman, 2003). There is no one-size-fits-all approach to make this happen. As we imagine how job seekers with intellectual and developmental disabilities fit within the new and emerging fields, we must recognize that the best jobs are those that match a person's preferences, strengths, and needs. The best approach to creating new career paths for people with intellectual and developmental disability is one that never loses sight of the individual job seeker. The strategies discussed in this article provide a snapshot of some of the many different options and approaches

available to support individuals to learn about, personally develop, and begin careers of their choosing as participants in the American workforce of the 21st century.

**If you have any questions about supported employment or need a special education/disability advocate please contact Brenda Watkins, Transition Facilitator at Families Helping Families Region 7 at 318-226-4541/877-226-4541 or email her at [bwatkins@fhfregion7.com](mailto:bwatkins@fhfregion7.com).**

*This article was reprinted from <http://ici.umn.edu/products/impact/251/1.html>*

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## **Pushing Forward**

By: Monica Sullivan, FHF Region 7 Education Specialist

As we know, the best special education teachers are those who show you where to look but don't tell you what to see. These teachers educate, support and provide accommodations where they are needed. They find themselves meeting our children's exceptionalities where they begin and not where benchmark testing says they should be.

Special Education over the years has changed tremendously. The program itself has provided services for so many of our children as well as enhancing their abilities to learn and do well. Some educational leaders have improved the quality of special education and increased hope for our children to develop and succeed. Learning about empathy, compassion, and supporting our parents will develop strong relationships in supporting our children to achieve all of their potential goals. There have been myths created about Special Education instead of the appropriate solutions. While the complaints are increasing our children are regressing. As a community we need to support our schools and the academic programs our children are involved in. It is time to **Push Forward**.

As parents, it has become a dire need for parental involvement in our children's academic programs. Parents need to be involved in the beginning whether it is inclusion, resource room, self-contained setting, and the support services, being involved makes a creditable difference. It is a known fact when parents are fully involved they are able to understand the Special Education process and the rights of their children.

1. Do parents know about their child's IEP and their exceptionality?
2. Do parents know about the resources their child may be or become eligible for in the future?
3. Are there any support groups for parent and caregivers in your area?

These are three important questions that a parent should know pertaining to their child if their receiving special educations services. If you don't know the answers to these questions your regional Families Helping Families center will guide parents, caregivers and professionals in the direction needed to get the answers.

**Pushing Forward** is not starting over or leaving things incomplete. **Pushing Forward** is a way in which parents and caregivers have hope to get through the day and strength for tomorrow.

**If you have any questions about special education and your child's rights please contact Monica Sullivan, Education Specialist at Families Helping Families Region 7 at 318-226-4541/877-226-4541 or email her at [msullivan@fhfregion7.com](mailto:msullivan@fhfregion7.com).**



**LATEACH**  
Louisiana Together Educating ALL Children

**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 contact Region 7 Coordinator Carolyn Barfield at [carolyn.barfield@lateach.org](mailto:carolyn.barfield@lateach.org).**

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### WHAT IS P.O.P.?



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 from 5:30pm – 6:30pm.

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



**Update: The article below appeared in the FHF Region 7 newsletter that was released on July 1, 2013 and included the results of the legislative session. However, on June 21, 2013 Governor Jindal vetoed all of the funding for the programs listed in the article below. Legislators have the option of going into special session and voting to override the veto. However, a majority of the members of either chamber must agree on the special session. If a veto session convenes, two-thirds of the legislators in both houses would have to vote to override the Governor's actions. A decision must be made before July 11th.**

### From your LaCAN Leader Region 7

LaCAN Members I just wanted to thank all of you who helped us Advocate for Home and Community Based Services and other OCDD and DHH Programs during the 2013 Legislative Session.

We started strong with a great turnout at the Legislative Roundtable in January with State Senators and State House Members and Legislative Assistants attending and about 38 LaCAN members. We had a good power point program to inform members of what we would be advocating for during the 2013 Legislative Session.

On May the 1<sup>st</sup> we had our LaCAN Rally on the Capitol Steps with just over 400 advocates from across the State attending and talking with their Legislators.

That was followed up with two great days of Public Testimony Day in front of the House Appropriations Committee and Senate Finance Committee. We had a record of 19 LaCAN members testify before the Senate Finance Committee, their powerful testimony made a great impression on the Committee members. Below is our Victory for the 2013 Session.

Despite beginning the Legislative Session with a \$1.3 Million shortfall for Fiscal Year 2013-2014, the 2013 Session started out looking like a huge victory for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. LaCAN's advocacy efforts resulted in the restoration and addition of funding for a significant number of services and programs. Most notably:

- Funding of 200 additional NOW slots
- Restoration of \$794,000 for Children's Special Health Services Clinics

- Funding of \$950,000 for the Individual and Family Support Program in the Human Services Districts and Authorities
- Protection of funding for the Flexible Family Fund
- Restoration of \$54,732 for Families Helping Families Resource Centers

If you are not a LaCAN Member and would like to be one go to [www.lacanadvocates.org](http://www.lacanadvocates.org) online or call Families Helping Families and tell them you wish to join a great Advocacy Group and it is all free.

**For more information about LaCAN please contact Duane Ebarb at (318)688-4830 or email him at [dke1949@bellsouth.net](mailto:dke1949@bellsouth.net).**

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### Stipend Money Available!

Do you want to learn more about your child's disability? Have you heard of a new technique that might help him learn? Families Helping Families Region 7 might be able to help you get this knowledge.

There are stipend dollars available for individuals with disabilities and their families who live in the parishes of Region 7. Please apply for these funds if you would like to attend a conference, convention or other activity that will increase your knowledge.

To apply, you may call 318.226.4541/1.877.226.4541 or email: [info@fhfregion7.com](mailto:info@fhfregion7.com).

Please have the following information handy when calling to ask for funding or include these details in any email:

- 1) When
- 2) Where
- 3) Registration Cost
- 4) How much you are able to contribute

This is a great opportunity to attend a state, regional or national event that otherwise might not be possible!



## Giving Back to Families Helping Families Region 7

Families Helping Families Region 7 is proud to announce their participation in the Kroger Neighbor to Neighbor Donation Program **STARTING AUGUST 1st**. 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.

Helping Families Helping Families Region 7 is so simple just register your KrogerPlus Card online at [www.krogercommunityrewards.com](http://www.krogercommunityrewards.com). You must have a registered Kroger Plus card account to link to FHF Region 7. If you do not have a KrogerPlus Card, cards are available at the customer service desk at any Kroger. If you are a new online customers, you must click on SIGN UP TODAY in the 'New Customer?' box.

- 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.

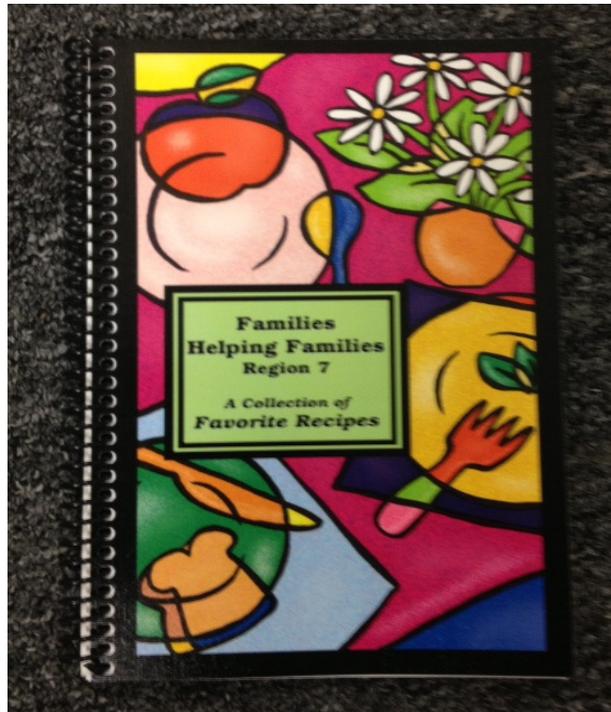
To verify you are enrolled correctly, you will see Families Helping Families Region 7 name on the right side of your information page.

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

**Let the Donating BEGIN!!**

## Families Helping Families Region 7 Cookbook Fundraiser

Families Helping Families Region 7 is currently selling cookbooks containing 120 favorite recipes from the FHF Region 7 board, staff, family and friends. Cookbooks are \$10.00 and all proceeds will help fund Families Helping Families Region 7 sponsored events. Stop by the center today and pick up your copy!



## Board of Directors

**Dr. Ann Springer**  
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### 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](http://www.laddc.org)

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



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

