

# NEWSLETTER




**JOIN THE CHALLENGE**

- Dylan will donate \$100 for every HOME RUN he hits during the 2023 LSU Baseball season.
- Dylan's family will donate \$100 for every HOME RUN Dylan's LSU teammates hit in the 2023 LSU baseball season.

**Donate Now or Pledge and Pay Later**

Go to [DC3HomeRunDerby.org](https://DC3HomeRunDerby.org) to participate or learn more.

All donations are tax-deductible and go to support the Network of Families Helping Families Centers.



Changing Lives Every Day




**Does Your Child Have Special Health Care Needs?**  
Do you care for someone with a disability?  
Need help with the school system?

*We're here to help!*

- Early Intervention
- Education Issues
- Health Concerns
- Home & Community-Based Supports and Services




**We Need Your Input**



[www.fhfnorthshore.org](https://www.fhfnorthshore.org)

## Board of Directors

### Executive Board

Heather St. Amant	Chairperson
Sean Morrison	Vice Chairperson
Amanda Mitchell	Secretary
Troy Broussard	Treasurer

### Members at Large

Marcy Donham

## NFHF Board Meetings

You are always welcome at NFHF board meetings which are held every other month at the NFHF center.

If you would like to attend a board meeting, address the board, or if you would like to learn more about becoming a member of the board, please contact us at (985) 875-0511.

### 2023 Board Meeting Dates

All meetings are held at the NFHF center and begin at 6:00 pm

January 18, 2023  
March 15, 2023  
May 17, 2023  
July 19, 2023  
September 20, 2023  
November 15, 2023  
December 2023 (TBA)

## Staff Members

Karen Artus  
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kartus@fhfnorthshore.org

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Click on Image Below for Brief Survey





## PROGRAM FUNDERS



Louisiana Developmental  
Disabilities Council



**FLORIDA PARISHES  
HUMAN SERVICES AUTHORITY**



*The work of NFHF, including publication of this newsletter, is funded by Florida Parishes Human Services Authority, Louisiana State Department of Education, Louisiana Department of Health, Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council, Families to Families Health Information Center and is supported by corporate and individual contributors.*

*Opinions contained herein do not necessarily represent those of the funding source, and no endorsement should be inferred.*



**Northshore  
Families Helping Families  
108 Highland Park Plaza  
Covington, La. 70433**

**(985) 875-0511  
(800) 383-8700  
(985) 875-9979 fax**

**fhfnorthshore.org  
info@fhfnorthshore.org**

**Center Hours  
Monday thru Friday  
9:00 am to 4:00 pm**

## MISSION

To provide individuals with disabilities the services, information, resources, and support needed to enhance their independence, productivity, and inclusion within our community.

## VISION

To ensure all individuals with disabilities have equal opportunities to be educated, live, work and recreate in their own communities.

## PARISHES SERVED

NFHF serves individuals and family members in Region 9 including: Livingston, St. Helena, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, and Washington parishes.



## *Director's Corner*

I hope your holidays were filled with joy and time spent with loved ones. December is always an exciting month at Northshore Families Helping Families and is filled with fun activities.

This year's Santa Express "drive-thru" toy distribution was exceptional. Thank you to the many businesses, organizations, and individuals who supported our fall toy drive. With generous community donations and volunteers on hand, every child received toys, stuffed animals, and a certificate for Cane's chicken. Families were greeted by jolly Santa and Mrs. Claus as they drove by the Mande Milkshakers dancing to swinging tunes.

Also, Northshore Families Helping Families ABLE Club (for individuals 16ys plus with exceptionalities) enjoyed their annual Ugly Sweater Potluck Christmas Party. The most attentive hosts made this event special - YMCA & Kiwanis. Christmas music serenaded by Beau Callais' trumpet rang throughout the hall. And then, Santa strolled in and the masses descended on the merry man. Before long Santa and 50-plus ABLE Club members were grooving on the dance floor.

So, 2022 went out with a blast and we at NFHF are excited to be kicking off 2023 with you. Take a look at a few of our new year opportunities:

ABLE Club - Game and Craft Met Ups

Get Involved - NFHF's Board is Seeking New Membership

Educational Events - Addressing Kids with Ongoing Health Concerns and More

Let Your Voice Be Heard - Advocate Through LaCAN, Join Virtual Legislative Roundtable March 9

We are your center and welcome your contact about these and many other resources and opportunities available. You can reach out to us by phone at (985) 875-0511, email at [info@fhfnorthshore.org](mailto:info@fhfnorthshore.org), and visit our website at [fhfnorthshore.org](http://fhfnorthshore.org). If you'd like to connect on social media you can find us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Kindest regards,

*Karen*

Karen Artus, MHA  
Executive Director  
Northshore Families Helping Families



*Turn your passion for disability services into action.*



JOIN THE

## NORTHSHORE FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### About Us

Northshore Families Helping Families (NFHF) helps individuals with disabilities and their families by connecting them with information and resources they need. NFHF is the first place families should go when they receive a diagnosis.



NFHF provides ongoing training and information, and most importantly we connect you and your loved ones with peers who understand what you're going through. Headquartered in Covington, we serve five Parishes within the Florida Parishes Region: Livingston, St. Helena, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, and Washington.

### About Our Board of Directors

The NFHF Board of Directors oversees the operations and programs of NFHF. The Board influences policy, engages in fundraising, provides budgetary oversight, and engages in strategic planning. At any given time, there are between 5 and 15 members. While the Board is a mix of the population, at least 51% must be an individual with a disability or a family member.

### Board Member Responsibilities

As a Board member you will be expected to do the following:

- Attend monthly Board meetings
- Volunteer! We are a working board, which means we do expect members to engage in various volunteer activities throughout the year
- Help with fundraising through public outreach, fundraising events, or grant research
- Join at least one working subcommittee
- Be ready to commit a few hours, each month to helping NFHF serve the disabilities community

### How to Apply

You can begin the process by completing an application located on the NFHF website.

[Click Here to Apply](#)

Selected candidates will meet with Board members or our Executive Director to discuss interest and needs of the organization. Ultimately, Board members will be selected by the existing Board of Directors.



# SANTA EXPRESS



## Thank You

Wrapping up our year with our annual Santa Express event is something we enjoy and look forward to each year.

Please join us in thanking our volunteers, entertainment, and community partners for their support and donations, which allowed us to give approx. 200 children a toy for Christmas.





# NFHF NEWS / REMINDERS

## Center News

The NFHF Center will be closed on  
February 20-22, 2023  
in observance of Mardi Gras.

## Reminders

**Donate Today!**

[Click Here to Help Us Help Others](#)

### *Spring Forward*

Daylight saving time begins  
March 12, 2023.

### *Happy St. Patrick's Day*

March 17, 2023

Click on Image Below for Brief Survey



**We Need  
Your Input**

NORTHSHORE  
Families  
Helping  
Families  
[www.fhfnorthshore.org](http://www.fhfnorthshore.org)



# NFHF WEBINARS

Click On Each Image to Register

A CLOSER LOOK AT YOUR CHILD'S IEP SERIES

## EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR (ESY) WEBINAR

In this webinar, we will locate the portion of the IEP where Extended School Year Services can be found.

Participants will learn what should be included in this section as well as the responsibilities of the Local Education Agency.

We will discuss the different criteria that must be considered by the IEP team at each yearly IEP meeting.

FEBRUARY

14<sup>th</sup>

@ 2:00 PM



More Info:

(985) 875-0511

FHFNORTHSHORE.ORG

Register @

**TINYURL.COM/SPED-ESY**

Registration is Required to Attend



## INTRO TO EARLY STEPS WEBINAR

Get More Info @ (985) 875-0511

INFO@FHFNORTHSHORE.ORG



Northshore Families Helping Families (NFHF) invites you to join us for a webinar to help you understand how Early Steps serves you and your child.

**February 15, 2023 @ 12:30 pm**



Jennifer Johnson  
Early Steps  
Regional Coordinator  
Region 9

Join us in welcoming our guest presenter, Jennifer Johnson, as she discusses the programs and services Early Steps provides for children up to the age of three.

Jennifer will share information to answer a variety of questions, including:

- What is Early Steps?
- What are my roles and responsibilities?
- What are my rights as a parent?
- What is an IFSP and how can I be more involved in the planning process?

Jennifer will also be available to answer your questions at the end of the presentation.

Please visit our website or use the url below to register.

**tinyurl.com/INTO-EARLYSTEPS**

Registration is required to attend.

NFHF SERVICES & PROGRAMS ARE AVAILABLE THANKS TO COMMUNITY DONORS AND OUR CONTRACT FUNDERS.





# NFHF WEBINARS

Click On Each Image to Register

A CLOSER LOOK AT YOUR CHILD'S IEP SERIES

## ACCOMMODATIONS

WEBINAR



MARCH  
**14<sup>th</sup>**  
@ 2:00 PM

This webinar is all about accommodations and relates to all students with an education plan (IEP or IAP).

We will discuss what accommodations are and why they are important. Participants will learn the different ways accommodations are provided and how to ensure that they are provided by the instructor.

Register @

**TINYURL.COM/SPED-ACCOM**

Registration is Required to Attend



## TRANSITIONING OUT OF EARLY STEPS

WEBINAR

Get More Info @ (985) 875-0511

INFO@FHFNORTHSHORE.ORG



Northshore Families Helping Families (NFHF) invites you to join us for a webinar to help you understand the process of transitioning out of Early Steps.

**March 15, 2023 @ 12:30 pm**

Join us in welcoming our guest presenter, Jennifer Johnson, as she discusses the process of transitioning out of Early Steps.

- Find out what to expect as your child is leaving Early Steps and going through the eligibility process for supports like Part B, FPHSA, and finding outpatient therapy options.

Jennifer will also be available to answer your questions at the end of the presentation.



**Jennifer Johnson**  
Early Steps  
Regional Coordinator  
Region 9

Please visit our website or use the url below to register.  
**tinyurl.com/OutOf-EarlySteps**

Registration is required to attend.



## LAPIE WEBINAR

March 21, 2023 @ 12:00 pm

Register @

**HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/NFHF-LAPIE**

Registration is Required to Attend

Please contact us if you have questions  
Phone: (985) 875-0511  
Email: info@fhnorthshore.org

## LAPIE

### Louisiana Alliance of Postsecondary Inclusive Education

The mission of the Louisiana Alliance of Postsecondary Inclusive Education is to increase postsecondary inclusive opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Louisiana.

Presented by

**Gerlinde Beckers, Ph.D.**

Dr. Beckers is a Southeastern Louisiana University Professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning with 30 years of experience in the field of education. This includes teaching/research experience at a Research I institution, a regional practitioner-focused university, and as a K-12 public educator. Dr. Beckers teaches courses related to applied behavior analysis in the classroom; evaluation; significant disabilities and content literacy.

Dr. Beckers is the Director of Lions Connected, serves on the Louisiana Department of Education Special Education Advisory Panel, is the chair of the Board of Regents Inclusive Postsecondary Education Committee and Co-chairs the Education committee on the Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs. Dr. Beckers has numerous publications and presentations related to individuals with disabilities and content literacy.

Presentation Topics Include:

- What is Inclusive Postsecondary Education
- LAPIE and History of PIEF
- Future Legislation

NFHF SERVICES & PROGRAMS ARE AVAILABLE THANKS TO COMMUNITY DONORS AND OUR CONTRACT FUNDERS.



# COMMUNITY RESOURCES

## Home and Community Based Waivers

Medicaid home and community –based waiver programs offer greater opportunity for individuals to live, work and recreate in the community setting of their chose. The information below is meant to provide you with a brief glimpse of what each waiver provides/includes but is not a complete explanation or description.

### Children's Choice Waiver

- The Children's Choice Waiver offers supplemental support to children through age 18 who currently live at home with their families.
- The service package is designed for maximum flexibility and includes Support Coordination and options of Respite/Family Support, Family Training, Specialized Medical Equipment, Environmental Accessibility Adaptations and therapy services.
- Waiver participants are eligible for all medically necessary Medicaid services, including Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostics and Treatment (EPSDT) screenings and extended services.
- Children who "age out" (reach their 19th birthday) will transfer into an appropriate waiver for adults as long as they remain eligible for waiver services.

### Residential Options Waiver (ROW)

- The Residential Options Waiver is designed to offer services necessary to support people of all ages in moving from an ICF/IDs or nursing home to a community-based setting.
- It is a capped waiver with the person's individual annual budget being based on the person's support needs and the current ICF/ID budget rate.

### Permanent Supportive Housing for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

- Permanent Support Housing support services assist waiver recipients to obtain and maintain successful tenancy in Louisiana's Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Program.
- Housing stabilization transition services or housing stabilization services are provided to Children's Choice Waiver, New Opportunities Waiver and Supports Waiver recipients when they are offered an opportunity by the PSH program.

A person with or without the assistance of the Support Coordinator may apply for Permanent Supported Housing by calling the Permanent Supportive Housing program @ 1-844-698-9075

### New Opportunities Waiver (NOW)

- The New Opportunities Waiver offers home or community-based services to people age 3 and older who would otherwise require the level of care found in an Intermediate Care Facility.
- The NOW includes an array of services aimed at assisting people to live as independently as possible by supplementing the family and/or community supports while supporting dignity and quality of life.
- The NOW is appropriate for those individuals whose health and welfare can be assured via an individualized support plan and for whom home and community based waiver services represent a least restrictive environment alternative.

### Supports Waiver

- This waiver offers a way to provide options and meaningful opportunities through vocational training and inclusion to individuals who are age 18 or older who would otherwise require the level of care found in an ICF/ID.
  - These options include Support Coordination, Day Habilitation, Prevocational services, Supported Employment, Respite, Permanent Supportive Housing Transition and Stabilization, and Personal Emergency Response Systems.

Source: Florida Parishes Human Services Authority (FPHSA)



**FLORIDA PARISHES  
HUMAN SERVICES AUTHORITY**

**(985) 543-4730**



## WAIVERS MADE SIMPLE

Would you like to learn more about the Louisiana OCDD Screening for Urgency of Need (SUN) and Tiered Waiver Process? Join us!

- The type of service(s) someone with a developmental disability may be able to access.
- How other service systems can be accessed when someone with a developmental disability also needs services that are outside of the OCDD service system.
- Why OCDD shifted to a Tiered Waiver.
- The process to get a waiver.



Presented by  
**Amy E. Greer, Ph.D.**  
OCDD Deputy Assistant Secretary - Services

**Date: March 28, 2023**

**Time: 12:00 PM**

[Click Here to Register](#)

CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES CENTER FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**FHF NOLA**

504-943-0343 or 1-877-243-7352  
[www.fhfnola.org](http://www.fhfnola.org)

**FHF Greater Baton Rouge**

225-216-7474 or 1-866-216-7474  
[www.fhfgbr.org](http://www.fhfgbr.org)

**Bayouland FHF**

985-447-4461 or 1-800-331-5570  
[www.blfhf.org](http://www.blfhf.org)

**FHF of Acadiana**

337-984-3458 or 1-855-984-3458  
[www.fhfacadiana.org](http://www.fhfacadiana.org)

**FHF of SW Louisiana**

337-436-2570 or 1-800-894-6558  
[www.fhfswla.org](http://www.fhfswla.org)

**FHF at the Crossroads of LA**

318-641-7373 or 1-800-259-7200  
[www.fhfxroads.org](http://www.fhfxroads.org)

**FHF of Region 7**

318-226-4541 or 1-877-226-4541  
[www.fhfregion7.com](http://www.fhfregion7.com)

**FHF NE Louisiana**

318-361-0487 or 1-888-300-1320  
[www.fhfnela.org](http://www.fhfnela.org)

**Northshore FHF**

985-875-0511 or 1-800-383-8700  
[www.fhfnorthshore.org](http://www.fhfnorthshore.org)

**FHF of Greater New Orleans**

504-888-9111 or 1-800-766-7736  
[www.fhfogno.org](http://www.fhfogno.org)



# COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Medical and Education Providers serving individuals with disabilities and special health care needs can now get a free NFHF poster as a resource for the community you serve.

Send request to [info@fhfnorthshore.org](mailto:info@fhfnorthshore.org) or call (985) 875-0511,



**NORTHSHORE**  
**Families Helping Families**

Does Your Child Have  
Special Health Care Needs?  
Do you care for  
someone with a disability?  
Need help with the  
school system?

*We're here to help!*

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

*Talk with someone  
who gets it...*

Northshore  
Families Helping Families  
108 Highland Park Plaza  
Covington, La. 70433  
Toll Free: 1-800-383-8700  
Fax: 985-875-9979  
[info@fhfnorthshore.org](mailto:info@fhfnorthshore.org)  
[www.fhfnorthshore.org](http://www.fhfnorthshore.org)



# COMMUNITY PARTNERS



## #3 Dylan Crews Challenges You to Donate to Families Helping Families

Dylan Crews, Outfielder for LSU Baseball, joined forces with the Network of Families Helping Families Centers to Support Kids with Disabilities and Special Health Care Needs.

For every home run he hits during the 2023 season, he will personally donate \$100 to Families Helping Families. For every home run his teammates hit during the 2023 season, his family will personally donate \$100 to Families Helping Families.

Dylan and his family hope YOU will join in on the Home Run Derby fun by donating any amount every time Dylan or one of the LSU Tigers hits a home run.

You can choose to Pledge and Pay Later or Donate Now.

**Pledge and Pay Later:**  
This option allows you to pledge a specific dollar amount per home run hit for a specific number of games, and then you will be billed for your tax-deductible donation.

**CLICK HERE**



**JOIN THE CHALLENGE**

- Dylan will donate \$100 for every HOME RUN he hits during the 2023 LSU Baseball season.
- Dylan's family will donate \$100 for every HOME RUN Dylan's LSU teammates hit in the 2023 LSU baseball season.

**Donate Now or Pledge and Pay Later**

Go to [DC3HomeRunDerby.org](https://DC3HomeRunDerby.org) to participate or learn more.

All donations are tax-deductible and go to support the Network of Families Helping Families Centers.



# GLOSSARY OF EDUCATION TERMS

Source: Louisiana Department of Education

## **Accommodations**

An accommodation is a change that helps a student overcome or work around their disability without significantly altering the content that the child learns.

- Example of an Accommodation
  - A student who has trouble writing can give answers orally.
    - Student is still expected to know the same material, and answer the same questions as fully as the other students, but doesn't have to write answers to show information is known.

## **Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)**

A BIP is an improvement plan that identifies how the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team will implement strategies, interventions, and supports to reduce or extinguish problematic behaviors that are interfering with a student's progress toward goals.

- Plan should include positive strategies, program modifications, and supplementary aids and supports that are designed to reduce or eliminate the student's problem behaviors and allows the child to be educated in the least restrictive environment.
  - BIP is developed based on multiple sources of data that are summarized in a functional behavior assessment.

## **Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)**

- FBA is a data-collection and analysis process conducted by Individual Education Plan (IEP) teams when students are exhibiting problematic behaviors and may require a behavior plan. The FBA is intended to identify the target behavior, understand the purpose of the behavior, and the factors that maintain the behavior in order to write an effective BIP.

## **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**

- LRE is the legal requirement that a student with a disability should have the opportunity to be educated with non-disabled peers, to the greatest extent appropriate. They should have access to the general education curriculum, or any other program that non-disabled peers would be able to access.
- This is based on the presumption that the general education setting is the first choice for educating all students, including students with disabilities, and that IEP teams should first consider supplemental aids and services to help the student reach his or her goals before considering more restrictive settings.
- LRE is not contingent on funding issues.



# GLOSSARY OF EDUCATION TERMS

Source: Louisiana Department of Education

## Self-Advocacy

Self-advocacy is a set of skills that enables students with disabilities to take charge of their lives, articulate their needs and make informed decisions about the supports necessary to meet their needs.

- When applied in the context of Universal Design for Learning, self-advocacy skills may improve persistence, retention and degree attainment.

## Self-Determination

Self-determination is a combination of attitudes and abilities that lead people to set goals for their future and take the initiative to reach these goals.

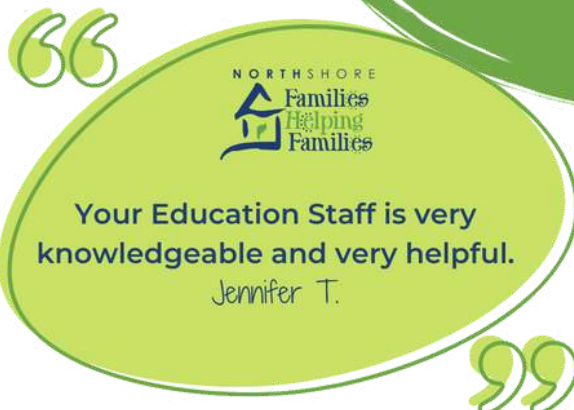
- Research has shown that students with disabilities who exercise greater self determination, are more often to find meaningful employment and to live independently after high school.



**Click here to view the full Glossary of Key Terms provided by the Louisiana Department of Education**



Visit Our Website to Learn About NFHF's Education Liaisons & Services



Your Education Staff is very knowledgeable and very helpful.

Jennifer T.



The IEP Webinar Training was great and it helped me personally and professionally. I had an IEP meeting and I had everything I needed.

Jennifer S.



# BULLYING

## NINE SIGNS TO CONSIDER

by Odessa Held

*Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.*

*Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.*

If you're a parent and your reading this I'm going to guess that you would agree when I say "Parenting is Hard!" especially when we feel like we're suppose to have all of the answers and know what to do.

One of the most frustrating issues to deal with when your children are in school is bullying. Something you don't even know is happening unless your child tells you or you start to see signs that something is going on.

Your son or daughter suddenly has no interest in attending a once enjoyed event. Getting ready in the morning is now a battle of wills and your patience is tested on a daily basis. It's easy to become frustrated and impatient, but try to take a deep breath and step back for a moment.

Maybe the change in attitude and behavior are signs that your child is being bullied. Maybe they don't know how to, or are embarrassed to, tell you what's going on in a group, on a bus, or at school.

Could these be un-intended clues to let you know something is wrong and what's happening is something much more than just a bad day? Possibly!

While not all changes indicate that your child is being bullied, paying attention to these changes can help you determine if bullying may be something your child is experiencing.

According to **StopBullying.gov** some signs that may point to a bullying problem are:

1. Unexplainable injuries
2. Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewelry
3. Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
4. Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Kids may come home from school hungry because they did not eat lunch
5. Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
6. Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school
7. Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
8. Feelings of helplessness or decreased self esteem
9. Self-destructive behaviors such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide

If you know someone in serious distress or danger, don't ignore the problem. **Get help right away.**

Source: StopBullying.gov



StopBullying.gov [CLICK HERE](#)

## Steps you can take

If you or someone you know is being bullied, there are things you can do to keep yourself and others safe from bullying. Visit StopBullying.gov to learn more about:

### What Kids Can Do

### What Teens Can Do

### What Adults Can Do

If you or someone you know is involved in cyberbullying, it is important to document and report the behavior.

If you have done everything you can to resolve the situation and nothing has worked, or someone is in immediate danger, there are ways to get help.

If there has been a crime or someone is at risk of harm call 911.

If a child is being bullied on a school bus, at a school event or activity, in a classroom or hallway be sure to tell a parent or caregiver.

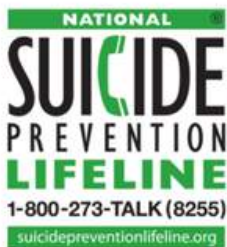
Contact the:

- Teacher
- School counselor
- School principal
- School superintendent
- State Department of Education

If the school is not adequately **addressing harassment** based on race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), disability, or religion contact the:

- School superintendent
- **State Department of Education**
- U.S. Department of Education, **Office for Civil Rights**
- U.S. Department of Justice, **Civil Rights Division**

If you would like to speak with a NFHF Education Liaison to address bullying issues as they relate to special education, please contact our center at (985) 875-0511 or by email at [info@fhfnorthshore.org](mailto:info@fhfnorthshore.org)



988 has been designated as the new three-digit dialing code that will route callers to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (now known as the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline), and is now active across the United States.

When people call, text, or chat 988, they will be connected to trained counselors that are part of the existing Lifeline network.

These trained counselors will listen, understand how their problems are affecting them, provide support, and connect them to resources if necessary

# ADULT GROUP ACTIVITIES



Hi, I'm Rachael. I'm the Adult Program Coordinator here at Northshore Families Helping Families. We call our adult program the ABLE Club which stands for Adults Building Life Experiences.

This group is for adults ages 16 and up and we have in-person and virtual events every month for those who want to attend. Many of our members' families and support workers attend our events too.

If you would like to attend an event or get more info about the ABLE Club, you can call 985-875-0511, or you can email me at [rachaelsykes@fhfnorthshore.org](mailto:rachaelsykes@fhfnorthshore.org).

Diversity is being invited  
to the party; inclusion is  
being asked to dance.  
~ Verna Myers

## February

Monthly Group Dinner  
Feb. 16th @ 5:30 pm  
Olive Garden  
5001 Pinnacle Parkway  
Covington, LA 70433

**REGISTER NOW**



## March

Monthly Group Dinner  
Mar. 16th @ 5:30 pm  
El Portal  
1200 Hwy. 190  
Covington, LA 70433

**REGISTER NOW**

The logo for Northshore Families Helping Families, featuring a stylized house icon with a green roof and the text "NORTHSHORE Families Helping Families" in a circular arrangement.

## ABLE CLUB CRAFT AND GAME HOUR

Get More Info @ (985) 875-0511  
[INFO@FHFNORTHSHORE.ORG](mailto:INFO@FHFNORTHSHORE.ORG)

## FEBRUARY

February 27, 2023  
1:00 pm to 2:00 pm  
@

Northshore  
Families Helping Families  
108 Highland Park Plaza  
Covington, La. 70433

Space is limited and registration is  
required to attend.

NHFH SERVICES & PROGRAMS ARE AVAILABLE THANKS TO COMMUNITY DONORS AND OUR CONTRACT FUNDERS.





# ADULT GROUP ACTIVITIES

Our 2022 ABLE Club Ugly Sweater Potluck Party was a big success. Everyone enjoyed seeing Santa, music, dancing, a variety of food and drinks.

Our Christmas event grows in size every year and we're glad to have partners like the Kiwanis and the YMCA who help us make this annual event possible for our ABLE Club group.



# ADVOCACY

## Northshore Legislative Roundtable

The Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council's 2023 Legislative Advocacy Agenda will be shared across the Northshore region at a virtual LaCAN Roundtable.

Individuals with disabilities, family members and advocates are encouraged to attend to learn more about the advocacy agenda and how to get involved in the Council's other advocacy opportunities like legislative visits and public testimony.

Take advantage of this incredible opportunity to receive valuable information about advocacy and connect with your legislators virtually.

Roundtables are free to attend, but you must pre-register via the link below.

If you have any questions, please contact our center by email: [info@fhfnorthshore.org](mailto:info@fhfnorthshore.org) or by phone: (985) 875-0511.

[CLICK HERE](#)



REGION 9

## LEGISLATIVE ROUNDTABLE MARCH 9, 2023 @ 11:00 AM

You're invited to join Northshore Families Helping Families (NFHF) as we host LaCAN's 2023 Legislative Roundtable for Region 9.

The Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council will share their 2023 Legislative Agenda and obtain valuable input from representatives and policymakers in our region.

Get to know Legislators in your area and be informed when it comes to state issues.

Please type the URL below into your browser or call NFHF to register for virtual or in-person attendance.

Get More Info @ (985) 875-0511  
or [info@fhfnorthshore.org](mailto:info@fhfnorthshore.org)


<https://tinyurl.com/LaCAN-Virtual>



# ADVOCACY

## The Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council Announces 2023 Legislative Agenda Items

Click on Each Image to View Document



**Recurring Funding for the Families Helping Families Regional Resource Centers**

**FY22 Impact of FHF Centers\***

- FHF Centers are the **ONLY** "one-stop shops" in Louisiana providing support to **ALL** individuals with disabilities and their families.
- Over **39,400** contacts were made to local FHF Centers from individuals, families, and professionals who sought and received help.
- Nearly **3,500** referrals to services provided
- Over **5,500** individuals attended **365** trainings on various disability related topics
- 30,300** peer-to-peer support connections made

**What Can Legislators Do?**

Appropriate an additional \$500,000 in State General Funds (SGF) to the DD Council's budget and request this additional funding be recurring so Families Helping Families (FHF) Centers throughout the state can continue to provide vital services to individuals with disabilities and their families.

**Why Do This?**

Every DD Council state dollar goes directly to FHF Centers. Over the past two fiscal years, the legislature has seen the value of the Centers and appropriated an additional \$500,000 to the Council's budget. We believe their continued support and appropriation of these additional dollars shows their intent that this funding be recurring.




Unfortunately, despite the Council's request, this additional funding was not included in the FY24 budget. Without additional funding, FHF Centers will continue struggling to maintain their current level of service and possibly jeopardize some FHF Centers' ability to remain open. We need the legislature's help to ensure these additional funds are included in the FY24 budget and made recurring.

FHF Centers are family-directed with a majority of Center staff being parents or family members of children with disabilities or individuals with disabilities. FHF Centers share experiences and information from someone "who has been there."

The information, referral, trainings, and peer support provided by FHF Centers are not replicated by ANY other organization in the state, leaving families nowhere else to turn, particularly while waiting for other services.

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**FACT SHEET**

**Fund Incontinence Supplies for Adults with Disabilities**

**Background Information:**

Currently incontinence supplies are covered in state plan Medicaid through Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) for children with disabilities ages 5 to 21, when determined to be medically necessary by a doctor. At age 21 the coverage for these medically necessary supplies ends. However, for many families of adults with disabilities the incontinence issues never end, leaving individuals and families, who already have a limited income, with the burden of the extensive cost of these medically necessary supplies which can exceed over \$2500 a year.

The waivers with the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) do not cover incontinence supplies.

**These supplies include:**

- Diapers / Briefs
- Bed pads
- Disposable Liners / Shields
- Protective under pads

**What Can Legislators Do?**

Appropriating \$9.4 million in State General Fund will ensure that individuals will be able to continue to have these medically necessary supplies covered by their waiver.


**Why Do This?**

Other waivers such as the Community Choices Waiver (CCW) can cover the cost of incontinence supplies under the Medical Supply Purchase service when determined to be medically necessary by a physician.

Many individuals struggle with conditions associated with incontinence management which lead to potential health issues. By covering these supplies, you will help to alleviate the financial burden and help improve health outcomes.

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**Fund New and Existing Postsecondary Inclusive Education Programs for Students with I/DD**

**KNOW THE FACTS**

- LA currently has **6** postsecondary institutions offering an inclusive education opportunity for students with I/DD
  - 12 interested in creating a program since the passage of Act 682.
- Demand for these programs is high. Each year, many qualified applicants are turned away due to limited number of slots available at the current programs.
- 122 individuals have completed their programs with 74% gaining competitive employment.
  - National employment rate of people with I/DD is only 34%.
- Programs are or will be certified by the U.S. Department of Education as Comprehensive Transition & Postsecondary programs making students eligible for Pell Grants.
  - LRS funding also covers student cost for those who qualify.

**What Can Legislators Do?**

Appropriate \$3 million in State General Fund to the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund to expand and increase postsecondary inclusive education programs for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Louisiana.

**Why Do This?**


Act 682 of 2022 unanimously passed the legislature to establish the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund in an effort to help increase postsecondary inclusive education opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in Louisiana. \$1 million was added to the fund when created, but with an average startup cost of \$156,000, additional funding is needed to help make programs more accessible statewide.

Individuals with I/DD deserve the opportunity to enjoy the full college experience with their peers. These programs afford students the opportunity for self discovery, to gain independence, learn life skills, build lifelong friendships and create a greater support network. They also receive the education, support and training needed to not only obtain but maintain employment.

Individuals with disabilities are an untapped resource who make valuable and dependable employees. We need to invest in their education and employability in inclusive and competitive environments just as we do for individuals without disabilities. Everyone deserves a chance to live independently and contribute to their community, and these programs do just that.

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**Amend Laws to Allow for Virtual Representation & Participation in Public Meetings**

**KNOW THE FACTS**

- At least **20** states offer virtual or hybrid meeting options for public entities even when no state of emergency or disaster exists.\*
- HCR112 of 2022 urges and requests local public bodies to provide a way for the public to participate in meetings electronically.
  - It also recognizes the benefit this option gives to the disability community.
  - Passed the House and Senate unanimously.
- SR147 of 2022 created the Remote Operations of Public Entities Taskforce to study the possibility of allowing for remote operations.
  - This taskforce is expected to reveal its recommendations in January or February and intend to bring legislation during the next session to address this issue.

**What Can Legislators Do?**

Amend Louisiana's Open Meetings Law to allow virtual participation of public body members and the general public when no state of emergency or disaster exists. Require official meeting notices include information regarding all available options for the public to participate.

**Why Do This?**

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires all state and local bodies to provide reasonable accommodations for its meetings including the option of virtual participation.

Requiring in-person attendance is discriminatory against some people with disabilities and their families by creating undue hardships to attend and participate in in-person only meetings. It also limits their ability to serve on public bodies and creates a health risk for certain individuals. This population must be afforded the opportunity to share valuable stakeholder feedback on all issues that impact their lives.

Many members of public bodies will also benefit from virtual participation. By offering a virtual option, it will be easier to obtain and maintain a quorum. It will also help reduce travel and other associated meeting costs for public entities.

Shifting meetings to a virtual or hybrid model should be relatively simple considering most public bodies learned to navigate these accommodations and efficiently conducted business throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Technology has come a long way since Louisiana's Open Meetings Law was enacted in 1976. Now, we have the opportunity to create a more inclusive, transparent environment for all Louisianians to participate in public meetings, especially Louisianians with disabilities.

\*State Laws Regarding Remote Meetings When There is No State of Emergency: TargetTV, targettv.org/planning-chat/state-laws-remote-meetings.

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# ADVOCACY

## What LaCAN Members Do

If you're looking to have a greater impact for people with developmental disabilities a LaCAN membership may be something for you to consider. LaCAN members participate in various advocacy activities throughout the year. Their efforts have resulted in major accomplishments that have improved the lives of individuals with disabilities and there are plenty of opportunities to get involved.

Activities include attending *Legislative Roundtables*, *Yellow Shirt Days*, and responding to *Information and Action Alerts*. Your level of activity is totally up to you. LaCAN Leaders are available to assist you and answer any questions you may have about advocacy efforts, local activities, and member meetings.

Please visit <https://laddc.org/lacan/> to become a LaCAN member or use the button below to learn more about advocating for someone you care for. If you're interested in learning about becoming an advocacy leader in the Northshore you can find that information in this link as well.

CLICK HERE



**ADVOCACY**  
TEAM LEADER OPPORTUNITY

**APPLICATIONS ARE CURRENTLY BEING ACCEPTED FOR  
AN ADVOCACY TEAM LEADER TO LEAD THE LA  
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL'S  
GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY NETWORK (LACAN) IN THE  
NORTHSHORE/FLORIDA PARISHES AREAS**

**VISIT LADDCC.ORG TO LEARN MORE**  
(CLICK TO SEE THE LATEST ACTION ALERTS & VIEW INFORMATION ALERT #2)



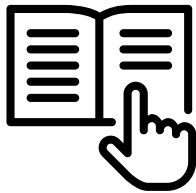
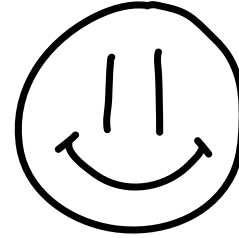


# COMMUNITY LINKS

## Adult Waiver: Dental Program

The Louisiana Dental Task Force has a new Adult Waiver Dental Program! This program helps with Home Care for individuals with disabilities – managing oral hygiene, and Best Practices for preparing for dental visits.

The task force has created a document that will allow you ask and/or view questions and answers regarding the program. [Click Here to view documents.](#)



## National Library Services (NLS) for the Blind and Print Disabled

NLS is a free braille and talking book library service for people with temporary or permanent low vision, blindness, or a physical or perceptual disability that prevents them from reading or holding the printed page. This includes individuals with reading disabilities.

NLS offers books in braille or audio, mailed to your door for free or instantly downloadable. [Click Here for More Information](https://www.loc.gov/nls/thataillmayread/) or visit <https://www.loc.gov/nls/thataillmayread/>

## Developmental Disabilities Resources

The **Louisiana Developmental Disabilities (DD Council)** identifies the most pressing needs of people with DD and work to address them through advocacy, systems change, and capacity-building efforts that promote self-determination, integration, and inclusion.

University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research & Service (UCEDDs) are a nationwide network of independent but interlinked centers that address issues, find solutions, and advance research related to the needs of people with DD and their families. In Louisiana: [Human Development Center at LSU Health New Orleans](#)

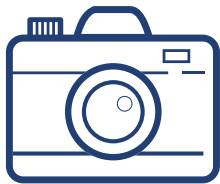


# COMMUNITY LINKS

## How to Find Your Immunization Records

The Louisiana's Immunization Program is encouraging everyone to keep up with immunizations by accessing information in digital and print formats. They recommend:

- Sign up for MyIR Mobile to view your immunization records anywhere.
  - "MyIR Mobile in partnership with your State Health Department allows you to review your immunization history, get reminders for future immunizations, and even print your own official record."
- Request a copy of your immunization records from your doctor or your child's pediatrician.



## Cameras in Special Education Classrooms

According to the Louisiana Department of Education Allocation Summary Form, millions of dollars has been sent to school districts to install cameras in special education classrooms.

Some districts are being proactive when it comes to installing cameras, and some are following the law and requiring parents to first request cameras. [Click here](#) to take a look at the August 2022 BESE report to see funding amounts allocated by parish.

## Winter Outdoor Safety Tips

Outdoor activities can expose you to several safety hazards, but you can take these steps to prepare for them:

- Wear appropriate outdoor clothing.
  - Wear a tightly woven, preferably wind-resistant coat or jacket.
  - Wear inner layers of light, warm clothing.
- Wear mittens, hats, scarves, and waterproof boots.
- Sprinkle cat litter or sand on icy patches.



Learn safety precautions to follow when outdoors.

- Carry a cell phone.
- Work slowly when doing outside chores.

Take a buddy and an emergency kit when you are joining in outdoor recreation.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/features/winterweather/index.html>



# COMMUNITY LINKS

## Tips for Parents

These tips are for parents and caregivers working with their child's health care provider, including pre-visit tips; tips for talking with the health care provider; tips for learning more; and tips for helping the provider help other families.

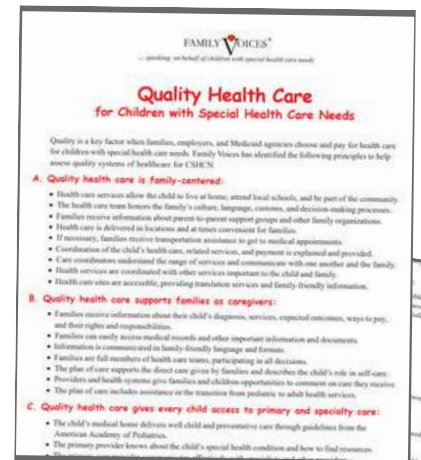


... speaking on behalf of children with special health care needs

Quality is a key factor when families, employers, and Medicaid agencies choose and pay for health care for children with special health care needs. Family Voices has identified the following principles to help assess quality systems of healthcare for Children with Special Health Care Needs.



[LEARN MORE](#)



[LEARN MORE](#)



Click On Each Image Below For More Information



**WHAT IS AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER**

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



**DECISION GUIDE TO COMMUNICATION CHOICES**

For Parents of Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



**WHAT IS ADHD**

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



**LANGUAGE AND SPEECH DISORDERS IN CHILDREN**

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



**TICS AND TOURETTE SYNDROME**

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



**DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES**

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



**FACTS ABOUT FRAGILE X SYNDROME**

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



**ALL THINGS ADHD PODCAST**

Listen to the podcast series "All Things ADHD" by the National Resource Center on ADHD on a variety of topics for anyone dealing with ADHD



**WHAT IS CEREBRAL PALSY?**

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

# COMMUNITY LINKS

## \$1,000 Tutoring Vouchers

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) is launching a new program that will provide thousands of families with \$1,000 tutoring vouchers to help children learn to read.

The Steve Carter Literacy Tutoring Program connects families of eligible K-5 public school students with high-quality literacy tutors.

Visit the [online portal](#) to learn more about the program and share their email address to be notified when student registration opens this year.



## ABLE Accounts Give Help for People With Disabilities

If you have a child or grandchild with disabilities, one of your biggest worries is what will happen when you are no longer around to provide aid.

For many people, the answer is an Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) account. The accounts let those with disabilities set aside extra money without interfering with their federal aid. [Click here](#) to read more about how it works.

## What is OCDD?

The Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) serves as the Single Point of Entry into the developmental disabilities services system.

A few of the services and programs OCDD provides include:

- EarlySteps
- Flexible Family Funds
- Freedom of Choice Providers

[Click here](#) to learn more about OCDD services and programs.







# Northshore Families Helping Families and The Bureau of Family Health

Northshore Families Helping Families has partnered with the Bureau of Family Health. The purpose of this partnership is to ensure that all children and youth with special healthcare needs (CYSHCN) in Louisiana, as well as their families and healthcare providers, are aware of and are able to access supportive resources in their communities and the state.

In accordance with the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), CYSHCN are children who “have or are at increased risk for chronic physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional conditions and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.” (HRSA, 2020).

Nationally, nearly 20% of U.S. children under age 18 years of age have a special health care need and one in five families have a child with a special health care need (HRSA, 2020). There are over 300,000 CYSHCN estimated to be living in the state (Louisiana Office of Public Health – Bureau of Family Health, 2020).

Many families require services across multiple systems including healthcare, early intervention, mental health, early care and education, and schools. Support from people who are familiar with the local systems, state policies, and who have personal experience, are an important part of any effective system of care. The intent of this partnership is to ensure that CYSHCN statewide and their families have access to this valuable local resource.

If you would like more information about how we serve Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs, please contact us @ (985) 875-0511 or by email at [info@fhfnorthshore.org](mailto:info@fhfnorthshore.org)

## REGION 9

# Data Profile

There are an estimated 28,270 Children and Youth with  
Special Health Care Needs residing in Region 9.

There are over 41,000 children, age 3-17 years, in Region 9 with a mental,  
emotional, developmental or behavioral (MEDB) problem.

The majority of Region 9 is classified as rural and are health professional shortage areas (HPSA).

[1] The Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS COUNT Data Center, <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/3853-child-population?loc=20&loc=5#detailed/5/3251,3265,3271-3272,3278/false/37/any/7999>

[2] Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative, Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health website. National Survey of Children's Health, 1.11 Children with special health care needs, 2017 and 2018. Retrieved 07/2020 from <https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=6919&r=1&r2=20>

[3] Louisiana Rural Health Plan 2011-2015

[4] Bureau of Health Informatics, Bureau of Primary Care and Rural Health, HRSA Data Warehouse, 2018 HPSA Data