

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

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Big Fun in the Big Easy

People First of NOLA held its first annual Mardi Gras ball on Saturday, January 28, 2012. A magical night was had by all in attendance. Congratulations to all of the members of the 2012 People First Mardi Gras Court:

King- Matthew Hightower
Duke- Aaron Williams
Duke- Christopher Watson
Duke- Frederick Bowie

Queen- Charlotte Romano
Maid- Nicole Taylor
Maid- Jackie Robinson
Maid- Joyce Jolle

Special thanks to Strive, Inc. (Valerie Washington), Family Helpers of Greater New Orleans (Tammy Jackson, Yolanda Longmire) AAA Care, LLC (Stephanie Jackson), Superior Options (Leona Harris) and Metropolitan Human Services District (Donna Francis, Lydia Joseph), FHF of SELA staff members Fay Daspit and Beth Anne Merida, and many, many more who worked very hard to create such a wonderful event.

Also, special thanks to Fergie Lewis at Stationery Studio for designing and donating all event invitations. You can find her on the web at <http://stationery-studio.com/>

Want more information about People First? See page 2.



Giving Back—Paying Forward by Carol Calix

The very lifeblood of non-profit organizations are the volunteers that provide the most essential element—themselves.

Five years ago a small group gathered to become the founding board members of Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana. They worked diligently to form by-laws, set policies and procedures and helped us meet all of the requirements to become a 501(c)3.

The time has come to replace the founding members of our board of directors as outlined in the term limits in the by-laws.

First, we would like to give tribute to our board members that have served in the last five years:

Dr. Eartha Lee Johnson—2007-2008

Kelly Levasseur—2007-2009

Willie Martin—2007-2009

Laura Iveson—2007-2010

Yolanda Johnson White—2007-2010

Kathy Hume—2007-2011

Dr. Sarintha Stricklin—2007-2011

Bobbie Bedney—2007-2012

Polly Campbell—2007-2012

Lang Le—2007-2012

Claudia Smith—2007-2012

Eddie Tebbe—2008-2012

Georgette Wallace—2010-Present

Hyacinth McKee—2011-Present

Adranell Murray—2011-Present

Molly Sullivan—2011-Present

(Continued on page 3)

People First of NOLA:

- Is a self advocacy group run **by** people with
- disabilities, **for** people with disabilities.
- Where people learn to speak up for themselves about decisions they make.
- Members can connect with others in their community, across the nation and around the world.
- Members learn about their rights and responsibilities as citizens of the United States of America.

Mission Statement of People First of Louisiana:

People First of Louisiana supports people with disabilities to empower themselves in becoming effective decision makers, to gain more independence, and enjoy life as equal citizens of the United States of America.

\$10 gas cards are available to caregivers/relatives that provide transportation to People First members to attend the meetings, made possible through funding provided by Metropolitan Human Services District.

People First of NOLA meets every third Tuesday of the month at 4:30 pm.

Meetings are held at:
Goodwill Headquarters
3400 Tulane Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70119

Upcoming meeting dates are:

April 17, 2012
May 15, 2012
June 19, 2012
July 17, 2012
August 21, 2012
September 18, 2012
October 16, 2012
November 20, 2012
December 18, 2012



(Continued from page 2)

Each board member brings a unique perspective and all are important to the success of a non-profit. With the loss of all of our founding members FHF of SELA is looking for individuals that have a passion to serve this agency in the capacity of a board member. The board must be comprised of 51% parent or sibling of an individual with a disability or be an individual with a disability. It is also important that the board includes professionals that work within the disability field. Another plus is to have professionals that have knowledge of running a business, such as accountants, marketing personnel, information technology personnel, attorneys, grant writers, the list could go on and on. The important thing is to have a good representation of the community as a whole, with diverse ethnicities, backgrounds, disabilities, gender and socio-economic status.

Do you have a couple of hours a month to donate to FHF of SELA? The board meets every other month and each board member sits on at least one committee. There are several committees to chose from: By-laws/Policies, Finance, Personnel, Fundraising, Public Relations/Marketing, Nominations/Board Development, and Facilities. Your volunteer time and mileage is tax-deductible.

Please contact us if you would like more information about serving on our board. It is just as important to find the right people to serve as it is to find the right staff to hire. It is about moving forward with our mission to educate and empower individuals with disabilities, their families, professionals and communities by providing resources, training, and family-to-family support.

If you share our vision of a region where people with disabilities live and are fully included in school, work, and recreational activities, please contact us at 943-0343. We will be happy to send you a board application. Terms are for two years and you can serve two consecutive terms. We need your help as we strive to help meet the needs of our loved ones with disabilities within our community.

VISION STATEMENT

Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana envisions a region where people with disabilities live and are fully included in school, work, and recreational activities.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to educate and empower individuals with disabilities, their families, professionals and communities by providing resources, training, and family-to-family support.

Board of Directors

Eddie Tebbe
Board Chairman

Molly Sullivan
Board Vice Chair

Polly Campbell
Secretary

Lang Le
Treasurer

Board Members

Bobbie Bedney
Hyacinth McKee
Adranell Murray
Georgette Wallace



FHF of SELA Team

Carol Calix
Executive Director

Donnica Conway-Strawder
Projects Coordinator
LaTEACH Coordinator

Fay Daspit
Family Advocate

Shay Hunter
Early Steps—Community
Outreach Specialist

Aisha Johnson
Family Advocate

Tracy Jones
MHSD Office Assistant

Willie Martin
MHSD Office Assistant

Beth Anne Merida
Bookkeeper

Delery Rice
LaCAN Leader

*The office will be closed in observance of
the following holidays*

May 28



Memorial Day

July 4



Independence
Day

Are you a fan of social media?

Find us online!

Facebook



[www.facebook.com/
FHFofSELA](http://www.facebook.com/FHFofSELA)

We post articles of interest, links to
other local advocacy organizations,
information about upcoming trainings
and more!

Come join us and keep the
information flowing.

Twitter

@FHFofSELA



**Stipends/
Financial Assistance**



Financial assistance is available to parents of children with developmental disabilities and to individuals with developmental disabilities that would like to attend workshops and conferences. Please visit the websites and/or call the agencies that are hosting the event you are interested in attending to see if this is something you would benefit from if you attended. If you want to attend and need help with the cost of the registration, hotel and/or mileage, please call us for a **Stipend Application**. Funds are limited so we ask that you notify us of your request as early as possible.

Call us at 504-943-0343 or
1-877-243-7352.



*Donations to Families Helping
Families are tax-deductible.*

There are several ways to donate:

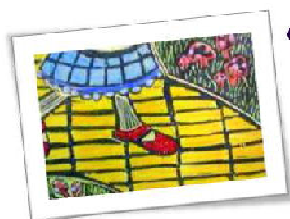
- * *Check*
- * *Credit Card*
- * *Paypal*
- * *One-Time Donation or Recurring Gifts*
- * *In-Kind Donations of Goods*
- * *Volunteer your talents*
- * *Goodsearch/Goodshop.com*

*Every dollar goes directly to helping
families with loved ones who have disabilities and
every dollar counts. For information on donations please
contact Beth Anne at (504) 943-0343 or
bamerida@fhfsela.org*

*Your time and talents are also appreciated. Have a few
hours to spare and want to help us make a difference?
Call to find out how you can help.*

As a non-profit doing business in Louisiana, board meetings are open to the public. Our meetings are scheduled bi-monthly, on the second Thursday of the month at 6 pm. Board meetings are scheduled on **April 12, June 14, and October 11, 2012**. FHF of SELA has created a five year strategic plan and soon work groups will be formed, which are also public meetings. Check out the website to view the strategic plan. Meetings are posted on the FHF website. If you are interested in serving in **any** capacity, please contact Carol at 943-0343.

In 2012 we will need to replace several board members that have served their term limits.
If you are interested in information about being a board member, please call Carol.



**“PBIS, FBA, BIP,
Oh My!”**

Stipends/Financial Assistance is available to parents to attend this event. See page 4.

LASARD Summer Institute

Wednesday, June 6th 2012

Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention Planning

Join us on Wednesday, June 6th, 2012 for a Keynote presentation by Dr. Mandy Rispoli:



Dr. Rispoli is an Assistant Professor of Special Education at Texas A & M University and a Board Certified Behavior Analyst – Doctoral level (BCBA-D). Dr. Rispoli is also the co-director of the Intervention Clinic, part of the Autism Assessment Intervention and Research Clinic in Bryan, Texas. To date, Dr. Rispoli has published over 50 peer-reviewed research articles and two book chapters concerning the education of children with autism and developmental disabilities. Dr. Rispoli’s primary research focus pertains to functional assessment and function-based antecedent interventions for challenging behavior in children with autism spectrum disorder. Her work in this area explores the role of variables that may alter a child’s motivation to engage in challenging behaviors during behavioral assessments and interventions. Dr. Rispoli serves on the editorial review board for *Assessment for Effective Intervention*, *Behavior Modification*, and *Journal of Developmental and Physical Disabilities*. To contact Dr. Rispoli, visit her Texas A & M webpage <http://directory.cehd.tamu.edu/view.epl?nid=mrисpoli>

Keynote Session:

Demystifying the Functional Behavior Assessment Process

A recent study reported that 94% percent of surveyed individuals with ASD engaged in some form of challenging behavior (Matson, Wilkin, & Macken, 2009). Without appropriate intervention and supports, these behaviors can lead to negative outcomes including loss of instructional time, social isolation, and placement in restrictive settings. The functional behavior assessment process is designed to lay the foundation for building effective behavioral interventions to prevent and reduce challenging behaviors. This presentation will review recent trends and issues related to functional behavior assessments for persons with ASD, provide a detailed and engaging break down of the components of a functional behavior assessment, and explore applications of functional behavior assessments in the real world.

Breakout Session:

When Clicking Your Heels Doesn’t Work: Practical strategies for building usable and effective behavior intervention plans

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires that behavior intervention plans be developed for students who engage in severe challenging behavior. However, many behavior intervention plans suffer from the “file drawer syndrome” in which they are filed away and not implemented correctly. This session will present step by step procedures for developing effective and usable behavior intervention plans for students of all ages with autism spectrum disorder. In addition, tips for implementing evidence-based interventions for challenging behavior will be presented.

This day will also feature afternoon Breakout presentations from regional speakers and school-based teams.

We look forward to seeing you at the 2012 LASARD Summer Institute!

For more information and registration, please visit: www.hdc.lsuhsd.edu

Families Helping Families is grateful for the community support that we receive all year round. Thank you to everyone who contributes their time, talents, donations and energy to help us carry out our vision and mission.

February 13, 2012

NORWALK, Conn. -- Xerox (NYSE: XRX) announced today that 11 employees will take a fully-paid leave of absence to volunteer for local non-profit organizations, engaging in activities ranging from simplifying business operations to instructing at-risk teens on independent living.

The paid leave is part of the company's Social Service Leave program, known as corporate America's first community service sabbatical program that has loaned employees to non-profits since 1971.

"A hallmark of Xerox's deep value system is giving back to the communities where our people work and live," said Ursula Burns, Xerox chairman and chief executive officer. "Xerox's Social Service Leave program allows us to spread the true wealth of our company - our people -- with organizations that need them now more than ever."

Each of the following Social Services Leave recipients was chosen by a peer group within Xerox. Social Service Leave participants for 2012 include Claudia R. Smith, New Orleans, La., to Families Helping Families of South East Louisiana. Smith will support processing the applications for the Standards for Excellence Certification for the non-profit organization.

More information about Xerox's community involvement, environmental stewardship and sustainability, workplace practices and corporate governance can be found in the company's Global Citizenship Report available at <http://www.xerox.com/citizenship>.



Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana is so thankful to Xerox for choosing our organization to participate in the 2012 Social Service Leave Program. The time and talents of Claudia Smith will enable us to move forward with non-profit certification. Mrs. Smith will also be able to network with agencies designed to help grow our non-profit, such as Louisiana Association for Nonprofit Associations, Unified Nonprofits of Greater New Orleans and Maryland Nonprofits (for certification).

Save the Date: Advocacy Center Building Dedication on April 19!

The Advocacy Center (AC) will dedicate its New Orleans building to AC's Systems Advocacy Specialist and lifelong disability advocate Charles Tubre in a ribbon-cutting ceremony, to be held on **Thursday, April 19, 2012 from 5:00pm-7:00pm.**

The new building is located at **8325 Oak Street in New Orleans.**

The dedication event will feature music and small plates from Rue Chow food truck.

We hope you will join us on the evening of April 19th to help honor Charles Tubre!

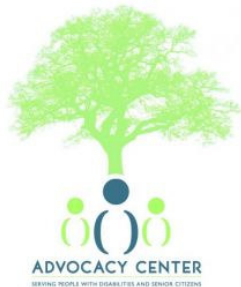
For more information, contact Pamela Fisher, Director of Development, at (504) 522-2337 x125 or pfisher@advocacyla.org.

PHONE: 1-800-960-7705 (Voice or call relay at 711)

TTY: 1-866-935-7348

WEBSITE: <http://www.advocacyla.org>

EMAIL: advocacycenter@advocacyla.org



MAKING THE TRANSITION TEAM WORK

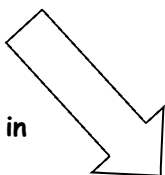
Each Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) team member has an important role. This workshop will help you understand who

Must be present,
who **Must** be invited and who
May be invited.

We will discuss the roles and responsibilities for each key member. Coming to this workshop will help to ensure that your next ITP meeting will be a successful one.

**Saturday, April 14, 2012
10:00 am to 12:00 pm
Families Helping Families SELA
4118 Franklin Ave.
New Orleans, La 70122**

An opportunity to look at the materials available to check out in our library!



OPENING DOORS TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

This workshop will help you understand your child's strengths and identify the supports and resources he or she will need to be successful at the postsecondary level. In addition, the workshop will help you develop advocacy skills in order to take full advantage of the transition process and the time your child is in high school to plan their transition to postsecondary education and/or employment.

**Saturday, May 5, 2012
10:00 am to 12:00 pm
Families Helping Families SELA
4118 Franklin Ave.
New Orleans, La 70122**

An opportunity to look at the materials available to check out in our library!

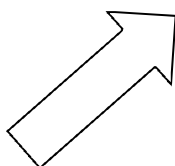


FUNCTIONAL SKILLS: EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION SIGNS AND WORDS

Did you ever think about all the employment information signs and words found in the workplace? This workshop on Employment Information Signs and Words (an iPad application containing 80 easy-to-understand videos) will help students become familiar with these essential signs and words. This program will help guarantee a successful transition from the classroom to the workplace.

**Saturday June 2, 2012
10:00 am to 12:00
Families Helping Families SELA
4118 Franklin Ave.
New Orleans, La 70122**

An opportunity to look at the materials available to check out in our library!



**To register call
504-943-0343 or
1-877-243-7352.**

These workshops are supported under a contract with the Louisiana Department of Education with funds under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act.





Louisiana Family to Family Health Information Center Upcoming Events!

For registration forms, email f2fhic@bellsouth.net or call 1-800-331-5570.

La F2FHIC Conference:

“Caring for Children and Youth with Complex Needs and Multiple Diagnoses”

May 9, 2012, Morgan City Municipal Auditorium.

Registration 8:00am; Conference at 9:00am

This conference was created to help parents of children with complex needs and the professionals who serve them. Presenters will consider the child and family as a whole when speaking on complex challenges in health, mental health and disability. Parents and professionals are encouraged to attend. Light breakfast and box lunch included. **There is no fee to attend; however, all attendees must register and space is limited. Only Registrations received before May 2nd will include lunch.** A continuing learning group will be formed from this conference to provide information and support to families and professionals.

La F2FHIC Leadership Academy:

“In Person” Leadership Academy

May 17-18, 2012, North Branch Library, 4130 Park Avenue, Gray, Louisiana

Welcome 9:00-9:30; Academy 9:30am-4:00pm

This Leadership Academy was developed for families of children and youth with any type of special health care need, mental or behavioral health issues, or other disabilities. Learn how to get the services your child needs! Learn about your rights! Learn how state and other systems work! Learn how to pass on your knowledge to others!! **Parents of children with special health care needs or disabilities of all types and youth with special health care needs or disabilities of all types up to age 26 are encouraged to attend!**

La F2FHIC Leadership Academy:

“Web Based” Leadership Academy

May 24-25, 2012 9:00am-12:00pm and 1:00pm to 2:00pm

This Leadership Academy is a web-based version of the Academy that will take place on May 17-18 in Gray, Louisiana. It was also developed for families of children and youth with any type of special health care need, mental or behavioral health issues, or other disabilities. Learn how to get the services your child needs! Learn about your rights! Learn how state and other systems work! Learn how to pass on your knowledge to others!! **Parents of children with special health care needs or disabilities of all types and youth with special health care needs or disabilities of all types up to age 26 are encouraged to attend!**

To register for any of the above events, email f2fhic@bellsouth.net to request a registration form or call 1-800-331-5570.



Children's Special Health Services

FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES OF JEFFERSON

PRESENTS A

RESOURCE INFORMATION WORKSHOP

Date: Wednesday, April 25, 2012

Time: 9:30am-3:00pm

Location: The Gathering Place, Arabi, LA 70043 (The old bowling alley)

The following agencies will be in attendance to do a presentation of their services/programs:

Children's Special Health Services, Metropolitan Human Service District, Early Steps, Department of Children & Family Services, and Louisiana Rehabilitation Services. This workshop is designed especially for state agency staff who work with children & youth with special health care needs and their families. Come to receive an update on programs as well as stay abreast of changes in services and eligibility criteria for services.

Other local community agencies/providers invited to be on hand to network and provide information about their program/services: FHF of Southeast Louisiana, FHF of Jefferson, Early Childhood Supports & Services (ECSS), The Advocacy Center, The Guidance Center, Gulf Coast Teaching Family Services, LaCHIP/Medicaid, Social Security Administration, plus more.

To register or for more information, please contact

Thuy (Twee) Nguyen @ (504) 896-1340

Email tnguyen@fhfjefferson.org

or

Madeline Lombardi @ (504) 888-9111

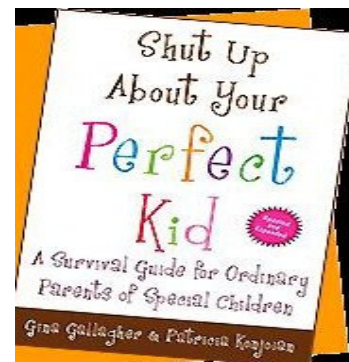
Email mlombardi@fhfjefferson.org

∞Continental Breakfast/ Lunch provided and door prizes will be given away∞

**Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana
Presents
The Authors of "Shut Up About Your Perfect Kid!
A Survival Guide for Ordinary Parents
of Special Children" and their "Movement of Imperfection"**



**DATE: May 11, 2012
TIME: 9:00-2:30
PLACE: Lindy Boggs
Conference Center
2045 Lakeshore Dr
New Orleans, LA 70122**



**This conference is for parents of
school-aged children receiving special education services
or in need of special education services only**

Registration and Continental Breakfast: 8:15am-9:00am

**9:00am-11:30am Session I—"My Child Needs Special Education Services, Now What?!"
(A Parent's Survival Guide)**

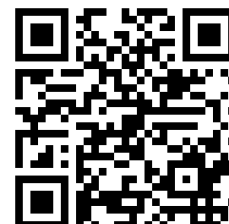
Lunch will be provided: 11:30am-12:30pm

12:30pm-2:00pm Session II—"A Light at the End of the Tunnel (It Does Get Easier, Sort Of)"

On a perfection-preoccupied planet, sisters Gina Gallagher and Patricia Konjoian, dare to openly speak about the frustrations, stigmas, joys and challenges they face as parents of children with disabilities (one with Asperger's syndrome, the other with bipolar disorder).

This refreshingly frank and enjoyable presentation, based on their book, "Shut Up About Your Perfect Kid, a Survival Guide for Ordinary Parents of Special Children" (Random House, August 2010), has participants laughing out loud and celebrating the joys, gifts, and milestones of special children. Participants will learn –

- How laughter can be a powerful coping technique.
- How to navigate the special education system.
- How to get your children the services and the support they need.
- How to help break stigma.
- How to see the joys and gifts in raising special children.



The Massachusetts-based authors speak at parenting, mental health, and educational conferences around the country and have been featured by CNN and in several national radio and print media outlets.

To register call 504-943-0343 (Door prizes awarded)



**THE UNIVERSITY of
NEW ORLEANS**

Made possible through funds from the Louisiana Department of Education



***Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana
Metropolitan Human Services District
Presents its
Fifth Annual Family Forum***



Assistive Technology

Transforming the Lives of
Individuals with Disabilities

May 12, 2012

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Lindy C. Boggs International Conference Center
University of New Orleans
2045 Lakeshore Drive, Suite 248
New Orleans, Louisiana 70122

Sessions Include



ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY



Keynote:

Assistive Technology 101

Susan Stewart-Program Director of Louisiana Assistive Technology

Driving With a Disability

Assistive Technology
Assessments

IPAD Applications

Assistive Technology -
Small Change,
Big Difference

There will be five drawings for a
\$500.00 gift certificate to purchase Assistive Technology!!

- ❖ You must be present to win.
- ❖ Family member with a disability must be registered
with Metropolitan Human Services District

Register today! Call 504-943-0343

Continental Breakfast
will be served

Assistive Technology
Vendors will be available



THE UNIVERSITY of
NEW ORLEANS

Have You Been Told That Your Son or Daughter, Who Has a Disability, is not Allowed to Inherit Money?

by J. Doug Sunseri, Attorney-at-Law

Often, parents and family members are left with the disheartening prospect as to how their special needs son/daughter or family member with a disability will be supported after they die. Normally, an inheritance will interrupt his or her SSI and Medicaid. Therefore, someone who has a disability cannot inherit more than \$2,000 because it will interrupt his or her government benefits.



There is an easy way around this problem. You can leave money for your son or daughter, without interfering with the public benefits. This concern can be addressed by a Supplemental Needs Trust (also known as Special Needs Trust). This Trust will allow a family member with a disability to retain governmental benefits and protect assets acquired throughout a lifetime.

A Supplemental Needs Trust may be a stand alone document or it can be a part of a Last Will and Testament. A Supplemental Needs Trust enables a person with a physical or mental disability, or an individual with a chronic or acquired illness, to hold in Trust, an unlimited amount of assets for his or her benefit without jeopardizing entitlement for Social Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, vocational rehabilitation, subsidized housing, waiver services and other government benefits.

A Supplemental Needs Trust provides for supplemental and extra care over and above the support which is provided by government to improve the quality of life. If Medicaid won't pay for certain medical care or treatments, the Trust can step in and provide those. The primary restriction of a Supplemental Needs Trust is it cannot provide a benefit for food or housing. Supplemental Needs Trust may pay for insurance, rehabilitation, job training,

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

education, maintenance, equipment, transportation, recreation, eyeglasses, health club and I-Phone/Blackberry.

Further, Supplemental Needs Trust allows the Trustee to allocate funds on behalf of the beneficiary for electronic equipment, companion/support services, athletic training and sports, travel/vacations and programs to promote independence and enhance self-esteem.

A Supplemental Needs Trust can be established at any time before the beneficiary's 65th birthday. It is common to create a Supplemental Needs Trust early in a child's life as a long term vehicle for holding assets to benefit the family member with a disability. This particularly applies to parents who wish to leave funds for a child's benefit after the parents' death. The cost of the creation of the Trust is tax deductible.

A family or person seeking to create a Supplemental Needs Trust is advised to utilize the services of an attorney who is proficient in disability issues. A Supplemental Needs Trust can very easily be invaded by government if the Trust is invalidated due to the lack of proper language throughout the Trust. For more information, please see the website for the Developmental Disability Legal Network, LLC at www.disabilitytrust.net.

This is a service provided by J. Douglas Sunseri of the Law Firm of Nicaud Sunseri, 3000 18th Street, Metairie, LA 70002, 504-837-1304, jdsunseri@nslawla.com.

Please see page 18 for an exiting event on May 17th!

Now Hiring

Family Advocate (Information and Referral Specialist)

FHF of SELA has a part time (20 hours per week) position available.

Parents of children with a disability are encouraged to apply.

For all of the details (job description/requirements) go to www.fhfsela.org/now-hiring.

Cover letters along with resumes can be faxed to 504-940-3242 or emailed to ccalix@fhfsela.org or mailed to 4118 Franklin Avenue, New Orleans, LA., 70122.

NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE

It's APPtastic!!

Staff members at FHF of SELA research apps and podcasts for the iPad and iPad2 that are user friendly, informative, yet entertaining for the families that we serve.

This edition spotlights:



The Best in Travel Apps! With summer time quickly approaching and school winding down, many of us will embark upon our much anticipated travel excursions. Here we look to some must have travel apps that will keep your little ones occupied during that long car drive, navigation systems to keep you on the right path and the latest “it” places to visit once in your destination.



Trip it: With this free app you'll never have to dig through your printed, paper itineraries again. Trip It links to your e-mail account and picks up every confirmation number that comes into your inbox. Any flight, hotel, or even dinner reservation that contains a confirmation number will be put into an organized itinerary, all in one place. Flight delays and last-minute changes sent to your e-mail will be updated automatically.

Instagram: A fast, beautiful and fun way to share your pictures of your vacation with friends and family .Snap a photo with your iPhone, choose a filter to transform the look and feel, send to Facebook, Twitter or Flickr – it's all as easy as pie. It's photo sharing, reinvented, and it's free!



Family Matters: Offer hundreds of questions and activities to keep kids entertained on the go. Whether you're standing in line at Disney World or waiting for the movie to start at the theatre or stuck in traffic, waiting just got a little more fun.



Urbanspoon: Can't decide where to eat? Urbanspoon can help. Shake your iPhone



and the Urbanspoon slot machine will suggest a restaurant. See what's nearby in your area or browse a comprehensive list of restaurants. Make a Reservation, and expand your DINELINE by checking in. See what your FRIENDS like. Use GPS to find a restaurant near you,

.....

As always, you can search ITUNES or the APP store for all your APPtastic needs or make an appointment at Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana and we will be more than happy to offer assistance. Families, professionals and educators can make an appointment to come to the FHF office and test out these and many other apps on one our iPads. Call the office at 943-0343 for more information or to make an appointment.

***Attention Parents and Individuals with a Disability - An Opportunity to “Make A Difference”
Do you want to be a part of the University Of New Orleans’ special education improvement
project? You could make a difference in the way students are taught how to become teachers at
the University of New Orleans (UNO).***

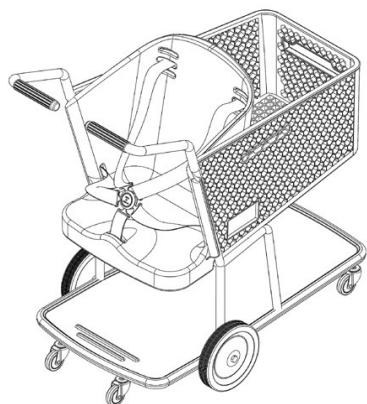
Families Helping Families has partnered with UNO to hold focus groups in order to gather the perspectives of families on what can be done to better prepare teachers. We are looking for dynamic, inspired and committed parents to be a part of this group. Stipends will be available for participation.

Participation will include redesign teams looking specifically at: courses taken, field experience/student teaching, candidate assessment, induction, dissemination and system improvement and possibly more based on your input. This will be a participant-driven process involving group meetings, to identify both problems and solutions, make presentations to a variety of audiences, host a family forum event, engaging the community as a whole, participating in outreach, developing a resource guide and more. The conclusion of this will culminate in September 2012, so be prepared to make a long-term commitment to this project just as we expect that teachers make long-term commitments to our children.

If you are in individual with a disability or the parent of a child with a disability, we will be accepting applications on a rolling basis. We do expect a good number of applications so if you are interested in participating in this exciting opportunity please send an email to info@fhfsela.org and request an application or call Carol at 504-943-0343.



Caroline's Cart



Designed by parents Drew Ann and David Long when it became obvious that their daughter would soon outgrow a typical shopping cart, Caroline's Cart provides an alternative for caregivers. No longer will families and caretakers have to struggle with pushing a wheelchair and pulling a shopping cart, making the shopping experience more comfortable and accessible for everyone.

Technical features and benefits-

- The handles of Caroline's Cart swing back to provide convenient access to the seat
- The seat back has a five degree tilt for increased comfort for children with low muscle tone
- The seat faces the caregiver, so eye contact is easy to maintain, children with anxiety issues can watch the parent during the shopping trip, and children prone to seizures can be monitored
- The platform below the seat provides a footrest for the child
- An abductor in the seat helps keep the child upright
- A harness helps to secure the child so parents have hands free to steer the cart and shop
- An ample cargo basket provides space for purchased items, including hooks on the side for hanging bags



For more information on Caroline's Cart visit them online <http://www.carolinescart.com>, at their corporate office 1500 First Avenue N., Suite 20, Birmingham, AL 35203 phone (205) 307-6573 or by email info@carolinescart.com

Caroline's Cart Mission Statement: Our Mission is to make Caroline's Cart available to retailers everywhere, providing a quality product for children with special needs that further enables their participation in mainstream society with their family through the common activity of grocery shopping.

April is Autism Awareness Month

What is Autism? Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life and affects a person's ability to communicate and interact with others. Autism is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a "spectrum disorder" that affects individuals differently and to varying degrees. There is no known single cause of autism and it can be found in combination with other disabilities.

Know the Signs: Early Identification Can Change Lives

Autism is treatable. Children do not "outgrow" autism, but studies show that early diagnosis and intervention lead to significantly improved outcomes.

Here are some signs to look for in the children in your life:

- Lack of or delay in spoken language
- Repetitive use of language and/or motor mannerisms (e.g., hand-flapping, twirling objects)
- Little or no eye contact
- Lack of interest in peer relationships
- Lack of spontaneous or make-believe play
- Persistent fixation on parts of objects

All information from www.autism-society.org/



There is a local chapter of the Autism Society!

P.O. Box 26057,
New Orleans, LA 70186
gnoasachapter@yahoo.com
<http://www.autism-society.org/chapter168>

The Autism Society of Greater New Orleans is

on Facebook! Find them at

<https://www.facebook.com/ASGNO>



Autism Support Group

Children's Hospital Parenting Center
938 Calhoun Street
New Orleans, LA 70118

Phone: 504-896-9484

Held the 1st Tuesday of the month at the Parenting Center from 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Parents, family members, educators, and professionals are welcome (no children please).

Saturday, April 21, 2012

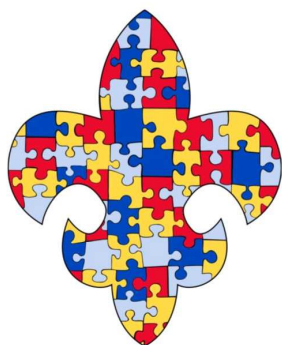
**Registration opens at 8:00 am
Walk begins at 9:30 am**



8th Annual Walk for Autism Awareness



Be a part of the solution!



**Greater New Orleans
Autism Society of America**



Location:

**LaSalle Park, next
to Zephyr Stadium**



**6600 Airline Dr.
Metairie, LA**

- ***Michael Lewis, from the New Orleans Saints, will be there signing his new book!***
- ***We will also have our typical information booths, music, food, raffle, and children's activities!***

For more information, contact

AS-GNO

(504) 464-5733

[Www.autism-society.org/chapter168](http://www.autism-society.org/chapter168)

E-mail: gnoasachapter@yahoo.com



Come join us for the

First Annual Southeastern Louisiana Symposium for Families



Supplemental Needs Trust

Are You Protected?

Do you have a child with a disability?



Do you worry what will happen to your son or daughter after you pass away?

Did you know your children may be in jeopardy of losing their social security, their waiver and other government benefits if they inherit money?

Do you know why a will is not enough to protect your child's benefits?

Doug Sunseri, a local, home grown,

New Orleans attorney can help offer peace of mind.

Doug can assist your family in the establishment of a

Supplemental (Special) Needs Trust.

Such a trust would allow your son or daughter to inherit money without losing their social security or other government benefits.

Join us as Mr. Sunseri teaches us how to protect our loved ones!

May 17th

First Presbyterian Church

5401 South Claiborne Ave.

7:00pm to 8:30pm



Children Welcome! Light refreshments will be served.

Call 943-0343 or 1-877-243-7352 to register

or scan the QR Code with your iPhone or Android device.

A Note From Delery Rice, Regional LaCAN Leader:

This year's legislative session is underway. LaCAN has two current issues we are asking our legislators to consider and members to advocate for this session. The first is that people with developmental disabilities need waiver services. We are asking our legislators to appropriate funds for these services. Waiver services are more cost effective and afford individuals a better quality of life than institutional settings. Services and supports provided through home and community-based waivers allow individuals with developmental disabilities to live independently in their own home or with their families in the community. The second is a bill already filed, Senate Bill 227 (SB227). This allows for what LaCAN is referring to as "Let the Money Follow the Person". Louisiana has the highest number of people in ICF/DD (Intermediate Care Facility/Developmental Disabilities) per capita in the country. Louisiana has made significant progress in recent years in reducing the number of public ICF/DD facilities and the total census in these facilities. However, this same reduction has not occurred in private ICF/DDs. People with disabilities can live more independently and have a better quality of life through the use of home and community-based waiver services. Home and community-based services are national best practice. Providers choosing to convert will be paid the fair market value to close each of their ICF/DD beds. Approximately 724 of the 3,750 people in Louisiana's private ICF/DD are on the seven year waiting list for waiver services.

Finally, mark your calendars for our "Yellow Shirt Week". "Yellow Shirt Days" are marked for April 16th and 17th. I will send out further information as I receive it.

You can join LaCAN or find out more about our initiatives, membership or other information on the LaCAN website www.lacanaadvocates.org.



Students with Significant Disabilities Deserve Choices and Services in Charter Schools

Facts First

- Students with significant disabilities are not served by most Charter Schools.
- Changes to school systems being responsible for students based on where they live have increased the segregation and limited options of students with disabilities.

What Legislators Can Do:

Ensure all students have equal access to and services in quality schools.

Why Do This?

Changes to the traditional structure and responsibilities of Local Education Agencies have led to students with disabilities being more segregated.

There are concerns that resources designated for services to students with disabilities are being unfairly distributed to schools who are not serving students with more significant disabilities. School districts serving all students are finding it increasingly difficult with smaller portions of resources.

To be the most effective LaTEACH member during session, we have some tips that will help you take advantage of every opportunity to take a stand and let your voices be heard on issues that matter to you and students in Louisiana.

- Tip 1:** Check your email at least daily. Make sure to check your spam folder too.
- Tip 2:** Make sure to read the entire email.
- Tip 3:** Take note of the bills' numbers and if it is a Senate bill or House bill.
- Tip 4:** Look for where the bill is in the process.
- Tip 5:** Never assume other LaTEACH members are contacting policymakers so you don't have to.
- Tip 6:** Use sample letters as a guide.
- Tip 7:** Know your Senator's and Representative's contact information.
- Tip 8:** Make sure to confirm your action to LaTEACH.
- Tip 9:** Add LaTEACH to your Facebook account.
- Tip 10:** Identify four family members or friends who will join you in LaTEACH efforts.

Adapted from www.lateach.org

	<u>% of Charter Schools NOT Serving Students With Significant Disabilities</u>	<u>% of Traditional Districts (LEAs) NOT Serving Students With Significant Disabilities</u>
Autism	59%	1%
Emotional Disturbance	44%	1%
Multiple Disabilities	91%	4%
Orthopedic Impairment	75%	3%
Traumatic Brain Injury	84%	20%
Visual Impairment	84%	16%

Data from 2009 Special Education Profile (most recent data available).

Donnica Conway, Regional LaTEACH Coordinator
Donnica.Conway@lateach.org
(504) 943-0343



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4118 Franklin Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70122

504-943-0343
1-877-243-7352 (Toll-Free)
504-940-3242 (Fax)

www.fhfsela.org

[http://www.facebook.com/
FHfOfSELA](http://www.facebook.com/FHfOfSELA)

Follow us on Twitter @FHfOfSELA.

FHF of SELA receives partial funding from the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council, Metropolitan Human Services District, Louisiana State Department of Education, Family to Family Health Information Center, the University of New Orleans, and Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals.

LaCAN
LOUISIANA CITIZENS FOR ACTION NOW

Still Waiting for Waiver Services?

Join LaCAN NOW!

LaCAN (Louisiana Citizens for Action Now) is a statewide grassroots network of individuals and families who have worked together since 1988 advocating for a system that supports individuals to live in their own homes rather than having to move to a facility to receive needed services.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE! JOIN LACAN!

WWW.LACANADVOCATES.ORG

MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

JOIN LACAN!



LaTEACH
Louisiana Together Educating ALL Children
is a grass root network of individuals that believe all children should have the opportunity to be educated with their typical peers in a typical classroom.

LaTEACH has made great strides this year but they still need **YOU** to help make a difference in improving education for our children with disabilities.

Donnica Conway-Strawder
LaTEACH Region 1 Area Coordinator
Louisiana Together Educating ALL Children
4118 Franklin Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70122
504-943-0343
1-877-243-7352



**A Statewide
Talk List**

What is LadisAbility Talk?

It's an e-mail talk list from Louisiana Parent Training and Information Center/Families Helping Families of Jefferson to help families of people with disabilities and their advocates in Louisiana share information, resources, and support.

What's a talk list? It is a way for e-mail users to be in a group with others who have similar interests.

Who should join? Parents of children with disabilities, self-advocates, and advocates for people with disabilities in Louisiana.

How do I join? Just send an e-mail to:
fhfprompter@yahoo.com or
LaDisabilityTalk-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

FREE—FREE—FREE