Advocating Daily

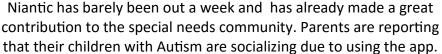


EDUCATING AND EMPOWERING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Summer 2016

New App Reportedly Helping Kids with Autism

Have you *caught em all*? Well, maybe your kids have. The new *Pokemon Go* app from



The barriers of anxiety have been broken down by bringing players together for a common passion. Pokemon trainers are required to leave their homes and walk their

communities searching for elusive prizes. Then, once collected, players gather at gyms to battle.

As one ASD mom wrote on Facebook about her son playing at the park...

"Normally he is so rigid about his routine. But tonight he was happy to change things up...other kids ran up to him so they could hunt Pokemon together....My autistic child is socializing. Talking to people. Smiling at people. Verbalizing. Participating in pragmatic speech. With total strangers. Looking up at them. Sometimes in the eye. This is Amazing"

Not only is it allowing children to overcome social difficulties, but it is bringing families together for a shared activity. Getting people outside and walking is a just icing.

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FHFSELA Staff:

MARKYOUR CALENDAR!

Aisha Johnson

Executive Director

Shay Hunter

Assistant Director

Rickii Ainey

Information and Referral Specialist (MHSD)

Janice Alexander

Office Assistant

Laqwenta Smith-Johnson

Transition and Training Coordinator (STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION)

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Early Steps Community
Outreach Specialist

Sharla Lynn Green

Data Entry Specialist

Vanessa Herrera

Education Advocate (STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION)

Cynthia Smith

Bookkeeper

Daniell Migliore

LaCAN Leader Region 1

Marte Robertson

Lyntrell Ratliff

Office Assistants (MHSD)



Attention Early Steps Parents:

Would you have time to participate in the Quarterly Regional Interagency Council Committee Meeting on

Friday, 7/29/2016 from 12-2 p.m.

at East Bank Regional Library 4747 West Napoleon Avenue

Metairie, La. 70001?

We are looking to recruit active EarlySteps parents to participate in our Regional Interagency Council Committee (RICC) Meetings. Committee meetings give our parents the opportunity to participate and actively be a part of the committee to voice their opinions on peer level so that our EarlySteps families can receive the best services possible.

If you need additional information, and to RSVP, please contact Tomorrow Fondal, Community Outreach Specialist (COS) at 504.943.0343, or you can email her at tfondal@fhfsela.org



CHECK OUT THESE AMAZING TRAINNGS AND WORKSHOPS!



Finding Hidden Gold



Hear from special needs financial advisors as they discuss how to effectively plan for the long term aspirations and security of our loved ones living with special needs. Topics to be discussed include finding the most cost effective funding techniques for Special Needs Trusts; determining future financial needs and providing adequate resources; putting together a team to coordinate services for your child; and establishing a roadmap for future medical, legal, and related services for your family member with special needs.

This workshop is made available though a partnership with Metropolitan Human Services District

When: August 2,2014

Where: New Orleans East Library

Time: 10:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

To Register go to:

 $http:/\!/finding hidden gold.event brite.com$

Or call our office at 504-943-0343

A Familiës

FHFSELA Board of Directors:

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Now Green!

FHF-SELA is now publishing our newsletter online only! For a paper letter please call us today!

504-943-0343

FHF-SELA receives partial funding from Metropolitan Human Services District, the State Department of Education, the Louisiana Developmenta Disabilities Council, Family to Family Health Information Center, Amerigroup, Xerox Corporation, LSU Health Science Center, and Early Steps.

CHECK OUT THESE AMAZING TRAINNGS AND WORKSHOPS!

SSA'S REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE PROGRAM

This workshop will provide a comprehensive overview of the Social Security Administration's Representative Payee Program.



Topics will include:

- · What is a Representative Payee
- What are the duties of the representative payee
- · Examples of what payees can and can not do

TO REGISTER FOR THIS WORKSHOP GO TO

HTTP://SSAPAYEEPROGRAM.EVENTBRITE.COM

When: August 30, 2016

Where: The Gathering, 7265 Saint Claude Avenue Arabi, La

Time: 10:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.

Lunch will be provided by Liberty's Kitchen



This workshop is made possible through a partnership with

Metropolitan Human Services District



CHECK OUT THESE AMAZING TRAINNGS AND WORKSHOPS!

STEP BY STEP SCHOOL DISCIPLINE GUIDE

Parents of children with disabilities often ask:

- Can the school send my child home before the end of the school day?
 - Can the school district suspend my child?
 - Can the school district expel my child?

What happens to my child's educational services if he or she is sent home, suspended, or expelled?

This workshop will answer these and many other questions. Whether your child is on an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan, or if you suspect that your child has a disability that affects his or her behavior at school, this guide will help you understand the complex disciplinary process for your school.



TO REGISTER FOR THIS WORKSHOP GO TO

HTTP://SCHOOLDISCIPLINEGUIDE.EVENTBRITE.COM

When: September 20, 2016

Where: The Plaquemines Parish Care Center

115 Keating Drive, Belle Chasse, LA 70037

Time: 10:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.

Lunch will be provided by Rotolo's Pizzeria



This workshop is made possible through a partnership with The LDOE and Metropolitan Human Services District



Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana



Services and Programs

FHF of SELA is a 501(c)3 non-profit resource center for individuals with disabilities and their families. For more information about the services and programs we provide, please call 504-943-0343.

Services

Information and Referral

- Information and referral for evaluations, medical services, Medicare, Medicaid, and Crisis Intervention
- Information on community programs, services and opportunities
- Educational materials, publications and disability-friendly apps.
- Internet and personal resources across all three parishes

Education and Training

- Workshops on caregivers, transition, education, IEP/504, school and family partnerships, communication, healthcare, advocacy and more
- Register for our latest workshops online or by calling 504-943-0343

Peer-to-Peer Support

 Continuous information, guidance and support from our employees who are parents, siblings and self-advocates.

Our Vision.

We envision a region where people with disabilities live and are **fully included** in school, work and recreational activities.

Our Mission

Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana's mission is to **educate and empower** individuals with disabilities, their families, professionals and communities by providing resource, training and family-tofamily support.

Programs

ALL AGES

 LA Citizens for Action Now (LaCAN) - A statewide grassroots network for individuals and families advocating for service system supporting individuals with disabilities to live in their own homes rather than a facility.

0-3

Early Steps Community Outreach Specialist The specialist visits hospitals and clinics with
 information about Early Steps for hospitals, clinics
 and directly to parents who have children who may
 exhibit developmental delay

4 - 14

- Education Advocate Funded by the State
 Department of Education, advocates for all
 students in regular education and community
 settings to ensure full and valued membership in
 society. Provides workshops, presentations, and
 one-to-one support. Advocates for children to be
 educated in the Least Restrictive Environment and
 educates parents on being their child's advocate.
- The Prism Project of Greater NOLA: Roux-Roux Productions (TPP of GNO)- A performing arts program for children with and without special needs. TPP of GNO teaches children dance, music and theater, creating an original performance.

15 - 22

- Career Symposium A multi-faceted workshop for students with disabilities, their families and teachers to better prepare students with disabilities to have meaningful careers after high school.
- Transition Advocate funded by the State
 Department of Education. Trains, educates and
 empowers families and professionals to develop
 Individualized Transition Plans.

22 +

People First of NOLA - An adult advocacy group for individuals with disabilities



Building a Better Tomorrow and Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana would like to thank all of the kids who chose to spend their summer with us. We are thrilled to have been able to put on our first annual inclusive summer camp at Joe Brown Recreation Center. Check back next summer for a bigger and better camp!





Out in the Community

- •<u>LSU Health Sciences Center Presents: Usher Syndrome in Louisiana</u>, Saturday August 6th 10-2pm. In the Cecil J Picard Center, University of Louisiana, Lafayette. To register call 504-258-7667
- The Autism Center at Children's Hospital presents Parent and Caregiver classes.

"Overview of Autism Spectrum Disorder" is a free three week course that meets on Tuesdays from 1-2:30 beginning on August 2nd. Courses on behavior are also offered. For more information call, 504-896-7272







Free Backpack & School Supplies!!!*

Saturday, July 23, 2016 10:00 am to 1:00 pm



Sojourner Truth Neighborhood Center 2200 Lafitte St., New Orleans, LA 70119

Students Ages 4 to 18; must be with Parent or Guardian (*while supplies last)

COMMUNITY RESOURCES ◆ ENTERTAINMENT ◆ TEACHER SUPPLIES ◆
HEALTH SCREENINGS ◆ FUN ACTIVITIES ◆ REFRESHMENTS ◆
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For members who do not speak English, we offer oral interpretation services for all languages. These services are free of charge. If you need these services, call Member Services toll free at 1-800-600-4441.

Para miembros que no hablan inglés, ofrecemos servicios de interpretación oral para todos los idiomas. Estos servicios son gratuitos. Si necesita estos servicios, llame a la línea gratuita de Servicios al Miembro al 1-800-600-4441.

Nếu quý vị cần thông tin này bằng tiếng Việt, hãy gọi tới đường dây miễn phí của Dịch Vụ Thành Viên theo số 1-800-600-4441.





1-800-600-4441 ■ www.myamerigroup.com/LA







Affordable Care Act (ACA):

Helping Families of Children with Special Needs to Understand Deductibles

One of the most confusing aspects for families of children with disabilities is the concept of deductibles and how that plays into cost-sharing. Many parents will choose plans with lower deductibles, but this may mean there is also a level of fewer benefits, which could be particularly problematic for children with special health care needs.

What is a Deductible?

According to Healthcare.gov, the deductible is "[T]the amount you owe for covered health care services before your health insurance plan begins to pay." For example, if the plan's deductible is \$500, that's how much you would have to pay before insurance kicks in.

Please note that there can be either individual or family deductibles under the plan. (Each individual deductible generally will be lower than a family deductible for a similar plan.) If you have an individual ("embedded") deductible, each individual would have to reach that deductible before his or her healthcare costs would be covered. If it's a family ("aggregate"), deductible, that means that the deductible amount would have to be spent across all family members before their healthcare costs would be covered. It may be necessary to call an insurance plan to find out what type of deductible it has.

While it may sound better to have one family deductible this is NOT necessarily better when it is expected that one family member – such as a child with special health care needs – will have higher health care costs than other family members. For example, if there is a family deductible of \$2,000, then insurance coverage won't apply for any family member until the family has spent that much out of pocket. But if each family member has a \$500 deductible, then insurance coverage will be applied for an individual family member once his or costs have reached the deductible. (See blog post from the Georgetown Center on Health Insurance Reform at http://chirblog.org/embedded-deductibles-and-how-they-work/.)

What Families Need to Know

Deductibles are only part of total health costs. Parents must also consider premiums (cost of buying the insurance policy) as well as out-of-pocket costs, including copays (see Resources.) Families can also save money by using "in-network" providers, which means health care providers that participate with their plan and agree to accept the payment amount provided by the insurer.

Key things for parents of children with special needs need to keep in mind about deductibles are:

- There is no deductible for preventive services.
- Some plans offer other (non-preventive) services without a deductible, although any copayments will still apply. Examples include visits to a primary care provider and some specialists (e.g. mental health), and/or prescriptions. To find out which services are covered without a deductible, go to healthcare.gov, pick a plan, and click on "costs for medical care." An even more detailed list is available on the plan "Summary of Benefits and Coverage."
- When choosing a plan, families can look at services without a deductible along with premiums and other out-of-pocket costs. During open enrollment, there is an "Out-of-Pocket Costs" tool on Healthcare.gov which estimates premiums,

Family Voices National Center for Family/Professional Partnerships

3701 San Mateo Blvd. NE, Suite 103, Albusquarque, NM 87110

505-872-4774

www.familyvoices.org

www.fs-ncfop.org

This tip sheet was developed with funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration(HRSA)/Maternal and Child Health Bureau(MCHB)/

Division of Services for Children with Special Health Needs (DSCSHN), through cooperative agreement# U40MC00149.



Ask the Advocate

What should I be doing now to prepare for fall?

A new school year means a new grade, new teachers, new goals, and maybe even a new school! In order to help you and your child with special needs be as successful as you can be, we've put together a list of eight helpful back-to-school tips that we hope will make the transition into a new school year a little easier for you and your child.

Organize all that paperwork

In the world of special education, there are lots of meetings, paperwork, and documentation to keep track of. Try to keep a familycalendar of school events, special education meetings, conferences, etc. Setting up a binder or folder to keep your child's special education documentation, meeting notices, and IEPs in sequential order can also help you stay organized.

Start a communication log

Keeping track of all phone calls, e-mails, notes home, meetings, and conferences is important. Create a "communication log" for yourself in a notebook that is easily accessible. Be sure to note the dates, times, and nature of the communications you have.

Review your child's current IEP

The IEP is the cornerstone of your child's educational program, so it's important that you have a clear understanding of it. Note when the IEP expires and if your child is up for reevaluation this year. Most importantly, be sure that this IEP still "fits" your child's needs! If you're unsure, contact the school about holding an IEP review meeting.

Relieve back-to-school jitters

Just talking about the upcoming year and changes can help reduce some of that back-to-school anxiety! Talk to your child about exciting new classes, activities, and events that they can participate in during the new school year. If attending a new school, try to schedule a visit before the first day. With older students, it is sometimes helpful to explain the services and accommodations in their IEP so that they know what to expect when school begins.

Keep everyone informed

It's important that you and the school communicate early and often! If there is anything (concerns, changes, questions about the IEP) that you feel is important to share with the staff working with your child before school starts, or during the year, don't hesitate to contact them! The more proactive and honest you are, the better the school staff will be able to meet your child's needs.

JUVENILE JUSTICE AWARENESS DAY

WHEN

July 29th, 2016 9am – 1pm

WHERE

Orleans Parish Juvenile Court

1100 B. Milton Street, New Orleans, IA

HOSTED BY THE ORLEANS PARISH JUVENILE COURT IN CONJUNCTION WITH TOTAL COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.

FEATURING:

Total Community Action Louisiana State Troopers AmeriHealth Caritas New Orleans Fire Dept. Urban League Job One WES HN Testing EP Sports

And other community partners

> FREE FOOD DRINKS, & SCHOOL SUPPLIES

THIS EVENT IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!



The MHSD Regional Advisory Committee is made up of self-advocates, parents, providers, and other agencies striving to improve Dev. Disability services. If you are interested in being a part of this great team. Please fill

Nomination Form

Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD)

Metropolitan Human Services District Regional Advisory Committee (RAC)

Region: MHSD	Date Completed:
Name of Nominee:	
Street Address:	
City:	State:Zip:
Email Address:	
Daytime Phone: (Fax Number: ()
Parish of Residence:	Parish of Work:
Recommended by:	
· ·	ollowing information is to assist in the selection of members who can best represent the region's ted to provide this information.
Racial/Ethnic Group:	White/Caucasian Black/African American Hispanic Other:
Gender: Male Fem	
If selected, I will serve as a:	
Individual with a development	al disability
	levelopmental disability who lives at home.
	levelopmental disability who lives in a group/community home or apartment.
Parent of an individual with a c	levelopmental disability who lives in a state operated developmental center.
Representative of an advocacy	organization Name:
Public Provider Name:	
Private Provider (non-profit)	Name:
Other Name:	
• •	es you have had that are relevant to serve on this committee. Also, please describe what you hope any attach additional sheets, if necessary.
Signature of Nominee:	
	nd email address to be posted on the OCDD RAC/SAC websites(please initial)
	evelopmental disability and/or their parent(s) must check this box to indicate a need for assisses. Accommodations needed:

INTERESTED IN BEING ON MHSD'S REGIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE?

Fill this out and get it back to us.





Autism Spectrum Disorder:
What we know
and what is still needed in
Greater New Orleans

Friday, July 29 • 8:30am - 12:00pm

This FREE workshop is for:

- Caregivers, families, and friends who want to support someone with ASD
- Medical professionals in clinics servicing individuals with ASD.
- Teachers and administrators providing education to children and adults with ASD.
- Community health workers, community organizations, and service workers that may provide referrals to children and adults with ASD.

1542 Tulane Avenue, New Orleans, LA •1st Floor Auditorium

For more information or inquiries on CEU credits, please contact our office at (504) 568-2003 or E-mail Kira Barker: cbark1@lsuhsc.edu



Thank You To Our Supporters

FHF of SELA is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. We rely on contracts with organizations, partnerships with community groups, grants and private donations. Through these incredible organizations and people, FHF of SELA is able to provide free services and programming to families and professionals across Orleans, Plaquemines and St. Bernard Parishes. It is all thanks to these supporters and the anonymous donors that enable our organization to assist thousands of families across the Greater New Orleans region achieve education and empowerment.

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Make a Donation Today!

Your donations could help families of individuals with special needs connect with accurate resources, provide recreational opportunities to children with special needs, teach parents or individuals with disabilities self-advocacy skills, or provide a student with a disability the means to achieve their dream career.

For Example:

- \$5 connects families without internet to accurate resources
- \$10 provides a student with a disability tools for their career
- \$30 covers the cost of participating in The Prism Project of Greater NOLA
- \$72 enables two adults with disabilities to become empowered self-advocates
- \$150 allows a child with special needs to attend summer camp

Thank you for your support! All donations are tax-deductible

You can make a donation online by clicking Donate at www.fhfsela.org

Scan the QR Reader

OR

Mail in your donation with the form below to Families Helping Families of Southeast Louisiana 7240 Crowder Blvd. Suite 200

New Orleans, LA 70127



Name:	Address:
Phone:	City, State, Zip:
Email:	Parish:
Relationship: Parent Sibling Sel	f-Advocate Professional Family Member Donor
Please add me to your mailing list: Yes	No
I would like to donate:	
\$5 \$10 \$30 \$72 \$15	50 Other
I would like to volunteer or apply for an internsh	
I would like information about:	

LaDDC NEWS

Legislative News from LaCAN and LaTeach

Department of Education (LDOE) to collect and analyze data on the number of times students with disabilities were restrained or secluded in schools, advocates and legislators agreed this data was not being collected. Senator Jack Donahue once again championed the needs of students with disabilities by authoring SB 317/ Act 522 that accomplished three things related to the use of restraints and seclusion. First, it clarified LDOE is required to report incidents of restraint and seclusion. Second, the definition of restraint was slightly modified. Finally, an Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline was established. This Advisory Council will provide advice and guidance to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and LDOE regarding best practices in providing support to schools in addressing student behavior. At least three of the twenty-four members of this Advisory Council will be parents, two of whom will be parents of students with disabilities. Parents were very pleased the legislature saw fit to create a solution for supporting schools in using positive approaches to challenging behavior.

Challenging behavior was also the focus of HB 862/Act 226 by Representative Reid Falconer, which limits the liability for parents of some students with developmental disabilities when their student is at school. Advocates behind Act 226 were pleased the legislature agreed that when a parent sends their child with a disability and a behavior intervention plan to school, the parent is no longer liable for damages or injury caused when the student is in the care of the school. Data and Informed Stakeholders Parents and other advocates need adequate information to be able to provide meaningful input into the development of policy and practices impacting students with disabilities. The Louisiana Department of Education will be required to produce a report with statistics on students with disabilities as a result of SB 310/Act 485 by Senator Dan Claitor. For almost twenty years LDOE provided the information required by Act 485 in a report called the Special Education Data Profile, but discontinued this practice after 2012. These data allow stakeholders to observe trends and patterns, such as the rise in the rate of students with autism, differences between school systems in things like inclusive practices, participation rates of students taking tests designed for students with the most significant disabilities, and other important practices and outcomes of students with disabilities. To LDOE's credit, it produced the 2014-15 Louisiana Special Education Data Profile before the regular session ended.

Retroactive Diploma Representative John Schroder and Senator Claitor once again stepped up and championed a bill (SB 335/Act 303) to allow people with disabilities who exited school without a diploma, even though they earned all the necessary credits, to request a high school diploma. Act 303 also prohibits schools from requiring medical information to be shared until a student is enrolled.

Budget Funding for public schools was cut by \$24 million, leaving local school systems scrambling to make budget cuts that will have the least impact on students. The level of cuts to the high cost fund that assists school systems in meeting the costs of serving students with disabilities with high cost needs is not known at this time.

We are pleased to welcome our new LaCAN and LaTEACH Leader

Daniell Migliore!

Hello! My name is Daniell Migliore and I am your new LaCAN and LaTEACH Region 1 leader. I have 4 kids ranging from 15-22, one of which has developmental disabilities. I've always been passionate about advocating for people with developmental disabilities, but became even more passionate about it when my son started school and I realized that he was not getting the services that he needed to excel in a regular education classroom. As a LaCAN /LaTEACH Leader, my goal is to provide you with any information you may need on how current or proposed policies affect individuals with developmental disabilities and their families and to link individuals and families in Region 1 with one another and with policymakers that represent Region 1 so you are all able to share your personal stories and concerns. I can be reached at the FHF office at 504-943-0343, on my cell phone at (504) 491-6604, by email at lacanregion1@yahoo.com, daniell.migliore@lateach.org, or on FaceBook at https://www.facebook.com/lateachandlacanregiononeleader. Please add me as a friend on FaceBook so that we can stay connected.

I look forward to hearing from you and working with you all!

PF Meetings March 2016-December 2016 Month Month MarchAugust 15 16 April 19 September 20 May October <u>17</u> June November <u>21</u> <u>15</u> 19 20 People First of NOLA meetings are held every 3rd Tuesday of the month, 4:30-6PM. The meetings are held at: Ashe Cultural Center 1712 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd, NOLA 70113

People First of NOLA

WELCOME

If you are an adult with a developmental disability and want to learn self-advocacy skills, come join People First of NOLA!

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
- Where members can connect with others in the community, nation and world
- Where members learn about their rights and responsibilities as citizens of the US





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Help us Go Green today! Opt out of a paper newsletter and receive our education and trainings faster!

LIKE us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/FHFofSELA follow us on Twitter @FHFofSELA & Pinterest FHFSELA to stay up-to-date on all exciting events, articles of interest, links to other advocacy groups, information on trainings and more!





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!





Louisiana Together Educating All Children (LaTEACH) 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.

LaTEACH Region 1 Area Coordinator
Louisiana Together Educating ALL Children
7240 Crowder Blvd, Suite 200
New Orleans, LA 70127
504-943-0343
1-877-243-7352





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

FREE—FREE—FREE