



Families Helping Families

Region 7

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



Come Play

What you should know about my kid with special needs

This is my little boy, Max. He's 7. He loves chocolate ice cream, T-ball, splashing around in the pool, the movie *Cars*, pulling his little sister's hair. Also, chocolate ice cream. And Max has cerebral palsy. He had a stroke at birth. Crazy but true: Babies can have strokes. My husband and I were told that Max might never walk or talk, that he could be mentally retarded. Every single one of my nightmares became a real possibility.

Except...Max walks. He runs, too. He speaks. He's bright. He's funny. Yes, he has his challenges: He cannot talk fluidly, and he has trouble using his hands and chewing food. But he's doing really well. And he makes me happy, blissfully happy, every single day. Because he's so sunny, because he's a fighter, because he is an all-around phenomenal kid. That might not be what you'd think if, say, you were to spot us at the playground.

You might feel sorry for my child. I know Max may look a little pathetic when he drools or when he's struggling to pick up something and he can't. But, trust me, he is perfectly content with who he is – one very cheerful, life-loving child. Who will someday be quite the ladies' man, I know, but I'm not quite ready to worry about Max and dating. Maybe when he's 8.

You might think my child should be treated differently from other kids. Nope. Max likes it when you talk to him. He likes it when you joke around with him. He likes it when you fart (although I'm not expecting you to do that).

You might think your kid and my kid don't have much in common. It's true, Max might not be able to do some things other 7-year-olds do, or do them in the same way. But like your kid, he loves to pretend, laugh, get silly, roll in the dirt, get covered in dirt, track dirt all over the house. You get the picture.

You might feel embarrassed if your child says something "inappropriate." Like "Mommy, why is that boy drooling?" Don't worry, I won't be offended; kids are curious. I understand that. Just as long as your child doesn't ask, "Mommy, do you think that boy's mommy could use a little liposuction?"

You might think it's rude to pull your child aside and explain that my child has special needs. Actually, I'd appreciate it if you did do that. Sometimes, kids don't know what to make of Max or how to play with him. I can certainly jump in and explain things to your child, but it'll be much more reassuring and encouraging coming from you. Say it however you wish – "This is a child who can't talk like you do but who likes to play just like you do; you may just need to have a little more patience with him" – but please say it.

My child will feel included. Everyone will have fun. What could be bad?

**Reprinted from the September 2010 issue of Good Housekeeping magazine. Ellen Seidman has a blog that you can read as well: www.lovethatmax.com*

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

Bullying Among Children and Youth with Disabilities and Special Needs

Source: Stop Bullying Now! U.S. Department of Health and Human Services HRSA

What is bullying?

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional and that involves an imbalance of power or strength. Often, it is repeated over time. Bullying can take many forms, such as hitting, kicking, or shoving (physical bullying), teasing or name-calling (verbal bullying), intimidation through gestures or social exclusion (nonverbal bullying or emotional bullying), and sending insulting messages by text messaging or e-mail (cyberbullying).

What is known about bullying among children with disabilities and special needs?

There is a small but growing amount of research literature on bullying among children with disabilities and special needs. This research indicates that these children may be at particular risk of being bullied by their peers. For example, research tells us that:

- Although little research has been conducted on the relation between learning disabilities (LD) and bullying, available information indicates that children with LD are at greater risk of being teased and physically bullied (Martlew & Hodson, 1991; Mishna, 2003; Nabuzoka & Smith, 1993; Thompson, Whitney, & Smith, 1994).
- Children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are more likely than other children to be bullied. They also are somewhat more likely than others to bully their peers (Unnever & Cornell, 2003).
- Children with medical conditions that affect their appearance (e.g., cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, and spina bifida) are more likely to be victimized by peers. Frequently, these children being called names related to their disability (Dawkins, 1996).
- Obesity also may place children at higher risk of being bullied. In a study of children aged 11–16 researchers found that overweight and obese girls (aged 11–16) and boys (aged 11–12) were more likely than normal-weight peers to be teased or to be made fun of and to experience relational bullying (e.g., to be socially excluded). Overweight and obese girls were also more likely to be physically bullied (Janssen, Craig, Boyce, & Pickett, 2004).
- Children with hemiplegia (paralysis of one side of their body) are more likely than other children their age to be victimized by peers, to be rated as less popular than their peers, and to have fewer friends than other children (Yude, Goodman, & McConachie, 1998).
- Children who have diabetes and who are dependent on insulin may be especially vulnerable to peer bullying (Storch et al., 2004).
- Children who stutter may be more likely than their peers to be bullied. In one study, 83 percent of adults who had problems with stammering as children said that they had been teased or bullied.

How does bullying affect children?

Bullying can have serious consequences. Children and youth who are bullied are more likely than other children to:

- Be depressed, lonely, anxious;
- Have low self-esteem;
- Experience headaches, stomachaches, fatigue, poor appetites;
- Be absent from school and dislike school; and
- Think about suicide.

Can bullying of my child be illegal?

Yes. Bullying behavior may cross the line to become "disability harassment," which is illegal under Section 504 of the Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. According to the U.S. Department of Education, disability harassment is "intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on disability that creates a hostile environment by interfering with or denying a student's participation in or receipt of benefits, services, or opportunities in the institution's program" (U.S. Department of Education, 2000).

This behavior can take different forms including verbal harassment, physical threats, or threatening written statements. When a school finds out that harassment may have occurred, staff must investigate the incident(s) promptly and respond appropriately.

Disability harassment can occur in any location that is connected with school: in classrooms, in the cafeteria, in hallways, on the playground or athletic fields, or on a school bus. It also can occur during school-sponsored events (Education Law Center, 2002).

What can I do if I think my child is being bullied or is the victim of disability harassment?

- Be supportive of your child and encourage him or her to describe who was involved and



how and where the bullying or harassment happened. Be sure to tell your child that it is not his or her fault and that nobody deserves to be bullied or harassed. Do not encourage your child to fight back. This may make the problem much worse. People who know . . . helping families with disabilities Page 5 of 12.

- Usually children are able to identify when they are being bullied by their peers. Sometimes, however, children with disabilities do not realize they are being targeted. (They may, for example, believe that they have a new friend, when in fact, this "friend" is making fun of them.) Ask your child specific questions about his or her friendships and be alert to possible signs of bullying—even if your child doesn't label the behaviors as bullying.
- Talk with your child's teacher immediately to see whether he or she can help to resolve the problem quickly.
- If the bullying or harassment is severe, or if the teacher doesn't fix the problem quickly, contact the principal and put your concerns in writing. Explain what happened in detail and ask for a prompt response. Keep a written record of all conversations and communications with the school. Ask the school district to convene a meeting of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team or the Section 504 team, a group convened to ensure that the school district is meeting the needs of its students with disabilities. This meeting will allow you to explain what has been happening and will let the team review your child's IEP or 504 plan and make sure that the school is taking steps to stop the harassment. If your child needs counseling or other supportive services because of the harassment, discuss this with the team.
- As the U.S. Department of Education (2000) recognizes, "creating a supportive school climate is the most important step in preventing harassment." Work with the school to help establish a system-wide bullying prevention program that includes support systems for bullied children.
- Sometimes children and youth who are bullied also bully others. Explore whether your child may also be bullying other younger, weaker students at school. If so, his or her IEP may need to be modified to include help to change the aggressive behavior.
- Be persistent. Talk regularly with your child and with school staff to see whether the behavior has stopped.

What if the bullying or harassment does not stop?

If your school district does not take reasonable, appropriate steps to end the bullying or harassment of your child, the district may be violating federal, state, and local laws. For more information about your legal rights, you may want to contact:

- The U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights Phone: (800)-421-3481; or <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>
- The U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs Phone: (202) 245-7468; or <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index.html>

**Reprinted from: http://www.education.com/reference/article/Ref_Bullying_Among/*

Transition Planning: Setting Lifelong Goals

By Jennifer Graham and Peter Wright, Esq.

As we enter the second half of the school year, many parents hear the clock ticking louder and louder as graduation nears.

We hope you have been working closely with your child's IEP team through high school to ensure that appropriate transition goals have been established and your child's progress toward these goals has been measured and documented.

IDEA 2004 requires Transition Services to be "results-oriented" to "facilitate the child's movement from school to post school activities . . ." [1] The law requires that the IEP Transition Services be in place by (before) the child's 16th birthday.[2]

In this article, we provide you with two checklists and some advice to help your child make a successful transition from school to employment or further education.

IDEA 2004 Transition Checklist

IDEA 2004 describes the required components of the transition plan. During your child's high school years, it is essential that the IEP team adhere to these requirements.

- The student must be invited to participate in IEP meetings to discuss his/her goals for life after high school.
- You may request several IEP/Transition Planning meetings during the school year.
- You may invite representatives of local agencies to these IEP meetings to discuss transition goals and services to support those goals.
- The IEP, including the transition plan, should be based on person-centered planning, and reflect the student's interests and skills.
 - The work experiences or "community based work assessments" (CBWAs) chosen should be based on the student's interests and abilities. Students should NOT be placed in a community based work assessment simply because it is available.
 - Any placement should help the student develop skills in a setting that is of personal interest to him/ her and where his/her unique abilities can be successfully utilized and improved with job coaching.
- Annual transition goals in the IEP should lead to successful post- high school outcomes.
- Progress should be documented and measurable.
 - Ask for progress reports about your child's community based work experience. Discuss with the IEP team how your child will meet the goal of being employed after graduation, without a lapse in supports and services.

- Maintain a portfolio and resume of your child's experiences, progress reports, and favorable reviews from your child's supervisors.

Transition Planning Checklist

While IDEA 2004 provides the legal requirements for transition services to support your child's goal of employment in the community or further education, there are several things that parents and students must do to prepare for life after high school.

- Confirm the date of your child's graduation. Federal law states that your child's eligibility for special education ends when s/he graduates from high school **with a regular diploma** or until the child reaches the age of eligibility for a free appropriate education under State law.
- Clarify whether your child will receive a regular high school diploma or a certificate of attendance.
 - Clarify that you child will be able to fully participate in the graduation ceremony.
 - Find out what local agencies provide job coaching for transitioning youth. Contacting adult provider agencies before your child graduates or "ages out" will help to ensure that your child will continue to receive services after graduation. This may also prevent your child from being placed on a long waiting list for adult services.
 - You are entitled to invite representatives from other agencies to your child's IEP meetings.
 - If the IEP Team, which includes the parents and the child, determine that your child's transition



needs can be met by participating in transition programs on college campuses or in community based settings, these services should be included in the child's IEP.[3]

- If appropriate, invite the child's supports coordinator from your local Office of Mental Retardation to IEP meetings during the last year of high school. This person can help to coordinate post-high school support services.
- If your child will be eligible for services through Vocational Rehabilitation, schedule an appointment for an intake interview and file the necessary paperwork with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation ahead of time. Request that a Vocational Rehabilitation counselor attend the IEP meeting no later than spring of the your child's last year in high school.
- Discuss your child's transportation needs. If s/he will need assistance getting to and from work, request and fill out applications for public transportation services.
- Request information about social/recreational opportunities for young adults with disabilities in your community. Ask for their contact information.
- Request information about post-high school training programs at local vocational schools, community colleges, business schools, and state-affiliated training schools.

When your child graduates from high school, you and your graduate should celebrate accomplishments -- and the transition to adulthood.

**For more information on transition, please contact Minnie Jenkins, Transition Facilitator at Families Helping Families Region 7. Call her at 318-226-4541/877-226-4541 or email her at mjenkins@fhfregion7.com.*

Asperger's and Dating

For teens with Asperger's, dating can be too complicated to comprehend. Some teens with Asperger's may choose not to date at all, while others may put little thought into it at all, dating without rhyme or reason. It helps if you can prepare your teen for the dating world beforehand.

There are several common problems for teens with Asperger's. Dating requires social skills, emotional attachment, interruption of routine, flexible thinking, and can often assault the sensory systems. Advising your child on dating should include ways to handle these disruptions that will go against personal make-up.

Adaption to your child's weakness and special attention to his strengths can help them overcome the unique Asperger's dating issues. For example, your child will need to practice flexible thinking. Dating can mean changing plans and disagreements on activities. Your child should be prepared for those times when they have to negotiate. Here are a few other examples:

- Practice basic social skills. Once they have gotten someone's attention, they will need to be able to notice non-verbal communication, cues and gestures, personal space, etc.
- Practice emotion identification. Dating and relationships are highly emotional. They should be able to identify the emotions in a given situation and respond accordingly.
- Practice self-control. Dating is disruptive to the normal routine and orderly life. They should be able to accept change without it affecting his well-being.
- Be aware of sensory weakness. They should be mindful of atmosphere and physical touch when dating.

Be factual when talking about Asperger's and dating. You should supply your child with detailed information on acceptable age appropriate behavior. Make your child aware of the negatives like rejection and abuse. Discuss the benefits of dating someone who is like-minded when it comes to personal interests and personal beliefs.

Find resources that can guide you during this time. "The Guide to Dating for Teenagers with Asperger Syndrome" by Jennifer Uhlenkamp is a question and answer-style book on the challenges of dating and relationships.

Do not hesitate to enlist outside assistance if needed while managing the Asperger's dating issues. Social skills classes, cognitive-behavioral therapy, and psychological counseling are usually available to those with Asperger's Syndrome and can be a great help.

**Republished for www.parentingaspergerscommunity.com*





Medicaid Changes that do not apply to Individuals with Disabilities

By Karen Scallan

By now we've heard changes are coming to Medicaid. That's a given. But what they are and how they will affect individuals with disabilities could be confusing for some.

Louisiana is instituting managed care for Medicaid eligible patients in Louisiana, managed care, sometimes called coordinated care networks, are groups of a wide variety of providers that basically work together. You will choose the group you want to participate in.

But these changes will NOT APPLY to individuals with Medicaid waiver services. This includes children and adults who are receiving services through the NOW, ROW, Supports and Children's Choice Waivers. Individuals with Medicaid waivers for developmental disability services will continue to receive benefits for their medical care just as they had before. For example, a family of 3 children with Medicaid and one of the children has the Children's Choice Medicaid waiver will only enroll their other 2 children in a coordinated care network.

School services that are typically used by children with disabilities will not be included in the coordinated care networks either. If a child on Medicaid receives speech, occupational therapy or physical therapy from school and the school district bills Medicaid for those services, the school will not bill the managed care group the child is enrolled in. Instead they will continue to bill the state as they always have. Families should remember though that if the child receives speech, occupational therapy or physical therapy in the community and they are not a Medicaid Waiver recipient (ex. Children's Choice), those services will now go through the managed care organization that they are enrolled in.

How will the state notify families of these changes? The state's managed care for Medicaid will be called "Bayou Health." Bayou Health will institute the changes in phases across the state, starting with the Greater New Orleans Metropolitan and surrounding areas. First, individuals enrolled in the state's current Medicaid program will receive a brochure. Then, a few weeks later, they will receive a large packet in the mail to review, complete and return. There will be meetings in the community and a phone number you can call for assistance in determining what plan is best for you.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT ANYONE ENROLLING IN PLAN WITH BAYOU HEALTH RETURN THEIR CHOICE APPLICATIONS BY THE DEADLINE INDICATED ON THEIR LETTER.

If you are unable to return the form by the deadline, the state will choose a program that best matches your previous medical history of use of doctors and other providers. Once that happens, if you do not agree with the choice that was made for you, you will have a brief window in which to change plans. Once that window is expired, you will have to stay with that plan and the doctors on the plan for the rest of the year.

We will be sending out more information on the changes to Medicaid through your local Families Helping Families offices, newsgroup posts and via email and our website.

**In the meantime, if you have questions, please feel free to contact the Louisiana Family to Family Health Information Center at 1-800-331-5570.*



Changes Proposed to Flexible Family Fund (Formerly the Cash Subsidy Program)

The Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) plans to move forward with changes to the Flexible Family Fund (previously known as the Cash Subsidy Program) unless an outcry from parents and others is enough to convince DHH Secretary Bruce Greenstein to withdraw the plan. The twenty-year-old popular program has provided a small stipend (\$258 per month) to families of children with the most significant developmental disabilities who face extraordinary costs in caring for their child at home. The original intent of the program was to keep administrative expenses low and assist families based solely on their child's disability, regardless of income or other services received.

The proposed changes would take effect July 1, 2012 and would restrict this program to families with an annual net income of \$67,050 or less. (Families with households larger than four must not exceed an annual income of 300% of the federal poverty level.) **And children will not be able to receive any waiver services (Children's Choice or NOW) and the Flexible Family Fund.** These changes would apply to children currently receiving the funds and to new children applying.

The DD Council does not support these changes. On the surface, DHH's proposal seems to designate these resources to the most needy families; however, families with children with the most significant disabilities face obstacles that would call into question using annual income to make the determination of need. There are far too many other factors that play into the equation and the administrative cost needed to arrive at the true picture of a family's need is not worth taking those funds out of the program. One factor is the likelihood of changes in a family's financial situation due to decisions regarding employment – which occurs at a high rate among the parents of these children. When this program was first created, it was designed on the premise that families of children with the MOST severe disabilities have extraordinary expenses, above those of other children with disabilities, and therefore income was not and should not be used to determine eligibility for the subsidy. Receipt of other services, regardless of their nature, also was not and should not be a determining factor.

LaCAN members are contacting Secretary Greenstein to let him know they oppose these changes.

**Reprinted from LaDDC News December 14, 2011*



Employment First Initiative

People with disabilities are standing up and demanding systems changes that allow for greater opportunities for economic self-sufficiency, with employment being the key to making that happen. OCDD is responding by launching an Employment First Initiative, effective **July 1, 2011**. Louisiana is one of 23 states participating in the State Employment Leadership Network (SELN), a joint initiative of the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services.

OCDD is partnering with such agencies as LA Workforce Commission, LA Rehabilitation Services, Medicaid, Office of Behavioral Health, Department of Education, The Developmental Disabilities Council, the Advocacy Center, LSU Human Development Center and LA Economic Development, to name a few. These agencies are part of a larger consortium known as Work Pays, a group of agencies, consumers and businesses collaborating and working to improve the lives of people with disabilities through promoting employment for all people with disabilities.

The OCDD official position statement on Employment First:

Employment will be the primary outcome for all persons receiving OCDD services who are of working age. Employment is characterized by typical jobs with competitive compensation that are fully integrated into the workplace. A more thorough implementation statement with further detailed definitions, desired outcomes and operational procedures will be released as they are finalized.

**For more information or if you have any questions about Employment First, please contact Mary Russell, OCDD Family Facilitator at Families Helping Families Region 7. Call her at 318-226-4541/877-226-4541 or email her at mrussell@fhfregion7.com.*



Play is crucial to a child's development. When children are engaged and having fun, they are learning.

Play benefits physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development. Simple play with a child can help physical development such as hand/eye coordination, dexterity, and brain development. Social development including self-awareness and communication skills can benefit from play. Play can also enhance emotional development by increasing coping skills and promoting confidence in children. Problem solving, organization, sequencing, and decision making are all skills that children learn through play and are a part of a child's cognitive development.

Parents of children with special needs are often challenged when trying to buy toys for their children. There are many resources available to help parents find and choose the right toys for their child with special needs.

Toys 'R Us is one resource. Each year Toys 'R Us publishes a toy guide for "differently-abled Kids". This guide allows you to shop by skill or age and gives tips on toy buying and safe play.

www.toysrus.com/shop/index.jsp?categoryId=3261680

For more information on how your child learns through play and what you can do, go to:

www.zerotothree.org/play

**For more information or additional resources contact Monica Stamply, EarlySteps Community Outreach Specialist. 318-226-4541/877-226-4541 or monica.stamply@la.gov*

From your LaCAN Leader Region 7



Hi LaCAN Members I hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We will be looking forward to an active Legislative Session beginning March 12th, 2012. I will again ask you to do the Action Alerts as soon as they come to your email inbox. The more the Legislators, DHH, OCDD and other policy makers hear from you the more likely they will be to support our concerns. Also if you wish to visit with your Legislator about a OCDD issue let me know so I can schedule a meeting. We have two new Senators in Region 7, Senator Greg Tarver Senate Seat 39 and Senator Barrow Peacock, Senate Seat 37.

We also have four new House members in Region 7, Rep. Jeff Thompson, District 8, Rep. Gene Reynolds, District 10, Rep. Patrick Jefferson, District 11, and Rep. Kenny Cox, District 23.

I have planned our annual Legislative Roundtable for Thursday, January 26th, 2012 at Christ United Methodist Church, 1204 Crabapple Dr., Shreveport, LA 71118 from 9:30am-1:30pm. If you would like to attend please RSVP to me as soon as possible.

Just a reminder of our Mission below:

Advocating for individualized community supports for Louisiana's citizens who experience developmental disabilities

LaCAN 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. Specifically, they have advocated for implementation of Louisiana's Community and Family Support System Plan.

Regional LaCAN teams include parents, family members, and individuals with disabilities. These members are notified by email or phone when communication with state agency officials, legislators or the Governor is necessary.

LaCAN provides information and support to individuals wishing to effectively advocate for the expansion and improvement of community and family support services for people with disabilities and their families through email updates, regional workshops, regional team leaders, and personal contact.

Please don't hesitate to contact me Duane Ebarb at 318-688-4830/318-226-4541 or email me at dke1949@bellsouth.net if you have an issue you need help with.

Seven Nights with No Dishes Winner!



"1st Annual Seven Nights with No Dishes", a fundraiser for Families Helping Families Region 7 was a great success. The winner, Ms. Angela Davis, won Seven Nights of eating out at: **Wing Taxi, MJ's Soul Food Café, Red Lobster, 2-El Dorado Sportsmen's Café, and 2-El Dorado Buffet.** Thanks are certainly due to the wonderful community eateries who so generously donated the prize meals. We always

recognize and appreciate their generous giving spirit. The programs of Families Helping Families Region 7 will be better served with their help and the help of those who bought tickets. Thank you all and we wish you luck next year!

WHAT IS HWF?

Hanging with Friends aka HWF is Families Helping Families Region 7 support group for self-advocates over the age of 18 or out of the school system. Hanging with Friends was birthed out of the idea that all people should have friends as well as being active and included in their community. We get together one a month to have fun, meet new people, and participate in community activities. Some activities include bowling night, movie night, sweetheart dance, community festivals, and holiday celebration plus much more. As a group we are serious about self-advocacy issues, but we also want to make you laugh and feel good about life.

Join us to celebrate the strengths of self-advocates. Most of all, let's work together to help people live the life they want with the support they need. All HWF activities can be found on our website at www.fhfregion7.com or you can contact Minnie Jenkins or Mary Russell at 318-226-4541/877-226-4541 for additional information.



A Note from the Director

Families Helping Families Region 7 in collaboration with SPAR Therapeutic and Recreation would like to say "Thank You" to all of those who attended our Christmas Dinner and Dance on December 09, 2011. A special "Thanks" goes out to the following listed below for their donations and time. Because of their kind hearts and giving spirit our Christmas Dinner and Dance was once again a SUCCESS and we were able to provide over 160 participants with gifts, food, and door prizes.

Accomplished Learning Services

Larry Allen
Richard Allen
Farrah Comeau
Custom Cakes
Custom Shots Photography
Jewel Davis
DJ Drew
El Dorado Casino and Hotel
Families Helping Families Region 7 Staff

Families Helping Families Region 7 Board

Ivan Smith Furniture – Jewella Ave
Ivan Smith Furniture – Mansfield, La
Ivey Lumber – Mansfield, La
Mansfield Drugs – Mansfield, La
MJ's Soul Food Café
National Total Care Services, LLC.
Smith Jewelry/Radio Shack – Mansfield, La
Wal-Mart Super Center – Mansfield Rd.



“It’s Who We Are..It’s What We Do!”



For more information about Families Helping Families Region 7 and a listing of upcoming events, workshops, conferences, and support groups please visit our website at www.fhfregion7.com.

Stipend Money Available!

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

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

To apply, you may call 318-226-4541/877-226-4541 or email: info@fhfregion7.com.

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

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

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



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Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council's Mission

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

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

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

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

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