



hello,
Winter



Does Your Child Have
Special Health Care Needs?

Do you care for
someone with a disability?

Need help with the
school system?

We're here to help!

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

*Talk with someone
who gets it...*

Families Helping Families
of Acadiana

100 Benman Road
Lafayette, LA 70506

Toll Free: (855) 984-3458

Fax: (337) 984-3468

www.fhfacadiana.org



PARISHES WE SERVE

Acadia - Evangeline - Iberia - Lafayette - St. Landry - St. Martin - Vermilion

Throughout history, families have been turning to other families that have dealt with similar struggles and it is within our nature to do so. Families Helping Families has been developed to aid families in the search for the support, information, and resources that can help them.

A very powerful bond and commitment exists between families who share like circumstances and travel a similar path.

An informed, educated, and supported family raises a strong, nourished, and capable child with a bright and successful future.

We believe access to this kind of support and resources should be available to everyone who needs it and Families Helping Families is here to help.

[Website](#)

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday
8:00 am - 4:00 pm
Friday
8:00 am - 12:00 pm

Contact Information

100 Benman Road
Lafayette, La. 70506
Phone: 337-984-3458
Fax: 337-984-3468
Email:
info@fhfacadiana.org



Merry Christmas

WORDS FROM THE DIRECTOR

It's hard to believe that we are heading to the close of 2023.

As the weather grows colder and the holidays grow closer, we are excited to bring you the latest edition of our newsletter, highlighting the spirit of inclusivity and warmth that defines our community.

In this season of togetherness, we celebrate the unique strengths and perspectives that each member brings to Families Helping Families of Acadiana.

We end 2023 with a wealth of great memories of what we have accomplished this year.

We are entering 2024 with an array of planned workshops, presentations, and outreach activities to enhance and support the individuals, families, and professionals we serve in Region 4.

All of us at Families Helping Families of Acadiana are blessed to have such a great community, and we look forward to seeing even more of you as we get ready to step into the new year.

Happy Holidays!



Nicole Flores
Executive Director

2024 CALENDAR OF DISABILITY-RELATED DATES

January

World Braille Day
Moebius Syndrome Awareness Day
Kawasaki Disease Awareness Day
CTE Awareness Day

February

Low Vision Awareness Month

Turner Syndrome Awareness Month
International Angelman Day
Anosmia Awareness Day
Rare Disease Day

March

Cerebral Palsy Awareness Month
National Developmental Disabilities Month
Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Awareness Month
Brain Injury Awareness Month
Trisomy Awareness Month
International Wheelchair Day
Dissociative Identity Disorder Awareness Day
World Down Syndrome Day
Purple Day for Epilepsy
World Bipolar Day

April

Autism Awareness Month
Parkinson's Awareness Month
National Deaf History Month
World Autism Awareness Day
Parkinson's Disease International Awareness Day
National American Sign Language (ASL) Day
ALS Awareness Month

May

Better Hearing and Speech Month
Borderline Personality Disorder Awareness Month
Health Vision Awareness Month
Mental Health Month
Ehlers-Danlos Awareness Month
Prader Willi Syndrome Awareness Month
Williams Syndrome Awareness Month
Apraxia Awareness Day
World Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Awareness Day
Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month
Aphasia Awareness Month

June

Dravet Syndrome Awareness Month
Tourette Syndrome Awareness Day
CDKL5 Awareness Day
Dravet Syndrome Awareness Day
National Cleft and Craniofacial Awareness and Prevention Month

July

National Fragile X Syndrome Awareness Month
Disability Pride Month
World Fragile X Syndrome Awareness Day
American Disability Act (ADA) Day

September

Deaf Awareness Month
Muscular Dystrophy Awareness Month
National Service Dog Month
Sickle Cell Awareness Month
Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month
Hydrocephalus Awareness Month
Chiari Malformation Awareness Month
Craniofacial Acceptance Month
Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI) Awareness Month
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Syndrome Awareness Month
Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy Awareness - World Duchenne Awareness Day
International Day of Sign Languages

October

Dyslexia Awareness Month
Down Syndrome Awareness Month
Dwarfism Awareness Month
Learning Disabilities Awareness Month
National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)
Spina Bifida Awareness Month
ADHD Awareness Month
Dysautonomia Awareness
Rett Syndrome Awareness Month
Mental Health Awareness Week
World Cerebral Palsy Day
World Mental Health Day
World Blind Day / World Sight Day
White Cane Awareness Day
Invisible Disabilities Week
World Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Day

November

Diabetes Awareness Month
Epilepsy Awareness Month
22q Awareness Month
World Diabetes Day
World Ohtahara Syndrome Awareness Day

December

International Day of People with Disabilities



UPCOMING EVENTS!

JANUARY 2024



Special Education Dispute Resolution Options

January 8, 2024

1:00 pm.

[Register](#)

EARLY STEPS FAMILY ORIENTATION

January 19, 2024

10:00 am.

[Register](#)

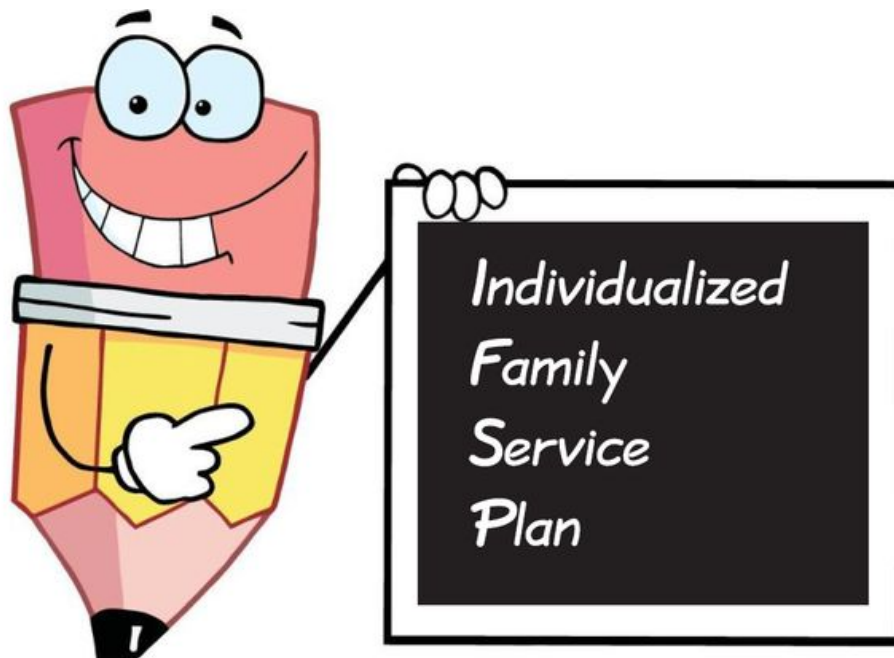


Louisiana's Bullying Law

January 22, 2024

12:00 pm.

[Register](#)



Make The Most Of Your Individual Family Service Plan: IFSP 101

January 24, 2024

11:00 am.

[Register](#)



Act 378

**Community and Family Supports: The Origin of Waivers,
Families Helping Families, and Grassroots Advocacy**

January 30, 2024

11:00 am.

[Register](#)

FEBRUARY 2024



Anti-Discrimination Laws & Students with Disabilities
February 1, 2024
10:00 am.

[Register](#)



Top Tips for an Effective IEP

February 5, 2024
12:00 pm.

[Register](#)

EARLY STEPS FAMILY ORIENTATION

February 16, 2024
10:00 am.

[Register](#)

What is Early Steps? Knowledge is power!



February 14, 2024

11:00 am.

[Register](#)



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Special Education FAQ 1.0

February 19, 2024

1:00 pm.

[Register](#)

MARCH 2024



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Special Education FAQ 2.0

March 4, 2024

1:00 pm.

[Register](#)



EarlySteps: Transitioning from Part C to Part B

March 6, 2024

11:00 am.

[Register](#)

**EARLY STEPS
FAMILY
ORIENTATION**

March 8, 2024

10:00 am.

[Register](#)



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Special Education FAQ 3.0

March 18, 2024

1:00 pm.

[Register](#)

REQUEST A *Training*



If there is a topic that you would like to know more about, please email us with your requests.

[Submit Requests](#)



[Join LaCAN](#)

LaCAN (Louisiana Council's Advocacy Network) furthers the Council's mission by advocating for policies and systems that support inclusion everywhere people learn, work, live, and play.

LaCAN advocates for service systems that support children and adults with disabilities to live in their own homes and be fully-included and participating members of their local schools and communities.

LaCAN provides information and support to individuals wishing to effectively advocate for systems change in the areas of home and community-based services,

education, and employment.

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

Guiding Principles

- Children, regardless of the severity of their disability, need families and enduring relationships with adults in a nurturing home environment to develop to their fullest potential.
- Adults with developmental disabilities should be afforded the opportunity to make decisions for themselves, live in typical homes and communities, and exercise their full rights and responsibilities as citizens.
- People with developmental disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability, should have the opportunity and support needed to gain and maintain competitive, integrated, individualized employment.
- All students, with or without disabilities, should be provided the same opportunities to be educated in neighborhood schools as their sisters, brothers, friends, and neighbors.
- All students, with or without disabilities, should be provided with the support to learn together effectively, involving family, school, and community.

Benefits to Membership

You can help improve the systems that serve individuals with developmental disabilities by joining the LaCAN and participating in its advocacy efforts.

There are no dues or fees to join and your activity level is up to you.

Here are just a few of the benefits to joining LaCAN:

- CONNECTION – become a part of a regional team of advocates
- INFORMATION – receive current information on proposed policy changes and how those changes may affect you and others
- TRAINING – learn skills to effectively advocate for systems change
- SUPPORT – receive assistance from a regional LaCAN Leader who will link you with your policymakers and support your advocacy efforts
-

Linking lawmakers, individuals with disabilities, and family members to make positive change in systems serving people with disabilities.

Region 4 Legislative Roundtable TBD- mid-late February 2024

Legislative session begins March 11th!

LaDDC & LaCAN Legislative Agenda:

- Funding for Families Helping Families Regional Resource Centers
- Increase Waiver Rate for Night Services
- Eliminate Flexible Family Fund Waitlist

If you are interested in sharing you or your family's story/testimony of how these issues affects you please contact your LaCAN Team Leader, Kristie Curtis.

THANK YOU!

thank you!



CREOLE SAUCE BOSS





**Our staff would like to thank
Fuselier Foods - The Creole Sauce Boss
for catering this years Christmas Extravaganza.
Very much appreciated and as always, delicious.**

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**

January

Annette Fruge'

February

AnnMarie Bihm

March

Harlon Cowsar, II



Thank you for your hard work and dedication.

Month of January

**Kristie Curtis
AnnMarie Bihm
Lillian DeJean**

Month of February

Brenda Bares

Month of March

Todd Fontenot

OFFICE CLOSURES



CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAYS

December 18, 2023 - January 2, 2024

PARENT SUPPORT



NEED SOMEONE TO TALK TO?

Every family is different, that is why we offer one-on-one individualized parent support.

**These sessions can be held in person, phone or virtually.
Families Helping Families of Acadiana provides a
comfortable, nonjudgmental and confidential environment
that will allow you to be at ease when confiding with us.**

WE'RE HERE TO LISTEN!

Please call our office to schedule an appointment.

Call Us!



GROUP

**We provide a holistic, all inclusive support group setting
for our families. Multiple topics are discussed and
everyone feels a sense of belonging.
All are welcome.**

Please continue to check our website and/or all our social media
platforms for scheduled dates.

Visit our Website



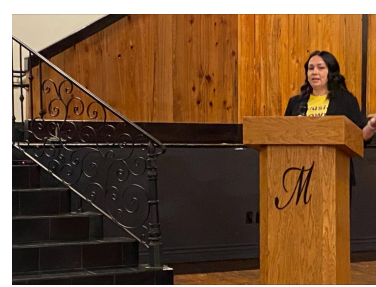
If you are interested in finding out more information about Families Helping Families of Acadiana and the services we provide, please call our office and we will be more than happy to schedule an in person/virtual meeting or call with you!

We are striving to educate EVERYONE in the community about the services we offer, as well as express the importance of inclusion and empowering individuals with disabilities.

IN THE COMMUNITY

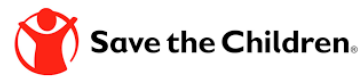








COMMUNITY PARTNERS



PROGRAMS THAT ARE SUPPORTED THROUGH OUR CENTER



LaDDC



PARENTtoPARENT
USA



F2FHIC

SEASON'S GREETINGS



Meet Our Team

LEARN ABOUT OUR STAFF



Nicole Flores

Executive Director



Annette Fruge'

Director of Family and Community Support
Information & Referral Specialist
Community Resource Specialist
Peer Support Specialist



Todd Fontenot

Financial Manager
Information & Referral Specialist



Nicole Dejean

Special Projects



Kristie Curtis

EarlySteps COS
LaCAN Leader



Danielle Ledet

Education Liaison
Information & Referral Specialist



Brenda Bares

Education Liaison



Susie Dupont

Accounts Manager



Lillian DeJean

Louisiana Youth Leadership
Forum Coordinator



Harlon Cowsar, II

Adult Program Coordinator
Referral Specialist



AnnMarie Bihm

Outreach Prep Specialist
Education Liaison Aide



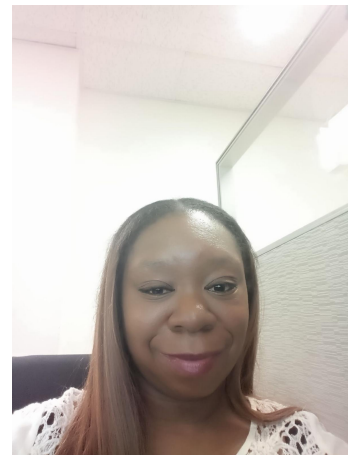
MEET OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Terrell Bergeron
Chair



Kisha Levy
Vice-Chair



Jessica Leday
Secretary



Rebecca Fruge'
Treasurer



Micah Moscovis
Member



Angie LaBorde
Member



Trina Stelly
Member



Alvada Willis
Member



**Cherelly L.
Williams**
Member

*Photo
Coming
Soon!*

Ashley LaBorde
Member

MAKE A DIFFERENCE



The Families Helping Families Network



Please see below to find the FHF Center located in your area of the state.

The Families Helping Families Networks are individual, non-profit, family-driven resource centers.

They are a group of families, who, through their own experiences, promote advocacy and are committed to reaching other families who have members with disabilities.

The term "disability" includes physical, mental, emotional, behavioral, and/or academic needs.

The FHF Centers are directed and staffed by parents, self-advocates, or family members of individuals with disabilities. The Centers provide education and trainings, peer support, and information and referrals as part of their free services.

**Families Helping Families of
Southeast Louisiana, Inc.**
**Region 1 - serving Orleans,
Plaquemines, St. Bernard**
**2401 Westbend Parkway, Suite
3090**
New Orleans, LA 70114
504-943-0343 or 1-877-243-7352
504-940-3242 Fax
www.fhfsela.org

**Bayou Land Families Helping
Families, Inc.**
**Region 3 - serving Assumption,
Lafourche, St. Charles, St. James,
St. John, St. Mary, Terrebonne**
286 Highway 3185
Thibodaux, LA 70301
985-447-4461 or 1-800-331-5570
985-447-7988 Fax
www.blfhf.org

**Families Helping Families of
Southwest Louisiana, Inc.**
**Region 5 - serving Allen,
Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron,
and Jefferson Davis**
324 West Hale Street
Lake Charles, LA 70601
337-436-2570 or 1-800-894-6558
337-436-2578 Fax
www.fhfswla.org

**Families Helping Families Region
7**
**Region 7 - serving Bienville,
Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, Desoto,
Lincoln, Red River, Natchitoches,
Sabine, and Webster**
215 Bobbie St., Ste. 100
Bossier City, LA 71112
318-226-4541 or 1-877-226-4541
318-742-7260 Fax
www.fhfregion7.com

**Northshore Families Helping
Families, Inc.**

**Families Helping Families of
Greater Baton Rouge, Inc.**
**Region 2 - serving East and West
Baton Rouge, East and West
Feliciana, Iberville, Pointe Coupee,
and Ascension**
2356 Drusilla Lane
Baton Rouge, LA 70809
225-216-7474 or 1-866-216-7474
225-216-7977 Fax
www.fhfgbr.org

**Families Helping Families of
Acadiana, Inc.**
**Region 4 - serving Acadia,
Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St.
Landry, St. Martin, and Vermilion**
100 Benman Road
Lafayette, LA 70506
337-984-3458 or 1-855-984-3458
337-984-3468 Fax
www.fhfacadiana.org

**Families Helping Families at the
Crossroads of La., Inc.**
**Region 6 - serving Avoyelles,
Concordia, Catahoula, Grant,
LaSalle, Rapides, Vernon and
Winn**
2840 Military Hwy., Suite A
Pineville, LA 71360
318-641-7373 or 1-800-259-7200
318-640-4299 Fax
www.familieshelpingfamilies.net

**Families Helping Families of
Northeast Louisiana, Inc.**
**Region 8 - serving parishes of
Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin,
Jackson, Lincoln, Madison,
Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland,
Tensas, Union, and West Carroll**
5200 Northeast Road
Monroe, LA 71203
318-361-0487 or 1-888-300-1320
318-361-0417 Fax
www.fhfnela.org

**Families Helping Families of
Greater New Orleans (FHF of**

**Region 9 - serving Livingston, St.
Helena, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa,
Washington
108 Highland Park Plaza
Covington, LA 70433
985-875-0511 or 1-800-383-8700
985-875-9979 Fax
www.fhfnorthshore.org**

**GNO)
Region 10 - serving Jefferson
Parish and the State of Louisiana
700 Hickory Ave
Harahan, LA 70123
504-888-9111 or 1-800-766-7736
504-353-2350 Fax
www.fhfofgno.org**



Families Helping Families of Acadiana | 100 Benman Road, Lafayette, LA 70506

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