







**(337) 984-3458**

**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](http://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](mailto:info@fhfacadiana.org)

Goodbye

SUMMER

hello

AUTUMN

WORDS FROM THE DIRECTOR

# Happy Fall Everyone!

All of us at Families Helping Families of Acadiana are excited to share information about our upcoming events and activities for the fall and winter season. We look forward to seeing you at events ranging from our traditional trainings, Treats at the Village, to our Christmas Extravaganza and more.

Our community makes up the “Families” in Families Helping Families of Acadiana, and we are glad to serve you in our mission to assist and strengthen individuals with disabilities and their families through a coordinated network of resources, services, and support.

All of us here either have a disability and/or a child or family member with a disability, so our mission is not just a statement – it’s who we are and what we do.

As always, thank you so much for allowing FHF of Acadiana to assist you and your families, and we look forward to seeing you at our next event!



**Nicole Flores**  
Executive Director

## 2024 CALENDAR OF DISABILITY-RELATED DATES

### 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



**October 2024 - December 2024**

# 2024 Caucus for Children Developing the next Louisiana State Plan for Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention!



## We invite you to attend the 2024 Caucus for Children!

Join us at a meeting in your area! Every voice is very important for our children's future. This plan will cover the next five years of strategic efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect across Louisiana. Please invite all of your parish and city leaders, educators, faith-based leaders, nonprofit and civic organizations, law enforcement, medical and legal professionals, social service groups and more! We want to have a full and robust response in each area to help determine a customized regional plan.

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR!



REGION 9: August 19 - Monroe Area  
REGION 8: August 20 - Ruston Area  
REGION 7: August 21 - Alexandria Area  
REGION 6: September 9 - Lake Charles Area  
REGION 5: September 10 - Lafayette Area  
REGION 2: September 11 - Baton Rouge Area  
REGION 4: September 17 - Thibodaux Area  
REGION 1: September 18 - Kenner Area  
REGION 3: September 19 - Covington Area  
Zoom 1: October 1 - North Louisiana  
Zoom 2: October 2 - South Louisiana

### AGENDA

9am Welcome & Introductions  
9:30am Networking Activity  
10am Regional Trends Discussion  
10:30am Solutions Discussion  
11am Prioritization of Solutions  
11:30am Wrap-up and Closing Comments



<https://bit.ly/2024LCTFCaucus>

ALSO - Complete our survey by using the QR code on the right. Share your opinions on trends, actions and potential activities that could help to prevent future challenges for children and families in Louisiana.



Register





# MORNING SUN FINANCIAL SERVICES

## SELF-DIRECTION WEBINAR

- Join us for a brief overview of Morning Sun's processes, difference between self-direction and traditional provider, discuss steps to enroll in self-direction and the responsibilities and roles of people in Self-Direction.

**October 9, 2024**

**6:00 p.m.**



**LACI POLOTZOLA**  
EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATOR OF  
PROGRAM OPERATIONS

[Register](#)

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# TREATS AT THE VILLAGE

A TRICK OR TREATING EXPERIENCE FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS & THEIR FRIENDS AND FAMILIES!

MONDAY OCTOBER 14, 2024  
5:00 PM - 8:00 PM  
AT LARC'S ACADIAN VILLAGE  
200 GREENLEAF DRIVE  
LAFAYETTE, LA 70506

ENTRANCE IS FREE!  
COME FOR CANDY, MUSIC, GAMES, & JAMBALAYA FROM TONY CHACHERE'S!

SPONSORED BY



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



**ACADIANA AREA  
HUMAN SERVICES DISTRICT**  
Serving Acadians with Quality Compassionate Care







# ANYTHING OVER RICE

*FHF Acadiana Fundraiser*

*Where?*

**Knights of The Columbus Hall  
387 Main Street, Arnaudville, LA 70512**

*When?*

**Saturday, October 19th, 2024**

*Time?*

**9 AM (set up) – 4 PM**



PayPal

\*Teams must bring all cooking equipment and supplies needed. Tables and chairs will be provided.

- ★ **1st, 2nd, & 3rd Place Prizes**
- ★ **People's Choice Awards**
- ★ **50/50 Raffle Every Hour**
- ★ **Music Entertainment**
- ★ **\$12 All-You-Can-Eat Wristband PLUS Voting Privileges for People's Choice Award**

**Team Registry – \$50**  
**Register your best dish served over rice by calling 337.984.3458**



# Early Steps

## Upcoming Webinar Trainings!



“What Is  
EarlySteps?”  
October 23rd  
12 pm

“Transition  
from  
EarlySteps”  
November 20th  
12 pm

“IFSP 101”  
December  
11th  
12 pm

Join us for a free informational webinar! Learn more about Early Steps: Louisiana's Part C Early Intervention System.



Contact: [kcurtis@fhfacadiana.org](mailto:kcurtis@fhfacadiana.org)  
(337) 984-3458



**What Is Early Steps?**  
**October 23, 2024**  
**12:00 pm.**

[Register](#)

**Early Steps Transition  
Webinar**  
**November 20, 2024**

**IFSP 101: Making the  
Most of Your Child's IFSP**  
**December 11, 2024**



12:00 pm.

Register

12:00 pm.

Register

LIVE WEBINAR

# EARLY STEPS FAMILY ORIENTATION

October  
25th  
11 AM

November  
22nd  
11 AM

December  
13th  
11 AM



*Gain knowledge of Louisiana's Part C program &  
Learn what to expect for your child and family!*

Contact: Kristie Curtis, COS Region 4  
kcurtis@fhfacadiana.org  
(337)984-3458



**Early Steps Family Orientation**  
**October 25, 2024**  
**11:00 am.**



Register

**Early Steps Family  
Orientation**  
**November 22, 2024**  
**11:00 am.**

Register

**Early Steps Family  
Orientation**  
**December 13, 2024**  
**11:00 am.**

Register



*You're invited to OCDD's roadshows:*

# COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

The Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) is hosting roadshows to talk about upcoming OCDD initiatives with waiver participants, families, providers, support coordinators, and all interested partners. Dates and times are subject to change, but OCDD will give out updated information. For questions, email [OCDDInfo@la.gov](mailto:OCDDInfo@la.gov).

<b>Tuesday, October 1</b> 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.	<b>West Monroe Convention Center</b> 901 Ridge Ave., West Monroe, 71291
<b>Wednesday, October 2</b> 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	<b>Shreve Memorial Library: Hamilton/South Caddo Branch</b> 2111 W. Bert Kouns Industrial Loop, Shreveport, 71118
<b>Monday, October 14</b> 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	<b>East Bank Regional Library</b> 4747 W. Napoleon Ave., Metairie, 70001
<b>Tuesday, October 22</b> 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.	<b>Terrebonne Parish Library: North Branch</b> 4130 W. Park Ave., Gray, 70359
<b>Thursday, October 24</b> 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	<b>Lake Charles Event Center: Jean Lafitte Room</b> 900 Lakeshore Dr., Lake Charles, 70602
<b>Tuesday, October 29</b> 10 a.m. - noon	<b>North Oaks Medical Center</b> 15837 Paul Vega MD Dr., Hammond, 70403
<b>Wednesday, November 6</b> 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.	<b>East Baton Rouge Library: Goodwood Branch</b> 7711 Goodwood Blvd., Baton Rouge, 70806
<b>Thursday, November 7</b> 10 a.m. - noon	<b>Lafayette Town Hall Auditorium</b> 220 W. Willow Street, Building C, Lafayette, 70501
<b>Tuesday, November 12</b> 10 a.m. - noon	<b>Main Street Community Center</b> 708 Main Street, Pineville, 71361
<b>Thursday, November 14</b> 9:30 a.m. - 11 a.m.	<b>Virtual: <a href="https://bit.ly/2024OCDDvirtualroadshow">bit.ly/2024OCDDvirtualroadshow</a></b> Must register in advance. OCDD will post a recording online after.



# TOGETHER WE CAN CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 6-8, 2024  
LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA



HIVE OF HOPE:  
CONNECTING,  
STRENGTHENING,  
SERVING...  
WELL-BEEING FOR  
POSITIVE CHANGE



ACADIANA AREA  
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
PRESENTS

# A CHRISTMAS EXTRAYAGANZA

ROBICHEAUX RECREATION CENTER  
1919 ERASTE LANDRY ROAD  
LAFAYETTE, LA 70506



SATURDAY  
DECEMBER 7, 2024  
11 AM TO 3 PM

GAMES AND ACTIVITIES FOR THE  
WHOLE FAMILY TO ENJOY!

PLUS... FOOD, MUSIC,  
DOOR PRIZES & MUCH MORE...



ACADIANA AREA  
HUMAN SERVICES DISTRICT  
Serving Acadiana with Quality Compassionate Care







Our mission is to assist and strengthen individuals with disabilities and their families through a coordinated network of resources, services and supports.

FHF of Acadiana is located in Lafayette, La. and we cover Region 4, offering Peer Support, Information and Referral, Advocacy, Education and Training.

We understand that it may be difficult for many families to come to our office.

So, we are coming to you!

We travel to each parish in Region 4. While there we visit and enjoy local coffee shops. But, most of all, we get a chance to sit and talk to YOU.

**COME HAVE COFFEE WITH US!**

## REGION 4



ACADIA

EVANGELINE

IBERIA

LAFAYETTE

ST. LANDRY

ST. MARTIN

VERMILION

# LAFAYETTE PARISH

**Are you coming to my event?**

**LOCATION**

809 Apollo Road  
Scott, LA 70583





**DATE AND TIME**

10/22/24


9 am - 11:00 am

**Come have coffee with us!**

**RSVP**

## Anti-Discrimination Laws & Students with Disabilities



 Sharon Blackmon, FHF of GNO  
Brenda Bares, FHF of Acadiana

**MONDAY, OCT 14, 2024**  
**12:00 PM - 1:00 PM**

**REGISTER NOW**

<https://tinyurl.com/AntiDisOct14>



 **FREE WEBINAR**

Join us to learn about your child's important protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which are anti-discrimination laws that prohibit schools from discriminating against students with disabilities.



**Register**





## How to Write Ambitious IEP Goals

 FREE WEBINAR

**THURSDAY**

**OCT 24, 2024**  
**10:00AM - 11:00AM**

**Register:**

<https://tinyurl.com/AmbitiousOct24>



Sharon Blackmon, FHF of GNO;  
Brenda Bares, FHF of Acadiana



**Louisiana**  
Center for the Visually Impaired

Changing Lives Every Day



[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.**

**Email**

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# LADDC News

## Partners in Policymaking Recruiting 2025 Applicants



[Click Here](#)

**Partners in Policymaking: Recruiting 2025 Applicants**  
**LAST CHANCE TO APPLY!**  
**Deadline: Monday, September 30th**

**HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY**

**EMPLOYEE BIRTHDAYS!!!**

**October**

**Susie Dupont  
Danielle Ledet**

**November**

**Kristie Curtis  
Todd Fontenot**





Thank you for your hard  
work and dedication.

**Month of September**

**Nicole Flores  
Danielle Ledet**

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**Month of November**

**Harlon Cowsar, II  
Susie Dupont**

## OFFICE CLOSURES



**Monday  
November 11, 2024**

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**Thursday - Friday**  
**November 28, 2024 - November 29, 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!](#)

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## **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](#)

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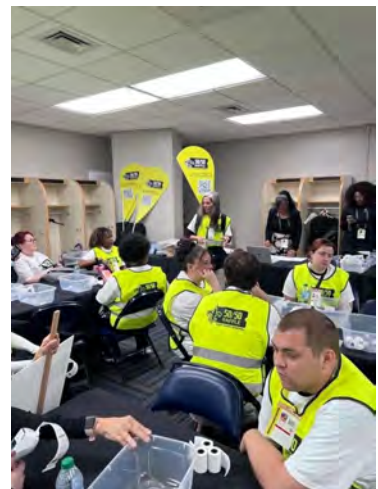
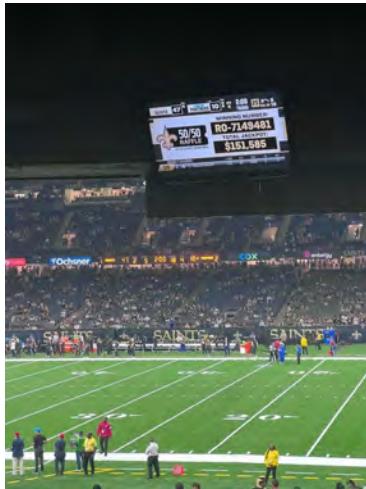
**If you are interested in finding out more information about Families Helping Families of Acadiana and the services we provide, please call our office and we will be more than happy to schedule an in person/virtual meeting or call with you!**

**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.**

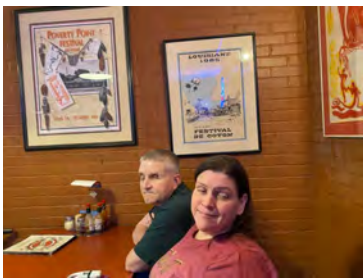
## **IN THE COMMUNITY**











## COMMUNITY PARTNERS



THE FAMILY TREE  
INFORMATION, EDUCATION & COUNSELING CENTER







## PROGRAMS THAT ARE SUPPORTED THROUGH OUR CENTER





## F2FHIC

### Communicating with your Doctor

As we grow we hit milestones in our lives and some of these milestones are harder than others. Transitioning from high school to college or the workforce can be a scary and unfamiliar experience for both parents and their children, especially when it comes to our kids hitting the age of majority where they have to make their own decisions concerning their health. For those of them who are not so conversational or anxious at the doctor, communicating their needs may be difficult. They may miss important details or not say anything about what is going on because they are more worried about getting the task done with. This short article is an example and outline to demonstrate the importance of teaching your child how to communicate on their own with their doctors.







**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



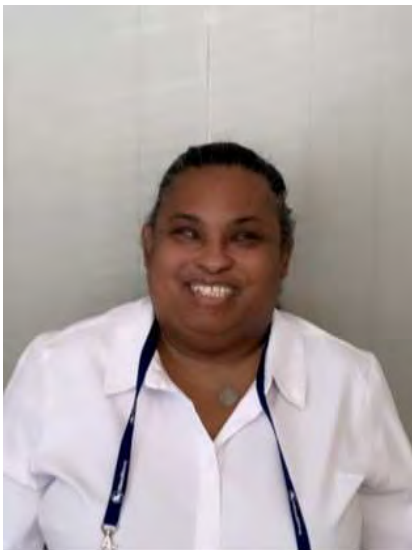
**Nicole Dejean**

Special Projects



**Kristie Curtis**

EarlySteps COS  
LaCAN Leader



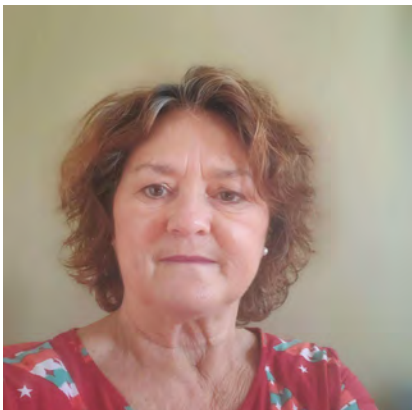
**Danielle Ledet**

Education Liaison  
Information & Referral Specialist



**Brenda Bares**

Education Liaison



**Susie Dupont**



**Lillian DeJean**



Accounts Manager

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

**Denise Auzenne**  
Member

**Angie LaBorde**  
Member

*Photo  
Coming  
Soon!*

**Ashley LaBorde**  
Member



**Cherelly L.  
Williams**  
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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!