

April - June 2015

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GiveNOLA Day is May 5, 2015!

Last year, GiveNOLA Day raised **\$2.2 million** from **19,000+ donors** around the country. This year, the goal is **\$3 million**.

Be a part of the success of GiveNOLA Day 2015!

On Tuesday, May 5th, Northshore Families Helping Families (NFHF) will be participating in GiveNOLA Day! Hosted by the Greater New Orleans Foundation, GiveNOLA Day is a one-day online giving event to inspire people to give generously to nonprofit organizations that are making our region stronger, creating a thriving community for all.

"We are excited to once again participate in GiveNOLA Day! Join in the spirit of generosity on May 5th. Your donation will enable us to continue supporting families for equal educational opportunities, independence, inclusion and quality of life in the Northshore community," said Sue Ellen Stewart, Executive Director of NFHF.

Donations to Northshore Families Helping Families, which can be as small as \$10 and are 100% tax deductible, come to us to support our resource center, serving the parishes of St. Tammany, Washington, Tangipahoa, St. Helena and Livingston. From midnight to midnight on May 5th, every gift over \$10 on www.GiveNOLA.org will receive a little lagniappe thanks to GiveNOLA Day sponsors and the Greater New Orleans Foundation.

Mark GiveNOLA Day on your calendar for Tuesday, May 5th. Let's inspire the community to come together for 24 hours to contribute as many charity dollars to support the work of local non-profit organizations, just like us. Share with your friends and support Northshore Families Helping Families as part of GiveNOLA Day on Tuesday, May 5th. **Help us spread the word!**

.....
MAY 5, 2015 • GiveNOLA.org
ONE DAY TO GIVE AS ONE
.....



The work of NFHF, including publication of this newsletter, is funded by Florida Parishes Human Services Authority, Louisiana State Department of Education, Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council, and is supported by corporate and individual contributions. Northshore Families Helping Families is a United Way recipient.

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BOARD

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Advisory Board Members

You are always welcome at NFHF Board Meetings. Six meetings are held each year on the first Friday of the month.

The next meeting will be held
Friday, May 1, 2015
at 7:30am at the NFHF office.

If you would like to
address the board, call
Sue Ellen Stewart at 985-875-0511.



NFHF Office:

204 W. 21st Avenue
Covington, LA 70433
(985) 875-0511
(800) 383-8700

info@fhfnorthshore.org

Office Hours:
9:00 am—4:00 pm
Monday—Friday

You can help make a difference by directly donating to our organization. Many companies are interested in donating to non-profit organizations and will match an individual's contribution.

Please contact Sue Ellen Stewart with questions.

DONATE

CLICK HERE TO GIVE >>



Mission: To provide the individualized services, information, resources and support needed to positively enhance the independence, productivity and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Vision: To ensure all individuals with disabilities have the opportunity to attend school, live, work, recreate in their own communities.

NFHF NEWS



Lynne Renihan joins NFHF as our Resource Specialist. In 1980, after graduating from St. Ambrose University in Iowa with a BA in Mass Communications/Public Relations, Lynne moved to New Orleans. After working in Public Relations at East Jefferson Hospital, she went to work for the State of Louisiana for the Department of Health and Hospitals assisting people with developmental disabilities. From there Lynne went to various other jobs helping people with disabilities and mental health conditions. These jobs included; qualified intellectual disability professional, advisor for advocacy groups, cash subsidy coordinator and case manager. She has also worked for several non-profit agencies helping people move into the community after living in developmental centers. After 25 years in the field she is still happy to continue to help people with disabilities achieve their goals. She lives in Waldheim and is married to a New Orleans native and enjoys her grandchildren, especially helping her grandson who has ADHD. She loves going to festivals, plays, movies, cultural events and being Queen of a Red Hat group.

Jennifer Brunning joins NFHF as a board member. Jennifer lives in Madisonville with her husband of 14 years, Casey Brunning, two beautiful daughters, Charlee, 11 a 5th grader at Lancaster, and Payton, 6 a 1st grader at Madisonville Elementary. Charlee has Tourette syndrome, along with a list of co-morbidities. Jennifer has worked over 12 years in outside sales, including Home Health/Behavioral Health. She has been a volunteer of Junior League of Greater Covington since 2001, helping at Children's Advocacy Center in Covington (Hope House). For 4 years, she has worked with the Fairhaven Children's Home during Christmas and Easter securing donations from the community/peers to supply gifts for all of the children (currently 18). Jennifer also volunteers at her childrens' schools and currently working on becoming a substitute teacher/para. Jennifer stated, "I believe it is my calling to be an advocate and look forward to offering any services I can to such a worthy cause that I believe in so strongly."

We are excited to have both ladies working and involved in making NFHF a valuable resource in the region!

A snippet from a community resident:

I recently attended a workshop sponsored by NFHF titled "Not Giving Up on Inclusive Education." I wanted to thank you for a wonderful, eye-opening presentation on true inclusion. As a retired special education teacher, I wanted to better understand what inclusive education meant to parents. The parents really opened my eyes!! I think every teacher and administrator should sit in on one of these meetings with parents. It would change their outlook for sure. I learned so much and understand so much more now. Hopefully I will be able to get back into the education world again and share some of my new found knowledge. Heaven knows the school officials need to be made aware of the truths about inclusion. Again, I want to say thank you for a very informative day.

Tell us how Northshore Families Helping Families has made a difference in your life and we will include it in our media publications. Send your story to info@fhfnorthshore.org.
We want to hear from you!

NFHF Quarterly Events

APRIL 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 People First St. Tammany	2 Rockin' the Rails	3 Office Closed	4 Egg Hunt Barnes & Noble Day
5 Easter	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18 soar Autism Walks
19	20	21 Challenging Behavior St. Helena	22 People First St. Tammany	23 People First Hammond	24	25 Challenging Behavior NFHF Autism Walk
26	27	28 Employment Workshop	29 Disability Rights Day	30 All About Waivers Workshop		

MAY 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 NFHF Board Meeting	2
3	4	5 GiveNOLA & Challenging Behavior - Livingston	6	7	8	9 Challenging Behavior - Livingston
10	11	12	13	14 Sexuality/ Relationships Workshop	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 / 31	25 Office Closed	26 Challenging Behavior Tangipahoa	27	28	29	30 Challenging Behavior Tangipahoa

JUNE 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Behavior Workshop - St. Tammany	3	4	5	6 Behavior Workshop - St. Tammany
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 Behavior Workshop - Washington	17	18	19	20 Behavior Workshop - Washington
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Free Education & Resource Webinars



Families Helping Families of Jefferson invites you to free webinars full of rich content. A webinar event is viewed right from your computer, where you can watch, listen and have the options to post questions and get LIVE responses. For a listing of webinars visit www.fhfjefferson.org and then click on [“Events and Trainings”](#) and choose a topic and register. Families Helping Families of Jefferson, 201 Evans Road Building, Suite 100, Harahan LA 70123, 800-766-7736.

Family to Family Health Information Center

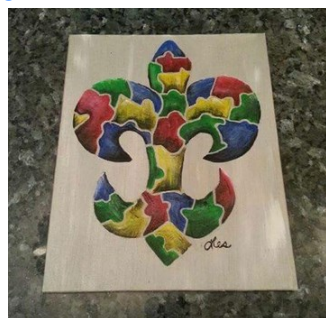
[Click here to read Affordable Care Act \(ACA\) Tips](#)



SUPPORT NORTHSHORE FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES

Purchase an Autism Fleur de lis

Leslie Gates, mom to a 12 year old on the Autism Spectrum, is also a painter and writer. Her story is featured for Autism Awareness Month in Slidell Magazine. Leslie painted an Autism Fleur-de-lis, had a limited number of 8x10 prints made, and is selling them for \$20 each. 100% will be donated to NFHF! To order a print, contact Leslie - Lestg77@aol.com. Thanks, Leslie! We are honored to receive your support!



Trainer's Choice Vitamins & Supplements Spring Sprint 5K and Fun Run

FREE T-SHIRTS



Free Food

Trainers Choice Vitamins & Supplements
Spring Sprint 5K & Fun Run
"Solving the Puzzle one Piece at a Time"

Please join us April 25th from 10am-2pm
Race Starts & Ends at Trainers Choice
Located at 1321 Gause Blvd in Slidell, LA (Next to Crossgates Family Fitness)
Entry is \$15, Kids 12 & under run Free!
Pre-Register by the 15th for ONLY \$10!!! Call 985-641-6696 or email TrainersChoice@yahoo.com
First 50 entries receive a FREE Superman Autism Awareness t-shirt!

April is Autism Awareness Month
A portion of the proceeds will be donated to
Northshore Families Helping Families



FREE DRINKS

Shop at AmazonSmile

and Amazon will make
a donation to:
Northshore Families
Helping Families

Get started

amazonsmile

AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5%
of your purchase total to Northshore
Families Helping Families when you shop
online at AmazonSmile. Be sure to select
NFHF as your organization of choice
and add the link to your bookmarks!

THANKS FOR SUPPORTING NFHF!

Our deepest thanks to our local businesses Mellow Mushroom, Northshore Parent and Barnes and Noble in Mandeville for sponsoring fundraising events for NFHF in March and April. Many of our families supported us by participating. With everyone's participation we can continue to provide resources, workshops and advocacy support in the community. Thank you very much!



Challenging Behavior Series You Don't Want to Miss!

Part 1: Behavioral Challenges and Parental Stress

This workshop will cover: Examples of challenging behavior that occur in children with and without developmental disabilities, Empirically validated methods used to address challenging behavior (including applied behavior analysis), Relationship between challenging behavior and parental stress, Techniques to decrease stress as to not escalate to abuse, & Preventative measures to prevent behavioral challenges. Role plays, vignettes and videos will be used to illustrate concepts.

Part 2: Decreasing Challenging Behavior Using Behavioral Procedures

This workshop will cover: Principles of applied behavior analysis (ABA) pertaining to addressing challenging behavior, Functions of behavior, Reasons why all interventions are not effective for all children, & Detailed information on when to seek professional assistance. Role plays, vignettes and videos will be used to illustrate concepts.

Participants should plan to attend part 1 and part 2 to receive maximum benefit from the series. Each workshop will be conducted by a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA).

Once locations are confirmed, online registration will open: www.fhfnorthshore.org

Childcare will be available at some locations. For more information, contact Sue Ellen Stewart – sestewart@fhfnorthshore.org

Series funded by Florida Parishes Human Services Authority

St. Helena	Part 1 - Tuesday, April 21	6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
	Part 2 - Saturday, April 25	9:30 am - 12:30 pm
Livingston	Part 1 - Tuesday, May 5	6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
	Part 2 - Saturday, May 9	9:30 am - 12:30 pm
Tangipahoa	Part 1 - Tuesday, May 26	6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
	Part 2 - Saturday, May 30	9:30 am - 12:30 pm
St. Tammany	Part 1 - Tuesday, June 2	6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
	Part 2 - Saturday, June 6	9:30 am - 12:30 pm
Washington	Part 1 - Tuesday, June 16	6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
	Part 2 - Saturday, June 20	9:30 am - 12:30 pm



www.fhfnorthshore.org
info@fhfnorthshore.org
 985-875-0511





Supported Employment in Louisiana

Presented by:

Sue Killam, M. Ed., CESP

Employment Initiatives Coordinator

LSU Health Sciences Center Human Development Center

Tuesday, April 28, 2015

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

St. Tammany Parish Hospital - Mandeville Room

1202 South Tyler Street

Covington, LA 70433

Register online: www.fhfnorthshore.org

What do you need to know about selecting and working with an employment provider? This session will provide an overview of issues and questions to consider when selecting a provider of employment services. Participants will learn some of the key quality indicators and characteristic of supported employment providers and what to look for when selecting a provider. Participants will also see some examples of successful employment outcomes.

This program is made possible through funding from
Florida Parishes Human Services Authority



www.fhfnorthshore.org
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(985) 875-0511



2015 DISABILITY RIGHTS DAY

Wednesday, April 29th - La State Capitol - Baton Rouge

6 reasons you should attend the Disability Rights Day on April 29

1. You or a loved one is on the waiver waiting list and you are tired of waiting.
2. You or a loved one have experienced high turnover with direct support workers because of the low wages.
3. Your child was determined ineligible for EarlySteps because he/she only has delay in one developmental area, instead of two.
4. You believe that Families Helping Families centers are vital to individuals with disabilities and their families, professionals and the community.
5. You or a loved one receives waiver services and you want to advocate for others who are still waiting because you remember how difficult the wait was!
6. You believe it's time to make individuals with developmental disabilities and their families a priority!



REGISTER NOW

LaCAN Region 9 Florida Parish Team Member Meeting
April 29th at 10:00 am

Meet outside the security doors on the right side of the Capitol Steps
Questions? Sharon Delvisco - laican.region9@gmail.com

For more information, go to:

www.laddc.org/disabilityrightsally

Disability Rights Day is supported through the collaborative efforts of the
La Developmental Disabilities Council, LaCAN, and Families Helping Families.

Meet and Greet: Try It to See If You Like It Events - Adult Programs

The purpose of these events is to provide folks who are 16 and older with the opportunity to meet new people, have fun and try new things!

For more information call (985) 875-0511
or email SharonDelvisco@fhfnorthshore.org or JustineFucci@fhfnorthshore.org
Register online: www.fhfnorthshore.org



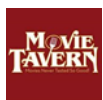
Book & Journal Club meets on Wednesdays at 1 pm at St. John's Coffee Shop, 535 E Boston St in Covington. Upcoming dates: April 22, April 29, May 6, May 13, May 20, May 27, June 3, June 10, June 17, June 14.



Wednesday, April 22nd People First St. Tammany Meeting from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm at the Arc of GNO Northshore Community Center, 106 E 25th Avenue in Covington. Come learn about People First and self-advocacy. People First of Northshore co-leaders are Perry Evans and Scott Smith. Advisors are Sharon Delvisco and Dawn Culbreath.



Thursday, April 23rd People First Meeting from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm at the Miller Memorial Library, 108 South Pine Street in Hammond. Join us and meet other individuals with disabilities, make new friends and learn about your rights. Come learn about People First and what People First is doing in our state concerning advocacy and self-advocacy for people with disabilities. The guest speaker is Sharon Hennessey, Director of People First of Louisiana.



Saturday, April 25th Breakfast and a Flick at Movie Tavern, 201 N Highway 190 in Covington. Meet at 8:30 am. Participants are responsible for the cost of their food and ticket.



Saturday, May 2nd at 10am Ponchatoula Lions Club Car Show, 750 East Pine in Ponchatoula. Meet at 10:00 am. Register by April 29.



Saturday, May 23rd at 2 pm at Slidell Jazz & Blues Festival, Slidell Heritage Park (off Front St in Slidell at 1701 Bayou Lane). General admission tickets \$10. Order online in advance at <http://slidelljazzandblues.com>. Bring your own folding chair. No cooler, outside food or beverages allowed at event.

Events are sometimes rescheduled, please contact Sharon Delvisco at 985-875-0511 the day before the event to confirm the date and time of events published.

Adult Program Spotlight - People First St. Tammany

The People First St. Tammany chapter has been meeting over the past few months. We now have two co-leaders, Scott and Perry Evans identified. There are two advisors for the group, Dawn Culbreath, the Arc of GNO Northshore Community Center, and Sharon Delvisco, Northshore Families Helping Families. There are a total of six members at this time. At the April meeting, Sharon Hennessey, Director of People First of Louisiana, organized Self-Advocacy Bingo. We learned a lot about key issues from the history of the disability rights movement while having fun playing



bingo. The next meeting will be held at the Arc of GNO Northshore Community Center at 106 E 25th Avenue in Covington at 1pm on Wednesday, April 22. Please let us know if you know if you plan to attend because refreshments will be served. To register or for more information, contact SharonDelvisco@fhfnorthshore.org.

People First of Louisiana

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

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

Vision: People with disabilities build personal visions that are reached through respect, equality and many different experiences that led to choices and life decisions. People with disabilities support one another to control their own lives, understand and speak up for their rights and live up to their responsibilities.

Disability is Natural: "Disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to:

- * live independently;
- * enjoy self-determination;
- * make choices;
- * contribute to society;
- * pursue meaningful careers; and
- * enjoy full inclusion and integration in the economic, political, social, cultural, and educational mainstream of American society."

Florida Parishes Human Services Authority Has Funds Available!

Individual and family support services provide assistance not available from any other resource that will allow people with developmental disabilities to live in their own homes or with their families in their own community. These services can include respite care, personal assistance services, specialized clothing, dental and medical services, equipment and supplies, communication services, crisis intervention, specialized utility costs, specialized nutrition, and family education. Services are provided through contractual agreements by private provider agencies or through individualized agreements with individuals and families who obtain their own service providers. To access Individual and family support services in Livingston, St. Helena, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa or Washington parish, contact Florida Parishes Human Services Authority (FPHSA) Developmental Disabilities Services (985) 543-4730, (800) 866-0806, or TDD Phone (985) 543-4754.



LaTEACH is a statewide grassroots advocacy network created for the purpose of effecting systems change. LaTEACH promotes appropriate, inclusive education for all students. LaTEACH works to make parents, educators, the general public, and state leadership informed and supportive of research-based and effective practices used appropriately for each student. If you believe 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, and should be provided the support to learn together effectively, then you should consider becoming a LaTEACH member. What's on our Legislative Agenda this year? Act 833 Implementation, Education Funding equitable across all schools, & Charter Schools serving all students. If you are interested in a leadership role in LaTEACH or you want more information on current issues in education, visit www.lateach.org. Current LaTEACH members: watch for upcoming action alerts and TAKE ACTION!



LaCAN is a statewide grassroots network of individuals, families and advocates who have worked together since 1988 advocating for a service system that supports individuals with disabilities to live in their own homes rather than having to be segregated from their communities in a facility to receive support. For more information, contact Region 9 LaCAN Leader, Sharon Delvisco at 985-875-0511 or laican.region9@gmail.com. LaCAN Region 9 Florida Parishes Team Member Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 29th at 10:00 am. Meet outside the security doors on the right side of the Capitol steps.

Request for Services Registry Dates as of 11/12/2014

New Opportunities Waiver (NOW) - 8/18/2004

Supports Waiver - 2/29/2012

Children's Choice Waiver - 7/5/2005

Through funding from the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council, we provide stipends to self-advocates and family members directly involved in the support of an individual with a developmental disability to attend conferences and trainings on disability related topics. Download a stipend application [here](#).

Act 833 of 2014

Alternative Pathways for Grade Promotion and Graduation

Act 833 established alternative pathways for grade promotion and graduation for students with disabilities who have not passed standardized tests or met local requirements for promotion. This shift in policy is a monumental departure from Louisiana being among the states with the most stringent and restrictive policies for grade promotion to graduation to Louisiana joining many states in recognizing the role a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) should have in determining student outcomes.

Which Students are Eligible?

Promotion

- Did not pass standardized test (prior year)
- Did not meet requirements for promotion (prior year)

Graduation

- Did not pass standardized tests:
 - any two (2) of most recent three (3) years; or,
 - two (2) administrations of any End-of-Course test.

Which Students are NOT Eligible?

Students with disabilities who have met requirements on standardized tests or for promotion and/or graduation will not be provided an alternative pathway to be promoted to the next grade or graduate.

[Introductory PowerPoint on Act 833](#)

[Introduction to Act 833 Training Module](#)

[Additional Information on Act 833](#)

Rules are being promulgated to guide the implementation of Act 833. Stakeholders will continue to ensure the rules reflect the intent and spirit of Act 833. To join in the advocacy efforts for this and other issues relate to students with disabilities, [join LaTEACH](#).



Louisiana Developmental
Disabilities Council

LaDDC NEWS

Congratulations to Brittany Wesley 2015 High School Graduate!



Brittany Wesley is the first known student to earn a diploma through Act 833 of 2014! Brittany left East Jefferson High School in 2013 with a Certificate of Achievement and 32 Carnegie credits (only 23 are required to graduate). Upon learning of Act 833, Brittany enrolled in the Jefferson Chamber Foundation Academy in August of 2014. This week Brittany received her high school diploma.

Brittany is headed to Colorado to pursue her goal of becoming trained in radiology. Act 833 enabled Brittany to fulfill her life goal of helping others by advancing her knowledge and skills in the medical field. The Council and LaTEACH are proud of Brittany for returning to school to earn her diploma and grateful she has a strong family and teachers at the Jefferson Chamber Foundation Academy who supported her dream of earning a high school diploma.

The Council looks forward to more students and educators having the courage to open doors of opportunity that have been unlocked through Act 833.

www.laddc.org



Mid-Year and FY16 Budget Reductions Freeze Waiver Slots, Cut Families Helping Families and More

People with developmental disabilities and their families did not escape the budget cuts that were announced in late February as part of both mid-year reductions and the Governor's Executive Budget for next fiscal year. Louisiana faces a budget deficit of \$104 million in the current fiscal year (FY) and this deficit increases to \$1.6 billion for FY16 (year beginning July 1, 2015). To decrease the deficit, Governor Jindal included some revenue raising activities such as scaling back on tax credits and increasing the cigarette tax in his FY16 Executive Budget. For details on these proposals and other cuts in the proposed budget, read The Advocate's [article](#).

Below is a summary of how individuals with developmental disabilities and their families will be impacted by the mid-year cuts and the cuts included in the Governor's FY16 Executive Budget as presented to the Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget. This summary does not detail all of the reductions made in the FY16 Executive Budget; the full budget and supporting documents can be viewed on the Division of Administration's website [here](#).

INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY SUPPORTS AND SERVICES

Waivers - During the 2014 Legislative Session, the Council and LaCAN members successfully advocate for funding to add 200 New Opportunities Waiver (NOW) slots and to fill 1,000 existing but vacant NOW, Children's Choice, and Supports Waiver slots. Funding was also appropriated to fill approximately 1,000 aging and adult-onset waiver slots. The Department of Health and Hospitals was in the process of filling all of these slots. Unfortunately, 722 waiver slots for people with developmental disabilities (155 NOW, 204 Children's Choice, and 413 Supports) and 272 Community Choices Waiver slots were frozen as a part of the Governor's Mid-Year Deficit Reduction Plan. This "freeze" stops the filling of slots and prevents any additional individuals and families on the waiting list from receiving waiver services. (Any outstanding waiver offers will be honored.) The only exception will be for people in emergency situations, children aging out of Children's Choice, and individuals transitioning out of a state facility.

Waiver slots were also frozen in the Governor's FY16 budget.

Individual and Family Support - The Council and LaCAN members also successfully advocated for \$1.1 million in funding for the Individual and Family Support Program in



Louisiana Developmental
Disabilities Council

LaDDC NEWS

Capital Area Human Services District (CAHSD), Acadiana Area Human Services Authority (AAHSA) and Florida Parishes Human Services Authority (FPHSA) because they receive a disproportionate share of the funding compared to other regions and the population they serve. This additional funding has been cut in the Governor's FY16 budget.

Families Helping Families - The Council and LaCAN members successfully advocated for \$170,000 in funding to be restored to nine Families Helping Families Centers across the state. (This funding had been cut from the centers over the last several years.) The \$170,000 was eliminated in the Governor's FY16 budget.

OTHER CUTS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HOSPITALS (DHH)

The Regional Human Services Districts/Authorities provide many vital services to their communities. This includes receiving and processing applications for supports and services and assisting individuals in accessing these services. The budgets of the districts/authorities have been repeatedly reduced and this year and next are no different. The districts/authorities took a combined mid-year cut of \$5.88 million and the Governor's FY16 Budget includes \$6.8 million in cuts (including the mid-year reduction). In addition, the DHH Program Offices (Developmental Disabilities, Behavioral Health, and Public Health) are being reduced by \$12 million in the FY16 budget. This is not a complete list of reductions. [Click here](#) for the Executive Budget documents that provide details of all DHH and other state agency cuts and budget proposals.

EDUCATION

The Department of Education's operating budget is being reduced considerably in the Governor's FY16 budget; however, how this will affect students with disabilities is unknown at this time. The budget proposal includes the elimination of 46 filled field positions and 45 filled administrative positions. Professional services and special projects are being reduced by a total of \$8.7 million. Again, how these cuts will impact students with disabilities is not yet known.

With the exception of the growth in the number of students attending schools, the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) was not increased. For six of the last eight years, funding for the MFP has basically been frozen.

Legislators will have the opportunity to make changes to the Governor's Budget Proposal during the 2015 Legislative Session which begins on April 13th. Individuals with disabilities and their families are encouraged to join the Council's grassroots advocacy networks [LaCAN](#) and [LaTEACH](#) to receive updates on issues being decided during session and on opportunities to participate in advocacy activities. Legislators need to hear how these cuts will affect their constituents with disabilities and their families.

www.laddc.org



Louisiana Developmental
Disabilities Council

LaDDC NEWS

Common Misconceptions about Self-Direction

Currently, recipients of the New Opportunities Waiver (NOW), Children's Choice Waiver and Residential Options Waiver have the option of receiving services through a provider agency or through Self-Direction. The self-directed option gives you the most control over your supports, but also more responsibility. A number of misconceptions exist about Self-Direction. It is important to be aware of these misconceptions about know the facts.

MISCONCEPTION #1: THERE IS A WAITING LIST FOR SELF-DIRECTION AND/OR NO SELF-DIRECTION "SLOTS" ARE AVAILABLE. According to Mark Thomas, Assistant Secretary of the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD), there is not a waiting list for Self-Direction and opportunities for Self-Direction are available. OCDD is currently processing individuals statewide for Self-Direction. The Human Services Districts/Authorities are completing plan-of-care revisions in the order in which the application for Self-Direction is received. Individuals interested in Self-Direction should contact their Support Coordinator to begin the enrollment process.

MISCONCEPTION #2: SELF-DIRECTION IS TOO DIFFICULT. Many who self-direct have stated that the initial process of getting enrolled in Self-Direction is tedious because of the required paper work and the lack of knowledge of some professionals in the service system to assist you. However, they also say once enrolled, Self-Direction is not difficult and the benefits far outweigh any inconvenience experienced getting enrolled.

MISCONCEPTION #3: INDIVIDUALS WITH COMPLEX NEEDS CAN'T SELF-DIRECT. With the help of family or friends, people with significant developmental disabilities are able to use self-directed supports to live the life they choose.

MISCONCEPTION #4: IF I SELF-DIRECT, I'LL HAVE TO DO EVERYTHING MYSELF. You don't have to do everything yourself. An authorized representative, such as a family member, may make decisions on your behalf. Your Support Coordinator will provide you with ongoing support and assistance and a fiscal agent will process payroll for your employees and make the tax withholdings and deposits on your behalf.

On the fence about Self-Direction? A great way to learn about self-direction is from those who are actually doing it. Reach out to a self-advocate or family who is self-directing for guidance. If you don't know anyone, your local Families Helping Families Center may be able to help identify someone. If you are ready to enroll, contact your Support Coordinator.

www.laddc.org



Proposed Changes to Request for Services Registry (RFSR) Meeting and Live Broadcast Announcement

Where:

Bienville Building Room 118
 Department of Health and Hospitals
 628 N. Fourth St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802
or by live broadcast

When:

Tuesday, April 28, 2015
 10 a.m. to noon

RSVP

Not required



Please join the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities as we share information with you and receive your feedback about proposed changes to the RFSR that will allow for prioritization of those waiting on waiver services. This would change the system change from a first-come, first served basis to a priority-based system. OCDD intends to incorporate finalized changes to the RFSR in the consolidated waiver that is under development. This Waiver will replace all four existing waivers and will start with I/DD MLTSS.

To Join by Live broadcast:

On the day of the meeting, the link to access the online live broadcast is www.dhh.la.gov/OCDDLIVE

If you wish to submit a question during the meeting, please feel free to email Beth.Jordan@la.gov. Beth will make sure that your question is received by the presenter.

If you need assistance or accommodations, please contact Faimon Roberts 225-342-6718 or Faimon.Roberts@la.gov

4.28.15

Free parking is available in the [Galvez or Welcome Center parking garages](#), simply click on the link above for directions to the garages. Please remember to bring your parking pass inside for validation.



ADVOCACY CENTER

SERVING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND SENIOR CITIZENS

Bayou Health Expands to Include Chisholm Class Members

Beginning this Spring, children in Louisiana between the ages of 3 and 21 who are on the NOW waiting list (Chisholm class members*) will be able to get Medicaid services through Bayou Health.

It is important that individuals and their families look closely at the potential benefits and risks of enrolling in Bayou Health.

Bayou Health is the state's managed care program for Medicaid recipients. Five private companies contract with the state to manage the acute health needs of individuals who are enrolled. Some of these health plans have a different network of doctors, hospitals, and other providers than traditional Medicaid.

Benefits of enrolling in Bayou Health may include access to a different set of medical providers. In addition, some plans offer incentives for successfully meeting certain outcomes.

To learn more about the specific benefits that each plan offers, visit https://bayouhealth.com/LASelfService/en_US/pdfs/LA-BenefitsCompChartOE.pdf.

There are also significant risks in moving to managed care. Some potential issues include:

- Access to your current doctors and other healthcare providers. Not all doctors and healthcare providers are enrolled in all the managed care plans. If you want to keep your doctors, it's important to confirm that they are all enrolled in the health plan you choose.
- Access to services. The managed care company will be determining the types, amounts, and duration of services to be received. The Advocacy Center has assisted a number of individuals who have encountered problems in getting needed services approved by plans in a timely manner or whose services have been reduced significantly.
- Access to prescription medications. Each plan covers different drugs and has different prior authorization and step therapy procedures. It's important to check that you can access needed medications on the new plan.
 - Aetna Better Health: <http://www.aetnabetterhealth.com/louisiana/providers/pharmacy>
 - LA Healthcare Connections: <http://www.louisianahealthconnect.com/for-members/pharmacy-services/>
 - Amerihealth Caritas: <http://www.amerihealthcaritasla.com/pharmacy/index.aspx>
 - Amerigroup: <https://www.myamerigroup.com/LA/Pages/medicaid.aspx>
 - UnitedHealthcare: <http://www.uhcommunityplan.com/la/medicaid/bayou-health/find-a-drug.html>
 - Legacy Medicaid: http://www.lamedicaid.com/provweb1/forms/rxpa/PDL_and_NPDL_%201-1-14.pdf

If a Chisholm class member joins Bayou Health and encounters problems, he or she can request to return to traditional Medicaid. The change will go into effect the 1st of the month following the request. Class members may be required to resubmit requests or prescriptions to the new plan. If a class member decided to go back to Bayou Health, he or she would have to wait until the next open enrollment period.

Children do not become Chisholm class members until they are 3 years old because that is when they can be placed on the NOW waiting list through OCDD or their local human services district. They may have a "protected Registry date" prior to age 3, but until they are formally found eligible for the DD service system, they are not Chisholm class members.

Individuals who are currently enrolled in Bayou Health and are placed on the NOW waiting list become Chisholm class members. At that point, they have the option to return to legacy Medicaid or remain with Bayou Health.

To enroll or dis-enroll in Bayou Health, call 1-855-BAYOU-4U (1-855-229-6848) or TTY: 1-855-LAMed4Me (1-855-526-3346).

If you have any questions about this, or if you encounter problems accessing services under Bayou Health, contact the Advocacy Center at 1-800-960-7705.

* Chisholm v. Kliebert, a class action lawsuit filed by the Advocacy Center in 1997, resulted in the state providing necessary services under regular Medicaid to children on the New Opportunities Waiver (NOW) waiting list. Chisholm class members are children up to age 21 who currently receive or are eligible for Medicaid, and who are on the NOW waiting list.



2015 ACTIVE Award Nominations Open Now through June 30.

2015 Awards include four awards for people with disabilities and our Champion Award, all awards are presented to people in **St. Tammany, Tangipahoa and Washington Parishes.**

Awards for People with Disabilities:

Artist – honoring the talents in all art forms, performing, visual, applied, etc.

Employee/Civil Servant - honoring those who are employed

Youth Spirit – ages 17 and under

Adult Spirit – ages 18 and over

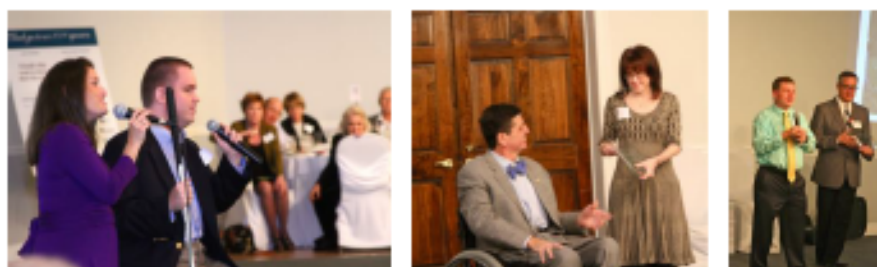
The Spirit Awards are given to those other than artists or employees whose spirit of achievement is uplifting and inspirational.

Champion Award – for an individual or business which supports people with disabilities, i.e.: educators, caregivers, volunteers, employers, medical personnel, and others.

Nominate online at ACTIVEPartnershipLA.org.

Please read nomination instructions on website carefully before you begin the form.

Three finalists for each award will be honored and the winner announced at our celebration this fall.



2014 Award winners: Erick Whittten – Artist; Shannon O'Rourke – Employee and Richard Harris - Spirit



About EarlySteps

EarlySteps provides services to families with infants and toddlers aged birth to three years (36 months) who have a medical condition likely to result in a developmental delay, or who have developmental delays. Children with delays in cognitive, motor, vision, hearing, communication, social-emotional or adaptive development may be eligible for services. EarlySteps services are designed to improve the family's capacity to enhance their child's development. These services are provided in the child's natural environment, such as the child's home, child care or any other community setting typical for children aged birth to 3 years (36 months).

Services

Services the EarlySteps program provides include:

- * Assistive technology
- * Audiology
- * Health Services (family education, assistance with other EarlySteps services only)
- * Medical Services (evaluation only)
- * Nutrition Services
- * Occupational Therapy Services
- * Physical Therapy Services
- * Psychological Services
- * Service Coordination
- * Social Work Services
- * Special Instruction
- * Speech Language Pathology
- * Translation Interpreter Services (foreign language and sign language)
- * Transportation (to and from an EarlySteps service only)
- * Vision Services

Effective October 1, 2013 EarlySteps implemented a cost participation system which allows families to share in the cost for some early intervention services. Financial information is gathered during intake for children who are eligible for EarlySteps. Family size and income are used to determine if a family will be required to pay for some services.

The EarlySteps Process

Anyone can make an EarlySteps referral. Children can be referred to EarlySteps by contacting the [System Point of Entry](#) (SPOE) in their region. Once the [SPOE](#) receives the [referral](#), the family will be contacted to begin the eligibility determination process.

For more information call: 985-429-1252 or 1-866-327-5978

Free Work Incentives Planning & Assistance for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Beneficiaries.

For Assistance Call 1-855-877-8599

(Monday-Friday 8AM-6PM)

Advocacy Center's Southeast Louisiana Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (SELAWIPA)

Call Us If You Have Questions About:

- Going to work or working more
- Social Security Work Incentives
- Medicare and Medicaid eligibility while working
- Ticket to Work
- SSI or SSDI payments while working
- Information and referral to employment programs

**Do You Receive SSI and/or SSDI?
Do You Want to Work or Work More?**

Do you want to know how Work Pay\$?



www.work-pays.org

If you are on SSI or SSDI and you want to start working or work more, call Advocacy Center's South East Louisiana Work Incentives Planning & Assistance (SELAWIPA) program today!

To request assistance call us at

1- 855-877-8599

What Can You Expect from The Program?

Community Work Incentive Coordinators (CWICS) will help you understand how work and earnings may affect your SSI, SSDI and other benefits. CWICS will also explain how SSA's Work Incentives, including the Ticket program, can help you start working or work more!

SELAWIPA Serves The Following Parishes:

Jefferson, Orleans, St. Bernard, Plaquemines, East Baton Rouge, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, West Feliciana, East Feliciana, St. Helena, Livingston, Ascension, Terrebonne, Assumption, LaFourche, Washington, St. James, St. John the Baptist, and St. Charles

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Get Involved

NFHF is currently looking to grow our volunteer base.

If you are interested, [sign up here](#).

Regional Interagency Coordinating Council (RICC)

Each region in the state has a Regional Coordinating Council (RICC). This gives parents an opportunity locally to stay current with the latest information and provide valuable feedback to EarlySteps. Parent participation is needed at our Regional Interagency Coordinating Council Meetings. The next RICC meeting is:

April 24th, 9:00 am - 11:00 am
Louisiana Workforce Commission
1711 Nashville Ave., Hammond, LA 70401
Presentation: Early Childhood Community Network and Head Start

Regional Advisory Committee (RAC)

The Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) for Developmental Disabilities Services for Florida Parishes Human Services Authority, established by legislative act, ensures public input in an advisory capacity in the development and implementation of policies, procedures, and the allocation of resources to the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities. This input shall be derived from communication with, but not limited to, individuals with disabilities and their families and other concerned groups or individuals.. Give comments about an interest, need or concern about issues facing families or individuals with disabilities. Get information about resources that may be available for you or others. Region 9 RAC wants to hear from you! For more information on the Regional Advisory Committee, email racddsfphsa@gmail.com. Next RAC meeting:

April 21st, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
Florida Parishes Human Services Authority Conference Room
835 Pride Drive, Suite B, Hammond, LA

Florida Parishes Human Services Authority Provider Meeting

Florida Parishes Human Services Authority / Developmental Disabilities Services would like to invite you to attend the next provider meeting. All Region 9 providers who serve people in the New Opportunities Waiver, the Children's Choice Waiver, Supports Waiver and the Residential Options Waiver are strongly encouraged to attend. The building manager has requested that no one park in the rear of the building, as that is for employees and judges only. Park in the front and side parking lots of the building or on the street. The next meeting is:

TBA
Louisiana Workforce Commission
1711 Nashville Ave., Hammond, LA 70401