

# Walk in Clueless and Walk Out with Information and Referral!

By: Laura S. Nata



Ms. Martinez, a single mom of Mariana who has down syndrome, recently walked into our office inquiring about financial and educational help. She wasn't really sure what we did, but was sent here for assistance.

Our typical protocol for new parents that are unsure of what they need, is to go through a checklist to see who they are

already connected to and where they need to still be connected.

After Ms. Martinez shared information about her daughter we determined she needed support in a lot of different areas. First, she was informed of her basic educational rights and was provided a parent handbook for future reference. Once we learned about her child's disability we informed her of the Down Syndrome Association of Greater Orleans and shared with her information on upcoming activities and their national conference. Because Ms. Martinez shared that Mariana enjoyed playing in the water, I asked her if she thought her child would enjoy swimming lessons. She thought that was great so we provided her with information on JO'JO's Hope Swimming Therapeutic Therapy and an application for her doctor to complete, so she will be able to get swimming lesson. This is where my son learned how to swim and he really did enjoyed it.

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Because her daughter has some gait concerns, I shared with her about Hippo Therapy from The Greater New Orleans Therapeutic Riding Center. Ms. Martinez loved this idea and thought it would be a lot of fun.

As we were talking I learned that she is on a very fixed income and her daughter was still using diapers. This was pretty costly for her. I explained to her that Medicaid would still pay for diapers for her daughter and provided her with an application for diaper service. I gave her paperwork for her doctor to fill out and sign and instructed her to come back to the office once that was done. When she returned, together, we called to make arrangements for the diaper service.

Ms. Martinez was thrilled to call us to say her first box of diapers, for the month, had arrived and she was thankful for all the resources we provided. She feels very empowered thanks to Families Helping Families of Jefferson.

If you are having trouble getting the resources you need for someone with a disability, call us and let us help you get the services you need.



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