



Quarterly Informer

July, August, and September 2025 Edition

CH..CH..CH..changes....

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FHF SWLA

Mission:

Our mission is to

enable and

empower

individuals with

disabilities and

their families by

providing

information,

referral, education,

training, peer

support and

advocacy skills.

Early intervention Family Support services have been and always will be one of the services FHF provides to the SWLA community. My advocacy journey began in 1992 when I was one of the first family advocates to have the privilege of providing support, information, and training to other families through a contract with what was then ChildNet (now EarlySteps), Louisiana's early intervention program for infants and toddlers with disabilities.

Unfortunately, funding for the Community Outreach Specialist ended June 30, 2025, for all of the Families Helping Families centers throughout the state, due to changes in programming made by EarlySteps. ***Please note: EarlySteps services ARE NOT ending, only the family component contract through the FHF centers.***

Changes are often difficult, BUT we are choosing to continue to provide these services to our community. The new position will work with families of children ages 0-5 with disabilities and special health care needs. China Guillory has a new title, Early Childhood Disability Specialist. She will assist FHF in offering the same type of support, information, and training that has been provided for the last 30-plus years. We are currently seeking funding for this position, but our Board has committed to continuing the position for the next 12 months.

So, while changes are hard, we are excited to build on the success of the past and move forward into the future. Look for China at health/resource fairs, hospitals, and other places where families in need are found. Thanks to EarlySteps for your support over the years, which enabled us to serve so many families of young children needing family support.

Who we Are ... What we Do!

Susan Riehn

Executive Director

Cynthia Brown

Bookkeeper

Wallace Johnson

Education Support
Specialist

My linda Elliott

Program Manager,
LaCAN Leader &
Senior Education
Support Specialist

Beryl Cook

Education Support
Specialist

Davelyn Patrick

Community
Resource Specialist

China Guillory

Early Childhood
Disability Specialist

Carla Chenier

ImCAL HSA DD

Facilitator

Nicole Jones

I&R/Clerical

Assistant

Susan



Allen Parish
August 12, 2025

Beauregard Parish
August 7, 2025

Calcasieu Parish
August 8, 2025

Cameron Parish
August 11, 2025

Jeff Davis Parish
August 8, 2025



To Improve Accessibility, Closed Captioning Gets An Overhaul

Closed captioning for television and movies has remained largely unchanged for decades, but a new design aims to give people with disabilities a better idea of what's happening on screen. Known as "Caption with Intention," the system employs animation, color and variable typography to give viewers who aren't hearing sound and dialogue a sense of emotion, tone and pacing.

The captioning system was developed by FCB Chicago, an advertising agency, in partnership with the Chicago Hearing Society and the film company Rakish Entertainment. Those behind the technology said they worked with members of the Deaf and hard of hearing community to refine the product in order to improve on deficits from traditional closed captioning in areas like speaker attribution, synchronization and intonation.

"I grew up with two deaf parents, so we only watched captioned programming in our house. As someone who could hear, I could tell just how much was missing — sarcasm, anger, joy, fear — all of it lost in plain white text," said Bruno Mazzotti, executive creative director at FCB Chicago. "That experience stayed with me my whole life. This project was a chance to finally close that gap, not just for my parents, but for millions of people like them."

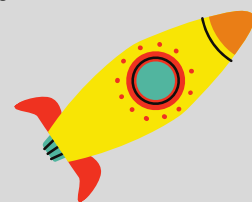
Caption with Intention is open source and freely available to any content creators, television or film studios and streaming platforms.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences recently recognized Caption with Intention, supporting the technology as a new industry standard.

EMPOWER
EVERY
VOICE



BUZZ



Community Dances

August 8, 2025

6 PM to 8:30 PM

October 10, 2025

Lake Charles Event Center
(Exhibition Hall)
900 Lakeshore Drive
Lake Charles, LA 70601
337-475-3100



FHF Office will be closed
September 1, 2025
in Observance of
Labor Day.

Join Us for
#988Day
on 9/8

988 DAY NO JUDGMENT.
JUST HELP.



September 8, is 988 National
Suicide Prevention Day.
judgment-free support
for mental health, substance
use, and more.

Back to school for kids with disabilities: Introducing your child to their teacher

It's back-to-school season and many of us have been spending the last few weeks finding the right backpack, locating the missing lunch box, or buying some pencils and tissue boxes for the classroom. If your child has disabilities, you may have also been making social stories or creating transition charts or visual schedules. Don't forget about one of the most important pieces: introducing your child to the teacher.

We all want the relationship between our kids and their teachers to be a positive one. To help get everyone off on the right foot, try introducing your child to their new teacher by creating a "Meet my child" document. Bring it with your child to meet the teacher or better yet, if possible, ask your child to carry it along.

I also like to write a letter and send it to my child's teacher by email. This helps me build a relationship with them and establish great communication from the start of the year.

(Prefer to listen? Check out Episode 24 of Just Needs: a podcast about parenting children with disabilities.)



2026 Partners in Policymaking

Partners in Policymaking is a national leadership training program for people with developmental disabilities and parents of young children with developmental disabilities. It provides the most current knowledge about disability issues and develops the competencies necessary for effective advocacy to influence public policy at all levels of government.

Partners offers six weekend sessions in Baton Rouge over six months for leadership development.

The Council is recruiting for the 2026 class!

All classes are mandatory and held in Baton Rouge, LA. The program is **FREE** to all accepted participants. Meals and lodging will be covered for each session. Mileage reimbursement will also be covered for those driving from out of the Baton Rouge area.

The application deadline is **September 30, 2025**.

For additional information, contact
Rebecca Fruge at (337) 371-6737

[https://laddc.org/partners-in-policymaking/
pipcoordinator.la@gmail.com](https://laddc.org/partners-in-policymaking/pipcoordinator.la@gmail.com)



September honors the contributions of service dogs to individuals with disabilities, raises awareness about the importance of supporting organizations that train service dogs, and acknowledges the legal protections these dogs and their handlers have under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). National Service Dog Month highlights the role service dogs play in helping an individual with a disability more independence and better quality of life.



Big Gains for Louisiana's Students with Exceptionalities

In January 2025, Louisiana's results on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), known as the Nation's Report Card, showed exciting news that students with exceptionalities in Louisiana did better than their peers across the country in both achievement and growth (doe.louisiana.gov). These students, who have often struggled, made strong gains in 4th and 8th-grade reading and math. This progress helped Louisiana reach its highest national rankings since 2019 and shows real improvement in its education system.

What Helped Louisiana Improve?

Several key strategies led to this progress:

New Reading Approach: Louisiana began using a new reading plan based on the science of reading, focusing on phonics. Teachers also received special training. This helped them better teach all students, especially those with exceptionalities (doe.louisiana.gov).

Strong Focus on Basic Math: The state also worked hard to make sure students learn important math skills early. Teachers were given better training and resources to help students succeed.

Special Education Playbook: Louisiana created a guide called the Special Education Playbook. It gave teachers clear tools and strategies to help students with disabilities. This playbook earned national praise (doe.louisiana.gov).

Tutoring and Early Help: Louisiana invested in high-quality tutoring and added early reading and math screeners for young children. This helped identify learning needs early and gave students extra support from the beginning (doe.louisiana.gov).

National Recognition

The U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) noticed Louisiana's success. In national reports, the USDOE pointed out how students with exceptionalities and those from low-income backgrounds made clear progress (doe.louisiana.gov). This shows that Louisiana's focus on fairness and inclusion is working and being recognized at the federal level.

Progress in Higher Education, Too

Louisiana is also improving in college-level education. While national data shows that programs for students with intellectual exceptionalities are growing, Louisiana is joining in. For example, Nicholls State University runs the STEPS program to support students with disabilities. It follows national standards and helps students gain college credits and life skills (insidehighered.com).

What's Next?

Louisiana wants to keep this momentum going. Plans include more early math screening, continuing tutoring programs, and using a strong accountability system. Experts say this system is one of the best in the nation (doe.louisiana.gov). The goal is to keep helping students with exceptionalities grow and succeed in school.

In Summary

Louisiana's recent NAEP results show real progress for students with exceptionalities. With better teaching methods, strong support systems, and inclusive laws, the state is closing learning gaps and leading the way in helping all students succeed.

Submitted By: Mylinda Elliot



Disability Pride Month is a time to celebrate the history, achievements, and experiences of the disability community while also raising awareness and promoting inclusion.

The Disability Pride flag shows a straight diagonal banner of five colors on a dark background. Its current design is an update of the original version of the banner with zigzag lines, which created a strobe effect on some computer and phone screens and caused difficulties for people with seizures and migraines.

Each color represents a different type of disability: physical (red), cognitive and intellectual (yellow), invisible and undiagnosed (white), psychosocial (blue), and sensory (green).

Finally, the charcoal background symbolizes mourning and rage for the victims of ableist violence and abuse.



Goodbye to full Social Security benefits at 65: SSA raised the retirement age starting this month

The traditional age of 65 has long symbolized the threshold for retirement and full Social Security benefits in the United States. However, this standard has officially shifted as the government raises the age of retirement.

Beginning in May 2025, individuals will need to wait longer to receive full Social Security retirement benefits, as the Social Security Administration (SSA) continues implementing changes set in motion by legislative reforms from over four decades ago.

These adjustments stem from the Social Security Amendments of 1983, which introduced a gradual increase in the Full Retirement Age (FRA) in response to longer life expectancies and rising financial demands on the Social Security system.

The changes aim to preserve solvency amid shifting demographics. As of 2025, the FRA for individuals born in 1959 has risen to 66 years and 10 months. Those who turn 66 in 2025 will reach their FRA between March and January 2026, depending on the birth month.

This increase represents another step toward the SSA's long-term goal of stabilizing benefit payouts.

*See
THE
Full
Story*

INSPIRE
OTHERS

Hundreds of Special Education Students Convene in First-Ever Sensory-Friendly Field day: ‘They can all just be Themselves’

Students in special education programs may abstain from the traditional high school fare; the buzzers and screaming at a basketball game or flashing lights at a school dance could be overwhelming for neurodiverse students, often hypersensitive to loud sounds or bright lights, for example.

For the first time at Sadle Park High School, a day of unforgettable fun was built specifically around their needs. The school hosted an inclusive “adapted field day” for the 200-some special education high schoolers in their district, jam-packed with dozens of activities, from a petting zoo to wheelchair basketball to a bouncy castle.

“A lot of times, other events, like sports and athletic events, are loud and difficult to be in. So this, it’s designed just for them,” said Special Education Teacher Toni Hoke, who brought her students from North Central.

Seeking to unite all the high schoolers receiving special education, Shadle duo Darby Schmidlkofer and Kelleigh Krelkamp set out to recreate the iconic field day in any student’s school career, but centered around inclusion. The two work at Shadle as special education teachers and speech-language pathologists, respectively.

“Inclusion is paramount and at the forefront of our brain always. We want to make sure that students feel as though they’re getting their actual high school experience,” Schmidlkofer said. “It’s such a pivotal time in their life, and we want them to feel involved and actively participate.”

During their regular school day, the teens rotate around different zones laid out in the school’s campus. In the courtyard, community partners have contributed different activities meant to entertain the senses: a large tub of gel water beads that students squish and run their hands through; huge bubble wands; a dark tent filled with colored lights and stuffed animals that play music and dance at the touch of a button.



How do I create an online account to renew Medicaid

Go to the Medicaid [self-service portal](#) on your computer or mobile device.

1. At the bottom right corner of the page, click on "I would like to create an account".

2. You will be taken to the "Before You Create an Account" screen.

This will tell you what you need to get started, including that:

- You will need an email address and access to that email. To finish creating your account we must send an email to you to be sure we have the right contact for your account. That is the last step to create your account.
- You will be asked to create a user ID, password and a six-digit PIN number. Be sure to save the user ID, password and PIN in a safe place. You will need them later. DO NOT use your email address as your User ID.

3. Click "Next" at the bottom right corner of the screen to move to the "Create an Account" screen. There are three (3) steps you must fill out to create an account:

Step 1: Personal Information– you will need to enter your name and email address.

Step 2: Your Account Credentials – this is where you pick out your User ID, password and PIN. Remember, your User ID cannot be your email address.

Step 3: The Security Check – enter the letters or number from the image to prove you are not a robot.

4. Click the "Create an Account" button.

5. After clicking "Create an Account" you will get an email from Medicaid at the email address you entered in the personal information step. The email will ask you to click a link to finish creating your account. Click the link and finish your account set up.



[Click Here for Assistance with Medicaid Renewal](#)

[Click here for self-service portal](#)

Information Provided by Navigators for Healthy Louisiana



What Are Public Schools Required to Do When a Student with Disabilities Is Bullied?

Here is a one-page fact sheet that provides concise information on the obligations of public school districts and resources for families on how to ensure their students with disabilities are protected.

[LEARN MORE](#)



Submitted by: Beryl Cook



Virtual Support Group Meetings

Free and open to all adults living with mental health conditions, NAMI Connections provides a safe, accepting, and confidential setting with access to a community of people who relate to your experience. Trained facilitators will guide you in learning to empower yourself in a place that offers respect, understanding, encouragement, and hope.

Meeting Information:

- Group meets on the first Thursday of each month.
- 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM
- Meets on Zoom

Scan QR Code to
register or email

For registration and inquiries: info.namiswla@proton.me

 info.namiswla@proton.me

 225-291-6262

 www.namilouisiana.org





NAMI Family Support Group 2025

First Monday of the Month

5:30 – 7:00 PM

Central Library

301 West Claude Street

Lake Charles, LA 70605

NAMI Family Support is a free program for adult family and friends of a loved one experiencing symptoms of a mental condition. It provides caring, nonjudgemental community support for processing frustration and emotional pain in healthy ways. Led by trained peer facilitators, this program helps participants apply the problem-solving techniques, effective coping strategies, and communication skills introduced in the NAMI Family to Family program. It also offers the lived experiences of others who successfully advanced through the stages of emotional crises to achieve better family relationships despite the challenges of their loved one's mental health condition.

NAMI Southwest Louisiana is currently conducting business through the oversight of NAMI Louisiana's director. For More Information, contact

Mary Alice Cash, Program Director

Post Office Box 1509

Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821

Main: 225-291-6262

www.namilouisiana.org

Family Engagement in Education for Students with Exceptionalities

Family Engagement, when families and schools work together, is a key part of student success. However, most research focuses on students without exceptionalities. For families of students with exceptionalities, involvement is even more important. These families often need to do more advocacy, communication, and planning to support their child's learning (ctserc.org).

Students with exceptionalities may face more challenges in school and often need extra help. Parents play a big role in making sure their child gets the support they need (ctserc.org). According to IDEA (the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), schools must include parents when creating Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). But true engagement means more than just showing up to meetings—it means working together as real partners (en.wikipedia.org).

Families of students with exceptionalities often face more barriers than other families (files.eric.ed.gov). For example:

- **School structure:** Complicated schedules, many different teachers, and confusing systems can make it hard for parents to stay involved (files.eric.ed.gov).
- **Socioeconomic status and identity:** Things like income, race, and gender can affect how schools treat and include families (en.wikipedia.org).
- **Hidden struggles:** Families may have extra costs and responsibilities, like medical care, transportation, and time spent advocating for their child.

Research shows that several strategies can help improve engagement between families and schools:

Partnership and Respect

Schools should treat families as equal partners. This means more than just inviting them to IEP meetings. It means listening, sharing goals, and building trust (learningpolicyinstitute.org, en.wikipedia.org).

Structured Programs

Programs where schools and families work together, like home-school support plans, have shown better outcomes for students with exceptionalities (sciencedirect.com).

Professional Development

Teachers and school staff need training on how to work with families of students with disabilities. This helps create a more welcoming and supportive school environment (transitionta.org).

Cultural Understanding

Schools should respect families' cultures, languages, and backgrounds. Good communication builds trust and helps families feel more comfortable.

When families are truly involved, students with exceptionalities tend to do better in school. They may have better attendance, stronger IEPs, fewer behavior problems, and more success overall. Parents also feel more confident and better able to support their children.

Even with progress, we still need more research. A 2024 study showed that there aren't enough strong studies on family engagement programs for students with learning differences. National efforts, like the IES "Families of Children with Exceptionalities" project, are working to find better ways to help families be more involved (ies.ed.gov).

Family engagement for students with exceptionalities needs to be more than the usual school outreach. It should include:

- Ongoing IEP teamwork
- Staff training
- Support that connects home and school
- Respectful and clear communication

These steps lead to better outcomes for students and more fairness in education. But we still need more research to create effective programs that truly support all families.

Submitted By: Mylinda Elliot

**PERFECTLY
IMPERFECT**



RIDDLES



Q: What has a bottom at the top?

**Answer is on
the last page**

Guide to Education Laws Protecting Students with ADHD

There are two federal laws, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, that require public schools to provide free and appropriate educational services to children who qualify for them. State laws can add additional protection for students; they cannot strip away any protections specified in these federal laws.

**LEARN,
MORE?**

Submitted by Beryl Cook

How to Survive Summer Vacation

Parenting tips to help make summer vacation a happy one for your ADHD child and the whole family.

By Peter Jaksa, Ph.D.

Hooray for summer! School's out, the weather is warm, and your kids are ready to play. Summer camp may be in the picture, but what's most enticing is the freedom and luxury to do absolutely nothing, until you've done it for a while.

"Mom, I'm bored!" "Dad, there's nothing to do!" It's amazing how quickly the thrill of nothing to do can wear off, sometimes in a matter of days. That's when you realize how tricky the transition from academic routine and structure to the lazy days of summer can be.

When your child has attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), you can make two safe predictions about summertime: Your child is likely to get bored easily and often, and he's almost as likely to become demanding of your time, attention, and patience. The way to manage summer's lack of structure is to strike the right balance between free time and planned time. Use these guidelines to light your way.

Keep a calendar (but leave some blank spaces)

Even during their long break, children need structure to feel secure and have a sense of what to do over the summer, and what they can expect. A simple calendar of events lets your child see what's coming. Fill in ahead of time a mix of major summer activities, such as the family vacation or trips to visit relatives, and casual recreational activities, such as a weekend trip to the zoo or museum. For your younger child, you may also want to prearrange and mark down playdates. Of course, summer should still be a time to relax, so try not to overschedule. One planned event a weekend is great, but three or four can feel rushed and hectic. Leave room for downtime every day, when your child can do whatever he wants – even nothing at all. And make time at the end of the day for the family to relax, read, and talk.

Loosen the reins, but stay on course

The summer months cry out for flexibility. That being said, you don't want to relinquish basic family rules and routines. It's tempting to let kids stay up later in summer, and a bit of that is OK. But remember that even a little sleep deprivation can lead to irritability and meltdowns at any time of year.

Try to maintain basic bedtime habits. Stick to scheduled chores, too, as well as other established behaviors. A whole day in front of the TV should remain taboo even during the summer months.

Use community resources

Take advantage of the summer recreational and educational opportunities that most towns offer.

Find a youth sports league, or sign up for a day camp. Many local rec centers offer swimming, gymnastics, and even computer classes. Encourage your artistic child to join a children's theater group or sign up for community art or jewelry-making courses.

In addition, visit local zoos and museums, and find out where and when summer festivals are scheduled in your area. Don't forget to add selected activities to your calendar. When you plan and write it down, you're more likely to do it.

Play after work

During the school year, you set a regular study time for your child because it helps him get his work done. In the same way, scheduled playtimes in summer, for kids and parents together, will ensure fun as well as family bonding. So play catch in the backyard, take a bike ride, or go out for ice cream. These relaxed times provide just the change of pace you and your child need to de-stress after nine months of school, or even a day's work.

Help your teen find work

A part-time job is a rewarding way for an adolescent to spend some of his summer. Few things work better in building a sense of maturity, independence, and personal competence. The structure a job affords is a plus for kids with ADHD, and the extra spending money is, of course, a bonus. While some teenagers are capable of finding a job for themselves, many need guidance and encouragement.

Start by defining work goals for your child, such as earning money or learning a new skill. Discuss the right types of jobs, based on her skills, organizational ability, and attention capability. Then help her choose where to apply. It doesn't hurt to work on interview skills; role-play with business owners and managers here. Your encouragement and support may be just what your teen needs to follow through on a job search.

Let kids be kids

This may be the key to your child's summer vacation success. Essentially, being a child is natural, spontaneous, and easy. You encourage this process when you allow your child the time and freedom to do what he feels like doing.

As I said earlier, some structure during summer vacation is important. But so is unstructured downtime. Most children can be amazingly creative in finding ways to have fun. With your encouragement, the freedom to do nothing opens up countless possibilities to do anything. Parents needn't be constant entertainment directors in the summer. It may be more helpful to express confidence in your child's ability to be creative and inventive – and then let him. So go ahead and schedule some activities, then get out of the way and let your child do what comes naturally.

For more information like this:

CLICK HERE



Homeownership and Housing Counseling

LOUISIANA RANKS #1 IN MORTGAGE DENIAL RATES FOR BLACK APPLICANTS*

*According to the HMDI Calculations of 2023 HMDA Data

HAVE YOU BEEN:

- TURNED DOWN FOR A LOAN
- CHARGED MORE, OR
- GIVEN WORSE TERMS

BECAUSE OF YOUR RACE, COLOR, RELIGION, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY, DISABILITY, PREGNANCY OR BECAUSE YOU HAVE CHILDREN?

(504) 596-2100
(877) 445-2100
OR VISIT LAFAIRHOUSING.ORG



The work that provided the basis for this publication was supported by funding under a grant with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The substance and findings of the work are dedicated to the public. The author and publisher are solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained in this publication. Such interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views of the Federal Government.



We remain committed to providing opportunities for first-time and low-income individuals looking to buy a home.

Here at Louisiana Fair Housing Action Center (LaFHAC), we know that securing healthy and affordable housing is key to ensuring long-term stability for families everywhere. Check out our link below for support in navigating and securing an equal lending process or to learn more about our housing counseling work.

[Learn More About Our Housing Counseling Services](#)

Louisiana Offering Free Community College for Adults: It's Time to Apply

Louisiana's Legislature could expand funding for a program that allows adults to access free community college tuition in high-demand fields, but lawmakers will likely wait until budgeted money is expended before adding more.

Applications opened June of 2025 to access grants available through the M.J. Foster Promise Program in the Louisiana Community and Technical College system.

Adults 19 and older can apply to earn credentials in Louisiana's growing industry sectors like construction, healthcare, information technology, manufacturing and transportation and logistics.

The M.J. Foster Promise Program, named after the late Gov. Mike Foster as the father of the modern community college system, reaches people in every corner of the state.

Students interested in applying for the program should complete the 2025-2026 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®). The FAFSA® must be completed before a student receives a second payment of award funds. Students can access FAFSA completion assistance by visiting geauxfafsa.org

College
Just Ahead

Let's Talk About It



SAFETY, CONSENT, AND HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

This session is designed for mature audiences, including individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families, caregivers, and professionals who support them. Together, we'll talk openly and respectfully about healthy relationships, boundaries, safety, and consent.



Dr. Sharon Delvisco - Project Director
Training & Course Development
Team Dynamics, LLC

 **OCT. 21, 2025**
1:00P.M.

REGISTER NOW!

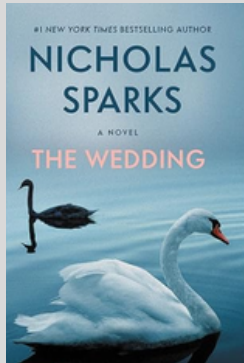
<https://tinyurl.com/letstalk1021>



Lead with Courage



Book Club



Sulphur Next Chapter Book Club is reading **"The Wedding"** by Nicholas Sparks.

The Sulphur Next Chapter Book Club meets on Tuesdays at 6 PM at Sulphur Regional Library, 1160 Cypress St, Sulphur, LA 70663.

Thursday Next Chapter Book Club is reading **"The Time Machine"** by H. G. Wells.

The Thursdays Next Chapter Book Club meets on Thursdays at 5 PM at Jason's Deli, 3527 Ryan St, Lake Charles, LA 70605.



For more information about our book clubs for adults with disabilities, contact Wallace Johnson at Families Helping Families of SWLA, (337) 436-2570.



Taking Action Against Abuse
Workshop Series



EMPOWERMENT AND PROTECTION: INCREASING AWARENESS AND ACTION AGAINST ABUSE IN THE IDD COMMUNITY'S FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

August 26, 2025
1 to 2:30 pm Lake Charles



Sharon Delvisco, DSW, LMSW, CGMP



Rebecca Mandal-Blasio, PhD, BACS-D

<https://bit.ly/LC826>



Taking Action Against Abuse is an interactive training designed to equip individuals with IDD, caregivers, families, and community partners with the knowledge and skills to recognize, prevent, and respond to abuse and neglect. This session will cover the definitions and signs of abuse, the importance of self-advocacy, and practical steps for reporting and intervention. Participants will engage in activities, discussions, and exercises to strengthen their ability to take protective action. By fostering awareness, confidence, and collaboration, this training empowers individuals with IDD and their support networks to create safer, more supportive environments.

Join us to be part of the solution—because awareness leads to action, and action leads to change.

Calcasieu Parish Public Library: Central Branch
301 W Claude Street
Large Meeting Room

Questions?
sharon@teamdyn.com

For Men With ADHD and Those Who Love Them (5 Tips)

Men with ADHD may bring unique challenges to a relationship — career shame, emotional dysregulation, and anger are a few common sticking points. Learn how both partners in a relationship can recognize these symptoms of ADD and work through them together.

How ADHD Impacts Men

We've gotten much better at thinking about the issues unique to women with ADHD. So what about the other half: men diagnosed with the condition? Understanding the pressure points and patterns that a man labors under after receiving his diagnosis is critical to relationship happiness. After a decade of working with couples affected by attention deficit disorder (ADHD or ADD), I've noticed some patterns that commonly impact men with ADHD — and their significant others.

I am not stereotyping men. What follows doesn't apply to every man with ADHD. Sometimes these patterns apply to women, too. But see if any of these five traits strike a chord as you think about your relationship.

1. Shame Over ADHD-Related Job Problems

Adults with ADHD are more likely to have work problems — trouble getting along with others at the job; quitting (out of hostility toward the workplace or out of boredom); being disciplined; and getting fired.

Many men define themselves in large part by their work. For them, job difficulties lead to shame and extreme sadness. Even when men excel, low self-esteem and ADHD symptoms may make it tough to hold a job.

One client told me, "I wasn't afraid of work as much as being judged for the results, because I never knew if I was doing a good or a bad job." Many men report working longer hours than their co-workers to manage the workload and stay organized. Such stressors put pressure on relationships.

Shame is also a factor for men with ADHD-related job problems. One man I worked with lost three high-level positions in a row because he couldn't manage the paperwork required for the jobs. After the third loss, he was so embarrassed that he left the house each morning and pretended to go to work, because he couldn't face disappointing his wife again.

Partners of men with ADHD sometimes exacerbate work and job-loss issues. For example, job searches are overwhelming and paralyzing for adults with ADHD. Searches require planning and sustained effort, and enduring repeated rejections. These tend not to be ADHD strengths. Being anxious or critical of the ADHD partner's search adds pressure, making the search even more overwhelming.

I've seen men refuse to look for a job rather than work through how they feel about finding one. One man told me recently, "I feel fear about searching for a job, so I become stubborn." Fear and stress represent weakness to many men; stubbornness feels strong, even if it isn't in a person's best interest.

Advice for Men with ADHD

Hire a good ADHD coach to help you learn to stay on top of the boring, but necessary, parts of your job.

Two of the biggest dangers of ADHD on the job are getting along with others and having behavior problems. If you have anger management issues, set that as a target symptom and get treatment for it. Set small, easy-to-meet goals. This will lessen your feelings of overwhelm and keep you moving forward.

Advice for Partners of Men with ADHD

Don't panic and add to the pressures of a job search. Instead, support getting outside assistance, such as a recruiter or a job placement agency.

Don't compound the shame of job loss or workplace problems. Remain empathetic to the difficulties that having ADHD adds to holding or finding a job. This can lessen your partner's resistance to getting needed help.

Support the efforts of ADHD partners to manage emotional volatility.
Be prepared to be the primary earner for at least part of your time together.

2. Emotional Regulation Challenges for Men with ADHD

Emotional dysregulation, responding quickly and intensely to stimuli, is a core characteristic of ADHD. I see more men than women with anger-management issues. Our society accepts raging men, but has little tolerance for angry women.

The result is that fewer men with ADHD see their anger and rage as a problem. A good number of men use their rage as a legitimate way to get a partner to back off, and blame their partner for their outbursts. One man told his wife, "You started this argument, so I snapped at you. So what? Get over it!"

Another refused to admit he was angry when he was yelling and calling his partner names. Yet another told me, "I've gone from 0 to 60 in a nanosecond my entire life, so it's OK," ignoring the pain and suffering his outbursts regularly caused.

Advice for Men with ADHD

Identify anger management issues for what they are: ADHD symptoms that hurt you at home and on the job. They need treatment. Consider medication, mindfulness training, and increased exercise for mood stabilization.

Seek counseling to understand the underlying triggers of emotional outbursts and address them.

Advice for Partners of Men with ADHD

Separate the ADHD symptom from the person who has it. This isn't a moral failing; it's a symptom.

Constructively communicate that his anger hurts you, rather than fighting back.

Create verbal cues with your partner to interrupt arguments before they get out of control. My husband and I agreed to use "aardvark" at times when I notice he is agitated, but seems unaware of it. This odd word means "stop talking, and take some time to calm down." It has worked well for us.

3. Retreat as a Coping Strategy for Men with ADHD

Research suggests that men have greater difficulty recovering from conflict than women do. Their blood pressure remains elevated after conflict, and they have more trouble calming themselves. Conflict feels physically uncomfortable, so men tend to avoid it.

Men with ADHD may feel bombarded with constant critiques of their underperformance at home and at work. The struggle to become reliable in the face of distraction and planning problems causes many men to retreat from conflict. This may lead to cover-up behavior, like lying, and being emotionally distant.

Some see retreat as benign and necessary. One man told me he covers up mistakes because "it is easier to silently commit myself to take actions that will make up for them" than to be in constant conflict with his wife. Enduring relationships rely on connection and trust, so understanding male avoidance can counteract this problem.

Advice for men with ADHD

Reflect on what your retreat gets you (less pain in the moment) and what

[Read the Whole Article](#)

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 30, 2025
10:30AM - 1:00PM**

IN PERSON @ FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES OF SWLA

**NO CAP-
YOU'RE ENOUGH!!!!**

**ONLY 10 SEATS AVAILABLE,
REGISTER TODAY!**

**JOIN US FOR THIS FUN, INFORMATIVE (IN PERSON)
WORKSHOP!**



**WE WILL BE LEARNING ABOUT ACCEPTING WHO YOU ARE,
POSITIVE SELF-TALK, COPING SKILLS, HEALTHY MINDS AND
BODIES.**

**FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES AND
SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS 8 TO 14 YEARS**



ACTIVITIES AND A LIGHT LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED.

**Guest Speaker: Leslie Petross, RD, LDN
CPSB Student Wellness Educator**



REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED; SEATING IS LIMITED

**EVENT HELD @ THE FHFSWLA OFFICE
324 WEST HALE STREET, LAKE CHARLES, LA 70601**

Link to Register:

<https://tinyurl.com/YwkshpReg73025>

For More Information Call 337-436-2570
or email bacook@fhfswla.org
dtpatrick@fhfswla.org



Louisiana Family to Family Health Information Center (F2F HIC) - Empowering Families Through Knowledge and Support

Welcome to the Family to Family Health Information Center (F2F HIC) of Louisiana. At the heart of our mission lies a profound commitment: to arm families with information, training, and resources so they can advocate for enhanced health services and outcomes for their children.

Who We Are & Where We're Located

We proudly operate under the auspices of Bayou Land Families Helping Families, a key initiative of the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council. Our center stands as a beacon of support for families with children or adults with special health care needs and professionals.



Program Supervisor: Trinity Cole

Address: 286 Hwy. 3185, Thibodaux, LA 70301

Phone: (985) 447-4461

Email: tcole@blfhf.org

Website: <http://www.blfhf.org/>

Our Services and Support

- The Family to Family Health Information Center offers specialized services and support for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs and their Families, spanning ages 0-26. Our offerings include:
- Empowering parents and transitioning youth with skills for proactive partnership with medical professionals.
 - Facilitating families' navigation through health care challenges and financing complexities.
 - Outreach through health fairs to raise awareness about community programs and services.
 - Conducting training sessions on services, resources, and advocacy for superior health care services in our state.

Statewide Outreach, Localized Support

Our collaboration extends beyond our immediate premises. Through our partnership with Families Helping Families Resource Centers across the state, we ensure that Louisiana's Family to Family Health Information Center reaches you right in your backyard.

Your Information Specialists

Our specialists, parents of children or youth with special health care needs, are not just professionals – they resonate with the experiences, challenges, and aspirations of families with special health care needs. Their lived experiences make them an invaluable resource for understanding and addressing your concerns.

A National Network of Support

Our efforts are part of a larger network. Family-to-Family Health Information Centers (F2Fs) function as family-led organizations supporting families of children with special health care needs. This initiative receives robust support from Family Voices through the Family Engagement and Leadership in Systems of Care grant, funded until 2028 by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Maternal Child Health Bureau.

Furthermore, the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) sponsors F2Fs not just in our state but across the nation, encompassing every state, the District of Columbia, five US territories, and dedicated F2Fs serving American Indians and Alaska Natives. This cohesive network ensures that CYSHCN and their families receive comprehensive support, irrespective of their location.

Connect with Us

For more information or to locate an Information Specialist in your region, please reach out using the contact information provided above or to your local Families Helping Families Center. We're here to guide, assist, and walk alongside you in your journey.



Join the movement. Be heard. Make a difference!

[Click here to Join 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.

JOIN TODAY!

WHAT DOES LaCAN DO?

- KEEPS YOU INFORMED
- CONNECTS YOU TO LAWMAKERS
- DELIVERS TIMELY ACTION ALERTS
- EMPOWERS YOUR VOICE

Join the movement. Be heard. Make a difference.
laddc.org/lacan



LEGISLATIVE VISITS
YELLOW SHIRT DAYS
LEGISLATIVE ROUNDTABLES
INFORMATION & ACTION ALERTS

Louisiana Council's Advocacy Network is an initiative of the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council



The Importance of Inclusion, Part 2: Inclusion and the Law

Why is the inclusion of children with disabilities in schools and communities important?

This webinar explores that question and the federal laws that support inclusive practices.

 **Tuesday, July 15, 2025**

 **1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

 **Karen Scallan, FHF of GNO**

 **Wallace Johnson, Mylinda Elliot, FHF SWLA**



FREE WEBINAR

REGISTER NOW

<https://tinyurl.com/071525inclusionPt2>

5inclusionPt2



KIDS COUNT

The Annie E. Casey Foundation created Kids Count to improve the lives of millions of children by advancing sound policy reforms informed by evidence and data. Kids Count provides legislators, public officials, and child advocates with reliable data, policy recommendations, and tools to advance policies that benefit children.

Kids Count has tracked overall child well-being along four domains to gather how kids are doing in each U.S. state.

Click Louisiana for 2025 Data. 



Unlearning Ableism: Disability in the Age of Social Media



In celebration of Disability Pride Month, the National Organization on Disability is sitting down with a panel of disability influencers, activists, and personalities to discuss what it means to be truly inclusive, combat ableism, and the role mental health plays in online advocacy.

Webinar:

**Thursday, July 17, 2025
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM CST**

**Click Here to
Register**

Accessibility:

Captions and ASL Sign Language
Interpreter will be provided.

Accommodations/Questions:

Contact info@nod.org with your request
or inquiry.

We Would Love To Hear From You!

Your stories inspire us and help others understand the impact of our services. If our organization has supported you or your family, we'd love to hear about your experience!

Share Your Story in Three Simple Ways:

1. Email - Write your testimonial and send it to us at info@fhfswla.org. Feel free to include details about how we helped and the difference it made for you or your loved one.
2. Video (Self-Recorded) - Create a short video (3 minutes or less) sharing your experience and email it to info@fhfswla.org. A heartfelt message straight from you helps us connect with others even more!
3. Video (Recorded at Our Office) Prefer to record your story with our support? Come to our office, and we'll help you record your video. Call Susan (337) 436-2570 to schedule a time.

Your story may be featured on our website, social media, or other materials to inspire and inform families like yours.



Thank you for being part of our community—
families helping families it is who we are, it is what we do!

Have Questions? Reach out to
smriehn@fhfswla.org, and we'll be happy to assist.
We look forward to hearing from you!



SAVE THE DATE

GODA Annual Conference



July 22nd, 23rd, 24th,
2025



Louisiana Purchase Room
W.C.C. Claiborne Building



Virtual Option Available July 22nd and
23rd. July 24th is **VIRTUAL ONLY**

REGISTER HERE:



The Governor's Office of
DISABILITY AFFAIRS

**2025 GODA Conference is back in-person and virtual with
lots of incredible information for all!**

Tuesday, July 22nd & Wednesday, July 23rd
W.C.C. Claiborne Building - Louisiana Purchase Room
(Virtual Attendance Option Available)

Thursday, July 24th - ALL VIRTUAL

[Click Here to Register!](#)

Shared Learning Groups on Systems Change and the Importance of Partnerships



**Join the Link Center's quarterly Shared Learning Group sessions!
July 22 & 23, 2025**

People with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), brain injuries, and other disabilities, and co-occurring mental health conditions need support for their whole well-being.

These sessions will explore how each of us has a part to play in changing the way these support systems work. The sessions will focus on partnering with others to influence these systems as a community of people with lived experience, families, professionals, and systems advocates.

Registration:

There are four sessions on the same topic, each for a different target audience. Registration is required and is limited to 200 participants per session.

Tuesday, July 22, 2025

Direct Support Professionals: 12:00-1:30 PM

Clinical Professionals: 2:00-3:30 PM

-
-

Wednesday, July 23, 2025

Families: 12:00-1:30 PM

Individuals: 2:00-3:30 PM

-
-

Live captioning and ASL interpretation will be provided. For more information, click [HERE](#).

Empowerment through Employment Virtual Conference

Disability Rights Louisiana (DRLA), the Louisiana Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), and the statewide network of Families Helping Families Centers (FHF) are hosting the

Empowerment through Employment Virtual Conference
Wednesday, August 13, 2025

The target audience for this conference is people with disabilities, parents of students and adults with disabilities, professionals, and employers.

Questions or more information: email: jdoiron@disabilityrightsla.org.

SAVE THE DATE: AUGUST 13, 2025 EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EMPLOYMENT VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

WE WILL ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS AND MORE:

- When should I start planning for employment for my child with a disability?
- Are there gainful employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities?
- How will employment impact my benefits?
- What happens if I need equipment or technology to be able to work?
- What programs help people with disabilities gain education and employment?

Presented By:


**DISABILITY RIGHTS
LOUISIANA**
Protect. Advocate. Empower.


**LOUISIANA STATEWIDE
INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL**


**Families
Helping
Families**
Supporting All Disabilities
It's Who We Are. It's What We Do.

Do You Have Questions About Special Education?

If Yes, then join us for Answers to some of the most FREQUENTLY asked questions in Special Education FAQ 1.0 webinar

Join us to Learn about the Identification, Referral, and Evaluation part of the Special Education process.

1 PM

THURSDAY, JULY 17, 2025



LINK TO REGISTER:

<https://tinyurl.com/SPEDFAQ1-71725R>

For more information contact
Mylinda at
(337) 436-2570 • 1-800-894-6558
www.fhfswla.org • info@fhfswla.org



SPECIAL EDUCATION FAQ 2.0 LUNCH & LEARN WEBINAR

**Friday, July 25, 2025
at 12 PM**

Link to Register:

<https://tinyurl.com/SPEDFAQ2-72525R>



**Join us for this
informative webinar on
the most frequently
asked questions parents
ask about the
Individualized Education
Program (IEP) and
discipline.**



**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
MYLINDA AT
337-436-2570 • 1-800-894-6558
info@fhfswla.org • www.fhfswla.org**

**FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES
IT'S WHO WE ARE!
IT'S WHAT WE DO!**



Invest in Families Helping Families of Southwest Louisiana.

FHFSWLA is a 501 (c)3 nonprofit agency that relies on donations to meet the needs of our agency's mission and vision. By donating to FHFSWLA, you are investing in the lives of

people with disabilities and their families. If passion paid, we would be the richest nonprofit in SWLA. Unfortunately, passion alone does not fully support our organization.

Please consider contributing so families who are touched by disability can be assured that this is a kind, family. The directed resource center is always here when they need us.

Contributions can be made to:
Families Helping Families of Southwest Louisiana
P.O. Box 1627
Lake Charles, LA 70602

FHF is funded in part by a contract from the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council.

Families Helping Families of Southwest Louisiana

MAILING ADDRESS: P O BOX 1627, LAKE CHARLES, LA 70602

OFFICE ADDRESS: 324 W. HALE ST., LAKE CHARLES, LA 70601

(337) 436-2570 • 1-800-894-6558 • (337) 436-2578 FAX

EMAIL: INFO@FHFSWLA.ORG

WEBSITE: [HTTPS://WWW.FHFSWLA.ORG](https://www.fhfswla.org)

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/fhfswla>

**Riddle Answer:
A leg.**

**Opinions contained herein do not necessarily represent those
of the funding source, and no endorsement should be inferred.**