



of Northeast Louisiana, Inc.

August, September, October 2006

Newsletter

Back to School Edition

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People who know . . . helping families with disabilities

Inclusion:

How to help your student with special needs
adapt to a classroom setting

By Teddy Schwab, Preemie Magazine

Tommy, a friendly five-year-old boy, entered kindergarten as one of the first children with cerebral palsy in his school district to be fully included in a regular class. His parents and the school personnel were apprehensive, but were committed and willing to provide the support needed to ensure a positive school experience for Tommy. Thanks to careful planning and ongoing monitoring of Tommy's progress, he was able to develop the academic and social skills needed to succeed not only in school, but also in life. Tommy's success provided a model for the inclusion of special needs students in the regular class in the school district.

In recent years there has been a movement toward placing special education students in a regular classroom to the largest extent possible and away from placement in self-contained classrooms. Today, this trend has taken on the name "inclusion."

When your student is ready for school, the thought of sending your child with disabilities into a school setting can cause sleepless nights to say the least. If you are familiar, however, with the evolution of inclusion and know how you can help the inclusion process work effectively, the task becomes much less daunting.

Brief History

The inclusion trend was spawned by provisions within the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which is legislation that states children should be educated in the least restrictive environment possible.

In the late 1970s, the term "mainstreaming" was commonly used to describe the placement of special needs students in self-contained classrooms for the majority of the school day with participation in regular class for nonacademic subjects. Since the mid-1980s, inclusion and new techniques have slowly started working their way into the school systems.

Currently, inclusion is applied to the full-time placement of the special-needs student in the regular class as opposed to the use of pull-out programs where the students are taught academic skills with other special-needs students.

The concept of inclusion emphasizes the importance of ensuring that the student with special needs feels and is accepted as an integral part of the class and not just as a part-time visitor.

In the Classroom

Of course, no two children's needs are identical and, therefore, no two inclusion programs will be the same. Inclusion is defined and implemented in different ways depending on the unique needs established in the Individualized Educational Program (IEP), a personalized education regimen created for each child by the parents, specialists, teachers and administrators.

The student might have an instructional aide for part or all of the day who assists the child with the regular curriculum or if necessary implements the IEP. Some children will receive extra help in speech and language, occupational therapy or other special areas.

My experiences with the inclusion of several children who would have possibly been in a self-contained class 30 years ago were quite successful. The greatest success, however, was achieved when there was positive collaboration and a mutually respectful relationship between the school personnel and the parents. The road was not always smooth, but with cooperation, flexibility and effort on everyone's part the children learned, developed friendships and like coming to school.

Parent-School Relations

The best outcomes for the child are reached when the parents trust the school's staff and administration and understand that they care about this child. This does not mean that parents become active participants in the spirit of cooperation. Parent advocacy groups, like Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc., encourage parents to participate in the planning, implementation and evaluation of their child's progress.

Hearing that you should become involved and actually executing this process are two entirely different things. Here are four simple and intuitive techniques on how to develop a positive relationship with your child's teachers and administrators.

Parent Assignment #1: Become a volunteer in the classroom. Knowing what is happening in the classroom is vital. This will allow you to see first-hand what is being done to meet your child's needs and reinforce those techniques at home. Besides, who better to have at school to help the staff learn the nuances of your child's behavior and special needs than yourself?

Parent Assignment #2: Go on field trips with the class. Introducing your child to the classroom setting will, obviously, break any routine you might have developed at home. After establishing a classroom routine, having a parent accompany their child on the first and subsequent field trips will help put your child at ease and increase the likelihood of a successful outing.

Parent Assignment #3: Communicate with the teacher. Establishing an open line of communication and dialogue with the teacher will make things easier if and when problems arise. Approaching the teacher positively and focusing on the child's needs and how to meet them rather than on anyone's failures will work much better than arguing about minor issues that waste time and prevent positive relationships from forming.

Parent Assignment #4: Be understanding. To make inclusion work, teachers need to recognize the concerns of the parents and parents need to acknowledge the school's efforts. Obvious actions, such as saying please and thank you, go a long way. Always keep in mind that the school does have your child's best interests at heart and your child's needs can and will be met.

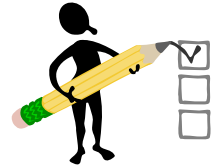
The public education system has come a long way in the last 30 years and inclusion continues to gain support. The best way to ensure a successful transition to the classroom is to understand and help the process and allow the school to do its job. Your job is the same as that of any parent - be a supportive advocate for your child.

Teddy Schwab is a retired public school special education professional whose career as an elementary school resource specialist included assessing children with special needs, writing educational programs, monitoring student progress and working with faculty, parents, and other professionals to ensure the proper learning environment for special needs students.

Back to School

Reprinted from Disability Solutions Newsletter, Spring 2006

Back to school is a time when there is potential for a new start and a fresh slate for students with disabilities, the families and teachers. Below are checklists for both parents and professionals to help start back to school on the right foot.



A Checklist for Families

- Do I believe that I am an equal partner with professionals, accepting my share of the responsibility for solving problems and making plans for my child?
- Am I able to see a professional as a person who is working with me on behalf of my child?
- Do I see my goal, when interacting with professionals, as the mutual understanding of problems so that we can work together to solve them?
- Do I maintain a file of important documents and correspondence so that I have a complete history of services provided to my child and family?
- Do I clearly express my own needs and the needs of my family in an assertive manner?
- Do I clearly state my desire to be an active participant in the decision-making process concerning services for my child? Do I seek mutual agreement on ways to assure my involvement?
- Do I take an assertive role in planning and implementing my child's plan?
- Do I come to appointments having thought through the information I want to give and the questions I want answered?
- Do I accept the fact that the professional often has a large load of families and students to deal with and not just mine?
- Do I treat each professional as an individual and avoid letting past negative experiences or attitudes get in the way of establishing a good working relationship?
- Do I communicate quickly with professionals who are serving the needs of my child when there are family changes or other notable events in my child's life?
- Do I take the opportunity to communicate with other parents? Do we share stories and successes? Do we support each other in reducing isolation? Do I generously share with others the expertise I have gained?
- Do I encourage professionals to communicate with one another and to keep me informed as well?

A Checklist for Professionals

- Can I imagine myself in this parent's place? Have I mentally reversed roles to imagine how I would feel as the parent of this child?
- Do I see this child as a little human who is more than one-dimensional? Can I look beyond diagnosis, labeling, and disability?
- Do I remember that this child about whom we are talking is someone the parent loves?
- Do I really believe that the parents are equal to me as a professional and, in fact, are experts on their own child?
- Do I constantly value the comments and insights of parents and make use of their reservoir of knowledge about the child's total needs?
- Do I communicate hope to parents when I judge their child's progress?
- Do I listen to parents, communicating with words, eye contact, and posture that I respect and value their insights?
- Do I ask parents questions, listen to their answers, and respond to them?
- Do I work to create an environment in which parents are comfortable enough to speak candidly to me?
- Am I informed about the child prior to a meeting? Do I place equal value on the parent's time and my own?
- Do I treat each parent I come in contact with as an adult who can understand a subject as well as I can?
- Do I speak plainly, avoiding the jargon of medicine, sociology, education, psychology, or social work?
- Do I make a consistent effort to consider the child as part of a family, consulting parents about the important people in the child's life and how their attitudes and reactions can affect the child?
- Do I distinguish between fact and fiction when I discuss a child's problems and potential with parents?

Come get a free copy of "Paving the Way: A Resource Guide to Individualized Education Plans." These are produced in our office and we would love to give you one to help you start the new school year off on the right foot.

The Schoolwide Applications Model (SAM): Addressing Academics and Behavior

Much like the "chicken or the egg" phenomenon, the question in many low performing schools often comes down to, "which comes first, academic problems or behavior changes"? Perhaps neither! There is a growing body of evidence that schools must be proactive in the prevention of *both*. There is growing consensus that the key to supporting student achievement is to include School Wide Positive Behavioral Support (SWPBS) strategies and Response to Intervention (RTI) procedures. SWPBS attempts to minimize the onset of both behavioral and academic problems by providing the best school climate possible for both general education and special education. This is done by ensuring that the academic instruction is productive and that the entire school receives social skill and bully-proofing instruction. Similarly, RTI procedures are designed to maximize inclusion of all students in general education. This is done by ensuring that good educational practices are implemented in general education settings, assessing the impact of such practices on student performance before moving to more intensive levels of educational intervention. In RTI, decisions about educational strategies and services are made based on data. As a result, referrals for special education are reduced because many students are able to make progress in regular education using evidenced-based educational strategies.



Temporary Location:
L5007 SAHP
Pennington Center
2323 Kenilworth Parkway
Baton Rouge, LA 70808
985-310-3130
www.hdc.lsuhscc.edu

The Schoolwide Applications Model (SAM) combines components of both SWPBS and RTI, resulting in a more comprehensive model for school improvement. SAM includes six guiding principles:

1. *All instruction is guided by general education.* The most basic tenet of this model is that there is one system that benefits all students. Students who require extensive services and supports would be welcomed since the accompanying funds for these services could be used to benefit a variety of students through integrated applications.
2. *All School Resources are configured to benefit all students.* This model organizes all categorical supports to benefit the most students possible as opposed to only using the special services and supports for identified students.
3. *Schools proactively address social development and citizenship.* SAM incorporates school wide positive behavioral support (SWPBS) to meet the need of social development for all students.
4. *Schools are democratically organized, data driven, problem solving systems.* SAM utilizes a process called Schooled Centered Planning to make decisions about ongoing elements of school reform.
5. *Schools have open boundaries in relation to their families and communities.* Parents and other members of the community serve on a Site Leadership Team to prioritize programs and to advance the mission of the school.
6. *SAM schools enjoy district support for undertaking this extensive systems change effort.* This prevents many difficulties that could be encountered when a significant departure is made from traditional educational bureaucratic management and communication.

These six guiding principles outline a comprehensive strategy to improve overall performance of a school by meeting the needs of regular students and students with special needs with the same program. The SAM model has been implemented in low-performing/high poverty, urban schools in several cities (e.g., Kansas City and Oakland). Preliminary student achievement data is very encouraging.

Editor's Note: If you would like more information about this program, please contact the LSU Health Sciences Center, Human Development Center.

Louisiana Citizens for Action NOW!!

WOW!! What a session we had this year. There were many Action Alerts that asked for phone calls, letters, faxes and emails. I know that sometimes it felt very overwhelming and impossible. But through all of our efforts here in Region 8, joined with all of the members across the state, we did a tremendous job. Just look at what your advocacy resulted in:

- Legislation to protect funds in the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities' budget for additional waiver slots and other community enhancements should any properties be sold or leased (Senate Bill 746).
- Funding for **200 additional** New Opportunities Waiver (NOW) slots in the budget (House Bill 1).

- ☑ Restored state dollars to the budget of the Developmental Disabilities Council and the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities to ensure vital community based services continue for individuals and families.
- ☑ Raised awareness among some legislators that the long waiting list for waiver services is unacceptable and an embarrassment that must be addressed with more than incremental changes.

In addition, the legislature went along with the suggestion of the Department of Health and Hospitals request to close Metropolitan Developmental Center due to the location and the lack of ability to evacuate the residents. These individuals are in the process of choosing home and community based services or placement in another developmental center.

Thank you for all of your hard work this past session. However, you do not have to stop advocating just because of the end of the voting. All of the senators and representatives are now in their home offices. Make contact with them, schedule appointments or make phone calls to let them know you are still advocating for yourself, your child, your family member or your friend. Remind them that we will not go away until there is no waiting list and everyone had the opportunity to choose the supports and services that are best suited to them.

Living with a Disability

What Federal Laws are Available to Help those with Special Needs?

By Jerry Levinson

Reprinted from Exceptional Magazine July 2006 Edition

Every once in a while I dispense with humor and write a column of (at least a little) substance. This column is about federal laws designed to assist those in the special needs community. Here's a quick synopsis (a website where you can read more about the laws follows each description):

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This is the granddaddy of all disability laws. The ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, state and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation and telecommunications. But the law has been called as much as a gift to lawyers as it is to the disabled because of all the "gray" areas" that invite litigation. For example, an "individual with a disability" is defined by the ADA not only as a person who actually is disabled in the commonly understood sense, but as a person "who is perceived by others as having such an impairment." Bring on the lawsuits! (www.ada.gov).

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This law is generally considered the precursor of the ADA. It bars discrimination on the basis of disability in federally conducted programs, in programs receiving federal financial assistance, in federal employment, and in the employment practices of federal contractors. The standards for determining employment discrimination under the Rehabilitation Act are the same as those used in the ADA. (www.eeoc.gov/policy/rehab/html).

Telecommunications Act. To ensure that the disabled have access to once inaccessible products and services such as telephones, cell phones, pagers, call-waiting and operator services, this law required manufacturers of telecommunications equipment and providers of telecommunication services to ensure that such equipment and services are accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities if readily achievable. (www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro).

Fair Housing Act. This law prohibits housing discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status and national origin. Its coverage includes private housing, housing that receives federal financial assistance and state and local government housing. It's unlawful to discriminate in any aspect of selling or renting housing or to deny a dwelling to a buyer or renter because of the disability of that individual, an individual associated with the buyer or renter, or an individual who intends to live in the residence. Discrimination is also barred in financing, zoning practices, new construction design and advertising. (www.hud.gov/offices/fheo).

Air Carrier Access Act. This act bans discrimination in air transportation by domestic and foreign air carriers against qualified individuals with physical or mental impairments, but applies only to air carriers that provide regularly scheduled services for hire to the public. (www.airconsumer.ost.dot.gov).

Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act. Under this law, polling places for federal elections must be physically accessible to the disabled. Where no accessible location for this purpose is available, a political subdivision must

provide an alternate means of casting a ballot on the day of the election. This Act also required states to make available registration and voting aids - such as telecommunications devices - for disabled and elderly voters. (www.usdoj.gov.)

National Voter Registration Act (NVRA). To increase the historically low registration rates of minorities and the disabled that have resulted from discrimination, the NVRA requires all offices of state-funded programs that are primarily engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities to provide all program applicants with voter registration forms, to assist them in completing the forms, and to transmit completed forms to the appropriate state official. (www.usdoj.gov/crt/voting).

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Under the IDEA, public schools are required to make available to all eligible disabled children a free, appropriate public education. This education must be provided in the least restrictive environment appropriate to their individual needs. Under the law, school systems must develop Individualized Education Programs (IEP's) for each child that reflect their individualized needs. Particular procedures must also be followed in the development of the IEP's which must be reviewed at least annually. Specialized teams - including the child's teacher, parents (subject to certain limited exceptions), the child (if determined appropriate) and an agency representative - are charged with developing the IEP's. (www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osep).

The Architectural Barriers Act (ABA). This law requires that buildings and facilities - designed, constructed or altered with federal funds - comply with federal accessibility standards. It also applies to buildings and facilities leased by federal agencies. ABA requirements are limited to architectural standards in new and altered buildings and in newly leased facilities. (www.access-board.gov).

Incontinence Supplies for Children with Medicaid

Louisiana Medicaid now covers disposable incontinence supplies for recipients ages 4 to 20 who need them. These diapers, "pull-ons", and in some cases liners, must be purchased through a Medicaid provider, with Medicaid's "prior approval." Steps are described below:

- Specify type, and the amount of supplies needed per day;
- Be supported by a statement from the child's doctor;
- Be submitted to Medicaid by the store or agency that will supply the diapers.

Medicaid may use a stricter review process for requests of more than six (6) changes a day.

If you would like the forms to give to your supplier or more information, call Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc. locally 318.361.0487, toll free 1.888.300.1302 or via email: info@fhfnela.org.

AAMR Changes Its Name!

AAMR members have changed the name of their organization! Yes! They voted to dump the "R Word" and get themselves a brand new name. The new name is the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

AAMR has been around a long time and has over 9,000 members. Changing their name is a big deal. Valerie Bradley, the recent AAMR president, says that "this is a positive step and we should all feel very good about what this means."

Self-advocates are very happy about this. Self-advocates worked hard for a long time to tell people that they did not like the "R-Word." People do not always listen, but hard work pays off.

People inside of AAMR were listening. They heard what self-advocates were saying and decided to make the change.

The change will not actually take place for about six months. Still, AAMR leaders want you to tell your friends, family and staff about it.

This is good. Yet, the "R-Word" still lives. It lives in the names of many other agencies and organizations that still have not changed their name.

One self advocate from Alabama says that "maybe this will wake people up to do what AAMR did and change their name too!"

Programs for Adults

Third Thursday Thoughts

Third Thursday Thoughts is our new adult newsletter. In addition to giving information on timely topics, it also provides a preview of the Third Thursday get together topic. Both of these items are new programs for adults with developmental disabilities. The newsletter will come out monthly and, as the name implies, the group will meet on the third Thursday of each month from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. There will be a time of fellowship, learning, and the lunch will be served.

If you would like to be a part of this group call locally 318.361.0487, toll free 1.888.300.1320 or via email: info@fhfnela.org.

Next Chapter Book Club

Speaking of books, the Next Chapter Book Club will begin with a training session on Thursday, August 3, 2006 from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm. All of the participants and facilitators will meet for this workshop. There is still time to join the club! If you are interested in participating as a member or a facilitator, please call Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc. for more information. Our local number is 318.361.0487, toll free 1.888.300.1320 or via email: info@fhfnela.org. You can also go directly to the Next Chapter Book Club national website: <http://www.nextchapterbookclub.org/>



Second Saturday Sessions

The Second Saturday Sessions are offerings to area professionals who are in need of continuing education credits.

On the second Saturday of each month from 9:30 am - 12:00 noon, area professionals in the fields of occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy or other fields can come to Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc. to attend a workshop. Upcoming topics include communication, bully, developmental disabilities, and collaboration skills.

These workshops will be an economical way for professionals to continue their education and to get the word out about Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc. There is a cost of \$25.00 per workshop. Please call 318.361.0487 locally, 1.888.300.1320 or via email: info@fhfnela.org. Space is limited so you must pre-register.

Sign Language Classes

Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc. and the NE Chapter of Autism are sponsoring **Free Basic Sign Language classes**.

The next class will be Sunday, August 13, 2006 at 2:00 pm. This is also the time of their Autism Support Group meeting.

Child care is provided.

For more information call Cindy Byrd 318.348.0117 or email George Alexander: gbacoffee@bellsouth.net

Non Permanent ID Tattoos

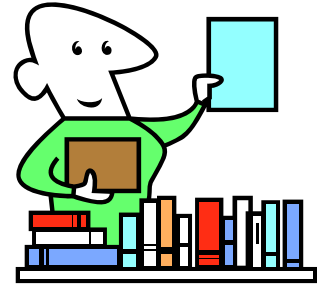
Tattoos with a Purpose is an outlet for those who are looking for options to address personal ID for people who cannot speak for themselves. This company is operated by Cindi Aldrich in Red Oak, Michigan. Cindi will personalize, design and take orders for large and small non-permanent tattoos. There are lots of applications for these (pardon the pun). Cindi also offers bulk purchase discounts.

For more information, you can email Cindi at cindi.aldrich@tattooswithapurpose.com or visit the website: <http://tattooswithapurpose.com/>

Library Additions

We have recently added over 60 new books, videos and magazines to the Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc. library. These new additions are for both parents and professionals. Below is a sampling of titles:

1. The ABC's of Bullying Prevention: A Comprehensive Schoolwide Approach
2. Unlocking Literacy: Effective Decoding and Spelling Instruction
3. The Official Autism 101 Manual
4. Bully Busters: A Teacher's Manual for Helping Bullies, Victims, and Bystanders, Grades 6 - 8
5. The Handbook for Smart School Teams
6. Kids on Wheels - a magazine that has an edition for children and for parents. You can also read this publication on line at: www.kidsonwheels.us.



Please come by and browse our library for these and many other exciting titles.

Kids on Wheels!!

As mentioned in the above article, we do have two new magazines - Kids on Wheels. This company also has more exciting resources. One is **Kids on Wheels: A Young Person's Guide to Wheelchair Lifestyle**. This really neat volume is written by kids, for kids. It covers topics such as cool kids, sports, toys, video games, art, music, books, school, friends, family, and your rights as well as many other topics. The second is **Kids on Wheels: A Guide to Wheelchair Lifestyle for Parents, Teachers and Professionals**. This delves into concepts that are needed for this group such as, empowering kids, parenting resources, health, medicine, insurance issues, education, legal rights, and resources. The list of topics covered by both books is practically endless!

If you are interested in either volume or any other titles mentioned in this newsletter, please drop by our offices and visit our library. We are located in Monroe, near the airport, across the street from the Department of Motor Vehicles. For directions or to ask about a specific title, call locally 318.361.0487, toll free 1.888.300.1320 or via email: info@fhfnela.org

Mixed Messages

If you wanted your child to acquire positive social skills, self-respect, and other beneficial traits, while making new friends, you might enroll her in school or community sports, church groups, or similar activities. This action on your part would send your child a strong message about your expectations for her and your belief in her abilities. In addition, you would probably do everything possible to keep your child away from others who are "troublemakers." These efforts would also send a powerful message to your child---that you don't want her to adopt "troublemaking" traits.

It seems we recognize the power of peer group influence in general society, but it also seems we *fail* to recognize this power in the lives of people with disabilities. The results of this failure are mixed messages and less-than-desirable outcomes for children and adults with disabilities.

For example, a preschooler with a disability is not yet talking. Under today's Conventional Wisdom, this child is enrolled in a

special ed preschool, where he's surrounded by other children with speech disabilities. What will he learn from this peer group where not talking, unintelligible speech, and/or grunts and screeches are common? What about students who are put in "emotional disorder classrooms" or children with autism who are placed in "autism classrooms"? How confusing this must be to a child, when the message he receives is: "We don't want you to head-bang, hand-bite, perseverate, or have other inappropriate behaviors, but we're going to put you in a class where these are the norm."

Yes, we can *hope* children will learn from the adult "experts" in the class, but as many of us have learned, children want to please and be like their peers, not grownups. In *The Nurture Assumption*, author and child development expert Judith Rich Harris writes, "Socialization is not something that grownups do to kids---it is something kids do to themselves." And one way we "self-socialize" is to mimic our peers. Similar situations exist for adults with disabilities: those in the aberrant environments of segregated residential or day programs learn that aberrant behavior is the norm, even as staff tries to eliminate such behavior!

In the mid-1800s, "special (segregated) schools" for children and young adults with disabilities represented best practices. But one of the early promoters of these schools, Samuel Gridley Howe, soon recognized their dangers. In 1866, Howe gave the keynote address at the opening of a new institution and shocked the audience by warning about the dangers of segregation:

We should be cautious about establishing such artificial communities...for any children and youth; but more especially should we avoid them for those who have natural infirmity...Such persons spring up sporadically in the community, and they should be kept diffused among sound and normal persons...Surround insane and excitable persons with sane people and ordinary influences; vicious children with virtuous people and virtuous influences; blind children with those who see; mute children with those who speak; and the like...

[Howe, S.G. (1866) In "Ceremonies on laying the cornerstone of the New York State Institution for the Blind at Batavia," Genes Co., NY: Henry Todd]

*Be careful whom you associate with.
It is human to imitate the habits of those with
whom we interact...
One of the best ways to elevate
your character is to find worthy
role models to emulate.*
~ Epictetus

Why haven't we learned much from the wisdom of the Ancient Greek philosopher Epictetus (see box), Samuel Gridley Howe in the more recent past, or Judith Rich Harris, today? When will we eliminate harmful, artificial environments? Where is our common sense? And how many more mixed messages will we send to the people we care about?

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Partners in Policymaking

6 Training Sessions That Could Change Your Life!

For people with developmental disabilities and parents of young children with developmental disabilities.

- **What is Partners in Policymaking?** Partners is an initiative of the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council. It is a national leadership training program that 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.
- **What is the purpose of Partners?** The purpose of Partners is to develop productive partnerships between people need and using services and those who make public policy and laws. The training is designed to provide knowledge and skills building so that the participants may work to obtain state of the art services for themselves and others.
- **Who should apply?** Motivated, interested people who have developmental disabilities - or who are parents of young children with developmental disabilities, especially people who are not active in existing organizations, but have the enthusiasm and potential to become effective advocates in the future.
- **What is the training like?** Participants attend weekend training sessions one weekend a month, from January through June in Baton Rouge. Sessions begin on Friday afternoon and conclude on Saturday afternoon. **Attendance at all sessions is mandatory.** All expenses for travel, lodging, meals, respite care and attendant services will be reimbursed.
- **How do you apply?** An application can be obtained by calling toll free 1.800.450.8108, 1.800.256.1633 TDD, or in Baton Rouge 225.342.6803, 225.342.5704 TDD. You can also apply via the Council's website by going to www.laddc.org. Applications for the next session should be mailed to The Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council, P.O. Box 3455, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3455 or faxed to 225.342.1970 or submitted through the website by **September 20, 2006**. **The next Partners class will begin in January of 2007.**

Mission and Vision of Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc.

Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc. strives to ensure that all of our services and resources are timely, relevant and in keeping with our mission and vision. Our Board has recently reviewed and revised our mission and vision statements to more clearly show our commitment to home and community based supports and services. Below are the newly adopted statements:

Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc. is a family directed resource center whose mission is to provide crisis relief, information and referral, education, training, and peer to peer support to individuals with disabilities and their families living in the community.

Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc. vision is to strengthen, support and empower individuals with disabilities and their families while promoting home and community inclusion.



LaTEACH is asking you to make written comment on the Notice of Intent that the Louisiana State Department of Education has issued on PartXCI. Bulletin 1922, Compliance Monitoring Procedures. This Notice of Intent is regarding moving the final authority of withholding funds to schools and school districts found to be in continued non compliance to BESE. This will make the process of compliance longer and more complicated. Bulletin 1922 **SHOULD** read that the State Superintendent of Schools and the Louisiana Department of Education should have the final authority to withhold these funds and they **should not** have to bring this before BESE each time to ask that this be done. This will add additional time to mandatory compliance

Please forward your written comments to:

Nina A. Ford
Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
Box 94064, Capitol Station
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9064

The deadline for written comments is: 4:30 p.m., August 9, 2006

For more information on LaTEACH or to join our membership, please call Christy Cormier at 337-436-2570 or 1-800-894-6558. You can also email Christy at fhfswla@xspedius.net.

LaTEACH's Mission: *"LaTEACH promotes appropriate, inclusive education for all students. We work to make parents, educators, the general public and state leadership informed and supportive of research based and effective practices used appropriately for each student."*

Education Resources - Websites

The Special Education Muckraker
www.specialeducationmuckraker.com

The Council of Exceptional Children
www.cec.sped.org

Home Schooling
www.home-ed-magazine.com

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council
www.laddc.org

Schwab Learning
www.schwablearning.org

Private School
www.capenet.org

Educational Resources Information Center
www.eric.ed.gov

**Families Helping Families
of Northeast Louisiana, Inc.**
www.fhfnela.org

Calendar of Events

Date	Activity	Where	When	Contact Staff Person
August 3, 2006 Thursday	Next Chapter Book Club Training	Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc.	9:00 am - 3:00 pm	Aliscia L Banks Nann McMullen
August 3, 2006 Thursday	West Monroe Kiwanis	West Monroe	12:00 noon	Aliscia L Banks
August 5, 2006 Saturday	Back to School Fair	Monroe Civic Center		Laura Nettles
August 12, 2006 Saturday	Second Saturday CEU Class	Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc.	9:30 am - 12:00 noon	Nann McMullen
August 17, 2006 Thursday	Ouachita Parish Transition Core Team	Louisiana Delta VoTech Campus West Monroe	10:00 am	Lisa Robinson
August 17, 2006 Thursday	Third Thursdays Self-Determination Workshop	Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc.	10:00 am - 12:00 noon	Nann McMullen
August 19, 2006 Saturday	Back to School Fair	Reveille United Methodist Church		Laura Nettles Nann McMullen
August 23, 2005 Wednesday	Board Retreat	Residence Inn by Marriott	1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	ALL Staff
August 29, 2006 Tuesday	Staff Training - ½ Day	Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc.		ALL Staff
October 14, 2006 Saturday	Second Saturday CEU Class	Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc.	9:30 am - 12:00 noon	Nann McMullen
October 18, 2006 Wednesday	Neurology Conference	Shreveport		Laura Nettles
October 18, 2006 Wednesday	Board Meeting	Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc.	12:00 noon	Aliscia L Banks Pat Evans Nann McMullen
October 19, 2006 Thursday	Third Thursdays Self-Determination Workshop	Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc.	10:00 am - 12:00 noon	Nann McMullen
October 19, 2006 Thursday	Transition Fair	Louisiana Delta VoTech Campus West Monroe		Lisa Robinson



Position Available!!!

Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc. is accepting applications for the position of **Children's Special Health Services (CSHS) Parent Liaison**. This is a permanent, part-time position of 25 hours per week.

Job Description: Provide information and training about CSHS services, Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana, Inc. resources and other community supports and services available to families of children with special health care needs.

Assist families to ensure active and meaningful parent participation in program activities.

Qualifications: High School Diploma or GED
Parent of a child with special needs
Minimum 1 year experience in organized volunteer work related to parent activities
Able to communicate effectively
Good organization skills
Public speaking skills
Basic computer knowledge

Mail Resume to: Aliscia L Banks, Executive Director
5200 Northeast Road
Monroe, LA 71203
abanks@fhfnela.org

Families Helping Families of Northeast Louisiana programs and this newsletter is funded by the Louisiana Department of Education, the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council, the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, the Office of Mental Health, and the Department of Health & Hospitals.