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*~Inside This Issue~*

Family Voices 2012 Education Conference New Office Pictures 19th Annual Developmental Disabilities Conference	1
Reading Rockets Educational Article LaTEACH Update! F2F Article Region 3 Family Forum ECSS Autism & Education Support Groups	2&3
GoodSearch Lending Library Workshop Pictures Family Testimonial: Children's Special Health Services & EarlySteps	4 & 5
Spotlight Article: By JoAnn Collins What are Functional Skills, and Why Does My Child with a Disability Need Them? Local Dentist Contributes to Non Profit Agency	6 & 7
Support Groups	8

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V  
P**

*Early!*

*Save the Date*

**Event:** Annual Education Conference

**Date:** March 9, 2012

**Keynote Speaker:**



**Dr. James Ball Ed. D., BCBA-D Autism Specialist & President/CEO of JB Autism Consulting**

For more information, please contact our office at 985-447-4461, 1-800-331-5570, or email at [ragaingray@bellsouth.net](mailto:ragaingray@bellsouth.net) or [sriggs@bellsouth.net](mailto:sriggs@bellsouth.net).

# Bayou Land Families Helping Families

*Region 3 Quarterly Newsletter October, November, December 2011*

Louisiana FAMILY VOICES® Bayou Land Families Helping Families is the Family Voices chapter for the state of Louisiana. Education and trainings are provided to families in an effort to support the needs of the child with a special healthcare concern.

Trainings and resources provided through our center will support parents, guardians, and caregivers as they develop into informed, empowered, and self-sufficient advocates. Louisiana Family Voices is an affiliate of the national Family Voices.

## Take a Look at our New Building!



Bayou Land Families Helping Families  
Presents our  
19th Annual Developmental Disabilities Conference

*Collaborative Efforts:  
Providing Local Supports & Services in Region 3*



Guest speakers for the day will be representing  
**The Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities**  
state office located in Baton Rouge and **The Greater New Orleans  
Resource Center on Developmental Disabilities.**

November 17, 2011

9:00 am - 3:30 pm

Terrebonne Parish Library (North Branch)

4130 W Park Ave

Gray, LA 70359

Anyone interested in attending can rsvp by contacting Ragain at [ragaingray@bellsouth.net](mailto:ragaingray@bellsouth.net), 985-447-4461, or 1-800-331-5570.



## Parent tips for raising strong readers and writers

### Growing Readers!

Brought to you by Reading Rockets, Colorin Colorado and LD OnLine



### Literacy in the Sciences: Activity No. 8

#### **Patterns and Categorizing**

Even our youngest children are able to recognize patterns and use categories to process new information. Almost everything we see, hear, or touch contains details that our brain processes. Without realizing it, our brain is looking for what is new, what is different, and what has changed. New information is matched to a category that already exists in our mind.

This need to find order, to compare and contrast, and to pay attention to what remains the same is an important part of early learning. As your child becomes a reader, he or she will learn to find patterns in letters and words and use this information to read groups of words (for example, sun, fun, bun all contain the ‘-un’ letter pattern or family). Your reader will also categorize words by sounds (for example short/long vowel words, rhyming/non rhyming words) or by meaning (for example words that mean the same thing, or words that are opposites).

Parents and caregivers can build pattern recognition and categorization skills in science and math through these simple activities:

- **Sort it:** Provide lots of opportunities to explore many kinds of materials that can be sorted and categorized by size or shape. These include small plastic toys such as animals and vehicles, Unifix cubes (or other “manipulatives”), blocks, or other small objects such as coins, stamps, cups, and bottle caps. Have children explore different ways to sort objects into similar groups. The groups, or categories, could be general concepts such as “hard things” “soft things” or something personal, such as “things that were gifts,” or “things I found.”
- **Same and different:** Help your child learn about different classifications scientists use to help them organize information. Use children’s books from the library to learn more about different classifications of animals, for example, mammals, and reptiles. Discuss what reptiles and mammals have in common, and what makes each unique.
- **Riddle me this:** Use riddles to help your child gain practice with “rules,” which are part of patterns and categorizing. For example, “I am a shape. I have four sides. Each side is the same length.” Good listening and a growing ability to sort through information will help your child solve the riddle correctly.
- **Make a mini grocery store:** Save your food boxes and juice containers for a few days, then enlist your child to stock the shelves. Designate one area for grains, another for dairy, and another for proteins. Have your child sort the objects into the correct location. This is a great opportunity to talk about healthy food choices.

Patterns, categories, and classifications are a part of everyday life and everyday learning. Use these ideas to help jump-start conversations with your young learner.

#### **Literacy in the Sciences: Patterns and Categorizing recommended children’s books:**

Five Creatures

By Emily Jenkins

Same Same

By Marthe Jocelyn

Tree of Life:

The Incredible Biodiversity of Life on Earth

The Vegetables We Eat

By Gail Gibbons

Parent tips for raising strong readers and writers Growingreaders! Brought to you by Reading Rockets, Colorin Colorado and LD OnLine Reading Rockets, Colorin Colorado, and LD OnLine are national education services of WETA, the flagship public broadcasting station in Washington, D.C.

#### **Region 3 Programs and Services**



## SB 59 is now ACT 328

### *Governor Jindal signs Senate Bill 59*



Senate Bill 59 has been signed into law by Governor Jindal. This now makes the bill ACT 328.

**Congratulations to LaTEACH members for a job well done this legislative session. Policymakers heard your voice. Your advocacy has influenced and created new policy in Louisiana.**

**Students with exceptionalities, their families and school staff now have assurances that the appropriate use of restraints and seclusion will be used in schools.**

**Anyone interested in joining LaTEACH, can sign up by contacting Christy Cormier at Families Helping Families of SWLA 2927 Hodges St Lake Charles, LA 70601, 337-436-2578, or 1-800-894-6558.**



**Interested in having parent directed monthly Education Support Group in the Thibodaux area?**  
Contact our office for more information at 985-447-4461, 1-800-331-5570, or [ragaingray@bellsouth.net](mailto:ragaingray@bellsouth.net).



## Know Your Rights in Health Care

By Karen Scallan  
Program Director,  
La Family to Family Health Information Center

When you go to the grocery store and the clerk overcharges you or refuses to serve you, most of us respond by asking for a manager. Why then do we not seek a higher authority when it comes to problems with a health care or other service provider? For whatever reason, this is frequently the case. Patients need to know their rights in the health care system.

Any provider accepting Medicaid, LaCHIP or Medicare or who receives a federal grant--whether they be a therapist, primary care physician, dental provider, hospital or nursing home--is considered a "Federal financial assistance" recipient. As such they are subject to nondiscrimination laws. These laws include Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

These entities must not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex or religion. Recipients of Federal financial assistance must also take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to their programs, services and activities by people who do not speak English or are limited in English proficiency. They may need to provide language assistance services, such as interpreters and translated documents and provide program brochures in languages specific to the languages spoken in their area.

If you feel you or your child has been discriminated against by a medical provider, we recommend you first go up the chain of command in that health care facility. If you do not feel the situation was corrected, you can contact the US Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights which has the authority to investigate these types of complaints. Complaints must be filed within 180 days of the discriminatory act unless a waiver is granted by the Department. The Louisiana Family to Family Health Information Center can help you navigate the systems of care and complaint processes. For more information contact The Louisiana Family to Family Health Information Center at 800-331-5570 or U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, Voice Phone: 214-767-4056; TDD 214-767-8940 or visit <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/index.html>.



### *Interested in an Autism Support Group?*

Do you have a child with Autism or a co-occurring disorder? If so, let us know, we are interested in starting a support group in the Thibodaux area! Contact us at 1800-331-5570, 985-447-4461, or [blfhf@bellsouth.net](mailto:blfhf@bellsouth.net).



### Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities and the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council **Family Forums**



*Are Individual and Family Support Services working for you and your family?  
Is the Family Support application/approval process family friendly? YOUR opinion is important.*  
YOUR comments will help us improve this program to better meet the needs of individuals and families.

**Date: October 26, 2011**

**Time: 1<sup>st</sup> meeting 10:00am, 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting 6:00pm**

**Location: Terrebonne Parish Library, North Branch  
4130 West Park Ave. Gray, LA 70359**

**Phone #: (985) 449-5167**

**If you need any special accommodations for this meeting, please let us know at the phone number above before  
October 21, 2011.**

### **Terrebonne Parish Early Childhood Supports and Services (ECSS)**

ECSS is an Infant Mental Health program through the Department of Health and Hospitals that provides services to families residing in Terrebonne parish. The following services reflect the assistance available to families. For more information regarding eligibility feel free to Contact 985-447-4461. October 19, November 16, and December 21 at the dates for ECSS Network staffing for professionals (local agency representatives)

5599 Hwy 311 Houma, LA 70360 Phone: 985-876-8882 Fax: 985-876-8899 Website: [www.ecssla.org](http://www.ecssla.org)

**Andrea D. Hayes ~ Program Monitor**



## Support Bayou Land Families Helping Families Just By Using The Internet!

Every time you search the internet at GoodSearch.com or make a purchase through GoodShop.com, Bayou Land Families Helping Families can earn money!

GoodSearch is powered by Yahoo! So you get the same great results while it donates about a penny per search. GoodShop.com is an online shopping mall which donates a percentage of each purchase. Hundreds of great stores including Amazon, Target, Gap, Best Buy, eBay and Office Depot have teamed with GoodShop. Every time you search the internet using GoodSearch and GoodShop, we receive a direct donation! Enter Bayou Land Families Helping Families as the charity you want to support at [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) and [www.goodshop.com](http://www.goodshop.com).

For More Information About Our Organization Please Visit: [www.blhf.org](http://www.blhf.org) or look us up on facebook!



*Don't Forget to Check out our Parent Center & Lending Library! We have new selections of books, as well as resource materials so stop by and check them out!!*

## Family Academic Skills & Drills

On Saturday September 24, 2011, Bayou Land Families Helping Families hosted its first ever Family Academic Skills & Drills workshop.

Presented by Anadee McGee, the 3 hour workshop included activities and tips for parents and kids that enabled student to grasp various skills and concepts in a multifaceted way.

Some of the activities included Math Bingo, and Gallon Man. Language Arts activities and tips were provided to parents and their children to be utilized at home.

Below are pictures of our participants and their handiwork from one of the interactive activities. More Family Academic Skills & Drills workshops will be coming soon... Anyone interested in attending our workshops, can contact our office to rsvp by calling 1-800-331-5570, or emailing [ragaingray@yahoo.com](mailto:ragaingray@yahoo.com).



*Family Testimonials*  
**Children's Special Health Services**  
*Demonstrating the Need for Services*



**To Whom It May Concern:**

Recently, I brought my 10 year old daughter, Alexis to CSHS in Thibodaux for an appointment with her neurologist. My daughter has Rett's syndrome and she cannot walk or talk and depends on us for all of her daily needs. On that day, I met the most wonderful person from Families Helping Families, April Young. She was there to see if I needed assistance with anything and of course I did need assistance. I had been trying to get an in-network medical company to order my daughter a new wheelchair for over 2 months and no one would order her chair because my insurance did not reimburse well for wheelchairs. I had called all suppliers on the list of in-network suppliers and the only way they would order my daughter's wheelchair was if I paid for it first. Also, I had been waiting for over 3 months to receive my daughter's diapers and I had not received any diapers. April, the parent liaison from Families Helping Families referred me to a wheelchair company who could order my daughter's chair. I called the wheelchair company as soon as I returned home from the appointment and gave all of my insurance information. The wheelchair company called me back the same day and informed me that the company could order my daughter's wheelchair thru CSHS and I would not have to pay anything for the chair. It was such wonderful news to hear this. My daughter attended the CSHS wheelchair clinic in July. Also, the Families Helping Families parent liaison gave me the information I needed to find out if my diapers had been ordered and if they were not ordered, how to order them myself. Today, I received my first shipment of diapers for my daughter. I cannot thank Families Helping Families enough for all they have done for me. It can be so frustrating trying to obtain the equipment, supplies, and services you need for a child with special needs. With Families Helping Families and CSHS, I feel like I can do anything. They are so wonderful.

Sincerely,  
**Paulette Dupre**



**Region 3 EarlySteps Program Family Testimonials!**



My son Jude was born with a genetic disorder called DiGeorge Syndrome. It is a genetic deletion disorder affecting the 22nd chromosome. There are 180 symptoms associated with DiGeorge Syndrome with some of the symptoms being mild, while other symptoms being life threatening. For my son Jude, he was born with a congenital heart defect, an immune disorder, feeding issues requiring a g-tube, reflux, low muscle tone, and developmental delays. It is likely that he will have learning difficulties when he reaches school age. There may be other issues that Jude will face as he becomes older. With each stage of life, there are new and different challenges for people with DiGeorge Syndrome. Although the future is uncertain, I have learned to focus on today, take it one day at a time, and appreciate the little things in life.

When I was twelve weeks pregnant and faced with the knowledge that I was going to have a baby with health issues, I learned about Families Helping Families. I called them and was able to speak to someone who had been through what I was about to go through. She gave me some really good advice, and she told me about Early Steps. Jude was hospitalized for the first eleven weeks of life. When Jude was discharged from the hospital, Early Steps was contacted to do an in home evaluation. Within a week, someone came to our home and did an evaluation on Jude. She sat down with me and explained in detail what Early Steps was and what is offered. I was so excited and encouraged feeling that Jude would get help and that my family and I were not alone in facing his challenges. Jude qualified to get weekly therapy services. Jude has a coordinator who calls and checks on how he is progressing and if I am happy with the services. She has been wonderful and always has a listening ear. She is willing to help me out in any way that she can. The people that work for Early Steps are very professional and respect the wishes of our family. To give an example, since Jude has an immune disorder, they are understanding and are willing to take extra precautions to make sure that Jude stays safe when coming to our home.

I have found that Early Steps has been a positive influence in the development of Jude, and they have provided my family with so much knowledge to help us care for Jude. We have been blessed with therapist that are compassionate, caring, professional and very educated, but they still manage to be realistic in their goals and expectations for our family to carry out their instructions on a daily basis. You can tell that for these people, it is more than just a job. They genuinely care about helping their patients and the families they serve. I have personally developed friendly relationships with the therapist and look forward to our therapy days. They are giving Jude a great start in life to make him the best person that he can possibly be. The therapy sessions so far have been a success. With Jude's developmental delays, the therapists have given us ideas to incorporate daily activities that help him. Through their help and ideas, Jude has made unbelievable progress! Week by week, Jude is getting stronger and smarter, and I have Early Steps to thank.

*Lynette Duet*

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## *What are Functional Skills, and Why Does My Child with a Disability Need Them?*

By: JoAnn Collins  
On March 18, 2008

Are you concerned that your child with a disability is not learning academics at a grade and age level pace? Have you thought that your child may benefit from a curriculum of functional skills? Would you like to learn about a resource that can help you learn more about functional curriculums for your child in special education? This article will discuss functional skills, functional academics, why your child with a disability needs them, and a resource for more information.

**Functional skills are defined as skills that can be used everyday, in different environments.** Functional skills focus on different areas such as **home** (cooking, cleaning etc) **family**, **self help skills** (bathing, brushing teeth, dressing, grooming), **employment**, **recreation**, **community involvement**, **health**, and **functional academics**. *All students with disabilities will benefit from functional skill training, to help them in their adult life.*

Functional academics are also important for children with disabilities, who may not be able to learn age and grade appropriate academics. **Functional academics are defined as academic areas that will be used by the student for the rest of their life.** For example: **Reading** (read signs; stop, go, men's, women's, read a recipe). **Math** (money, grocery shopping, making change, budget). **Health** (grooming, oral hygiene, plan healthy meals). A wonderful resource to learn more about functional skills, and functional curriculums to help children with special needs is the book entitled **Functional Curriculum for Elementary, Middle, and Secondary Age Students with Special Needs**. The book is Edited by *Paul Wehman* and *John Kregal*, and is a resource that you will use again and again.

**Your child with a disability needs functional skills because these skills will have meaning for your child, and will help them be as independent as possible, as an adult.** For example: Every child eats, and being able to cook or prepare simple foods will help them be more independent. If children learn simple household chores, these skills can be turned into job skills when they get older. For example: My daughter Angelina, who has a severe disability, learned how to fold towels when she was in elementary school. When Angelina entered high school she had a job folding towels at the high school pool. ***Because Angelina already had the functional skill of folding towels, the transition to a job folding towels was pretty easy.*** Angelina also learned that when she worked hard folding towels, she was paid. On pay day, she was able to spend the money that she made at her job. Learning functional skills that can be turned into work is critical for all children with disabilities. **They will gain pride by being able to work, and will understand the connection between work and money.**

By learning what functional skills are and why they are important, will help your child as they grow into adulthood. Do not be afraid to bring up functional skill training for your child, when you are participating in IEP meetings. Your child is depending on you to help them be a happy fulfilled adult!

### *Author's Bio*

*JoAnn Collins is the parent of two adults with disabilities, has been an educational advocate for over 15 years, an author, as well as a presenter. JoAnn's recently released book: **Disability Deception; Lies Disability Educators Tell and How Parents Can Beat Them at Their Own Game** helps parents develop advocacy skills to help their child. For free E newsletter entitled "The Special Education Spotlight" send an Email to [JoAnn@disabilitydeception.com](mailto:JoAnn@disabilitydeception.com).*

*Check out her Web site at: <http://www.disabilitydeception.com>. She can be reached at 815-932-9263.*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

DATE: 10/3/11

James J. Stafford, D.D.S.



**LOCAL DENTIST HELPS PATIENTS SMILE AND GIVE TO CHARITY**

**Vacherie, La.**

Local dentist, Dr. James Stafford, made a charitable contribution of \$975 this week to Bayou Land Families Helping Families as a result of the efforts of his office in the Smiles for Life Campaign. Accepting the donation from the BLFHF was Kim Detillier, Executive director. Earlier this year, Dr. Stafford invited his patients and members of the community to whiten their teeth for a reduced price with 100% of the proceeds going to charity.

*“ Because of the generosity of the many patients and community members who participated, Bayou Land Families Helping Families will be able fulfill more of its mission in our community,”* explained Dr. Stafford.

The Smiles for Life Foundation is the children’s charity organization of the Crown Council, an organization of leading-edge dentists throughout North America. Each year over a four-month period, Crown Council dentists participating in the Smiles for Life campaign offer professional teeth whitening services at a considerably reduced price and donate 100 percent of the proceeds to children’s charities.

The Crown Council’s Smiles for Life Foundation has raised more than \$30 million since 1998, benefiting nearly 500 children’s charities across North America. Since joining the campaign, Dr. Stafford, has raised approximately \$18,000. Through a unique partnership with legendary entertainer Garth Brooks and his Teammates For Kids Foundation, Smiles For Life guarantees that a full 50 percent of the money raised by Crown Council members like Dr. Stafford goes to children’s charities in communities across North America.

The remaining 50 percent is contributed to a LOCAL children’s charity which was Bayou Land Families Helping Families.

**For more information about teeth whitening or how you can participate in the Smiles for Life campaign in the future, contact Dr. James Stafford at (225)-265-3026 or log onto [www.SmilesforLife.org](http://www.SmilesforLife.org) or [www.drjamesstafford.com](http://www.drjamesstafford.com)**



P O Box 1345  
Thibodaux, LA 70302

<p align="center"><b>BRIDGES EDUCATION AND SUPPORT MEETINGS</b>  <b>(Building Recovery for Individual Dreams and Goal Through Education and Support)</b>          The meetings are held in Houma, Raceland, Galliano and Morgan City.          Any adult with an alcohol, drug addiction or diagnosed with a mental illness is welcome.          To get more information, call Brenda Martin at 1-800-805-7934 or (985) 876-8897.  <b>We are a peer-to-peer support group.</b></p>		<p align="center"><b>CODA Support Group</b>          (Co-Dependency Anonymous)          CODA group meetings are held at St. John's Episcopal Church on Jackson Street in the Hunter Horgan building in Thibodaux @ 7:00 PM. on Monday nights. Contact 447-8159 for information.</p>
<p align="center"><b>Bayou Chapter of the Autism Society of Louisiana</b>          3rd Thursday of each month in Morgan City from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. For more information, contact Dawn Spinella at (985) 631-9823.</p>	<p align="center"><b>CHADD</b>  <b>Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorders</b>  <b>Bayou Region Area Chapter Meetings:</b>  <b>2nd Friday of each Month from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM</b>  <b>TGMC Outreach Center/Southland Mall</b>  <b>For more information, contact Gretchen Avet at (985) 872-0945 bayouregionchadd@sw.rr.com</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Specially Chosen</b>          First &amp; Third Saturday of every month          6:00 PM          First Baptist Church Room 200          7382 Main Street, Houma.          Contact Brandy Bennett          (985) 223-0399</p>

This newsletter is provided through funding from the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, the Louisiana State Department of Education, the Office of Mental Health, the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council, Office of Public Health, Family to Family Health Information Center and Children's Trust Fund.