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**For Immediate Release**

**Questions & Interviews**

Helen Hebert, Office Manager

[hhebert@fhfgr.org](mailto:hhebert@fhfgr.org) or 225-216-7474

## **Getting “Active for Autism” Strides Forward in its 8<sup>th</sup> Year Bringing Autism Awareness**

**8<sup>th</sup> Annual Active for Autism 5K Run/Walk & Fun Fest – April 22<sup>nd</sup>**

BATON ROUGE, LA— It’s always an exciting time getting prepared for the annual Active for Autism Certified 5k Run/Walk & Fun Fest! For the past 7 years, the Greater Baton Rouge area, with Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge (FHFGBR), has gathered together to bring awareness, acceptance, and inclusion for individuals with autism. As a staff comprised of mostly parents or family members of children with disabilities, we offer support, training/education, and resources to other parents who are attempting to navigate the maze of available services. Active for Autism allows us to provide a myriad of services all for free!

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, about 1 in 68 children has been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. Even further, 1 in 6 children in the US received a developmental disability diagnosis in years 2006-2008. FHFGBR works as a resource center in a statewide network of agencies across Louisiana to provide emotional support, information, and guidance to families represented in these statistics. We serve people of all ages and with any disability—there’s simply no other organization that does what we do. Since the first Active for Autism event, we have encountered approximately 2,810 families who have a loved one with autism out of the nearly 13,800 families we have served.

Active for Autism is a colorful community event that raises money to support the Resource Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders (RCASD), a program of Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge. Every penny raised is brought back to FHFGBR to fulfill our mission and fund workshops, support groups, and recreational events that are coordinated by the RCASD. Many families walk in to our office feeling alone, distraught, and full of questions about what the next step is, and through the generous donations and participation of all Active for Autism participants and sponsors, these families can encounter others who have walked the same path.

We welcome all of the Greater Baton Rouge area to attend our Active for Autism 5k Run/Walk & Fun Fest! It is going to take place from 8am-12pm at Louisiana State Police Headquarters on Independence Boulevard. People of all ages and backgrounds come out to show their support for a loved one with autism or just to have a great time. The day will begin around the iconic balloon arch with registration at 7:30 AM and the RRCA Certified 5k to take place after, and then the walk to follow. During the day there will be entertainment by Henry Turner Jr. & Flavor and other musicians, vendor booths, and fun activities for the kids! FHFGBR is tremendously fortunate to have Bill

and Karen Profita as honorary chairs along with Daniel NoackLeSage, M.A., BCBA, LBA, director of One Step At A Time Behavioral Services, LLC., to serve as honorary co-chair of this year's event!

Join us on Friday, February 24<sup>th</sup> at Huey's at 350 3rd St. in Downtown Baton Rouge at 9 PM for Cocktails for a Cause to kick off our Active For Autism fundraising! Make a donation at the door and you will be entered into a raffle, or purchase one of four specialty cocktails and the proceeds will go toward our cause.

We love to bring the community together and we hope that you all can join us. For more information visit [www.fhfgbr.org](http://www.fhfgbr.org) or call the FHFGBR office at 225-216-7474.

### **About Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge**

Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge serves as a valuable family resource center in a statewide network of Families Helping Families located across Louisiana. FHFGBR is committed to helping families who have members with disabilities as well as self-advocates. FHFGBR provides information, referral, education, training and parent-to-parent support for disability issues to individuals living in the parishes of East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, Ascension, Iberville, East Feliciana, West Feliciana and Point Coupee, and Livingston Parish being an additional parish for the RCASD. A disability may be physical, mental, emotional, behavioral and/or academic. Families Helping Families staff can answer questions and provide support, resources and referrals.

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#### **Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge**

2356 Drusilla Lane | Baton Rouge, LA 70809 | Phone - 225-216-7474 | Fax - 225-216-7977

[www.fhfgbr.org](http://www.fhfgbr.org)

**Our mission is to provide the individualized services, information, resources and support needed to positively enhance the independence, productivity and integration of persons with disabilities into the community.**