



Of Greater Baton Rouge

# The Capital Area Quarterly

APRIL — JUNE 2008

## READY, SET & OFF TO CAMP WE GO!

See Page 7

### OUR MISSION

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.

*It's who we are.  
It's what we do.*

### In This Issue

Disability Rights Day	1
FHFGBR Staff and Events	2
Board of Directors, Count Us In, Family Opportunity Act & Events	3
Education Station	4
Important Dates To Remember	5
April Is National Autism Awareness Month	6
2008 Summer Camp Guide	7
Louisiana's Family to Family Health Information Ctr CAHSD	8



We want to hear from YOU!!!  
Check out our website at  
[www.fhfgbr.org](http://www.fhfgbr.org)

A Rally at the LA State Capitol in Baton Rouge

## Disability Rights Day

## The Right to Receive Waiver Services

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 2008

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Come join us on the Steps of the Capitol for the Rally with other Individuals with Disabilities And their Family Members

**“A Waiting List is  
NOT a Service!”**

For more information or to sign up for a T-shirt, contact:

**Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge**

**Region 2 LaCAN Leader Cindy Ardoin**

225- 216-7474 or toll free @ 1-866-216-7474

Email: [cardoin@fhfgbr.org](mailto:cardoin@fhfgbr.org)

The Arc Baton Rouge & People First of Louisiana are providing free accessible shuttle to and from the rally. Parking at the Casino.

Call Vicki Barker ASAP @ 225-383-1033 or 1-866-966-6260 to reserve your spot .



APRIL IS NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS  
MONTH



Funding for this publication is provided by the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council, Capital Area Human Services District, LA Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, Louisiana State University and the Office of Public Health

# Our Staff

Jamie S. Tindle  
Executive Director  
jamietindle@fhfgbr.org

Cindy Ardoin  
LaCAN Leader  
Information & Referral Specialist  
SDE Transition Parent Facilitator  
cardoind@fhfgbr.org

Cynthia Chesterfield  
IEP Facilitator for Inclusive Ed  
Inclusive Recreation Resource  
Specialist  
cchesterfield@fhfgbr.org

Carly Dickson  
Special Projects Coordinator  
Lending Library Organizer  
cdickson@fhfgbr.org

Rose Garrett  
Resource & Self Advocate Specialist  
rgarrett@fhfgbr.org

Kay Lewis  
CSHS Parent Liaison  
klewis@fhfgbr.org

Nora McKenzie  
Community Outreach Specialist  
Family 2 Family Health Info  
Specialist  
nmckenzie@fhfgbr.org

Summer R. Mizell  
Education Advocate  
smizell@laptic.org

Michelle Muse  
ECSS Coordinator  
LaSIG Family Facilitator  
mmuse@fhfgbr.org

Toni Peters  
WBR Parent Family Liaison  
LaTEACH Coordinator Area 6  
tpeters@fhfgbr.org

Jarrelyn Ruiz  
Resource & Information Specialist  
Newsletter Editor  
jruiz@fhfgbr.org



"THE WILL OF GOD WILL  
NOT TAKE YOU WHERE  
THE GRACE OF GOD WILL  
NOT PROTECT YOU"



## CAMP SUNSHINE

When: June 4 – July 27  
Time: 8:00 – 5:00 p.m.  
1 hr. before and after care provided  
Place: BREC Independence Recreation Center  
7505 Independence Blvd  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806  
Cost: \$50 wkly (before care/ after care = add \$12 wkly)  
Ages: Camp Sunshine A, ages 6-12 years of age  
Camp Sunshine B, ages 13-16 years of age



Camp Sunshine is exclusively for children with Disabilities. The camp only accepts 25 children. There are daily field trips such as swimming, movies, BREC Zoo, BREC Bluebonnet Swamp, etc. Other activities include arts and crafts, socialization activities, and inclusive activities with other day camps.

If you are interested, please call Katrina Coots @ 225-926-4659 to set up a registration appointment

## Solving The Employment Puzzle

It's Hard to Plan When You Don't Know What You Want

For youths with Disabilities

When: June 10, 2008

Time: 9am to 11am

Where: BREC Independence Park Blvd. Rm. 111

- To Register call your Families Helping Families Transition Specialist Cindy Ardoin @ 225-216-7474

**United We Ride (UWR)** is a federal interagency initiative aimed at improving the availability, quality, and efficient delivery of transportation services for older adults, people with disabilities, and individuals with lower income.



Please call...

1-435-752-0238 ext. 16 for more info or go to  
[www.unitedweride.gov](http://www.unitedweride.gov)

*"If the model for  
developing power*

*resides in the  
powerful, that is,  
if what we learn  
about how to  
behave is by  
observing those  
who have power over us then  
those in power must assume  
responsibility for modeling  
appropriate behaviors."*

*Author Unknown*



## Caregiver Burnout Workshop

Join us to learn skills and strategies to help you cope with burnout.

Presentation by Kendrick Jackson,  
Stress Manager Specialist of  
Louisiana Spirit



When: Friday, May 9, 2008  
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Where: Independence Park Theatre  
7800 Independence Blvd.  
Baton Rouge, La 70806

You must call to register as spaces are limited  
To register, contact Kay Lewis at 216-7474 or email her at [klewis@fhfgbr.org](mailto:klewis@fhfgbr.org)

# FHFGBR Board of Directors

JOHN SAMAHA, CHAIRPERSON

BELYNDA GAUTHIER, VICE CHAIRPERSON

ROY HEBERT, TREASURER

STACEY ATKINS, SECRETARY

ALVIN MACK

THOMAS SELLARS

CHERRI E. PENTON, Ph. D.

RICHARD BORN

KATRINA COOTS

ROBIN CLARK

JIM LEVELLE, Ph. D.

BOARD MEETINGS WILL BE HELD ON  
MAY 8 & JULY 10  
FROM 11:30 am UNTIL 1:00 pm  
AT OUR CENTER

Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge  
and  
Bayou Land Families Helping Families  
Partners with



To Present

## "Count Us In"

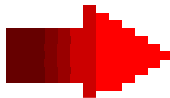
A Government Internship Program for people  
with developmental disabilities ages 18 and older to work as an intern  
in the office of a Senator or State Representative.

Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge  
778 Chevelle Drive  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

To request an application please call FHFGBR :  
225-216-7474 or toll-free 1-866-216-7474

Or download an application at [www.fhfgr.org](http://www.fhfgr.org)  
Deadline to submit application is Friday, April 25, 2008

## What is the Family Opportunity Act?



The Family Opportunity Act (FOA) provides  
health coverage for uninsured and  
underinsured children with disabilities in  
families with too much income to qualify for  
Medicaid or LaCHIP.

Family  
Opportunity  
Act  
Medicaid Buy-In  
Program  
for Children with  
Disabilities



Let Us Be  
Your Partner in Health

1-888-342-6207

[www.Medicaid.DHH.Louisiana.gov](http://www.Medicaid.DHH.Louisiana.gov)  
Louisiana Department of Health & Hospitals

## LIEA Indian Youth



April 11-April 13, 2008

Location: Lumen Christi  
Retreat Center,  
Schriever, Louisiana

For more information, contact  
Robbie Gray at 225-342-6803 or  
[rgray@dhh.la.gov](mailto:rgray@dhh.la.gov)



## SSI & SSDI Workshops

2 dates and locations available

New Roads Library  
201 Claiborne Street  
New Roads, LA 70760  
April 25, 2008  
9 am to 11:30 am

OR

Independence Park Theatre  
7800 Independence Blvd.  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806  
April 29, 2008  
9 am to 11:30 am

To register, call Cindy Ardoin @ 225-216-7474

## Down Syndrome Awareness Group

Membership Meeting—May 27, 2008  
6:30 pm at Ochsner Medical Center  
Baton Rouge, I-12 at O'Neal, Plaza II Room 109

RSVP by May 16 to Paulette Roberts @ 225-664-6546 or [phroberts@cox.net](mailto:phroberts@cox.net)



# Education Station



“By learning we teach, by teaching we learn.”

Wrightslaw.com

Inclusion

## Helping Your Child Avoid Test Anxiety

I know as parents, you want to do everything within your power to help your child prepare for test taking. One of the most important factors in regards to testing is “test anxiety.” It’s good for your child to be concerned about taking a test, but it is not good for them to develop “test anxiety.” Test anxiety is worrying too much about doing well on a test. It can cause your child to become ill, for instance develop a nervous stomach or headache. Students with test anxiety can worry about success in school and about their future success. They can become very self-critical and lose confidence in their abilities. Instead of feeling challenged by the prospect of success, they become afraid of failure. If your child worries too much about taking tests, you can help to reduce the anxiety by helping or encouraging your child to do the following things:

- Plan ahead. Start studying for the test well in advance. Make sure that you understand what material the test will cover. Try to make connections about what will be on the test and what you already know. Review the material more than once.
- Don’t “cram” the night before. This will likely increase your anxiety, which will interfere with clear thinking.
- Get a good night’s sleep.
- When you get the test, read the directions carefully before you begin work. If you don’t understand how to do something, ask the teacher to explain.
- If rules allow, look quickly at the entire text to see what types of questions are on it (multiple choice, matching, true/false, essay). See if different questions are worth different numbers of points. This will help you determine how much time to spend on each part of the test.
- If you don’t know the answer to a question, skip it and go on. Don’t waste time worrying about one question. Mark it and, if you have time at the end of the test, return to it and try again.

Parents if you have any questions regarding LEAP Alternative Assessment (LAA1 or LAA2) please feel free to call us!

Louisiana State Department of Education  
will be holding their Annual

2008 PARENT WEEKEND WORKSHOP

Saturday June 09, 2008

Location to be announced. Space is limited.

Call our center at (225) 216-7474 to register and more details.

Parent to Parent

### Simple reading practice



I’ve found a way to give my children reading practice—and improve their behavior at the same time. I write short notes to my kids and leave them around the house.

Sometimes I’ll mention my youngsters’ good behavior (“Thanks for helping with the dishes!”) or write reminders (“Please hang me up. Signed, Your towel”). Sometimes the notes are about

not-so-good behavior. (“I was disappointed when you yelled at me. Can we talk about it?”) I make sure to leave notes for treats, too (“Let’s go fly your kite this afternoon!”).

I look for unique places to put the notes, such as on their pillows, in front of the dog’s water bowl, or pinned to the shower curtain. The kids enjoy discovering the notes and reading them aloud. ♥



Cynthia Chesterfield—  
IEP Facilitator for Inclusive  
Education and Inclusive  
Recreation Resource  
Specialist

Summer Mizell—  
Education Advocate



Funding for this publication is provided by the Louisiana State Department of Education.

# Important Dates to Remember

DATE/ TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	CONTACT
April 12, May 10 & July 14, 2008 3 pm to 5:30 pm	Baton Rouge Autism Society of America	Jones Creek Library 6222 Jones Creek Road. Baton Rouge, LA 70817	Beryl Herbert 225-273-3984
April 3, 2008 9:30 am to 12:30 pm	ECSS– Kids First Conference Speaker: Dr. Patricia Blackwell “Inspiring Parents to learn, laugh...thrive”	McKinley Alumni Center 1520 Thomas Delpit Dr. Baton Rouge, LA 70802	Nora McKenzie 225-216-7474
April 4 & June 6, 2008 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm	Parents Night Out	Fr. Engels Hall at St. Jean Vianney 16166 S. Harrell's Ferry Rd. Baton Rouge, LA 70816	Kristen Thompson 225-756-9231
2nd Monday of every month 5:30 pm to 7 pm	People First Meetings	BREC Independence Park Room 111 7505 Independence Park Blvd. Baton Rouge, LA 70806	Rose Garrett 225-216-7474
April 11-April 13, 2008	LIEA Indian Youth Leadership Camp	Lumen Christi Retreat Center 100 Lumen Christi Lane Schriever, LA 70395	Robbie Gray 225-342-6803
April 18, 2008 6 pm to 9 pm	People First of Louisiana Ms. Benita Plaisance and Ms. Becky Zito Spring Fling & Sunshine Social Dance	BREC Independence Park 7505 Independence Park Blvd. Baton Rouge, LA 70806	Rose Garrett 225-216-7474
April 22, May 27 & July 24, 2008 6 pm to 7:30 pm	Aspie's Meet Up	BREC Independence Park 7505 Independence Park Blvd. Room 136 Baton Rouge, LA 70806	Toni Peters 225-216-7474
April 23, 2008 2 pm to 3:30 pm	Disability Rights Day	Louisiana State Capital Steps Baton Rouge	Cindy Ardoin 225-216-7474
April 25, 2008 9 am to 11:30 am	SSI & SSDI Workshop	New Roads Library 201 Claiborne Street New Roads, LA 70760	Cindy Ardoin 225-216-7474
April 29, 2008 1 pm to 3 pm	RICC Meetings Regional Interagency Coordinating Council	BREC Independence Park Room 137 7505 Independence Park Blvd. Baton Rouge, LA 70806	Nora McKenzie 225-216-7474
April 29, 2008 9 am to 11:30 am	SSI & SSDI Workshop	BREC Independence Park Theatre 7800 Independence Blvd. Baton Rouge, LA 70806	Cindy Ardoin 225-216-7474
May 3, 2008 9 am to 11 am Registration 8:15 am	Best Buddies of Louisiana Friendship Walk	BREC Cohen Arboretum 12056 Foster Rd. Baton Rouge, La 70806	Anna Mcleod 225-226-1677
May 7, 2008 9 am to 12 pm	How to Help Your Child Cope With Behavior Challenges at Home and School	BREC Independence Park Theatre 7800 Independence Blvd. Baton Rouge, LA 70806	Cynthia Chesterfield 225-216-7474
May 9, 2008 9 am to 1 pm	Care Giver Burnout Workshop	BREC Independence Park Theatre 7800 Independence Blvd. Baton Rouge, LA 70806	Kay Lewis 225-216-7474
May 14, 2008 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm	SICC Meeting State Interagency Coordinating Council	State Office Building 150 N. Third Street Baton Rouge, LA 70821	Janie Martin 225-219-7560
May 16, 2008 6 pm to 6:30 pm	Working with a Checkbook Workshop and Sunshine Social Dance	BREC Independence Park 7505 Independence Park Blvd. Baton Rouge, LA 70806	Rose Garrett 225-216-7474
June 10, 2008 9 am to 11 am	Solving The Employment Puzzle	BREC Independence Park Rm. 111 7505 Independence Park Blvd. Baton Rouge, LA 70806	Cindy Ardoin 225-216-7474



# April is National Autism Awareness Month

Autism is a complex neurobiological disorder that typically lasts throughout a person's lifetime. It is part of a group of disorders known as autism spectrum disorders (ASD). **Today, 1 in 150 individuals is diagnosed with ASD, making it more common than pediatric cancer, diabetes, and AIDS combined.** It occurs in all racial, ethnic, and social groups and is four times more likely to strike boys than girls. Autism impairs a person's ability to communicate and relate to others. It is also associated with rigid routines and repetitive behaviors, such as obsessively arranging objects or following very specific routines. Symptoms can range from very mild to quite severe.

Autism was first identified in 1943 by Dr. Leo Kanner of Johns Hopkins Hospital. At the same time, a German scientist, Dr. Hans Asperger, described a milder form of the disorder that is now known as Asperger's Syndrome. These two disorders are listed in the DSM IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) as two of the five developmental disorders that fall under the autism spectrum disorders. The others are Rett Syndrome, PDD NOS (Pervasive Developmental Disorder/Not Otherwise Specified), and Childhood Disintegrative Disorder. All of these disorders are characterized by varying degrees of impairment in communication skills and social abilities, and also by repetitive behaviors.

Autism spectrum disorders can usually be reliably diagnosed by age 3, although new research is pushing back the age of diagnosis to as early as 6 months. Parents are usually the first to notice unusual behaviors in their child or their child's failure to reach appropriate developmental milestones. Some parents describe a child that seemed different from birth, while others describe a child who was developing normally and then lost skills. Pediatricians may initially dismiss signs of autism, thinking a child will "catch up," and may advise parents to "wait and see." New research shows that when parents suspect something is wrong with their child, they are usually correct. If you have concerns about your child's development, don't wait: speak to your pediatrician about getting your child screened for autism.

If your child is diagnosed with autism, early intervention is critical to gain maximum benefit from existing therapies. Although parents may have concerns about giving a toddler the label of "Autism," the earlier the diagnosis is made, the earlier interventions can begin. Currently, there are no effective means to prevent autism, no fully effective treatments, and no cure. Research indicates, however, that early intervention in an appropriate educational setting for at least two years during the preschool years can result in significant improvements for many young children with autism spectrum disorders. As soon as autism is diagnosed, early intervention instruction should begin. Effective programs focus on developing communication, social, and cognitive skills.

Resource: Autism Speaks [www.autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org)

## SUCCESS STORY:

Gabriel Hurts of Baton Rouge, has high functioning autism. In the past years he has had challenges with social interaction, communication and social acceptance with other related diagnosed issues. On January 31st, the D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) Program asked the students of Park Ridge Elementary fifth graders to read at the program. Gabriel's letter was chosen by his classroom teacher and fifth grade students. With assistance from Officer Jason Doyle and teacher, Ms. Vance, his goal was accomplished. Many thanks to Park Ridge Elementary School teachers, faculty and the City of Baker School System for their efforts and their support!

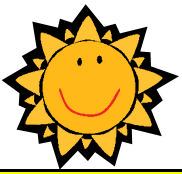


## The Voice of Autism



### RESOURCES:

- **BATON ROUGE CHAPTER OF AUTISM SOCIETY OF AMERICA**  
Support Group for Families affected by Autism. Meets every 2nd Saturday of each month at Jones Creek Road Regional Library at 3pm to 5pm. Contact Beryl Hebert @ 225-273-3984 [www.autism-society.org](http://www.autism-society.org)
- **LOUISIANA STATE AUTISM CHAPTER**  
Contact; Pat Giamanco 1-800-955-3760 or [www.lastateautism.org](http://www.lastateautism.org)
- **CAPITAL AREA ACTION FOR ADULTS WITH AUTISM Network (CAAN)**  
Contact; Pat Giamanco 225-757-8990 or [www.autism-society.org](http://www.autism-society.org)
- **ASPIE'S MEET-UP GROUP**  
Support Group for Adults with Asperger's Syndrome. Meets the 4th Tuesday of each month @ BREC Independence Park from 6pm-7:30pm  
Call Toni Peters @ 225-216-7474
- **BATON ROUGE LATE BLOOMERS**  
Moderated online support group for parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Must submit request to join. Membership protected! Moderator: Kara Shupe  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/brlatebloomers>
- **LOUfeat- LOUISIANA FOR EFFECTIVE AUTISM TREATMENT**  
Research based resources for children and adults with autism. President: Mary Elizabeth Christian Contact @ [www.loufeat.blogspot.com](http://www.loufeat.blogspot.com)
- **ADULT'S WITH AUTISM ONLINE SUPPORT GROUP**  
Moderator: Marcie Kimball Contact @ <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/groups/adultswithautismbr/>



# 2008 Summer Camp Schedules

DATE & TIME	REGISTRATION	CAMP	LOCATION	CONTACT
June 24—June 28, 2008 10 am—3:00 pm	Deadline May 30, 2008	Camp Shriver	BREC—Recreation Center 7505 Independence Park Blvd. Baton Rouge, LA 70806	Charlie Courville 1-800-345-6644
July 09—July 11, 2008	Deadline May 30, 2008	Camp Shriver	Minden Recreation Complex Minden, LA	Charlie Courville 1-800-345-6644
June 04—July 27, 2008 8 am—5 pm	April 12, 2008	Camp Sunshine	BREC—Recreation Center 7505 Independence Park Blvd. Baton Rouge, LA 70806	Katrina Coots 225-926-4659
Ongoing Schedule Please call for session	Call for more info	Reading & Math Camps	38214 Brown Road Prairieville, LA 70769	Becky Williams 225-673-1980
Ongoing Schedule Please call for session	Visit Lions Camp Website <a href="http://www.lionscamp.org">http://www.lionscamp.org</a>	Louisiana Lions Camp	292 L. Beauford Dr. Anacoco, LA 71403	1-800-348-6567

## **MED CAMPS OF LOUISIANA [www.medcamps.com](http://www.medcamps.com)**

June 1—June 6, 2008	3 weeks prior to start date	Camp Rolling Thunder <i>Children w/ Spina Bifida</i>	Camp Alabama 2090 Hwy 145 Choudrant, LA 71227	Steven McKinney 1-877-282-0802
June 8—June 13, 2008	3 weeks prior to start date	Camp Rough Riders <i>Children w/ cerebral Palsy</i>	Camp Alabama 2090 Hwy 145 Choudrant, LA 71227	Steven McKinney 1-877-282-0802
June 15—June 20, 2008	3 weeks prior to start date	Camp Easy Breeze <i>Children w/ Asthma</i>	Camp Alabama 2090 Hwy 145 Choudrant, LA 71227	Steven McKinney 1-877-282-0802
June 22—June 27, 2008	3 weeks prior to start date	Camp Little Giants <i>Children w/ Sickle Cell Anemia</i>	Camp Alabama 2090 Hwy 145 Choudrant, LA 71227	Steven McKinney 1-877-282-0802
June 29—July 1, 2008	3 weeks prior to start date	Camp Busy Bees Retreat <i>Children w/ Autism</i>	Camp Alabama 2090 Hwy 145 Choudrant, LA 71227	Steven McKinney 1-877-282-0802
July 6—July 11, 2008	3 weeks prior to start date	Camp Big Heart <i>Children w/ Hearing/Speech/ Visual Disorder</i>	Camp Alabama 2090 Hwy 145 Choudrant, LA 71227	Steven McKinney 1-877-282-0802
July 6—July 11, 2008	3 weeks prior to start date	Camp Shinning Stars <i>Children w/ Epilepsy &amp; Seizure Disorders</i>	Camp Alabama 2090 Hwy 145 Choudrant, LA 71227	Steven McKinney 1-877-282-0802
July 13—July 18, 2008	3 weeks prior to start date	Camp Wounded Knee <i>Children w/ Hemophilia</i>	Camp Alabama 2090 Hwy 145 Choudrant, LA 71227	Steven McKinney 1-877-282-0802
July 20—July 25, 2008	3 weeks prior to start date	Camp Kandoo <i>Children w/ Dev. Disabilities</i>	Camp Alabama 2090 Hwy 145 Choudrant, LA 71227	Steven McKinney 1-877-282-0802
July 27—July 29, 2008	3 weeks prior to start date	Camp Tall Pines Young Adults w/ Dev. Disabilities	Camp Alabama 2090 Hwy 145 Choudrant, LA 71227	Steven McKinney 1-877-282-0802

For information on camps with Easter Seals Disability Services, visit [www.easterseals.com](http://www.easterseals.com)



778 Chevelle Drive  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE PAID  
BATON ROUGE, LA  
PERMIT NO. 125

**Louisiana's Family to Family Health Information Center**  
**Now at Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge**  
*Program Serves Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Ages 0-26*

A new statewide program is now available to families of children with special health care needs of all types in Region 2 which include East & West Baton Rouge, East & West Feliciana, Iberville, Pointe Coupee and Ascension Parishes. F2FHIC, Family to Family Health Information Center services are provided statewide to children and youth with special health care needs ages 0-26 and is now available through FHFGBR.

The program provides opportunities through regional trainings for families to learn about services that provide assistance for medical care and

other services. Parents and youth learn about programs that serve individuals with special health care needs in our state and how to connect to that assistance.

How does the program work? Each region has an Information Specialist that can assist families in navigating the health care financing maze or provide information on just about any health topic. The Information Specialist for Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge is Nora McKenzie. If you would like to know more, please contact Nora today at 225-216-7474 or toll free at 866-216-7474.

**“We Want You to Know”**

By: Dr. Jack Johnson, Director  
Capital Area Human Services District  
Developmental Disabilities Division



The Developmental Disabilities Division at Capital Area Human Services District is the gateway to state-funded and federally-funded services and programs for persons with developmental disabilities ages 3 and older. The DD Division picks up where the Early Steps program leaves off and is the “gateway” in the sense that if someone is to access DD services, the person must be evaluated for eligibility to participate by our office. Even if your child has already been evaluated and diagnosed by a psychologist, physician, or by the pupil appraisal as having developmental delays, the child must be evaluated by an entry unit specialist to see if he or she qualifies for services. If your child does qualify, a statement of approval is issued. It is very important to have every person who is suspected of having a developmental disability evaluated for services as soon as possible. This is because many services are available on a first come, first served basis, and the date of the statement of approval will hold your child’s spot in line. Although some DD services may be available immediately, there are lengthy waiting lists for other services including the New Opportunities Waiver, Children’s Choice Waiver, and the Cash Subsidy program. Services for persons who receive a statement of approval include having a personal care assistant to assist in the home, respite care, vocational programs, psychological and behavioral health services, case management, and funding for medical supplies not covered by Medicaid. The DD Division at Capital Area Human Services District serves the following parishes: East and West Baton Rouge, East and West Feliciana, Iberville, Pointe Coupee, and Ascension. If you are unsure if your child has been issued a statement of approval or you believe that someone you know might qualify for DD services, please call 225-925-1910. Our office is located at 4615 Government St. in Baton Rouge and our hours of business are 8:00 to 4:30, Monday through Friday.

The best and most beautiful things cannot be seen or touched - they must be felt with the heart