

The

INCLUSIVE TIMES



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U.S. Representative Rodney Alexander speaks to Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce



Putting People Before Politics

By: U.S. Representative Rodney Alexander

Did your parents ever tell you to think of others before yourself? Having a selfless outlook can improve a situation and really open people's eyes. During this rocky economic climate, Americans struggle each day to find work and keep their heads above water. At times it is difficult to maintain an optimistic, selfless perspective; however, positive thinking can go a long way. As many of you know, unemployment has increased within the past two years, jumping from 7.6 percent to around nine percent, where it continues to hover today. When presented this information, it is evident why it can be difficult for those seeking work to stay strong. However, if Louisianans know best, it's how to remain strong even during these bleakest of circumstances.

Continued on Page 3

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- Curtis Paul (In Memoriam)



FHF board members Jimmy Redfearin, John Brinkerhoff, and director James Sprinkle with Representative Rodney Alexander in August.

Children’s Special Health Services

This is everyone’s favorite time of the year. The leaves are changing colors and falling, the air has a slight chill in it and it’s the beginning of the holiday season. But it’s also time to start bundling up to keep the winter chill out and to start warding off those nasty colds and runny noses. Remember to talk to your child’s pediatrician about FLU and/or Pneumonia shots especially if your child might be at risk. Get them early to avoid long waits. Everyone here at CSHS and FHF wants to wish all of you a Happy Halloween!!!! A VERY, VERY Merry Christmas and a Safe and Happy new Year!!!! If you have questions or need information you can call (318) 487-5282 ext. 206 for Melissa Harrison or Cathy Dove or ext. 241 for CSHS Nurse Louise Karisney.



ALL SERVICES ARE FREE TO CONSUMERS, FAMILY MEMBERS, PARENTS AND PROFESSIONALS

Continued from Page 1

As a member of Congress, it is my duty to be an advocate for sound policies that support economic liberty and provide our job creators the opportunity to succeed. In the coming weeks, Washington must work to find some common ground to ensure our country becomes financially viable once again. As we debate ideas, we must keep close in mind—and heart—each and every American searching for steady employment. This includes our nation’s largest minority group—people with disabilities.

This diverse sect, spanning all ages, genders, ethnicities and socioeconomic backgrounds, is a large contributor to our working populace and should be kept at the forefront of negotiations aimed at growing and stabilizing our labor force.

Our state is fortunate to have programs and initiatives whose goal is to help individuals with disabilities. On November 12, 2010, the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, also known as the DD Act, was created to help individuals with developmental disabilities to maximize their potential through increased independence and productivity. Also, Title II of the DD Act authorizes competitive grants to help states strengthen their family support programs for families with a severely disabled family member. In addition to legislation, federal agencies provide guidance to those who are disabled. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is a federal agency that deals with recruiting and maintaining employees. This agency serves as an excellent resource for those individuals, disabled or not, to seek and sustain employment.

It is important to support persons with disabilities to become independent, productive and incorporated members of our region’s workforce. Non-profit organizations like Families Helping Families are true testaments to the strength of a community. Providing a network of resources to people facing similar circumstances, Families Helping Families embraces the meaning of positive thinking. Individuals with disabilities are not broken or damaged, and having such a diagnosis should not be used to define one’s value and promise. No one of should be underestimated. Rather, these unique individuals should be treated with respect and granted same opportunity to learn valuable job skills.

This principle extends to the realm of employment, and individuals with disabilities deserve a fair shot. During difficult financial times, many recent college graduates and countless seasoned workers are frantically searching for jobs. When there is a 75 percent unemployment rate of people with disabilities, it is hard to argue change isn’t needed. Having an optimistic outlook and believing in others are losing their appeal this day in age, and we need to modify this approach. A disability does not define a person, and it certainly should not be used as a predictor of one’s potential.

As a divided Washington looks to remove barriers to job creation and finally provide Americans relief from uncertainty, we must remember to put people before politics. After all, it is the people who make America strong.

U.S. Rep. Rodney Alexander, R-Quitman, represents Louisiana’s 5th Congressional District and serves on the House Appropriations Committee.

JUST WHAT IS EPILEPSY?

By: Dr. Charles Ugokwe

Epilepsy is a common condition in which a person has recurrent seizures. The seizures are caused by sudden electrical discharges in the brain that result in convulsions, behavior changes and a brief loss of awareness or loss of consciousness. The brain is made of billions of cells that give off electrical energy. These electrical discharges are needed for emotions, movements, sensations and thought. Sometimes these electrical discharges become irregular or overloaded and give off much energy. This results in seizure activity. The sudden overload may stay in one small area of the brain or it may affect many areas of the brain.

A seizure caused by a single small area of brain causes jerking of the facial muscles, twitching, for example. A seizure that involves many areas in the brain will result in a change in consciousness and may cause the whole body to jerk, called a generalized clonic movement.

There are many causes of seizures and recurrent seizures are called epilepsy. If you have a seizure once, it is called a seizure – everybody has a 25% chance of having a seizure. If you have seizures more than once, it is called epilepsy. Epilepsy may be caused by some damage to the brain tissue or some unknown abnormality in the body chemistry. In approximately one-half of all the cases, the cause of epilepsy cannot be found. Seizures are divided into two categories: **generalized seizures** and **partial seizures**. The thing to remember is that generalized seizure starts all over, which is normally called a **grand mal seizure**. Partial seizures start from one part of the brain.

Categories of seizures:

1. **Partial seizures** are divided into **simple partial seizures** and **complex partial seizures**.
 - a. Complex partial seizures are characterized by purposeful movement. These types of seizures may vary greatly from one person to the other. The person with complex partial seizure may have an aura, or a warning as the first part of the seizure begins. An aura may be flashing lights, unusual taste or smell, a variety of sensations that the person may describe. Some people have motor automatizations which involve motor movement, mouth movement, pulling themselves and doing inappropriate things. During the seizure, the individual may appear drunk, drugged, and fidgety, have a glassy stare, make mouth



Dr. Charles Ugokwe and his wife Amaka stand at the entrance of the Cenla Neurology Clinic in Alexandria. For years Dr. Ugokwe has donated time serving the underprivileged in Central Louisiana in addition to his normal practice. Serving both children and adults, he also assists in helping those residing a Pinecrest. He is truly an asset to our community and we thank him.

- movements, and have jerks of one side of the body and/or act confused. With complex partial seizures, there is always a change in the content or level of consciousness. The seizure usually lasts for a few seconds, some minutes. They are usually unaware afterwards. After, the individual gets confused. Once in awhile, complex partial seizures can generalize.
- b. Simple partial seizure may be characterized by minor motor-sensory symptoms. There may be tingling in some area. The seizure usually remains in one area of the brain. No loss of consciousness or change in memory. Examples are stomachache, bad taste, bad smell, sweating, flushing, hearing things or seeing things.
2. **Generalized seizures:** Generalized seizures are divided into generalized tonic-clonic seizures, formerly called grand mal seizures, absence seizures formerly known as petit mal seizures, and myoclonic seizures formerly known as myoclonic jerks.
- a. Absence seizure. Absence seizure consists of a staring spell that usually lasts for 15 seconds to 30 seconds. This is described as daydreaming, may have some eye blinking or facial twitching or hand movement with brief loss of consciousness. They at times fall down. This is usually seen in young children, between 5 and 12 years of age, is usually called absence seizure. It rarely occurs before the age of two. The child may have thousands of these seizures per day, causing the child to have problems in school due to missing material in class. Once absence seizures are treated, they usually dramatically improve and, at times, the child may outgrow it.
 - b. Generalized tonic-clonic seizure, formerly known as grand mal. This affects the whole body. At the beginning of the seizure, the patient falls, loses consciousness. The body stiffens up (tonic stiffening) and the muscles alternate between spasm and relaxing with jerking movement. The patient may let out a cry and appear to be in pain, but the seizure itself does not hurt. The patient may hit his head, bite his tongue, urinate on themselves or defecate on themselves. After the seizure is over, the patient regains consciousness. The patient may be confused, fatigued, or experience a headache or have speech difficulty or weakness.
3. Myoclonic seizures. Myoclonic seizures are quick muscle contractions or quick muscle jerks appearing as a shock-like movement. They may occur repeatedly or as a single event with each seizure.



Community Healthworx unveils a painting donated by Dr. David Holcombe.

Community Health Worx

**1543 McGinnis Street
Alexandria, LA 71301**

Who We Serve:

Working people and their families who earn at or below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines.

What We Provide:

Free doctor visits, free labs and x-rays, free education classes on disease management and free prescription medications. We also provide free mammogram screening for our women patients.

When Do We Do This?:

Doctors' clinics are held every Tuesday evening beginning at 3:00 p.m. and every Monday morning at 8:30 a.m.

How Do We Do This?:

All doctors' clinics are staffed by volunteer physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses and specially trained non-medical persons who support the mission of the clinic.

Coming November 3, 2011:

Free dental clinic staffed by volunteer dentists, oral surgeons and dental hygienists. All dental patients must meet eligibility criteria of the clinic prior to any dental treatment.

What is the Free Pharmacy?:

In 2005, the working People's Free Clinic and the Caring People's Free Pharmacy merged and began doing business as Community Healthworx.

All patients who receive services through the medical clinic receive their free medications through the free pharmacy. However, some individuals receive only free medication through the pharmacy. They are: homeless persons referred by a social service agency; indigent individuals, seniors who are in the “donut hole” of the Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Program, any special needs child, and persons experiencing an emergency situation. These individuals qualify for services in much the same way that working people qualify to be treated in doctors’ clinic.

Where Do We Get Our Funding?:

Community Healthworx is completely locally funded. We receive various grants from local charities and foundations, as well as donations from churches, businesses and private citizens.

Our annual budget is less than \$400,000. We have four full-time staff and four part-time staff.

For every dollar we receive in donations, we provide more than \$5.00 in services. What a great return on a donor’s gift!

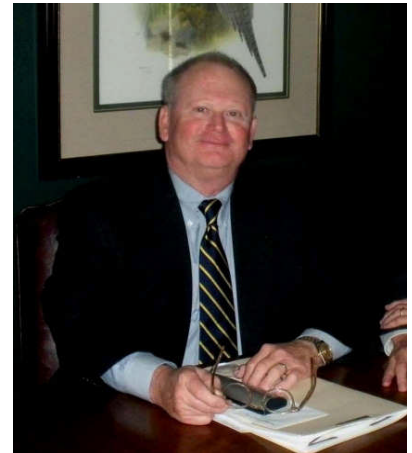
Dr. David Holcombe, regional Administrator and Medical Director for the Office of Public Health in region 6 does much more than his job by serving as volunteer Medical Director for Community Healthworx as well as serving on their board. Our community thanks him.



A Gift With Unintended Taxes Included!

By: Greg Walker, Attorney At Law

The best of intentions can go wrong when it comes to passing assets to your family. In an effort to keep things simple, many parents gift assets to their children during the parent's lifetime rather than waiting for the assets to pass to their children after the parent's death. In addition to keeping things simple, lifetime gifting allows parents to experience the joy of assisting their children when a need arises. Unfortunately, parents are not aware of significant tax and other consequences to both the parent and the child when assets are given away during the parents' lifetime.



Real estate is an asset parents often gift to their children. Parents want to help their children by gifting the family home which has gotten too big for the aging or widowed parent. Another way parents help their children is by donating family land. By donating land parents can help facilitate the building of a child's first home. Real estate donated to children is often a family asset like a vacation home or camp with hunting land which is given to the child to "keep it in the family." Commercial real estate is given to a child as an investment which can generate extra income and future wealth.

Another asset parents often gift to their children is stock. Parents may want to give a child or grandchild stock to start an investment portfolio or to simply pass down an investment that has been in the family for years. If the parent already has a comfortable retirement, the dividends from the donated stock can help the children in these times of uncertainty and increasing costs.

Both real estate and stock can become more valuable over time. While gaining value is a good thing, it is this increase in value that contributes to the first consequence of parents gifting assets during their lifetime. When you give assets to your children during your lifetime, your children receive your assets with your "basis" in the asset. Your basis is what you paid for the asset. Thus, if your child sells the asset for more than you paid for it, they will owe capital gains taxes on the increase in value from your original purchase price. This can be a significant tax. However, if you pass assets to your children through a will, certain types of trusts or using other planning strategies, your children can receive the asset with a "stepped up basis" at your death. This means that your child will receive the asset with a basis equal to its increased value at the time of your death, not your original purchase price. Then, if your child later decides to sell the asset there will not be a significant increase in value to be taxed on. This 'step up in basis' at death is the subject of current tax code discussions in Congress. At least for 2011 and 2012, the step up in basis at death remains in effect. However, the fate of the stepped up basis at death in 2013 and beyond is unclear. This uncertainty makes proper planning to achieve the best possible tax strategy even more important before passing assets to your children.

Another unintended consequence of parents lifetime gifting is a child's potential divorce or bad spending habits. A local couple gifted land to their daughter several years ago so she and their son-in-law could build a home next door. Unfortunately, the parents recently watched as the home was foreclosed on by the bank. Now, the parents have strangers living next door on what had been their land before being gifted to the daughter.

What seems like a simple plan to transfer assets to your children by adding the child's name to a deed or account and by giving assets to them outright can have disastrous tax and other unintended consequences? However, with proper planning, parents can "gift now" with both advantageous tax results and added protections.

Self-Direction comes to Central Louisiana



Tammy Salter introduces the Self-Direction Program to Central Louisiana

Self-Direction is a service delivery option which allows participants to become the employer of the people they choose to hire to provide supports for them. As the employer, participants are responsible for recruiting, training, supervising, and managing the people they choose to hire. This option gives participants the most control over their supports, but also the most responsibility.

Self-Direction is based on the principles of self-determination, which means that a person has the ability or right to make his/her own decisions, and include the following:

FREEDOM – the opportunity to choose where and with whom you live, as well as how you organize all important aspects of your life.

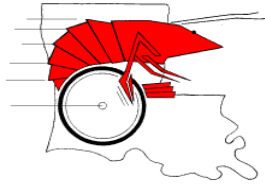
AUTHORITY – the ability to control some targeted amount of public dollars.

SUPPORT – the ability to organize support in ways that are unique to you.

RESPONSIBILITY – the obligation to use public dollars wisely and to contribute to your community.

CONFIRMATION – the recognition that people with disabilities themselves must be a major part of the redesign of the human service system of long-term care.

With Self-Direction, you control the amount spent on wages and benefits for your employees within the guidelines established by the program in which you are enrolled. With assistance from your support coordinator, you, as the employer, are required to budget payments for wages and required employment-related taxes.



GUMBO UPDATE

October 2011

Every child deserves the opportunity to participate in a sports program. GUMBO stands for “Games Uniting Mind & Body”, and it provides athletic opportunities for students aged 5-18 years with physical disabilities or visual impairments who are cognitively age appropriate. Typically, these children do not qualify for Special Olympics because they do not have an intellectual disability, and they are unable to participate in sports on an equal basis with their peers due to their physical or visual limitations. GUMBO athletes participate using leg braces, wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, or they run exhibiting some form of mobility or visual impairment. GUMBO focuses on the “ability” of their disABILITY, encouraging each child to discover their ability within, try new things, and lead a healthy, active lifestyle.

GUMBO offers sports opportunities in track, field, slalom, and indoor boccia throughout the state. The student athletes are classified according to their age and ability; they only compete against others in the same age group and with similar or like impairments.

NJDC Eleven Louisiana GUMBO athletes and their families traveled to the National Junior Disability Championship (NJDC) which was held in Saginaw, Michigan in July. “Team GUMBO” made a very impressive showing and even introduced many to our Louisiana cooking by serving gumbo and boudin. Athletes competed in track & field, powerlifting, and archery. Athletes who attended were Alexandra & Nicholas Badeaux (New Iberia), Kristen Bellard (Mamou), Chase Brossette (Gardner), Ryan Conley (Farmerville), Dylan Faughn (Covington), Acy Jackson (Prairieville), Stephanie Martin (Kenner), Mitchell Miles (Dodson), Bryce Segura (New Iberia), and Lakeria Taylor (Shreveport). Head coach was Stephanie Lamperez (New Iberia) and assistant coach was Melissa Brossette (Gardner).

Paralympic Experience held in Belle Chasse On Saturday, August 27, 2011, GUMBO provided an opportunity for young athletes (new & experienced), parents, teachers, & therapists to learn about Paralympic Sports. Trainers provided hands-on experience and coaching tips for wheelchair basketball, powerlifting, and wheelchair softball. U.S. Paralympian, Paul Schulte, was the guest speaker and he also impressed the crowd with his wheelchair basketball skills.

2011 U.S. Paralympics Track & Field High School All-Americans named Louisiana had 4 athletes on this list, which include Alexandra Badeaux (New Iberia), Dylan Faughn (Covington), Mitchell Miles (Dodson), and Lakeria Taylor (Shreveport). Congratulations!

Upcoming Events

November	GUMBO State Boccia Tournament in Baton Rouge
January	Wheelchair Basketball Clinic in Shreveport
February	GUMBO Southeast Sports Clinic
March 23	GUMBO North in Shreveport at Lee Hedges Stadium
April/May	GUMBO Acadiana, GUMBO South, GUMBO Crossroads

Louisiana GUMBO would like to thank the Louisiana Department of Education, Division of Special Populations and the Louisiana Elks Association for their continued support for young children with physical and visual disabilities. Please thank your local BESE Board member for supporting GUMBO.



LaDDC NEWS

September 14, 2011

Family Forums on Individual & Family Support Services Scheduled – Save the Date

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.

The Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities and the La. Developmental Disabilities Council will be conducting Family Forums across the state in the next few months on Individual and Family Support Services. Dates for each region are listed below. **Save the Date!**

October 5th	Region 5	Lake Charles area
October 26th	Region 3 (SCLHSA)	Thibodaux/Houma area
November 1st	Region 7	Shreveport area
November 2nd	Region 8	Monroe area
November 7th	Region 2 (CAHSD)	Baton Rouge area
December 1st	Region 4	Lafayette area
December 6th	Region 9 (FPHSA)	Northshore/Hammond area
December 13th	Region 6	Alexandria area
After New Year's	Regions 1 (MHSD) & 10 (JPHSA)	New Orleans/Jefferson

There will be two sessions per day from which to choose – a morning session at 10:00 a.m. and an evening session at approximately 5:30 or 6:00 p.m. Each session is expected to last approximately two hours.

The Regional Office/District/Authority is currently securing a location for the Family Forum in each region. As soon as these locations are secured they will be publicized. Until then, mark your calendars and **SAVE the DATE!**



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 are 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 have 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>.



Register to Vote Now: Statewide Elections Coming Soon!

On October 22, Louisiana voters will go to the polls to vote in races for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, and other statewide representatives. Voters will also choose their state Representatives and Senators.

To be eligible to vote in the October 22nd election, you must be registered to vote by September 21, 2011. You can register online at <http://www.sos.la.gov/OnlineVoterRegistrationOVR/tabid/955/Default.aspx>. You can also register via mail (You can download a registration card at http://www.sos.la.gov/Portals/0/elections/pdf/F%20VoterRegApp_Rev05-11_.pdf), Finally, you can register at your parish Registrar of Voters office, at the Department of Motor Vehicles and at many agencies which provide public assistance or serve people with disabilities. No matter what method you choose, be sure to allow time for processing your application to ensure it's received by September 21st.

Louisiana recently completed the redistricting process, changing a number of the boundaries of state House and Senate districts to comply with shifts in population as determined by the 2010 Census. Your district and polling place may have changed. Check this and the status of your registration at www.geauxvote.com or by calling your parish Registrar of Votes. Contact information is available at <http://www.sos.la.gov/Portals/0/elections/pdf/COC-ROVlist.pdf>.

The Advocacy Center is conducting a survey of many statewide candidates on disability issues. Results of the survey will be available via AC's website (www.advocacyla.org) and in *Pushing the Envelope: AC News in Brief*, AC's online newsletter. To subscribe to the newsletter, visit <http://advocacyla.org/index.php/newsletter-subscription.html>.

Advocacy Center staff will be available to answer your voting questions or assist with disability-related voting problems during early voting (October 8-15) and on Election Day. Call 1-800-960-7705 or email advocacycenter@advocacyla.org to ask a question or report a voting problem.

Parents, Teachers, Support Staff and School Administrators

Families Helping Families At The Crossroads Louisiana Presents:



Communication and Teambuilding: Helping Students to be Successful

Kathy Kilgore, Executive Director of the SUNS Center, will provide a day full of interactive and engaging activities. The morning session will help parents and teachers realize how communication significantly impacts students, especially those with special learning needs. In the afternoon, the session will focus on instructional approaches on how parents and professionals can help teach students with disabilities. Samples of basic strategies will be shared that are effective for use in inclusive settings.

Presented by Kathy Kilgore

Kathy Kilgore is the Director of the SUNS Center which stands for Serving the Unique Needs of Students. She has over 39 years of experience in education both as a teacher and administrator. In January 2006, she retired from the New Orleans Public School District where she served as the Associate Director for Exceptional Children's Services. Since her retirement, she has continued to be active in the field of special education and now serves as a special education monitor for the Louisiana State Department of Education. As Director of the SUNS Center, she consults with various school districts and individual schools on issues related to special education. The SUNS Center, under the guidance of the School Leadership Center, provides supports and direct services to schools and school districts assisting them in the design and implementation of programs for students with disabilities.



Monday, February 13, 2012 - 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Pineville Community Center

708 Main Street, Pineville, LA 71360

To register call 318-641-7373, Ext. 24 by Feb. 6th

(May have waiting list for those not registered by RSVP date)

This conference is sponsored in part by: Louisiana Department of Education and Families Helping Families at the Crossroads



**COME CELEBRATE WITH US!
KEES PARK COMMUNITY CENTER
HWY 28 EAST, PINEVILLE, LA
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2011
6:30 P.M. - UNTIL**

SPONSORED BY: FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES



**ENTERTAINMENT FOR ALL
FOOD, SANTA, AND CHRISTMAS
DANCE**

This will be a great opportunity for persons with special needs, families
and friends to become acquainted with each other.

R.S.V.P. BY DECEMBER 7, 2011

Please bring a \$5 - \$10 wrapped and tagged gift for your child (children)
or adult with special needs



Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Number Attending: _____

Please return to:

Families Helping Families

P. O. Box 3356, Pineville, LA 71361


Fax: 318-640-4299 or call 318-641-7373

or long distance 1-800-259-7200

For more information call number above

Partial funding by:

**Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council,
Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, Children's Special Health Services,
State Department of Education, Office of Mental Health, donations, personal contributions
and special fundraisers.**


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