

Quarterly Informer

April, May and June 2023 Edition

FHF 2023 Angel Awards

**FHF SWLA
Board of
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Khaja Moinuddin

FHF SWLA recognized our Angels from the past couple of year by presenting them with a small token of appreciation! Thank you for your support!!!

**Who we Are ...
What we Do!**

Susan Riehn

Executive Director

Cynthia Brown

Bookkeeper

Wallace Johnson

Education Support
Specialist

Myllinda Elliott

Program Manager,
LaCAN Leader &
Senior Education
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Community
Resource Specialist

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Early Steps COS

Carla Chenier

ImCA DD
Facilitator

Nicole Jones

I&R/Clerical
Assistant



FHF SWLA Mission:

Our mission is to enable and empower individuals with disabilities and their families by providing information, referral, education, training, peer support and advocacy skills.

Like Us On Facebook

Want to keep up to date with FHF of SWLA?

Like our Facebook page!! You will receive event information and other bulletins about what is going on in the SWLA region!

www.facebook.com/fhfswla/





Moss Bluff Buddy Ball



Registration is open!

Moss Bluff Buddy Ball have to register with the league. It is still free of charge you just go online and sign up. Don't forget to put your shirt size.

www.mossblufflittleleague.com

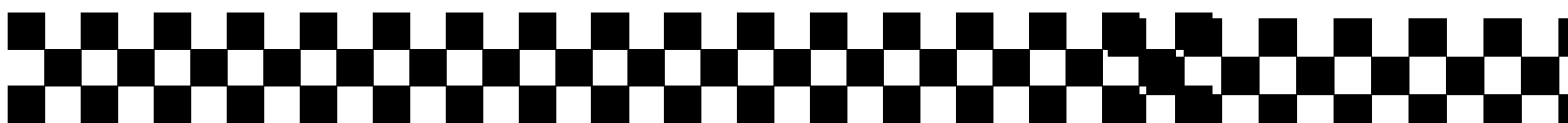


Moss Bluff Little League is returning to THE BLUFF for the 2023 season...



DID YOU KNOW ?

- McDonald's once created bubblegum-flavored broccoli..
- Grapes light on fire in the microwave.



FHF office will be closed
April 7, 2023
due to

GOOD FRIDAY

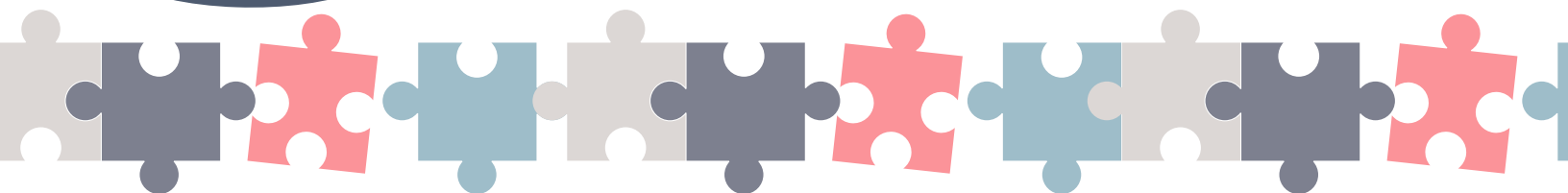




Riddle

Four legs up,
four legs down,
soft in the middle,
hard all around.
What am I?

Answer on the Last Page



DORITOS CHICKEN TENDERS

Ingredients:

- 1 large bag of Doritos (I used Nacho Cheese tortilla chips, but you can use any flavor)
- 2 small trays chicken breast tenders or breast cut into strips
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise (Garlic salt, paprika, or cayenne pepper (optional))

Directions:

Preheat your oven to 400 degrees and get all of your ingredients ready to use.

Pour your Doritos into a gallon size resealable bag (like Ziploc or Hefty) and use a rolling pin to crush the large chips into small bits. This is a great job for one of the kids if they are helping!

The amount of chips needed for the recipe will depend on how many chicken strips you intend to make, so you'll have to gauge that amount at the time, but the ingredients above should give you a good guide to start with.

When the crushed chips are small enough, pour them into a shallow dish. Pull out a baking pan and set it next to your chicken and Doritos setup. Spray it with nonstick cooking spray.

If you are using boneless skinless chicken breasts, slice them into appropriately sized chicken pieces to turn them into tenders.

Using a rubber spatula or silicone basting brush, "paint" each chicken tender with mayonnaise and then immediately press both sides of the chicken into the crushed Doritos. Make sure that the whole strip is covered with the chip coating.

If you feel like your Doritos are older or you want to add some bonus flavor, put a few shakes of garlic salt, paprika, or cayenne pepper into your mayo before painting it on.

Once coated, place your Dorito crusted chicken strips on the ungreased baking sheet and bake for 15-20 minutes. Serve hot and enjoy!



With New Technology, L'Oréal Looks To Make Makeup More Accessible

by Shaun Heasley | January 10, 2023

A major beauty brand is debuting a device aimed at ensuring that individuals with disabilities can apply makeup all by themselves.

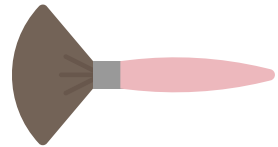
L'Oréal says it has created a handheld smart makeup applicator that can help people with limited hand and arm mobility easily and independently apply their own lipstick.

The device called HAPTA uses smart motion controls and attachments that can be customized to enable individuals to open packaging and apply makeup on their own with precision, L'Oréal said. The battery-powered device allows users to lock in custom settings.

HAPTA is based on technology that was originally developed to help stabilize and level utensils to allow those with disabilities to eat without assistance.

"Inclusivity is at the heart of our innovation and beauty tech strategy," said Barbara Lavernos, deputy CEO in charge of research, innovation and technology at L'Oréal. "We are dedicated and passionate to bring new technologies powering beauty services that augment and reach every individual's ultimate desires, expectations and unmet needs."

The device was unveiled earlier this month at CES, an annual consumer technology trade show in Las Vegas. L'Oréal said it plans to pilot HAPTA with its Lancôme brand this year starting with a lipstick applicator. Additional types of makeup are expected to follow.



HELP STOP TRAFFICKING

Louisiana has launched a hotline for receiving reports of suspected juvenile sex trafficking.

All cases of juvenile sex trafficking will now be reported through the DCFS child abuse/neglect hotline, which is toll-free and available 24/7. To report juvenile sex trafficking, call 1-855-4LA-KIDS (1-855-452-5437) and select Option 4

HELP **STOP** TRAFFICKING

REPORT
JUVENILE SEX
TRAFFICKING
TO
1-855-4LA-KIDS
(1-855-452-5437)
SELECT OPTION #4



Department of
Children &
Family Services
Building a Stronger Louisiana



Which Is Better: An IEP or a 504 Plan?

The pros and cons of a 504 Accommodation Plan and an Individualized Education Plan.

By Liz Matheis an article taken from www.empoweringparents.com

Three blocks spelling "IEP" on paint covered table, which is important to know about if a child has ADHD. Your child is showing signs of ADHD. He's doing OK at school, but isn't really living up to his potential. His teacher has spoken to you about the [accommodations](#) she is providing, but once she's done with him this year, then what? Will his next teacher know him well enough to offer the accommodations that have worked or, better yet, to offer different ones as he needs them?

All of these are big questions without easy answers. Your child's needs are different from those of every other child with ADHD. Each case is truly unique, but the path that parents should follow is well worn. It begins with an evaluation and a medical ADHD diagnosis for your child. Then it requires evaluating the two types of accommodations plans your child will need based on his academic, behavioral and/or sensory profile. That is where I will focus below.

I think my child has ADHD – what should I do?

If you and/or your child's teacher suspect that your child's inattentive, hyperactive, or impulsive behavior may point to ADHD, your first stop is likely your **pediatrician's office**. Not all pediatricians will complete an ADHD evaluation or offer a diagnosis, however, your pediatrician is a good first stop because she can refer you to a trusted psychologist or neurologist who can evaluate and diagnose symptoms.

A **neurologist** or **psychiatrist** can diagnose ADHD. However, you should not rely on them to tell you what type of supports your child needs in the classroom. Your neurologist may make some recommendations but you won't get a comprehensive understanding of your child's learning profile, nor will you learn about what classroom accommodations are shown to improve focus and learning.

This is often where a **psychologist** comes in. A psychologist can offer testing for educational achievement, cognition or IQ, and executive functioning – all of which help to shape your child's learning style profile, bring into focus his academic strengths and weaknesses, and lead to recommendations for classroom accommodations. This psycho-educational evaluation often also brings to light related learning disabilities that may be complicating your child's diagnosis, treatment, and school performance.

What is a 504 Accommodation Plan?

A [504 Accommodation Plan](#) is guided by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to ensure that a student with a disability has access to accommodations that improve academic functioning. In order to qualify for a [504 Plan](#), a student must have a diagnosis for a physical or emotional disability, or impairment (e.g., ADHD) that restricts one or more major life activities (e.g., attention, class participation).

Once a diagnosis exists, the parent prepares a letter to the school's 504 Committee specifying the disability as well as the accommodations needed by the student. When you prepare your letter, start it with, "I would like to request a 504 Accommodation Plan for my child due to a diagnosis of ADHD, which restricts one or more major life activities and his ability to access the curriculum." Identify your child's date of birth, grade, teacher (if in elementary school), and attach a letter from your psychologist, pediatrician, neurologist, or psychiatrist indicating an ADHD diagnosis and type (e.g., Inattentive, Hyperactive/Impulsive, or Combined).

A 504 Accommodation Plan can also provide extended time or small group administration for statewide testing for your child.

Note that a student is not able to receive specialized instruction (e.g., In Class Resource Program or Out of Class Resource Replacement) – or related services, such as occupational therapy, speech therapy or physical therapy – through a 504 Accommodation Plan.



What is an IEP?

An IEP or Individualized Education Plan is guided by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and provides special education and related services to a student who is identified as having a disability that negatively impacts her ability to receive academic instruction. A student who receives special education services is entitled to modification of curriculum, classroom accommodations, specialized instruction, and related services such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy and/or counseling (by the School Social Worker or School Psychologist).

A parent or teacher refers the child for special education and related services, and your child can be tested by the Child Study Team. These evaluations can consist of the following: Psychological Evaluation, Educational Evaluation, Social Evaluation, Speech Evaluation, Physical Therapy Evaluation, Occupational Therapy Evaluation. Other evaluations, such as a Central Auditory Processing Evaluation, neurological exam, or psychiatric evaluation are often conducted by professionals outside of the school who are contracted by your school Board. A student with an IEP is re-evaluated every three years to determine continued eligibility. However, a parent can request a re-evaluation sooner than three years, but not less than one year. An IEP is also reviewed annually.

IEP or 504 Plan?

If your child needs accommodations in the classroom – such as being seated away from windows and close to the teacher – but not an academic program, your child needs a [504 Plan](#). However, if your child has a learning weakness or disability, consider an IEP. If your child needs related services on top of that, consider an IEP.

So, if you're suspecting that your child has ADHD, begin with a qualified diagnosis and be sure to consider related learning disabilities. With that information in hand, you can begin to evaluate the best way forward for your child and her academic career.

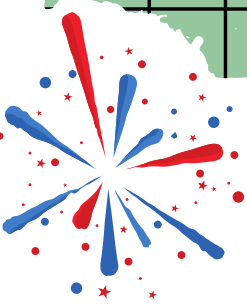


FREE COVID-19 TESTS

The White House is making COVID-19 tests available by mail. Every household can order four free tests. The tests are shipped straight to your door. Shipping is also free.



CLAIM YOURS



FHF office will be
closed
May 29, 2023
due to
Memorial Day

Juneteenth



June 19 is to commemorate the emancipation of enslaved people in the US. The holiday was first celebrated in Texas, where on that date in 1865, in the aftermath of the Civil War, enslaved people were declared free under the terms of the 1862 Emancipation Proclamation.

Juneteenth became a state holiday in Texas in 1980, and a number of other states subsequently followed suit. In 2021 Juneteenth was made a federal holiday.

The day is also celebrated outside the United States, being used by organizations in a number of countries to recognize the end of slavery and to honor the culture and achievements of African Americans.

FHF office will be closed
June 16, 2023
due to
Juneteenth



Earth Day is
April 22, 2023



HAPPY
Mother's
DAY



June 18, 2023

May 14, 2023



celebrate

Happy
Father's
Day



Early Learning Resources to Share With Caregivers

This website offers handouts that follow the well-child visit schedule, including the newborn visit, and suggest no- and low-cost activities to enhance caregivers' ability to stimulate a baby's development and promote school readiness. The resources are available in

English at <https://www.healthysteps.org/resource/early-learning-resources-to-share-with-parents-english/> and

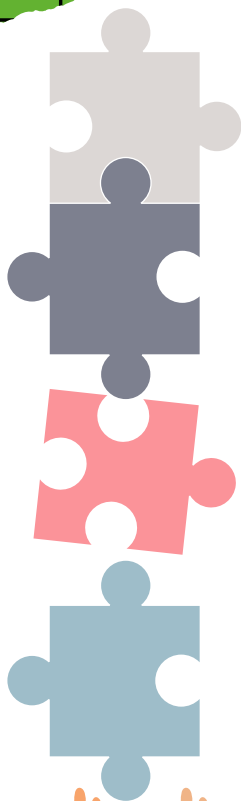
Spanish at <https://www.healthysteps.org/resource/early-learning-resources-to-share-with-parents-spanish/>

LEARNING
NEVER
ENDS

From: Baby Talk



Sunday, April 2
Autism
Awareness Day



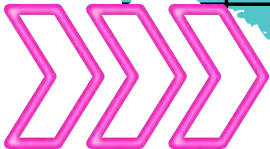
Tuesday, June 27
National HIV
Testing Day



Allen Parish
April 7-14
Beauregard Parish
April 7-14
Calcasieu Parish
April 7-14
Cameron Parish
April 7-14
Jeff Davis Parish
April 7-14



Allen Parish
April 7-14
Beauregard Parish
April 7-14
Calcasieu Parish
April 7-14
Cameron Parish
April 7-14
Jeff Davis Parish
April 7-14



Legislative Agenda 2023

Recurring Funding for Families Helping Families Regional Resource Centers

The Council will advocate for additional funding for the nine FHF Regional Resource Centers it contracts with. During the last two legislative sessions, an additional \$500,000 was added to the Council’s budget specifically for FHF Centers. The Council’s request to include this additional funding in its Fiscal Year 2024 budget was denied leaving these Center’s in an unfortunate situation.

Fund Incontinence Supplies for Adults with Disabilities

The Council will also partner with the Arc of Louisiana to advocate for the funding needed to provide all adults on Medicaid waivers for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) with incontinence supplies. Currently, incontinence supplies is covered for children and youth, but this coverage stops at age 21. *****Funding is included in the Louisiana Dept. of Health Budget*****

Fund New & Existing Postsecondary Inclusive Education Programs for Students with I/DD

The Council will continue its efforts to increase and expand postsecondary inclusive education opportunities in Louisiana for individuals with I/DD. During the last legislative session, the Inclusive Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund was established. This year, the Council is advocating for an additional \$3 million to be added to this fund.

Amend Open Meeting Law to Allow for Virtual Representation & Participation in Public Meetings

Finally, the Council will advocate to amend Louisiana’s Open Meetings Law to allow virtual participation of public body members and the general public when no state of emergency or disaster exists, and require official meeting notices include information regarding all available options for the public to participate.

Get Involved

The 2023 Legislative Session begins April10th and will conclude on June 8th. Individuals with disabilities, family members, and advocates are encouraged to take part in the Council’s advocacy efforts. If interested in advocating for these agenda items with your legislator and regional delegation? Reach out to your LaCAN Leader, **Mylanda Elliott**, to participate in legislative visits.





Hurricane Season 2023

June 1 - November 30

Key takeaways

- Hurricane season runs **June through November** every year, with **August through October** being the **peak months** for tropical cyclone events.
- The 2023 hurricane season is expected to be **less active than normal** for the first time in seven years.
- Be sure to review your **home** and **flood insurance policies** before or early in hurricane season.
- Many insurance companies **won't** let coastal residents in impacted states update or purchase coverage once a tropical storm is **officially named** by the National Hurricane Center.

Is 2023 going to be a bad hurricane season?

Going into the 2023 hurricane season, Tropical Storm Risk (TSR) — one of the industry's watched hurricane forecasting teams — is predicting a season that's 15% below the 30-year norm. [2]

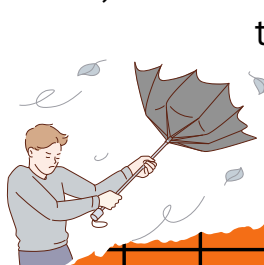
Below are the TSR predictions for the 2023 Atlantic hurricane season:

- Around **13 named storms**
- Around **6** of those could become hurricanes (wind speeds of 74 mph or higher)
- Around **3 major hurricanes** — Category 3, 4, or 5 (wind speeds of 111 mph or higher)

If you live close to the Atlantic or Gulf Coast, make sure to prepare your home and review your homeowners insurance well in advance of a hurricane threat.

Which months have the most hurricanes?

August through October are considered the peak months during hurricane season. Around 78% of tropical storm days, 87% of minor hurricane days, and 96% of the major hurricane days occur during those months, with **early to mid-September** being the most active time for tropical storms.





UNDERSTANDING THE ACHIEVING A BETTER LIFE EXPERIENCE (ABLE) ACT

Disability Rights Louisiana (DRLA) is a statewide non-profit agency providing FREE legal services, advocacy, and other supports to people with disabilities of all ages.

What is an ABLE Account?

An ABLE account is a tax-free account that can be used to save for disability-related expenses for a person who became blind or significantly disabled before age 26.

Why is there a need for an ABLE Account?

People with disabilities have many expenses that others do not have. Yet, to qualify for public benefits like SSI, individuals have to remain poor, having no more than \$2,000 in cash savings, retirement funds, and other items of significant value. This means that they cannot afford to pay for the extra expenses engendered by their disability. For the first time, eligible individuals will be allowed to establish ABLE savings accounts that will not affect their eligibility for SSI, Medicaid, and other public benefits.

Who can set up an ABLE Account?

ABLE accounts can be created by individuals who became significantly disabled before the age of 26, or by families to support their dependents with disabilities.

How much can an individual put into an ABLE Account?

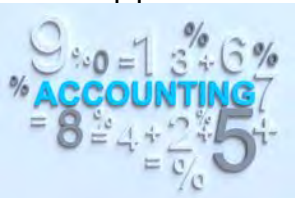
The contribution limit in 2023 is \$17,000. Employed individuals can also contribute earnings up to \$13,590 in addition to the \$17,000 annual contribution limit, as long as they do not have a retirement plan that they or their employer contributes.

Does an ABLE Account have an impact on other benefits a person with a disability might receive?

If the account grows to more than \$100,000, the beneficiary's SSI benefits will be suspended, but not terminated. The beneficiary would continue to be eligible for Medicaid. It is unclear whether other benefits, such as those provided by the State, would be affected if the account grows to more than \$100,000.

Which expenses are allowed by ABLE accounts?

Any expense associated with disability-related expenses. These include: education, housing, transportation, employment training and support, health care expenses, financial management and administrative services, assistive technology, personal support services, and other expenses which will be further described in regulations to be promulgated by the U.S. Treasury Department.





continue from pg. 12

Can a person with a disability set up more than one ABLE account?

No, but each person is limited to one ABLE account. However, you can “roll over” your ABLE account to another state’s program if you choose to.

Do I have to open an ABLE account in the state that I live in?

No, but some states restrict their ABLE accounts to residents only. You can visit the ABLE National Resource Center at www.ablemc.org to compare ABLE accounts across states.

Do I have to open an ABLE account in the state that I live in?

No, but some states restrict their ABLE accounts to residents only. You can visit the ABLE National Resource Center at <https://www.ablenrc.org/> to compare ABLE accounts across states.

What are the tax consequences of setting up an ABLE account?

- There is no federal tax on funds held in an ABLE account
- There is no federal tax when funds from the account are used for qualified expenses such as those listed above
- There is no federal tax deduction for someone who contributed to an ABLE account.

What happens upon the death of the person for whom an account was set up?

Upon the death of an eligible individual, any amounts remaining in the account must first be paid to any state Medicaid agency that provided assistance from the day the ABLE account was established, not to exceed the cost of care provided. Any excess over the Medicaid reimbursement amount will go to the deceased’s estate or to a designated beneficiary, and will be subject to income tax—but will not be subject to a penalty.

How is an ABLE account different than a special needs or pooled trust?

An ABLE account will provide more choice and control for the beneficiary and family. The cost of establishing an ABLE account will be significantly less than that of establishing a trust which requires hiring an attorney. However, for some people, a trust may be preferable over an ABLE account. Determining which option is the most appropriate will depend upon individual circumstances. If you would like more information about ABLE accounts, please visit the ABLE National Resource Center at <https://www.ablenrc.org/>

If you need help or have questions about
Disability Rights Louisiana,
call or visit us online:

CALL TOLL-FREE: 1-800-960-7705
8325 Oak St. • New Orleans, LA 70118
DisabilityRightsLA.org



Dylan Crews Challenges You to Donate to Families Helping Families

Dylan Crews, Outfielder for LSU Baseball, joined forces with the Network of Families Helping Families Centers to Support Kids with Disabilities and Special Health Care Needs. For every home run he hits during the 2023 season, he will personally donate \$100 to Families Helping Families. For every home run his teammates hit during the 2023 season, his family will personally donate \$100 to Families Helping Families.

Number 3 led the LSU Tigers with 22 of the 114 Home runs in the 2022 season and hopes to continue his hitting streak into the 2023 season. This junior from Longwood, Florida, has stolen the hearts of many families of children with disabilities or special health care needs by inviting and giving them tickets to LSU baseball games. For some families, it's the first time they have ever attended a game in Alex Box Stadium.

Dylan and his family hope YOU will join in on the Home Run Derby fun by donating any amount every time Dylan or one of the LSU Tigers hits a home run. You can choose to Pledge and Pay Later or Donate Now.

Pledge and Pay Later: This option allows you to pledge a specific dollar amount per home run hit for a specific number of games, and then we will bill you for your tax-deductible donation.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeo92EixbodtSg1tca5E9OGHdvoart2oCPjees0mmUUPiA7RQ/viewform>

Donate Now: This allows you to make one or more online donations at any time.

[https://www.paypal.com/donate?
token=7OdFLr8AHdRc5vecPrYSgV0vpyYlcQdJ0jWfVlaBEpDYz2MQO2xQIWLy93m0JJMQCcteG_eLAB9J1CO](https://www.paypal.com/donate?token=7OdFLr8AHdRc5vecPrYSgV0vpyYlcQdJ0jWfVlaBEpDYz2MQO2xQIWLy93m0JJMQCcteG_eLAB9J1CO)

It is estimated that as many as 1 in 4 Louisiana children have a special health care need or disability. 1 in 4 could struggle to meet their maximum potential unless parents ensure their children receive the services and education they need and are entitled to.

The network of Families Helping Families Centers rallies around parents and caregivers to provide them with the knowledge and skills they need to be their child's best advocate.

Everybody should believe in these kids as much as Dylan Crews believes in them. He can see their potential and understands the sacrifices many families make daily raising children with special health care needs and disabilities. He thinks kids like Aubrey deserve every opportunity to reach their full potential and is personally donating money and challenging you to do the same.

All tax-deductible donations will be equally split between the ten Families Helping Families centers across Louisiana. We hope you join Dylan, his family, and others in donating to the Dylan Crews Homerun Derby.

Baseball

Article from FHF GNO <https://fhfogn.org/baseball-donation>
Promo Video on YouTube https://youtu.be/Q7fNrbL_nC4




DON'T MISS IT

MEDICAID MEMBER DON'T RISK LOSING YOUR HEALTH COVERAGE.

Keep your contact information up to date, including your address, phone number, cell number and email.

Choose the way that's easiest for you:

-  Online at mymedicaid.la.gov
-  By email at mymedicaid@la.gov
-  By calling Louisiana Medicaid toll-free at 1-888-342-6207, or by calling your health plan (your plan's number is on your insurance card)

Don't miss important updates about your health insurance. Medicaid will start mailing renewal letters in May 2023. If you do get a letter in the mail, follow the instructions and respond to Medicaid.



Scan here for more info

 **LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**
Medicaid



HAPPINESS CAN BE FOUND
EVEN IN
THE DARKEST
OF TIMES

IF ONE ONLY
REMEMBERS TO



FOLLOW US



LIKE



SHARE

SUBSCRIBE



Interoperability and Patient Access for Medicaid Members

Louisiana Medicaid members will soon have more control and greater access to their health information.

Louisiana Medicaid and the health plans that serve members are working to make that possible.

If members choose, they will be able to see their medical claims, test results, and appointments; the cost of care; and their health care providers right on their phone. This can be shared through any mobile app currently designed and approved to display Louisiana Medicaid data. Not all apps will display all data available; it is up to the member to select the app that best suits their needs.

This is not to manage your Louisiana Medicaid eligibility and it will not allow you to change your health plan. You will continue to use the [MyMedicaid.la.gov](https://mymedicaid.la.gov) web site to apply for Medicaid or manage your Medicaid account. You will continue to use your health plan's website or mobile app for information about your benefits and services through your health plan.

Why would I want to make my data available through a mobile app?

Having easy access to your health information through an app can:

- Give you control of your health information.
- Make it easier to share your health information with healthcare providers, caregivers, or anyone you chose.
- Help you manage and improve your health.

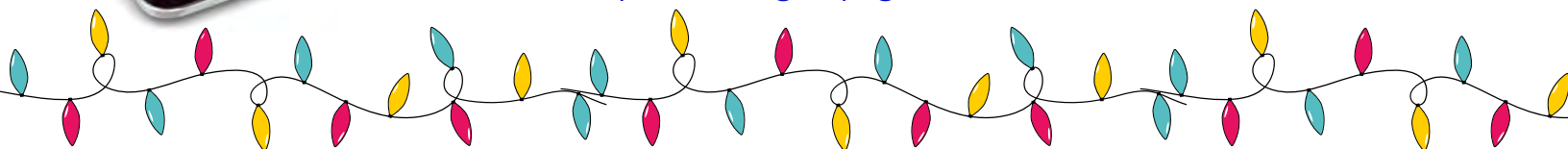
If you are enrolled in a health plan, visit that health plan's web site to see what they are doing about patient access. Links below.



- Aetna Better Health
- AmeriHealth Caritas
- Healthy Blue
- Humana Healthy Horizons in Louisiana
- Louisiana Healthcare Connections
- United Healthcare Community Plan



<https://ldh.la.gov/page/4218>



Save the Date

Friday, June 30, 2023

Community Dance

Lake Charles Civic Center

6:00 PM Exhibition Hall





Tips for Talking to Adults on the Autism Spectrum

By Margaret Walsh, M.A., BCBA

Do you have a family member, a neighbor, a co-worker, a classmate, or a gym buddy who is on the autism spectrum? If so, you may find that it can be challenging, at times, to communicate clearly with this individual. While no two people with autism have the same language and social skills, the following guidelines from experts in the field can help ensure your conversations go as smoothly as possible.

1. Address him or her as you would any other adult, not a child. Do not assume that this person has limited cognitive skills. An individual's disability may be more language-based and not related to his or her ability to comprehend the content of the conversation. In other words, s/he may understand every word you say, but may have difficulty responding verbally.
2. Avoid using words or phrases that are too familiar or personal. For example, words like "honey" or "sweetie," or "cutie," can come across as demeaning or disrespectful to anyone, but particularly to someone working to establish his or her independence. Save these terms of endearment for close friends and family members.
3. Say what you mean. When interacting with an adult with autism, be literal, clear, and concise. Avoid the use of slang, nuance, and sarcasm. These forms of communication may be confusing and not easily understood by a person on the autism spectrum.
4. Take time to listen. Being an active listener is an important skill when interacting with adults with ASD. Taking the time to listen lets them know that you care and support them. If you do not understand what the person is saying, ask more questions to clarify what he or she is trying to convey.
5. If you ask a question, wait for a response. If someone doesn't respond immediately to your question, do not assume they haven't heard or understood you. Just like typical adults, individuals with autism or other special needs sometimes need a little more time to absorb and process information before giving you their response.
6. Provide meaningful feedback. Some adults with ASD may unknowingly communicate inappropriately. Be prepared to provide specific feedback about what in the conversation was inappropriate. Providing feedback that is honest, non-judgmental, and clear can help someone with ASD learn to safely navigate complex social interactions.
7. Don't speak as if the person is not in the room. In a group setting with family members, caregivers, teachers, or others, do not talk about this person as if he or she were not in the room. It is easy to be drawn into this trap – especially if others are talking about this person in his or her presence. By modeling appropriate behavior, you can help others learn how to be more supportive of adults with ASD.

It is important for those of us who are family members, friends, and advocates of individuals who have ASD to recognize and respect them as adults and to help them experience as much self-esteem and achieve as much independence as possible.

<https://www.mayinstitute.org/news/acl/asd-and-dd-adult-focused/tips-for-talking-to-adults-on-the-autism-spectrum/>



One in Five Families with Children Has at Least One Child with Special Health Care Needs

It's a fact that many families around the world are affected by disabilities. In fact, recent statistics show that 1 in 5 families will have a child with a disability. This means that disability is a common experience for many families, and it's essential that we work together to ensure that everyone has access to the resources and support they need.

Children with disabilities face unique challenges, including difficulty accessing education, healthcare, and social services. For families, this can be an incredibly stressful and isolating experience, as they struggle to navigate a system that may not be designed to meet their needs.

Despite these challenges, families with children with disabilities are incredibly resilient. They work tirelessly to ensure that their children receive the support they need to thrive, and they advocate for policy changes that promote inclusion and accessibility.

There are many organizations and resources available to support families of children with disabilities. For example, your local Families Helping Families Center and Louisiana Family to Family Health Information Center provide information and resources on various topics. These centers are staffed with self-advocates and family members of individuals with disabilities who are facing similar challenges, providing a sense of community and support.

It's important that we work to change the broader societal attitudes towards disability. Disability is a natural part of the human experience, and it's essential that we work to break down the barriers that prevent individuals with disabilities from fully participating in society. By promoting inclusion and accessibility, we can create a society that values the contributions of all individuals, regardless of their abilities. We can work towards a future where every child has access to education, healthcare, and social services, and where individuals with disabilities and their families are supported and empowered.

Let's commit to working together towards a more equitable and just society. One where every individual, regardless of their abilities, has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

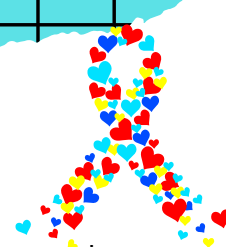
One in Five - Get the Word Out!



Did You Know?

- More than one in five families has at least one child with special health care needs – 23% of families.
- Approximately 14.6 million children ages 0 to 17 in the US have special health care needs (SHCN). That's nearly 20% (19.8%).
- The health care needs of these children may be physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional and represent a wide range of conditions including autism, cerebral palsy, developmental delay, intellectual disabilities, depression, learning disabilities, and epilepsy.
- Children with SHCN often have more than one condition and functional difficulties in more than one area that impacts their daily lives, such as breathing, communicating, chronic pain, learning, moving around, behavior, or challenges in making and keeping friends.
- Their families typically experience greater stress, struggling to meet the needs of their child in a maze of multiple and complex systems of care. Many families find that insurance is not adequate, care coordination is ineffective, and referrals are difficult. Families of children with SHCN are less likely to have family-centered health care.

Using Social Media on the Autism Spectrum



Social media can make forming friendships easier for autistic people, but there are pros and cons to consider.

The internet has changed the social landscape for people in many areas of the world. Smartphones have made social media accessible from more places than ever before.

If you're autistic, your social life may differ from most people's experiences. Social media can make it easier for you to build friendships, but there are safety issues you might want to know about first.

Autism and social skills

Autism is a neurodevelopmental difference that affects how your brain interprets and responds to your environment. It can impact how you interact with other people.

Autistic people tend to have social skills that differ from those of allistic (nonautistic) people. Since there are more allistics than autistics, the nonautistic ways are considered social "norms." Things like eye contact and small talk are a big part of social norms for neurotypical and neurodivergent allistic people. For autistics, though, it can be draining and stressful.

Other allistic differences include:

- the use of sarcasm and figurative language
- nonverbal communication, like the use of tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language
- social conventions like etiquette

Theory of mind is another common difference. It refers to how aware you are that others have different perspectives. Allistic people tend to have more theory of mind sensitivity, which means they may not think to tell you how they feel because they assume you should know.

Experiences can vary. Not all autistic people face every difference. Still, it's understandable if you sometimes feel overwhelmed by in-person socializing.

The benefits of social media for autistic people

One of the perspectives that many autistics share is how social media can ease some of the discomforts of in-person interactions, where you might feel distressed from your efforts to camouflage autistic traits.

Research from 2018 shows this masking can lead to mental health effects like depression and anxiety.

Social media may help for several reasons:

- no need for eye contact or nonverbal communication
- keyboarding instead of speech
- increased social connections through like-minded communities
- access to support groups and relevant information



A small 2017 study Trusted Source found that social media was connected to high friendship quality in autistic adolescents. Researchers believe it's because social media use requires less deciphering of complex allistic social information.

Meanwhile, a 2018 study found a link between Facebook use and increased happiness in autistic adults.

Autism and the negative effects of social media

Social media has some downsides.

For example, like in-person interactions, internet socializing has some unwritten rules that influence your messages. Things like:

- emoji use
- punctuation
- case choice

How often you post and the things you say also matter.

However, unlike in-person contact, you choose the pace of online interactions. This gives you time to read, learn about allistic communication, and think about your posts.

There are other downsides to social media, such as:

- impulsive posts can leave a permanent digital record
- cyberbullying
- exposure to inappropriate material or predators
- deceit from people hiding their true identity (catfishing)
- limited social experience
- anxiety from unrealistic expectations
- personal security threats from phishing posts
- accidental oversharing



It's important to be aware of these possibilities to keep yourself safe.

Social media tips

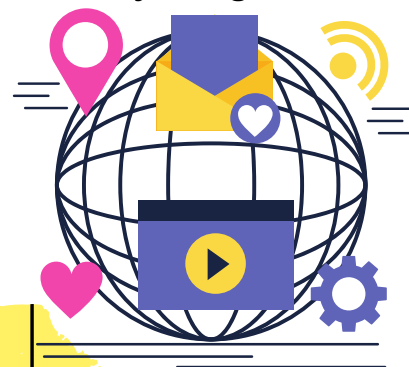
Anyone who uses the internet can benefit from some safety tips. You might try to:

- Remember that the person you're communicating with could be hiding their identity. Avoid giving out personal information like your address or birth date.
- Avoid sharing your schedule or travel plans.
- Remember every post is permanent (even if you delete a post, this doesn't get rid of screenshots).
- Avoid oversharing to keep social boundaries intact.
- Remember that your intentions might not be clear. What can seem like an interesting debate to you might feel like a fight for someone else.
- Pay attention to your feelings and log off if you get upset.

Recap

Social media can offer autistic people a way to interact without navigating allistic face-to-face social conventions. It can also help connect you to resources and support.

It comes with some risk, so it's important to think about safety strategies before you log on.





10 Corrosive Thoughts That Are Holding You Back

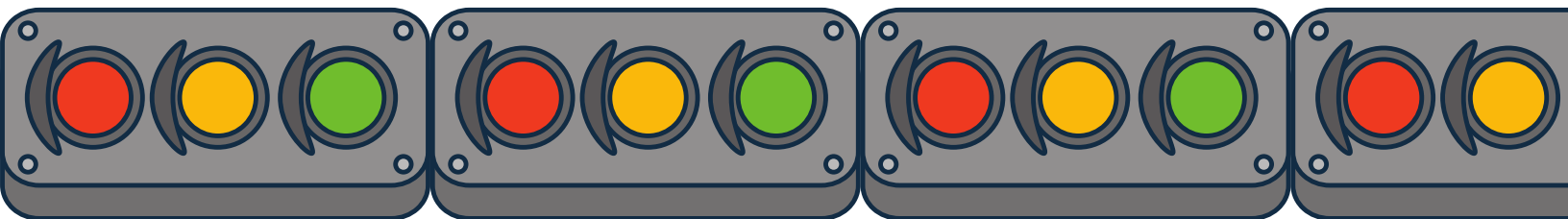
By ADDitude Editors Submitted by: Beryl Cook



We are our own toughest critics. And negative self-talk can lead to serious health consequences, so it's got to stop. Here are 10 of the most common "corrosive thoughts" that are sabotaging you — and what you can do to break free. We're all guilty of letting one minor setback snowball into an avalanche of self-deprecating, unhealthy thoughts. We are often our toughest critics, and that can lead to serious health and esteem problems if don't learn how to stop negative thoughts.

If you're guilty of lingering or obsessing over these 10 common corrosive thoughts, read on to learn how they can hurt you in the long run — and how you can reframe your thinking in a more positive and productive way.

For more information: <https://www.additudemag.com/slideshows/how-to-stop-negative-thoughts/>



Get Ready for Summer! Ideas for Teachers to Share with Families

By: Reading Rockets Submitted by: Beryl Cook

Reading Rockets has packed a "virtual beach bag" of activities for teachers to help families get ready for summer and to launch students to fun, enriching summertime experiences. Educators will find materials to download and distribute as well as ideas and resources to offer to students and parents to help ensure summer learning gain rather than loss. The school bell may stop ringing, but summer is a great time for all kinds of learning opportunities for kids. Reading Rockets has packed a bag full of activities for teachers to help families get ready for summer and to launch students to fun, enriching summertime experiences.

For more info: <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/get-ready-summer-ideas-teachers-share-families>

HELLO
SUMMER!





From Handy Handouts

Free informational handouts for educators,
parents, and students:

Here are some of the resources from Handy
Handouts:

<https://www.handyhandouts.com/>

**Accommodations vs. Modifications:
What's The Difference?**

https://www.handyhandouts.com/pdf/422_Accommodations.pdf

IEP Meeting Tips for Parents

https://www.handyhandouts.com/pdf/646_IEPMeetingTips.pdf

**Tips for Parents to Improve a
Child's Writing Skills**

https://www.handyhandouts.com/pdf/148_ImprovingWritingSkills.pdf

The Summer Slide:

**Summer Learning Loss Facts and Prevention
Tips**

https://www.handyhandouts.com/pdf/438_SummerSlide.pdf

Behavioral Health Day

The Louisiana Behavioral Health Day brings together passionate volunteers to advocate for state policy changes that will improve mental health and prevent suicide. We will meet with our state legislators as part of the event to:

- Share with them why suicide prevention and mental health is important to YOU and to your community
- Educate them about the work being done in your community to increase access to mental health care and prevent suicide
- Teach them what more must be done to improve mental health and prevent suicide.

The event will include a press conference and brief training session on the basics of an effective advocacy visit and current policy issues impacting mental health and suicide prevention. Following, advocates will have the opportunity to attend meetings with state legislators that will be scheduled ahead of time.

Event Details:

Location: Louisiana State Capitol Building

Address: 900 North 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA,

Start: May 4, 2023,
9:00 AM CDT

End: May 4, 2023,
4:00 PM CDT

Lunch will be provided.

To register for this event, **click** the link below:

[Louisiana Behavioral Health Day](#)



HOW TO SELECT OR CHANGE YOUR PRIMARY DENTAL PROVIDER



The DentaQuest Case Management team is here to help you.

If you have questions about your dental benefits, selecting or changing a dentist, contact DentaQuest Member Services at 1-800-685-0143 and ask to speak to our Case Management team. The team will help find a dentist who understands your needs and will be able to provide you the dental care you deserve.



This information is available at no-cost in other formats and languages. For help, call 855-229-6848 (TTY: 855-526-3346).



The Sulphur Book Club is reading Heidi by Johanna Spyri. I read Heidi a while ago, and it was a very good read. I encourage you to grab a blanket and a cup of cocoa with this book, you will not be sorry!

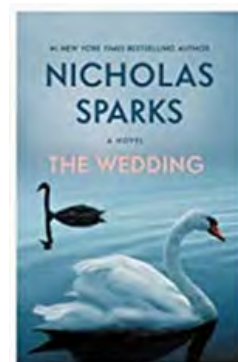


Families Helping Families is participating in a small fundraiser. We have created a new t shirt in Bonfire. there are several colors available and shirt sizes go up to a 5X.

<https://www.bonfire.com/peace-love-and-inclusion/>



Thursday's Book Club is reading The Wedding which is the second book in a Nicholas Sparks series. We previously read the Notebook. It was a really good book. It's a romance book about two people who meet and the girl is trying to decide who she wants to marry. Love is a beautiful thing. In the Wedding book, we are hoping to find out what will happen next.





**KEYNOTE
SPEAKER**

RONNIE HARVEY JR.

Administrative Director of Special Education and
Alternative Programs
Calcasieu Parish School System

FHF

2023 FAMILY EMPOWERMENT EXPO

APRIL 19, 2023

8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

**LAKE CHARLES CIVIC CENTER
EXHIBITION HALL**



Join us for our 2023 Family
Empowerment EXPO! Featuring
resources for individuals with
disabilities from all over the region!

<https://tinyurl.com/FHFswlaE04-19>

1-800-894-6558

WWW.FHFswla.ORG



CPSB Summer Camp

ADULTING 101 & 102

will be offered for both Middle School & High School
CPSB students with significant cognitive disabilities.
CLASSES BEGIN JUNE 5TH AND END JUNE 16TH.

REGISTRATION ENDS MAY 10TH

LOCATIONS: SULPHUR HIGH & BARBE HIGH



Webinar link for Camp K-5
<https://tinyurl.com/2p87husv>





Date: June 26 - 30, 2023

Time: 8:30 - 11:30

2 Locations

Henry Heights Elementary
W. T. Henning Elementary

Services Provided

Transportation
Breakfast & Lunch

Last Day to Register
May 10th

Eligible Students

K - 2 & Moderate,
Severe, Profound

3rd - 5th & LEAP
Connect

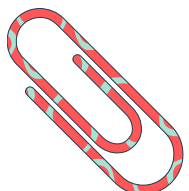
Register Here



**LOUISIANA
PROVIDES
STRIVING
READERS WITH
FREE BOOKS
THROUGH
COLLABORATION
WITH SCHOLASTIC**

Louisiana, in collaboration with Scholastic, today announced Reading Enrichment and Academic Deliverables (READ), a new state-funded book and literacy program designed to help support Louisiana pre-K4 through 5th-grade students who are not yet reading on grade level. READ will provide eligible students with home delivery of free, age-appropriate, high-quality books and engaging literacy resources.

Louisiana's READ program is the result of Act 395 of the 2022 Regular Session and associated legislative appropriations. Families can visit readLA.scholastic.com to register their child or learn more about the program



FREE WEBINAR

NO MORE Summer SLIDE



THURSDAY,
20TH APR 2023
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Registration Link:

<https://tinyurl.com/SummerSlideApr20>



Changing Lives Every Day



Summer is the perfect time for students of all ages to relax, but it's also a time when **learning loss and regression** can occur. The "summer slide" can happen when children do not engage in **educational activities during the summer months**. This training will provide you with **strategies and fun activities** you can do over the long break to **help prevent the summer slide**.

FAMILIES HELPING FAMILIES OF SWLA
PRESENTS THE
Regional Resource Information Workshop

TRAUMA INFORMED CARE AND RESOURCES For All Children

TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2023
9 - 11 AM

We are pleased to have **Hollie Jeffery** join us as the 2023 RIW speaker! She will talk about what Trauma Informed Care is, what it looks like for children, and what it looks like for children with disabilities and special health care needs. Ms. Jeffery is the founder of the ACE Institute.

Information on resource and referral services provided by Families Helping Families of SWLA will also be provided.

This Zoom webinar is a wonderful opportunity for Nurses and Social Workers to earn CEs, and at no cost to you!

Register at:

<https://tinyurl.com/R5RIW2023>

For More Information Contact

Davelyn Patrick

337-436-2570 * dtpatrick@fhfswla.org



The Bureau of Family Health is approved as a provider of nursing continuing professional development by Louisiana State Nurses Association Approver Unit, and accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. LSNA Provider No. 4003257. The event planners and presenter(s) have no relevant financial relationships to disclose. Nurses must attend the entire event and complete evaluation to receive continuing education (CE) award. This activity has been submitted for approval to the LA Department of Health, Office of Public Health, Bureau of Family Health (BFH) for 2 general contact hours of Social Work Continuing Education. The LA Department of Health, Office of Public Health, Bureau of Family Health is an authorized approval organization of the LA Board of Social Work Examiners. Presenters have no conflicts of interest to disclose. Social workers must attend the entire event and complete evaluation to receive continuing education (CE) award. The views expressed by the presenter(s) do not represent the opinions or policies of Louisiana State Board of Nursing or the Bureau of Family Health.

THE ACTING OUT CYCLE AND GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT BEHAVIOR WEBINAR



April 20, 2023
6 PM - 7 PM

Guest Speaker: Dr. Gerlinde Beckers, Ph.D.
Professor at Southeastern Louisiana University

Webinar Link

<https://tinyurl.com/ActB420R>

For More Information call China at:
(337) 436-2570 - 1-800-894-6558
info@fhfswla.org

Come and join us to learn about The Acting-Out Cycle which is a model of how a student's behavioral response often occurs in phases. It is most useful as a guide for how adults should respond to students to assist with de-escalation. As well as some general information on behavior.



Imperial Calcasieu Human Services Authority
Developmental Disabilities
Division Regional Advisory
Committee - R.A.C.
is looking for new members

If you care about services for children and adults with developmental disabilities, then the RAC needs you!

The RAC meets quarterly to provide input and advice in the development and implementation of policies, procedures, and the allocation of resources to Imperial Calcasieu Human Services Authority.

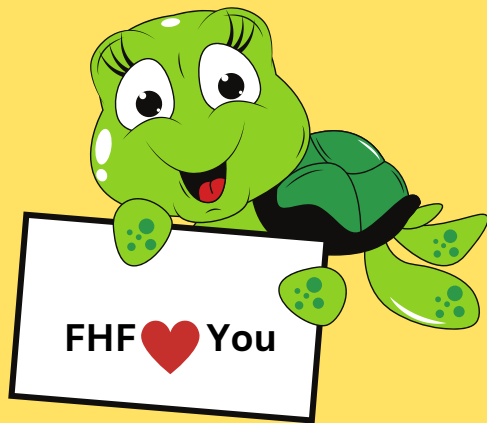
Our mission is to provide public input and to ensure that quality services are provided to people with disabilities in our community.

Join us at our next meeting on
Wednesday, June 7, 2023 on zoom

10:00 am - 11:30 am

To become involved, attend an upcoming meeting or contact
Debbie Bass for more information:
debbie.bass@imcalhsa.org
(337) 475-3100





**Families Helping Families
It's Who We Are!
It's What We DO!**

Riddle Answer: A bed.



Invest in Families Helping Families of Southwest Louisiana.

FHFSWLA is a 501 (c)3 nonprofit agency that relies on donations to meet the needs of our agency's mission and vision. By donating to FHFSWLA you are investing in the lives of

people with disabilities and their families. If passion paid, we would be the richest nonprofit in SWLA. Unfortunately, passion alone does not fully support our organization.

Please consider making a contribution so families who are touched by disability can be assured this one of a kind, family directed resource center is always here when they need us.

Contributions can be made to:
Families Helping Families of Southwest Louisiana
P O Box 1627
Lake Charles, LA 70602

FHF is funded in part by a contract from the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council.



Families Helping Families of Southwest Louisiana

MAILING ADDRESS: P O BOX 1627, LAKE CHARLES, LA 70602
OFFICE ADDRESS: 324 W. HALE ST., LAKE CHARLES, LA 70601
(337) 436-2570 • 1-800-894-6558 • (337) 436-2578 FAX

EMAIL: INFO@FHFSWLA.ORG
WEBSITE: [HTTPS://WWW.FHFSWLA.ORG](https://www.fhfswla.org)
FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/fhfswla>

**Opinions contained herein do not necessarily represent those
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