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Family Matters

Tips for Staying Safe This Summer

Summer is a time for fun and relaxation. But unfortunately, along with the fun, there are also concerns about safety. The following are tips on how to stay safe while having fun this summer..

By Cathy Dove, CSHS Statewide Parent Training Coordinator

Cool Tips for Beating the Heat

courtesy of the CDC and posted on kidsgrowth.com

Hot weather can be dangerous to your child's health. Learn about the potential health risks of extreme heat and discover ways to protect your child.

For children, summertime tends to be packed with outdoor activities. Before your youngster heads outside this summer the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urges parents to understand what extreme heat is, become familiar with its potential health risks, and discover ways to protect their kids.

What is extreme heat?



Extreme heat is weather characterized by temperatures that hover 10 degrees or more above the average high temperature for the region and lasts for several weeks. Associated with extreme heat are humid or muggy conditions, which add to the discomfort of high temperatures.

What Are the Potential Health Risks Associated with Extreme Heat?

Your child's body has an internal thermostat that is designed to help them maintain proper body temperatures. However, sometimes extreme heat can cause their thermostat to malfunction, which can result in one or more of the following conditions:

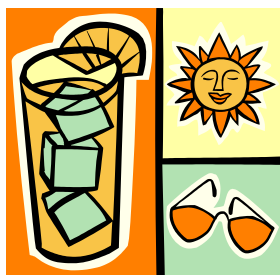
Heat Rash. Heat rash is a skin irritation caused by excessive sweating during hot, humid weather. It can occur at any age but is most common in young children. Although heat rash occurs because of exposure to extreme heat, treating heat rash is simple and usually does not require medical assistance. Other heat-related problems such as those listed below can be much more severe.

Heat Cramps. Heat cramps usually affect children and young adults who sweat heavily during strenuous activity. This sweating depletes the body's salt and moisture. The low salt level in the muscles may be the cause of heat cramps. Heat cramps may also be a symptom of heat exhaustion.

Heat Exhaustion. Heat exhaustion is a milder form of heat-related illness that can develop after several days of exposure to high temperatures and inadequate or unbalanced replacement of fluids. It is the body's response to an excessive loss of the water and salt contained in sweat. Those most prone to heat exhaustion are children exercising in a hot environment.

Heat Stroke. Heat stroke occurs when the body is unable to regulate its temperature. The body's temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the body is unable to cool down. Body temperature may rise to 106°F or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not provided.

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Tips for Staying Safe This Summer

Heat-Related Deaths. Most heat-related deaths occur when high temperatures overcome the body's natural ability to cope with heat. Very young children are at highest risk.

How Can I Protect My Child From Heat-Related Illness?

Because hot weather can be dangerous to your child's health, being indoors and taking advantage of air-conditioning is the number one protective factor against heat-related illness and death. However, if your child must be outside during extremely hot weather, learn what you can do to protect them from heat-related illness. For example, be sure to do the following:

- Drink plenty of fluids
- Replace salt and minerals
- Wear proper clothing and sunscreen
- Schedule outdoor activities appropriately
- Use a buddy system



The best defense is prevention. Here are some prevention tips:

- Drink more fluids (nonalcoholic), regardless of your child's activity level. Don't wait until they are thirsty to drink.
- Don't drink liquids that contain large amounts of sugar—these actually cause you to lose more body fluid. Also, avoid very cold drinks, because they can cause stomach cramps.
- Stay indoors and, if at all possible, stay in an air-conditioned place. If your home does not have air conditioning, go to the shopping mall or public library—even a few hours spent in air conditioning can help your child's body stay cooler when you go back into the heat.
- Electric fans may provide comfort, but when the temperature is in the high 90s, fans will not prevent heat-related illness. Taking a cool shower or bath, or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off. Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- NEVER leave a child in a closed, parked vehicle
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.

If your child must be out in the heat:

- Limit their outdoor activity to morning and evening hours.
- Cut down on exercise. If they are doing a lot of exercise, encourage them to drink two to four glasses of cool fluids each hour. A sports beverage can replace the salt and minerals they lose in sweat.
- Try to rest often in shady areas.

Protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed hat (also keeps them cooler) and sunglasses and by putting on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher (the most effective products say "broad spectrum" or "UVA/UVB protection" on their labels).

Protecting Kids From Mosquito Meanies

Kidsgrowth.com



Fun in the sun can be one of the most enjoyable family activities. Too often this outdoor fun is spoiled by that familiar picnic-crasher...the Mosquito! More than just a nuisance, mosquitoes can carry dangerous diseases like [encephalitis](#), [West Nile Virus](#), and Dengue Fever.

According to the University of Florida Professor of Entomology Dr. Peter V. Perkins, "The [West Nile Virus](#), a form of encephalitis carried by the Culex species of mosquito that is common to most areas of the U.S., is spreading across the country at an alarming rate." Parents everywhere are looking for ways to protect their children from the dangers of insect-borne diseases. Unfortunately, children are at a higher risk of infection due to their weaker immune systems. Luckily, there are some simple steps you can take to help reduce your child's risk of exposure to these dangerous diseases.

- Don't use scented soaps, perfumes or hair sprays on your children, and avoid dressing them in dark-colored clothing, all of which can attract mosquitoes and increase the risk of infection.
- Use an insect repellent containing DEET on exposed skin and clothing. Insect repellents used on children should contain no more than ten percent DEET according to the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- Keep your lawn and brush trimmed and replace birdbath and wading pool water at least once a week to eliminate mosquito habitat.
- Level low spots in your yard to promote water runoff, eliminating mosquito habitat.

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Tips for Staying Safe This Summer

- Keep your gutters clear and free flowing.
- Remove any unused flowerpots, tires or any other object that might hold standing water. Mosquitoes have been known to live in any standing water available, even bottle caps, old cans and plastic bags that collect water.
- Use a permethrin-based mosquito spray on your lawn, trees, shrubs, and flowers, such as Cutter Bug Free Backyard.
- To get an accurate weekly forecast of mosquito activity in your area before venturing outdoors, you can visit Skeeterbites.com.
- Whenever using an insect repellent or insecticide, always read and follow the manufacturer's directions for use, as printed on the product.

Keep these tips in mind when venturing outdoors with your children this summer, and you can help keep the whole family happy and healthy.

As a reminder, this information should not be relied on as medical advice and is not intended to replace the advice of your child's pediatrician

"Hurricane Season "

Be Prepared



The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) is urging residents to gear up and be prepared for hurricane season - well before a storm hits, which means now. Health officials emphasize that it's never too early to be prepared for hurricane season.

"Every day we encourage Louisianians to own your own health, but that also means taking responsibility for you and your family's safety before a disaster strikes," said DHH State Health Officer Dr. Jimmy Guidry. "When families prepare early, it reduces the stress that can be caused by an emergency. And we know from experience that thinking ahead can also save lives and property."

The 2012 hurricane season began June 1 and ends November 30. Weather forecasters have predicted a below-average season with fewer hurricanes than usual this year, but health officials remind Louisiana residents to remain vigilant.

"Even if it is a slow season, it only takes one hurricane to cause widespread destruction, damage and serious disruption to people's lives," Guidry said. "That's why we want people to be ready and have a game plan."

DHH advises residents to purchase supplies they would need in the event of a hurricane, including batteries, bottled water, tarps and non-perishable food, now to avoid the hectic rush that often occurs when storms enter the Gulf of Mexico. Families should also begin planning now where they will go and how they will get there if they need to evacuate. Also, consider how to get storm updates so you can stay informed during a hurricane, particularly in the event that power outages occur.

Families can find preparedness tips from DHH and other State agencies at <http://www.getagameplan.org/>, which is administered through the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. Some things families can do now to be ready if a hurricane hits include:

1. Make a kit with enough supplies to last your family two weeks.

- One gallon of water per person for 3 days-or 5 gallons per person for the two weeks
- Two week supply of non-perishable food items that don't require cooking or refrigeration
- ✦ Baby formula and a can opener
- ✦ Extra clothing, blankets, pillows, sleeping gear: baby diapers and supplies
- ✦ Two week supply of prescription medications (ask the pharmacist to print a list of your meds; first aid supplies and non-prescription medications.)
- ✦ Important papers, insurance cards, driver's licenses or I.D. (place these in a waterproof container)
- ✦ Flashlights & extra batteries
- ✦ Hygiene items (soap, toothbrush & toothpaste, deodorant, toilet paper)

Quiet family activities (books, cards, quiet toys)

2. Make a plan that details what you and your family will do.

- Identify ahead of time where you could go if you are told to evacuate. Choose several places- a friend or relative's home in another town, a motel or a shelter.

Keep handy the telephone numbers of these places as well as a road map of your locality. You may need to take alternative or unfamiliar routes if major roads are closed or flooded.

3. Stay informed

- The Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness in conjunction with DHH and other state agencies will be putting out timely information during hurricanes or other emergencies.
- Tune in to your local radio and television stations for the most up to date information provided, including evacuation instructions. If advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Disasters can occur anywhere at any time. At a moment's notice citizens may need to move quickly out of harm's way.

Get hurricane information at <http://www.emergency.louisiana.gov/>, <http://www.getagameplan.org/> and <http://www.dhh.la.gov/>.

The Parent Corner: For Parents by Parents

Submitted by a parent from Region 5

I remember when my daughter and I first moved back to Louisiana from Texas about five years ago, or so, and how difficult it was for us to find a pediatrician for her. For two years we called every single pediatrician listed in the yellow pages of the phonebook, at least once every three months, and for two years, what we got every time we spoke to any given doctor's office was, "What type of insurance do you have?; Medicaid? Oh, we're sorry but we aren't currently taking new Medicaid patients at this time, please check back later."

At the time, my daughter was a little over two years old, and she had already been diagnosed with a rare, genetic condition called "Ohdo Syndrome" when she was less than a year old. The fact that we could not find a pediatrician who would take her on as a patient gave me the impression that our situation was looking ominous, at best; my biggest concern at the time was, "Who is going to help us coordinate all of the specialized care that a child with her condition needs?" You see, in Texas, that job was handled by my daughter's pediatrician, so now that we were in Louisiana and couldn't find a pediatrician, we really didn't know who to turn to for help.

This is when we found "Families Helping Families of Southwest Louisiana", and they, in turn, put us in touch with "Children's Special Health Services" (CSHS), an organization operating out of the Health Unit in Lake Charles, LA. Had it not been for the people at both of these organizations, there is no doubt that my daughter would have gone much longer without the medical care that she needed, and I am forever grateful to all of the people working at both of these organizations for being there, and for doing on a daily basis what they do for people in our situation.

Children's Special Health Services provided for the coordination of, and scheduling of most of my daughter's medical specialists, and this was also very convenient for us because it prevented us from having to drive all the way to Lafayette, LA or to New Orleans, LA just to go see these various specialists. The participating doctors would travel to the Lake Charles Health Unit once every month, or every three months, depending on the particular specialty and how critical it was for the children to be seen by someone in their field. This worked out great for keeping up with my daughter's medical records as well, because instead of her clinical notes being stored at various doctor's offices and hospitals all over the place, these notes were at one central location, and maintained by CSHS. If medical specialists needed to know what was going on with my daughter in fields other than their own, it was very convenient for them to be able to obtain that information by looking no further than the file at the CSHS clinic.

As I said, I will always be grateful for everything CSHS has done for my daughter. Without the dedication that the numerous, participating, healthcare professionals show toward the children who depend on these services, many lives that are already plagued with difficulty would just be that much more difficult. I would recommend CSHS to any parent or guardian of a child with a severe to moderate disability, because unlike some other alternatives, at CSHS you will find wonderful and friendly healthcare professionals who care about your child's well-being, and they will truly get to know you and your child.

In my humble opinion, the services that CSHS offers are invaluable to communities across the state of Louisiana, and I'd like to say, "Thank you for being there CSHS!"

Very Sincerely, Mr. Casey Jones (Single father of a very special little girl!)



The Parent Corner: For Parents by Parents

Submitted by a parent from Region 2

My name is Cynthia Ransom, and I would like to share with you my daughter's story of triumph.

SynTaisha Ransom was born on November, 3rd, 1993 with a seizure disorder called Sturge-Weber. I was told she would be a vegetable. What a hard thing for a new mom to hear, but I am here to say what a wonderful joy she has been in our family's life. She is one of a kind, full of love and sassiness. She is a "Hot Mess," her favorite saying to others. She has come a long way since that day. I want to thank all of her doctors, Port Allen High School Staff, West Baton Rouge Parish School Board, especially Dr. Strauss, and those from Children's Special Health Services, Louisiana Human Care Connections, her brother Anthony Ransom, and grandmother Laura Ransom for the great coordination of care to ensure her health, education, and well-being. Her latest triumph was graduating from Port Allen High. She received her Certificate of Achievement on May 17, 2012. She also earned three awards for her dedication and hard work despite her hospitalizations because of seizures. The first award was for having a 4.0 in her classroom. This was amazing because she could not start her senior school year in August because she was in the hospital. She started school late September and two weeks later, she was hospitalized again because of more seizures. The second was for being the first student in her school to meet all the requirements for the LAA1 state test in over 6 years. The third was for the most improved student. I would like to also thank Families Helping Families of Greater Baton Rouge for their assistance in my child's IEP meetings and for the trainings they provided to help empower me to be an advocate for my daughter. I challenge all parents to advocate for their child/children; trust me it makes a huge difference overall. Know what your babies are entitled to and make those involved abide to his/her IEP. Do not allow anyone to give him/her another disability just because they can get away with it. They may not like you, but they will respect you and know you mean business. Also, our babies deserve the best education they can receive. Look out world, here comes –

SynTaisha JaMae Ransom!



Why Immunize?

For Parents CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Why immunize our children? Sometimes we are confused by the messages in the media. First we are assured that, thanks to **vaccines, some diseases are almost gone from the U.S., but we are also warned to immunize our children, ourselves as adults, and** the elderly.

Diseases are becoming rare due to vaccinations.

It's true, some diseases (like polio and diphtheria) are becoming very rare in the U.S. Of course, they are becoming rare largely because we have been vaccinating against them. But it is still reasonable to ask whether it's really worthwhile to keep vaccinating.

It's much like bailing out a boat with a slow leak. When we started bailing, the boat was filled with water. But we have been bailing fast and hard, and now it is almost dry. We could say, "Good. The boat is dry now, so we can throw away the bucket and relax." But the leak hasn't stopped. Before long we'd notice a little water seeping in, and soon it might be back up to the same level as when we started.

Keep immunizing until disease is eliminated.

Unless we can "stop the leak" (eliminate the disease), it is important to keep immunizing. Even if there are only a few cases of disease today, if we take away the protection given by vaccination, more and more people will be infected and will spread disease to others. Soon we will undo the progress we have made over the years.

Japan reduced pertussis vaccinations, and an epidemic occurred.

In 1974, Japan had a successful pertussis (whooping cough) vaccination program, with nearly 80% of Japanese children vaccinated. That year only 393 cases of pertussis were reported in the entire country, and there were no deaths from pertussis. But then rumors began to spread that pertussis vaccination was no longer needed and that the vaccine was not safe, and by 1976 only 10% of infants were getting vaccinated. In 1979 Japan suffered a major pertussis epidemic, with more than 13,000 cases of whooping cough and 41 deaths. In 1981 the government began vaccinating with acellular pertussis vaccine, and the number of pertussis cases dropped again.

What if we stopped vaccinating?

So **what would happen if we stopped vaccinating** here? Diseases that are almost unknown would stage a comeback. Before long we would see epidemics of diseases that are nearly under control today. More children would get sick and more would die.

We vaccinate to protect our future.

We don't vaccinate just to protect our children. We also vaccinate to protect our grandchildren and their grandchildren. With one disease, smallpox, we "stopped the leak" in the boat by eradicating the disease. Our children don't have to get smallpox shots any more because the disease no longer exists. If we keep vaccinating now, parents in the future may be able to trust that diseases like polio and meningitis won't infect, cripple, or kill children. Vaccinations are one of the best ways to put an end to the serious effects of certain diseases.

“Good Enough For Me”

Submitted by Kay Lewis-Caron

In my better moments, before I do anything with or for someone I support, I ask myself. “Is this good enough for me?”

- To sit in my wheelchair with crayons and paper in front of me for an hour?
- To be dressed in the same clothes I wore yesterday?
- That my hair is a mess, my face is unclean and my nails are ragged?
- Never to be allowed to prepare a snack? Try to eat my food myself? Pour my own drink?
- To wait...and wait...and wait?
- To have my Depends changed and never be allowed to do it myself with support?
- To be told to go, stop, hurry up, sit down, stand up, come here, and go there without being asked what I would like to do?
- Never to have the opportunity to make a contribution to my community?
- To use only play money and make pretend purchases?
- That I don't get to earn my own money?
- When I never take part in a whole project from beginning to end, but only one or two steps of it?
- Never to be allowed to serve my own food, make a mess, clean up my own mess, and take the time I need to finish something?
- That people believe that I cannot learn, grow, make friends and have a good life?
- That no one listens to what I want, what I value, what's important to me?

More and more I see myself not as a person to take care of others, but to care about others. My job is to support and assist people, not to do everything for them. If it were me, that is what I would want.

So put on your “Good Enough for Me” glasses and join me

in asking over and over and over again,

Is this good enough for me?



CSHS News

Esther McGee, CSHS Statewide Parent Training Coordinator, Retires

By Cathy Dove, CSHS Statewide Parent Training Coordinator

On March 30, 2012, Esther McGee, Statewide Parent Training Coordinator for Children's Special Health Services, retired after 20 years of devoted service to CSHS families.

Her retirement was celebrated with a retirement party supported by friends and co-workers. The party was held in Pineville, LA. at Families Helping Families (FHF) Region 6. Jim Sprinkle, FHF Director, provided the food and refreshments. Betsey Snider, retired CSHS nurse, presented Esther with a plaque from CSHS, and Aliscia Banks, FHF Director Region 8, presented her with a plaque from Families Helping Families. It was an emotional time for all, both a sad and joyful event. We were sad she was leaving us, but happy that she would finally be able to spend more time with her daughter, Kimberly and have more time to do the things she enjoys doing.



Left: Betsey Snider, Right: Esther McGee

Esther's journey began, as a woman who was driven by the concern and welfare of one tiny little girl, her daughter with special needs, Kimberly McGee. Although her plate was already full, that same concern turned her into a leader and advocate for families throughout the state.

For fourteen years I had the privilege to call her my friend and mentor, as many others did. She was the Training coordinator for the Parent Liaisons, who provide support for families, at CSHS clinics throughout the state. She was also responsible for creating and writing your CSHS newsletter, "Family Matters". Her talents were numerous, and her wisdom is unlimited. She was loved and respected by her peers and co-workers. And we wish her many years of deserved happiness. Esther McGee, an icon in CSHS history.



News From Around the State

Region 4

What's Happening at CSHS and FHF in Acadiana?

Now is the time! Start thinking about getting your child vaccinated before school starts. Every Wednesday, our health units in Acadiana, offer children's vaccinations. You must call and schedule your appointment ahead of time. The Health Unit's phone number is 337-262-5616, extension 114 to schedule an appointment.

If Wednesday is inconvenient, you might want to schedule a Saturday visit to one of the other Shot for Tots locations. On July 21, September 15, and November 17, The Children's Practice in New Iberia will be offering vaccinations from 8:00 AM to 11:30 AM. The price will be \$10.00 per child. On Saturday, August 4 and October 6 vaccinations will be offered for \$10.00 at Lafayette General. On August 18 and November 10 at Women's and Children vaccinations will be offered. **CHECK THESE DATES WITH YOUR CALENDAR AND MAKE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO GET YOUR CHILD VACCINATED, ESPECIALLY IF THEY ARE BEHIND ON THEIR SHOTS.**

When should your child need their vaccinations? AT 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 12-15 months, four years, and finally 11 -12 years.

Examine your child's immunization record, see what your child needs and bring them for their shots.

At Children's Special Health Service in Acadiana, we have Cheryl Turner joining our nursing staff. It will relieve a huge burden on our nursing staff of one.



Families Helping Families in Acadiana is planning the Treats in the Village again this year for October. It is a wonderful time of camaraderie and family fun. Please make plans to attend. What an awesome time you and your family will have!

Region 8

The TCMCD's Annual Awards Banquet

The Twin Cities (Monroe & West Monroe) Mayors' Committee on Disabilities hosted its 32nd annual banquet on July 17, at the Monroe Civic Center. During this gala event, awards were presented to local persons, groups, and businesses who have made significant differences in the lives of individuals with disabilities in Ouachita Parish. Also, ten individuals with disabilities, received scholarships to help pay for their post-secondary education expenses. These scholarships were presented during the celebration.

The keynote speaker for the event was a person who has a disability and has made outstanding contributions in the community. Entertainment was provided by local artists. Well-wishes and presentations were made by local community leaders. And the Region 8 CSHS/FHF Collaborative Team was there to support such a noteworthy occasion.

Region 6

The Rapides parish Health Unit will have a **BACK TO SCHOOL SHOTS DAY** on **Tuesday, August 7th from 8:00 AM—3:00 PM**

There will be a fee of \$10. If you have Medicaid, please bring your Medicaid or Bayou Health Card.





From left: Patricia George, Thuy Nguyen, Davelyn Patrick, James Sprinkle, April Young, Stephanie Miller, Cathy Dove, Angie Durand, Kay Lewis-Caron, Melissa Harrison, Brenda Bares

On June 15th, 2012 at a CSHS training in Pineville, Davelyn Patrick, the Parent Liaison in Region 5, presented James Sprinkle, Director of Families Helping Families in Region 6, with a sign that said "Sprinkle Inn". The sign was given to Mr. Sprinkle, as a token of appreciation, for providing lodging at a house on the grounds of FHF, often referred to as "Sprinkle Inn". The house is made available to those who attend trainings or meetings in the Pineville area.

The Parent Liaisons receive four quarterly specialized trainings a year, and two are usually held in Region 6. There are Parent Liaisons in each of the nine regions around the state. Parent Liaisons are responsible for providing support and information to families at CSHS clinics and in the community. Parent Liaisons are also responsible for referrals, assisting families in accessing services, and encourage and enable families to participate knowledgeably in their own health care.

See the following list, for a Parent Liaison in your area..

continued on next page

CSHS Parent Liaisons**Thuy Nguyen**

Region 1 - Orleans, St. Bernard, Jefferson, Plaquemines

Phone: (504) 896-1340

Fax: (504) 896-1360

Email: Thuy.Nguyen@la.gov

Kay Lewis

Region 2 - East and West Baton Rouge, East and West Feliciana, Iberville, Pointe Coupee, Ascension

Phone: (225) 242-4890

Fax: (225) 342-4707

Email: klewis@fhfgbr.org

April Young

Region 3 - Assumption, Lafourche, St. Charles, St. James, St. John, St. Mary, Terrebonne

Phone: (985) 447-0896

Fax: (985) 447-0973

Email: April.Young@la.gov

Brenda Bares

Region 4 - Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, Vermillion

Phone: (337) 262-5616 ext. 124

Fax: (337) 262-5399

Email: Brenda.Bares@la.gov

Davelyn Patrick

Region 5 - Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis

Phone: (337) 480-2636

Davelyn Patrick (continued)

Fax (337) 475-8613

Email: Davelyn Patrick

Melissa Harrison

Region 6 -Avoyelles, Concordia, Catahoula, Grant, LaSalle, Rapides, Vernon, Winn

Phone: (318) 487-5282

Fax: (318) 487-5481

Email: Melissa.Harrison@la.gov

Patricia George

Region 7 - Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, Desoto, Red River, Natchitoches, Sabine, Webster

Phone: (318) 676-7488

Fax: (318) 676-7783

Email: Pat.George@la.gov

Evelyn Jackson

Region 8 - Caldwell, East and West Carroll, Franklin, Jackson, Lincoln, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union

Phone: (318) 361-7316

Fax: (318) 362-3016

Email: Evelyn.Jackson@la.gov

Stephanie Miller

Region 9 - Livingston, St. Helena, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Washington

Phone: (985) 543-4165

Fax: (985) 345-8310

Email: Stephanie.Miller@la.gov

Disclaimer

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The writer tries at all times to assure the accuracy of information contained in the newsletter but no guarantee should be assumed.

A special thanks to the parents and Parent Liaisons that made written contributions to this newsletter.

If you have any suggestions or would like to submit a story, please contact Cathy Dove at Families Helping Families at the Crossroads at (318) 641-7373. If I'm not in, please leave a message and I'll call you back.

Thank you,

Cathy Dove, CSHS Statewide Parent Training Coordinator

Have a Fun and Safe Summer

