



# FHF Staff is Amazingly Helpful and Knowledgeable

by: Jennifer Huber

My son Caleb is considered a medical puzzle and receives Special Education services through Jefferson Parish Public schools. At the risk of sounding cliché, when you first find out that your child is going to need additional support and services, it feels like trying to paddle a sinking canoe upstream in a foreign land without a map. It is overwhelming, and more accurately, it is scary.

What is wonderful about FHF is they already understand that and have been on that journey themselves.

In my conversations with the cadre of medical and therapeutic professional support we have in place, they have ALL directed me to Families Helping Families as a resource.

I first turned to Families Helping Families years ago looking for help with navigating the options for schools in Jefferson Parish.

Like many parents, realizing the scope and depth of Special Education is daunting, to say the least. FHF provided my first IEP training but I quickly realized that FHF is a one-stop local resource for providing information, referrals, and training to parents. I have signed up for multiple webinars, attended a Social Communication event, and I look forward to going to the Jefferson Parish Resource Fair every year, which provides access to so many programs and services in the community.

Every person at FHF I have spoken to has been amazingly helpful and knowledgeable. I am especially grateful to Shanida Mathieu, who has been an invaluable and trusted source of encouragement, information, and guidance for me. I have received support through emails, and phone calls and she attended our last IEP meeting, which made things run very smoothly. It was essential to know I had someone there in my corner and to offer suggestions and be sure that all details were addressed.

FHF gave me the building blocks to begin my journey to being a more informed and effective advocate for my son. It was through FHF that I learned about Partners in Policymaking, a national training program here in Louisiana that educates and empowers parents and individuals to advocate for systems change for individuals with disabilities.

I am so grateful to FHF, which serves as a conduit in providing information, resources, and connections to a very large and active community support system and it is reassuring to know they will be there every step of the way.

