



Dear Friend,

Thank you for your ongoing support of children and Douglas County CASA! We are so excited to be getting out into the community more over the past quarter. We have ventured out to the Farmers Market and have presented to various groups interested in learning more about CASA and the amazing work of our volunteers.

We continue to recruit and train new volunteers and have averaged three new applications each month this year to date. We hope to increase that number throughout the rest of the year as we recruit to reach our maximum capacity.

It has been a busy quarter with a new email system, new databases, [a new website](#), and updating volunteer files in preparation for our program audit on Aug 11th. All of this as we continue to work with our volunteers to advocate for children and families. Our biggest focus has been ensuring the children we serve get access to summer enrichment activities and tutoring due to the challenging school year all students experienced.

We hope this newsletter provides you with a summary of what's happening at CASA and highlights some of the amazing work of our volunteers.

Thank you,


Erick Vaughn
Executive Director

Michael spent 9 years advocating for his 1st child

He was the only adult to provide stability during that time

Watch this video to hear about his impact on a child's life



A week in the life of a CASA volunteer

What exactly do they "do" in order to advocate for foster kids?

In short, lots of things, but here's sketch of what a week might look like when, for example, a child is assigned to a new foster placement. We're all so fortunate that visits like these are finally taking place in person again. As you can see, it takes a lot of checking and connecting to care for and advocate on behalf these kids.



Monday:

- Call social worker for an update on the child's new placement in a different county and how this will affect therapy appointments and education moving forward (30 min)
- Call foster parent at new placement to find out how the child is adjusting and ask to speak with the child. Schedule next child visit. (15 min)

Wednesday:

- Check-in phone call with CASA supervisor re: case developments and challenges (20 min)

Thursday:

- Observe virtual weekly supervised visit between child and birth mom with social worker (1 hr)

Friday:

- Drive to child's new placement for monthly visit (1.5 hrs round trip)
- Meet foster parent(s) at new placement, play with child at a nearby park & take them out for a treat (1.5 hrs)

Volunteers Needed

Do you know anyone who might be willing to take the time and be that safe, caring adult who can stand by one of these kids in the child welfare system, speak up on their behalf & give them some hope?

CASA is actively recruiting 25 new volunteers to join us immediately & help us reach more kids on our waiting list. Please send people our way.

E-mail: sparyzek@dccasaks.org, call 785.832.5172 or

[Click here for more details](#)



Child Advocacy Updates



One of our CASA volunteers has been advocating for a teenage boy for 5 years and he recently moved to a home in Lawrence after living elsewhere in Kansas for about 4 years. (This is a child who has had three failed attempts at being adopted.) The volunteer took him for a walk in his old school's neighborhood. As they walked, he shared some of his school memories with her. He recalled feeling like an outsider until one day he impressed the other student with how fast he could run.

After that "memory walk," they were driving somewhere to eat, when the car ran out of gas. They walked to a local auto supply store, purchased a gas can, then started walking to a gas station to get gas.

They saw a police officer in the process of writing them a ticket. Fortunately, he decided not to issue the ticket after all, but he didn't offer them a ride to get the gas. They continued walking. Several people, including a FedEx driver, stopped to offer assistance, but they decided to keep walking.

After returning to the car, putting the gas into the tank, and stopping for lunch, the volunteer dropped the youth off at his foster home. His parting words to her were "I forgive you, but I'll never let you forget this visit!" As a retired 6th grade teacher, the volunteer considered this "activity" one filled with valuable lessons for both the youth and her.

We have a CASA volunteer named Lynne who just retired at age 81 after helping foster kids for the past 9 1/2 years. During this time she served as a CASA on 3 cases, the last of which lasted 6 years.

The siblings for whom Lynne advocated are now in their late teens. The oldest has always been a good student and an athlete (their favorite sports are soccer and basketball). The younger is very social and likes to spend time with their friends.

Lynne saw both kids often when they were younger and lived in Lawrence. She made sure they were able to participate in summer activities sponsored by CASA. Later in the case, the kids' pre-adoptive placement disrupted due to the foster parent's moving out of state. This was extremely traumatic and disappointing to both kids, and Lynne was a sympathetic ear for them as they were going through this transition.

After the disruption, the kids were moved to a town in Kansas that is over 50 miles away from Lawrence. Lynne continued to visit them every month (she often took them out for meals) and kept in touch with them via e-mail and texts. When the younger youth was struggling academically, Lynne advocated for educational supports and mental health services. She also advocated for both children to be enrolled in driver's education when they were old enough. A retired



educator, she has always encouraged them to do their best in school and to explore subjects and activities that interest them.

Unfortunately, issues between the children's foster parents required that the children be moved again. Lynne continued to keep in touch and to advocate for a stable, appropriate placement for them. Not surprisingly, the COVID pandemic greatly impacted the stability of both children, who had to be moved to separate placements and have experienced even more disruptions during the pandemic.

More recently, Lynne has advocated for them to learn independent living skills and to explore career interests. She has also reported problems she observed with placements to their social workers and to the court. Both children have been able to hold jobs during the pandemic. The older youth, who is now a young adult, will be attending KU this fall. Lynne has discussed continuing to have contact and doing monthly "lunch dates." Their most recent placement has been with the parent of a friend, who plans to adopt them as an adult.

Recently, the the younger youth was able to join their sibling at this placement and will be able to rejoin friends at a previous high school this fall. They have expressed an interest in joining the military and possibly becoming an attorney. Though their sibling's case will soon close (when young adults turn 18 they age out of the child welfare system), the younger youth will have a new CASA volunteer who will be able to visit and continue Lynne's critical advocacy on their behalf.

Upcoming Events

Support CASA at The Merc during August

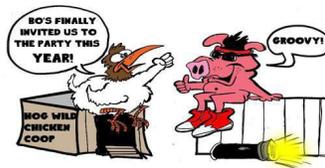
CASA will be The Merc's Change for our Community charity partner for the month of August and it will be easy to support local kids in foster care by: [Rounding the amount of your order up](#) to the next dollar and the difference will be redirected to CASA, [Bringing your own bag](#), and the 5 cent bag refund will be redirected to CASA and/or [Dropping your spare change](#) into the jars at our cash registers to support CASA.

[Click here for more details](#)



BO'S HOG WILD BREWFEST AND BBQ AUGUST 28, 2021

**BEER
BANDS
BBQ**



LOCATION
393 E. 1400 RD
BALDWIN CITY KS

SCHEDULE
KIDS PARTY 10AM TO NOON
FAMILY PARTY 5PM-9PM

Bo's Hog Wild is coming!

CASA is thrilled to be among the chosen charities to benefit from this beloved local tradition now in its 33rd year.

Join us for the free Kids Fest during the day and the Brew Fest & BBQ that evening. Activities, live music & tons of fun for a great cause.

Double the impact of your support for CASA kids when you donate to support Bo's Hog Wild. A generous sponsor has pledged to match all gifts to CASA via the Bo's Hog Wild Children's Fund at the Douglas County Community Foundation up to \$10,000! Can you help us hit that goal?

[Donate here](#)

Winds Across



A **KU Wind Ensemble** concert to
benefit **Douglas County CASA**

the Prairie : Sept 10th

**Please note: This event is sold out. Please contact CASA for information about pre-sale tickets for the 2022 event.

Along with Presenting Sponsor [Edmonds Duncan Registered Investment Advisors](#), CASA is honored to partner with the [KU Wind Ensemble](#) for a beautiful fall evening of inspiring music, delicious food and a view of the sunset from one of the prettiest spots in the county. It will be an unforgettable evening in support of our most vulnerable kids.

Introducing: The CASA Collective



The CASA Collective

It costs \$2500 to recruit, train & supervise a volunteer to serve one child or sibling group in the foster care system for an entire year. CASA currently has 92 children on our waiting list. Your support can help us reach more of them.

[Join now](#)

The following caring friends have answered the call to make speaking up for CASA kids a top priority. They have joined **The CASA Collective, our society of recurring donors**, and are making monthly or quarterly gifts of any amount to CASA to sustain this critical advocacy work throughout the year. Please consider joining them and providing ongoing support for kids who have experienced abuse & neglect and wait an average of 3 years for a safe & permanent home. Together we can give these kids some stability and make sure their voices are heard & their needs are met while they wait.

A BIG thank you and welcome to:

Jennifer & Mohamed Adhima

Sarah & Phil Cauthon

Brigitte Channel

Ashley Coles

Joseph Dougherty

Kim Glover

Liz Lanphear

Tracey & Dean Noll

Katy Price

Evan Williams

CASA is so grateful to partner with these Agency Sponsors. Please support the following businesses/organizations and thank them for supporting CASA.

BO'S HOG WILD

BREWFEST AND BBQ

Hero Sponsors - \$7500 - \$9999

Anonymous Donor
The Ethel & Raymond F. Rice Foundation

Guardian Sponsors - \$5000 - \$7499

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Winter Family Fund of the Douglas County Community Foundation



Advocate Sponsors - \$2500 - \$4999

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Douglas County Bar Association
Dunlap Family Foundation
Howe Stein Fund - Topeka Community Foundation



Friend of CASA Sponsors - \$500 - \$999

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Business Donors - up to \$499

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Kurt Goeser State Farm Insurance Agent
RE/MAX Excel

Sabatini Architects, Inc.
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Thank YOU for supporting children in the foster care system.

Help spread the word

Follow CASA on social media (using the links below) and please share & comment. Or simply have a conversation with your family, friends, or neighbors about why you love CASA.

Thank you for helping us increase awareness and connect with prospective volunteers!

[Learn more about volunteering](#)

Supplies & activities

Donate to help us provide much needed supplies directly to our kids as well as access to camps, the public pool, and other activities.

During quarantine CASA was able to provide the kids we serve with materials, games & other supplies to keep them engaged & stimulated.

[Donate to the Child Activities Fund here](#)



DID YOU KNOW that you can link your [Dillon's Plus](#) and [Amazon Smile](#) accounts to CASA? You can unlock automatic donations every time you make a purchase.

Douglas County CASA | DCCASAKS.ORG



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