



THE CASA BRIEF

A Newsletter for Volunteers, Friends and Supporters of Douglas County CASA

**Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children
Winter Edition - NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2010**

Heart of Giving Brightens Holidays for CASA

Gathering with friends and family during the holidays is a tradition most of us take for granted. But for so many of the children served by CASA, the holidays provide a painful reminder that they are different from their peers – separated from parents, siblings, pets and close friends as they reside in foster care and other safe placements to shield them from further abuse and/or neglect. Tears are shed for past traumas, a lost sense of security and stability, the pain of separation, and the uncertainty of the future. ***It's not a question of where they will go for Thanksgiving, Christmas or Hanukkah, it's a question of where they will live during their remaining days of childhood and who will be there to comfort them through the traumas and joys of everyday life.***

As these children and youth wait for a safe, permanent home via adoption or a return to parents who are struggling to remain sober, employed, and drug-free, the holidays can be a lonely time. Fortunately, this is often a time when many caring members of our community step forward to offer their help. It is this outpouring of concern and generosity that makes me particularly thankful during this holiday season. Just when our staff and volunteers are overwhelmed by the tragic reality of new abuse and neglect cases in Douglas County, and the increased needs for clothing assistance and other support for our CASA kids, the phone rings or my email in-box reveals a caring individual or group ready to extend a helping hand. This meaningful support is what makes our community special. Your financial donations to CASA, your in-kind contributions, your volunteer hours, and your creative and meaningful offers to share your time and resources truly make a difference.



As the director of a United Way agency, I see evidence on a daily basis that we are living united. From a young girl's Halloween fundraising to a midnight pancake feed by caring KU students to a Christmas-themed fundraiser by dedicated P.E.O. members, this issue of *The Brief* offers stories and examples of the generous hearts that sustain the CASA mission. With your help, we are making a difference one child at a time. As you gather with your loved ones this holiday season, please remember that your generosity is truly appreciated, and your diverse gifts are providing hope for the children in need of care served by our dedicated CASA volunteers. Your contributions of time and money exemplify the heart of giving, and we are thankful.

Happy Holidays,

Diana Frederick

Executive Director - Douglas County CASA



**JEAN SHEPHERD ROOM DEDICATION AT THE
CASA OFFICE – 1009 New Hampshire, Ste. B**

**Wednesday, December 15, 4:30-6:00 pm Ribbon cutting at 4:30
Holiday cookies and punch will be served. Please stop by!**



NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL ADOPTION AWARENESS MONTH

November 20 is National Adoption Day

FOSTER CARE ADOPTION: FACTS & FIGURES

Every year, more than 114,000 children in foster care are available for adoption. Many spend more than five years waiting for permanent, loving homes.

Who are these waiting children?

*There are an estimated 463,000 children in foster care in the United States, and more than 114,000 of them are waiting to be adopted.

*Through no fault of their own, these children enter foster care as a result of abuse, neglect and/or abandonment.

*The average child waits for an adoptive family for more than two years.

*19 percent spend 5 years or more waiting for a family.

*The average age of a child waiting for an adoptive family is 8.

What happens to them?

*55,000 are adopted from foster care.

*More than 29,000 children reach the age of 18 without ever finding a forever family.

To find out more about adopting a child in the United States, please visit

www.nationaladoptionday.org or call 1-800-ASK-DFTA.

LOCAL P.E.O. Group Supports CASA on November 20

A CASA fund raising event will be held on **November 20 at Alvamar Country Club from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.** This annual event titled **"Christmastime Past and Presents"** features around 28 vendors selling their homemade products. One of the vendors, **Chapter GQ of P.E.O.**, has reserved space to sell homemade knitted, stitched and crafted products **with ALL their proceeds going to Douglas County CASA.** This is a great opportunity to purchase quality homemade gifts for teachers, Secret Santas, babysitters, and friends. **Please help support CASA by shopping at this holiday fair.** The event also includes live Christmas music; food and beverages are available.



CASA Holiday Ornaments To Benefit A Child

Need a gift for the person who has everything? Are you looking for a gift that keeps on giving? Here's your answer! If you purchase a CASA Christmas ornament this year, all proceeds will be used to benefit a CASA child during the holiday season. With your donation, you will receive a beautiful CASA Christmas ornament (pictured at left), and your contribution will provide Christmas gifts for children served by CASA and/or allow them to purchase a gift for a family member or foster parent. Stop by the CASA office or email yaya@sunflower.com for more details or to make a donation for your ornament.

Save the Date: Anniversary Celebration – Tuesday, April 26 at Maceli's, 4:30-6:30 pm

Join us to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of Douglas County CASA and the 25th Anniversary of the Citizen Review Board. This is a celebration you won't want to miss!



Halloween with a Heart

12-year-old Elizabeth Patton loves Halloween, so when she was deciding on a project for her church confirmation program, she was inspired to enhance this holiday for children served by Douglas County CASA. Countless hours of babysitting and bake sales paid off, and Elizabeth raised \$200 to provide a special Halloween costume fund for CASA kids. Her efforts helped provide costumes for 16 children, allowing them to trick or treat as cheerleaders, monsters, princesses, karate kids and more.

The Halloween costumes funds were so popular that we quickly realized Elizabeth had identified an overlooked need for many of our children who are in placements with limited financial resources. We hope to continue Elizabeth's legacy of Halloween support next year. Pictured at right, Elizabeth also donated Jack-o-lantern candy containers for young trick-or-treaters. You can read more about Elizabeth's Halloween project in a recent newspaper feature:



<http://www.2ljworld.com/news/2010/oct/22/12-year-old-lawrence-girl-raises-money-help-kids-n/>



Kappa Alpha Theta's *CASA CAKES* A Success

A midnight pancake feed has replaced the 5K "Sun Run" which roused Kappa Alpha Theta members at dawn for many years. Replacing early morning laps with late night pancakes proved to be a fundraising success in October when the KU sorority hosted a mouth-watering benefit for Douglas County CASA. According to KAT Philanthropy Chair, Libby Johnson, "CASA Cakes went amazingly! We had an outstanding turnout, much more than

we expected, and we ended up making \$2,471 for CASA! Everyone loved the pancakes this year (they were delicious), and the people from the Lawrence and Topeka Perkin's restaurants were SO helpful and generous!!" This event is one of the important ways the Thetas support CASA, and we are grateful.



OUR WISH LIST ...

- ☺ Fleece blankets, mittens and hats for children and teens
- ☺ Jayhawks (stuffed animals) – large and small!
- ☺ Tickets to KU basketball games
- ☺ Journals and gel pens
- ☺ Decks of cards
- ☺ Diaper bags
- ☺ Monetary donations for the **CASA Kids Clothing Fund**
- ☺ Monetary or in-kind donations (e.g., movie and bowling passes) for the **CASA Child/Volunteer Activity Fund**. Special thanks to the generous donor who provided seed money for this important need!
- ☺ **Games (new or gently used) for the Wii.**
- ☺ Gift cards to Walmart, Target, Kohl's, JC Penney, and Best Buy.



A special THANK YOU to all of our wonderful CASA friends who have shared donations and/or participated in our restaurant dining out events and other fundraisers this fall. We are thankful for your generous support.



The Give Back Challenge: October 1- December 31

www.lawrencegiveback.com

Cards available in the CASA office



The Advocate

A special section for our Douglas County CASA Volunteers



Consider the following activities to share with your
CASA child during the holiday season:

11/26 – Downtown Holiday Lighting Ceremony, 9th & Mass.

11/29-12/2 – Festival of Trees, Liberty Hall

12/4 – 11 am – Old Fashioned Christmas Parade, Mass. St.

12/11 – Lawrence Arts Center Children’s Holiday Shop -
9:30 am to 2 pm – For details about this event, visit

www.lawrenceartscenter.com/HolidayShop/index.html

Contact the CASA office (832-5172) if you would like free shopping coupons for your CASA child. The Lawrence Arts Center has generously donated a number of coupons for CASA kids to participate in holiday shopping free of charge. Children and volunteers are also invited to decorate sugar cookies & a CASA Gingerbread House at our office that afternoon (12/11) from 1-3 pm. RSVP to dfrederick@douglas-county.com

By appointment – Enjoy a movie and popcorn in the Jean Shepherd Room – or play video games on our Wii or new X-Box! Special thanks to Kerry Catt for the X-Box donation.

VOLUNTEERS: PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE OFFICIAL RIBBON CUTTING AND DEDICATION OF THE JEAN SHEPHERD ROOM IN THE CASA OFFICE: Wednesday, December 15, 4:30-6 pm.

Ribbon cutting at 4:30 pm with Judge Shepherd. Holiday cookies and punch will be served.



CASA Volunteer Resource Library

By Susie Nightingale

A library is only as good as its patrons. That is true at CASA. We invite board members, staff, and volunteers to use our newly organized resource library in the Jean Shepherd Room. The books are now arranged in Dewey Decimal Classification order and have check out cards and date due slips. The check out period for books is one month; for DVDs, one week. Please sign the card, affix the date due on the slip in the back of the book and place the card in the charging tray. (Soon to be brightly decorated!) A CASA staff

member will also be happy to assist you.

Here are the categories for the Dewey Decimal System (DDC).

000 – Computer science, information and general works

100 – Philosophy and psychology

200 – Religion

- 300 – Social sciences
- 400 – Language
- 500 – Science
- 600 – Technology
- 700 – Arts and recreation
- 800 – Literature
- 900 – History, geography and biography



Our resource library has fiction, as well as nonfiction, for adults. We also have children’s literature in our collection. For basic readers without chapter headings, the call number is E and for books with chapters, the call number is F. For all books in the collection, the first three letters of the author’s last name are under the classification number or letter.

When you return a book or DVD, please give it to one of the staff members, and they will place it back on the shelf. Please do not do this task yourself. We want to keep the books handy by having them shelved correctly.

If you would like to help with our library project, we will gladly accept donations. Since there is a trained librarian on board with this project, cash donations would be best. That way, we can build our collection incrementally. For instance, most of our books now are in the Social Science (300) category, **especially 362.7, child abuse**. The librarian can keep abreast of new titles in appropriate subject areas and build the collection. Eventually, we shall compile a spreadsheet of the categories and titles in our collection and link it to our website so that you can check online for the resources you need. Since our collection is small, we ask that you return materials promptly. If you have any CASA items at home that are not cataloged, please bring them to the office so that we can add them to our collection. We hope that these changes will be beneficial to you. We want these materials to circulate widely, and we welcome any suggestions for improvement. Thank you for your help with keeping our library running smoothly.

Editors Note: We extend our heartfelt appreciation to CASA volunteer Susie Nightingale for her countless hours of work on our resource library. We are fortunate to benefit from her expertise as a retired librarian (now semi-retired!), but we need your help to keep this library functional. PLEASE RETURN ANY BOOKS OR DVDs YOU HAVE AT HOME THAT BELONG TO CASA – otherwise, you may get a phone call or invoice soon regarding your “past due” items. Thank you!

Please note that the in-service workshop on IEPs and Advocating for your CASA Child in the School Environment - originally scheduled in October - has been rescheduled for Thursday evening, NOVEMBER 18, 6:00-7:30 in the CASA office. RSVP to Elizabeth Day at eday@douglas-county.com or 832-5712.

- Dates to Remember:**
- 11/25 and 11/26 – CASA office is closed for the Thanksgiving holiday.
 - 12/11 – Children’s Holiday Shop at the Lawrence Arts Center, 9:30-2. Decorate cookies at CASA any time from 1-3 pm.
 - 12/15 – 4:30 – Dedication of the Jean Shepherd Room at CASA.
 - 12/24 – CASA office closed for Christmas.
 - 12/31 – CASA office closed for New Year’s.

“Those who say it cannot be done should not interrupt the people who are doing it!”
 - Judy Fortlage – 2010 G.F. Bettineski Child Advocate of the Year, Vancouver, WA

Douglas County CASA, Inc.

Board of Directors: Cara Nossaman Anderson, Mary Boatright (*President*), Julia Butler, Shelly Goscha, Beth Kelley, Brad Kemp (*Vice President*), Eve Kemple, Missy Martin (*Past President*), Karen Oberzan (*Secretary*), Lisa Ramler, Ruthi Rapp, Brian Seymour (*Treasurer*), Libby Johnson (*Kappa Alpha Theta*)

Staff: Diana Frederick, *Executive Director*; Sherry Catt, *Volunteer Supervisor*; Elizabeth Day, *Volunteer Supervisor*; Carolyn Johnson, *Volunteer Supervisor*; Diane Mosher, *Administrative Assistant*

Contact Information: Douglas County CASA, Inc., 1009 New Hampshire, Suite B, Lawrence, KS 66044; Phone: 785-832-5172; Fax: 785-856-1279; E-mail: casa@douglas-county.com; Web site: www.dccasa.org; for newsletter questions or suggestions, please contact Diana Frederick at dfrederick@douglas-county.com.

Our Mission:

CASA strives to ensure that children of Douglas County grow up in safe, permanent and loving homes by advocating for the best interests of children who have been abused or neglected and are under the protection of the Juvenile court.



Douglas County CASA, Inc.
1009 New Hampshire, Suite B
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