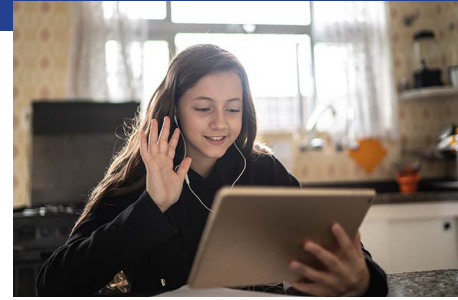


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CASA OF JACKSON COUNTY, INC.
409 N. Front Street
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Children in foster care and their CASA Advocates are in need of your support now more than ever.

Our team at CASA is committed to doing everything we can to protect the health and safety of our communities during this challenging and unprecedented time.

Despite quarantine and protective measures, CASAs are still staying connected to their kids remotely, in addition to attending court and other meetings virtually. CASAs will absolutely continue to communicate via phone, email, and Skype with the children for whom they are advocating. In the midst of this pandemic, with children at home and away from school, children in foster care may be at an increased risk for abuse and neglect. CASA's work remains vital for our community's most vulnerable children especially in these uncertain and rapidly changing times. Our Case Supervisors are working diligently from home, monitoring cases daily, checking court reports and ensuring all new information reaches our CASA volunteers immediately. We are a strong, determined team.

You can ensure that we are able to continue advocacy and support for the children we serve. CASA needs your support today, now more than ever! Please stand with us as we continue to advocate for the children most in need in our community. We are their constant presence and we will continue to be.



Ways you can support CASA

Donate online:

It is a safe and secure way to give. www.jacksoncountycasa.org

Donate by Mail:

(Envelope enclosed!)

Volunteer:

Virtual orientations are available every Thursday at noon!
Simply email: casa@jacksoncountycasa.org

New CASA Advocates

SWORN IN OCTOBER 30, 2020



Lily Reishman, Amy Arapoff, Laura Anderson, Nancy Messinger, Arlene LeWinter, Riley Smith, Kim Era, The Honorable Judge Benjamin Bloom, Patricia Sotelo, Lauren Trantham, Luisa Zaragoza, Lauren Ripley, Ingrid Edstrom

SWORN IN FEBRUARY 19, 2021



Brad Sachs, Katy Manning, Cessi Ward, Emily Lamore, Sarah Pfaff, Danielle Holtz, Noel Williams, Tia Marten, Hank Darlington, The Honorable Judge Kelly Ravassipour, Meghan Wilson, Angela Beeks, Nonie Jarvis, Jackie Carroll, Olivia Taylor, Madison Douglas, Amber Ishikawa, Sandee Galligan, Alison Daum, Jane Kellum, Kelly Taylor

CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH

Keeping children safe by supporting families and reporting suspected abuse or neglect is everyone's responsibility. This call to action is not just for families and those who work on behalf of children; rather, it is the sounding of an alarm to the mail carrier, delivery person, grocery store clerk, pastor, drug store cashier, virtual teacher, and next-door neighbor. Will you join us in keeping a watchful eye on our children?



National Child Abuse Hotline:
1-800-422-4453

www.childhelp.org

#EyesOnChildren

COMMUNITY HOPE



Jennifer Mylenek
Executive Director

While our world has been shuttered, the reports of child abuse and neglect have sharply decreased both locally and around the country. Studies reveal that pandemic-related challenges, such as social isolation, loss of a job, financial hardship, parenting stress, and increased alcohol/illicit drug consumption can significantly increase the risk of family violence, including child abuse. Combine that with the fact that professionals who are trained to recognize child abuse have limited access to children and their families during this time and we end up with an underreporting of child abuse and neglect. Under-reporting can mean that children are still experiencing abuse and/or neglect (and at possibly higher rates than usual) but are out of the purview of people who are responsible for reporting. In fact, many hospitals have reported a sharp rise in child admission due to severe injuries from family violence. The CDC reports that once restrictions are lifted and in-person school and doctor visits resume, we will most likely see a landslide of child abuse cases enter our system; which is sure to challenge an already burdened child welfare and court system beyond capacity.

Concurrently and despite the financial impact to our organization and a loss of volunteers due to COVID stressors and restrictions, we came together and pivoted to virtual operations, training 49 new CASAs and advocating for 628 children in 2020. (Ninety-six fewer children than in 2019.) Our wait list of children remains around 178.

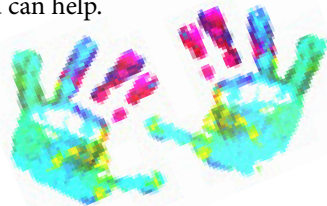
We received critical support from local foundations and donors, and thankfully received a PPP loan to bridge our losses in fundraising to maintain our staff who are responsible for supporting 200+ volunteers. We learned that together, we were able to promote resilience in our work, our children, and in ourselves.

This year we plan to bring our work to a new and even better place of service, to position ourselves to address an increased need for CASAs, incorporating voices of lived experience in our planning, and by leveraging what we have learned about virtual training to expand our knowledge base and outreach.

You can help by keeping hope alive for our children and youth. Consider becoming a CASA, making a donation, or contact our program for other ways you can help.

J Mylenek

Jennifer Mylenek,
Executive Director and Child Advocate



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Cristina Petrone *Case Supervisor*
Leanne Cohn, *Family Finding*
Vicky McGee, *Family Finding*
Jami Pope, *Family Finding*
Marisol Rodriguez, *Family Finding*

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION WEEK

APRIL 18-24, 2021



For your dedication to abused and neglected children in our community
For your innovative approach to serving in uncertain times
For your compassion and consistent presence in the lives of others

Thank you, CASA Volunteers.
You are our heroes.



"CASA provides me a clear, professional, and effective way to provide support to those in need in my immediate community."



"There is little in the world where helping one person can make a difference. Volunteering as a CASA has allowed me to help ensure the safety of numerous children."

"I like to feel that I am part of a positive process for children in need, solidifying their lives."

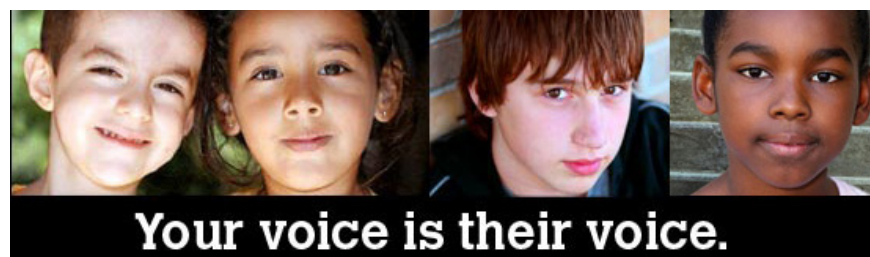
WHY I CHOSE CASA

By Deborah Rothschild

I became a CASA because of Jerry Johnson. We got to know each other as pen-pals when I lived in Houston, Texas. When our correspondence began, Jerry had recently been released from 6205 days in solitary confinement and was living in a prison cell in Lovelady, Texas. His life of crime started at age five when he was caught shoplifting food to help feed his siblings. His mother had abandoned her four children, leaving them to fend for themselves in an empty house. There was no father.

After years of running from foster homes, school truancy, petty offenses, and finally joy riding in a stolen car at 17, the Texas criminal justice system declared Jerry an incorrigible and put him in prison. For protection, Jerry joined a white prison gang. Eventually he was transferred to the Eastham Prison in Lovelady. As an initiation into his new gang, he was required to kill a rival gang member. And he did. As a result, Jerry was convicted of murder will remain in prison for the remainder of his life.

Jerry is a man who writes about Jesus, yearns to see his daughter, meet his granddaughter, and dreams of someday working on an organic farm. If Jerry had been given a CASA when he was young, his life might have been different. I can't change Jerry's life, but perhaps I can change other's lives by being a CASA.



Your voice is their voice.



Oh,
THE
Places
They'll
Go!



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I AM FOR THE CHILD
LUNCHEON
SUPPORTERS!

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A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Elizabeth Adams
Judge Ben Bloom

Mark Cromwell
KDRV 12

Jenni Portwood
John Watt

The Fifth Annual Tom Basgen Inspiration Award was presented to CASA Bruce Laidlaw.