

Let's CONNECT

NEWSLETTER



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If Not for CASA, then Who?

Have you ever thought about what the child welfare landscape would look like without CASA? We speak often about the gratitude we have for our volunteers, and the very real, tangible difference they make in the lives of the children we serve, but what would it look like for these children, if not for CASA?

Before Court Appointed Special Advocates existed, Seattle Superior Court Judge David Soukup often felt frustrated at not having detailed information that he needed to make informed decisions regarding the welfare of children in care. In 1977, he created the first CASA program.

48 years later, and our incredible volunteers are still practicing whole child advocacy while giving judges a glimpse into the real-life circumstances of the young person behind a child's name and cause number. Without the work of their Court Appointed Special Advocate, very real needs would go unmet and vital details slip through the cracks.

CASA Court Reports provide our judges with detailed information they need to make decisions that they often do not receive from other sources. Because of this, children are safer and families receive more of the services they need. Our Advocates view the whole picture, and think 'outside of the box' when it comes to meeting the needs of the whole child.

CASA plays an integral role in advocating for a child's educational needs, medical needs, and most importantly, ensuring that they are safe physically and emotionally. Our volunteers undergo extensive training prior to swearing in, with an additional 12 hours of continuing education every calendar year. They volunteer countless hours of their time to immerse themselves

in the lives of the children they've committed to serve. It is impossible to quantify the impact they make daily, and we are so thankful they do what they do.

If you would like to make a lasting impact on a child involved with the child welfare system in Parker and Palo Pinto counties, please visit:

<https://tx-hope.evintosolutions.com/VolunteerApplication>

We need you to help us continue to fight for every child and family to become safe, happy, and whole.

CASA Across the Nation in 2025

In 2025, the National CASA/GAL Association reports that their programs serve approximately 200,000 children annually, a figure based on their most recent annual impact reports. The exact number for 2025 may fluctuate, but the organization consistently works to serve a significant portion of the children in the dependency system, with a goal of providing a trained advocate for every child who needs one.

- ♥ The organization's most recent available annual data indicates they serve about 200,000 children.
- ♥ They work with more than 79,000 volunteers.
- ♥ CASA/GAL programs are active in 49 states and the District of Columbia.
- ♥ The organization aims to serve every child in the dependency system with a trained volunteer.

Statistics from:

<https://nationalcasagal.org/>

Mineral Wells

CASA - HOPE FOR CHILDREN
BREAKFAST WITH SANTA
Write a letter, have breakfast, and take pictures with Santa!
SATURDAY DECEMBER 06
SOUTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST
1401 SE 25th AVE. MINERAL WELLS
09:00AM - 11:00AM
COME ENJOY A DELIGHTFUL BREAKFAST, A PHOTO OPPORTUNITY WITH SANTA AND BALLOONS, CRAFT ACTIVITIES, GLITTER TATTOOS, AND HOLIDAY CHEER!
SPONSORED BY: Walmart and CASA

Weatherford

CASA - HOPE FOR CHILDREN
BREAKFAST WITH SANTA
Write a letter, have breakfast, and take pictures with Santa!
SATURDAY DECEMBER 13
PARKER COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
101 N MAIN ST. WEATHERFORD
09:00AM - 11:00AM
COME ENJOY A DELIGHTFUL BREAKFAST, A PHOTO OPPORTUNITY WITH SANTA AND BALLOONS, CRAFT ACTIVITIES, GLITTER TATTOOS, AND HOLIDAY CHEER!
SPONSORED BY: Walmart and CASA

CASA Hope for Children Angel Trees



There are only a few days left to bless a child in foster care with a beautiful Christmas!

You can visit the Hudson Oaks Walmart near the Vision Center to choose a wish list from the tree! Thank you so much to the City of Hudson Oaks, and our own Board Member Christina Robinson for working so hard each Christmas Season to give the children we serve the Christmas they deserve.

Some of these children are spending their first Christmas away from the only home and family they've ever known, while still others have celebrated far too many Christmases in group homes or shelters. If you're able, fulfilling one or more of these Wish Lists truly does make a difference in a child's life. Angel Tree Gifts must be turned in no later than December 5th, so that we can get busy playing Santa to children placed across the state of Texas!



Logging CFE Tools – What to Log and How?

By now, you've had training on CFE tools like Connect Cards, Circles of Trust, and Mobility Mapping. You've been trained on how to log those events into Optima, but did you know that your CFE work goes way beyond Family and Team Meetings, and utilizing those tools?

As CASA, you spend a lot of time interacting with a child's family, as well as having heart-to-heart conversations with children about family relationships and memories. Those connections are the HEART of CFE! Next time you are compiling and entering your notes after a child visit or family interaction, be sure and add each one of them to the Family/Child Connections or CFE Tool section of your contact logs as well. If you're unsure of how to copy/paste an entry into multiple categories, please reach out to your Volunteer Coordinator or the Office for help!

It is vital for grant purposes that the hard work you're doing in CFE is documented – but beyond that, the hard and heart work you are doing should always be accounted for!

Activity Date	11/21/2025
Activity Type	
Subject	
Out of Court	
Contact Type	
Hours	
Mileage	
Expenses	
Notes	

Attend Hearing

Attend Mediation / Settlement Conference

Case Records Review

Case Related Meeting: Child/Family

Case Related Meeting: For Youth 16+

CFE Family Meeting

CFE Tool Completed

Contact: Child Face-to-Face

Contact: Child Other Contact (not Face-to-Face)

Contact: CPS/SSCC

Contact: Other Case Contacts

Contact: Parent

Contact: Placement

Contact: Volunteer and CASA staff

Court Report: Prepare and/or Write

CVC Research / Referral / Follow Up

DFPS Hotline Referral

Educational Advocacy

Family/Child Connections

TBRI® Moment

TBRI® Caregiver Training

In 2025, CASA Hope for Children was pleased to offer TBRI® Caregiver Training to staff at both the Children's Advocacy Center and OCOK of Parker County. Aside from that, we've been working hard to offer Caregiver Training to Kinship Placements, Foster Families, and parents who are either approaching or in the midst of a Monitored Return. Once placements have completed the Caregiver Training, they are offered ongoing coaching sessions with one of our TBRI® Practitioners. These coaching sessions offer more in-depth discussion of trauma-based behaviors and providing trauma-informed care. We are committed to helping Caregivers be successful in providing a healing and nurturing environment for the children we serve.

As we approach 2026, we look forward to offering our first TBRI® Caregiver Training to our community, as well as regularly offering this training to every one of our Advocates. We are so happy to have received wonderful feedback from those who have attended the training and coaching sessions alike and have seen real change manifested in the parenting approaches our trained Caregivers are taking. This training has the potential to maintain placements, strengthen the connections between parent and child, and educate every professional working with our children in best practices.

If you are working on a case and feel that the Caregivers would benefit from receiving TBRI® Training, please reach out to Suzanne McCarley at suzannemccarley@casahopeforchildren.org

It is our goal to build a strong, healing, and trauma informed community around children who have experienced abuse and neglect. The dates and times of our upcoming trainings will be released later this month – Stay Tuned!!



It's All About Connection

Safety Advocacy – What to Look For

As Court Appointed Special Advocates, advocating for a child's safety includes visiting them in their placements and acting as a 'detective' of sorts to determine whether their needs – physical and emotional – are being met. The area of Safety Advocacy can seem rather simplistic – however there are subtleties that we look for beyond the obvious to ensure that the children we serve are safe.

We may have a vision in our minds of what a safe home looks like – sanitary, free of clear hazards, with the child having safe and appropriate places to sleep and play. While those are certainly

important factors, any child involved with the child welfare system has undergone significant trauma in their past and needs an emotionally safe place to heal and grow.

Is the child you're visiting eating the same meals and snacks as the other children in the home? If there are no dietary restrictions or preferences being considered, yet the child you're visiting is eating peanut butter and jelly while others in the home are eating a special meal, that bears investigating further. If the child on your case is wearing worn and ill-fitting clothing, and lacks basic hygiene items, we must consider whether that placement needs additional resources. Is the child on your case involved with their placement's at-home and extracurricular activities, fulfilling their right to normalcy, or do they seem isolated from what others in the home are doing? If any of these concerning circumstances are apparent, it's important to investigate further and resolve with the rest of the child's team whether this placement can become safe and appropriate.

Does the child's placement appear to be trauma informed and aware of their mental health and emotional needs? Are there additional services that could be offered to the placement to help equip them to effectively care for a child with trauma-based behaviors? CASA Hope for Children offers both TBRI® Caregiver Training and ongoing TBRI® Caregiver Coaching services, to help every placement become knowledgeable around meeting the emotional needs of children from hard places.

When you have questions or concerns regarding the safety of the children you serve in their placement, we are here for you! Contact your Volunteer Coordinator – you are the eyes and ears of our organization, and your work is vital!



ADVOCATE SPOTLIGHT

October



Christin Schimmelbusch

November



April Isbell

December



Peggy Hutton

Please join us in celebrating this quarter's Advocate Spotlights! These incredible volunteers pour out their time, hearts, and efforts to ensure that every child on their caseload has a constant in their lives advocating for their Education, Health, Safety, and Emotional well-being.

Thank you Christin, April, and Peggy – we are so blessed by you!!

All of us at CASA Hope for Children would like to wish our Advocates, Stakeholders, and Supporters a Merry Christmas, and all the richest blessings in 2026!

We love you and are thankful for you – we wouldn't be here without you!



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA - HOPE FOR CHILDREN

WHERE TO FIND US:

CASA Hope for Children

305 S Rusk Street

Weatherford, TX 76086

www.casahopeforchildren.org

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

CASA Hope for Children recruits, trains, and supports volunteer Court Appointed Special

Advocates (CASA) to advocate for the best interest of children and empower families in the child welfare system.

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