



NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 349
JOLIET, IL



CASA OF WILL COUNTY Spring Newsletter

April is Child Abuse Awareness Month

THIS IS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR STRONG, NURTURING COMMUNITIES TO SUPPORT FAMILIES BY GETTING INVOLVED AND PLAYING A ROLE IN PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT AND BY PROMOTING CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING STRATEGIES.


Did you know that April is **Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month**?

We ask you to join with us in taking the time to acknowledge the importance of families and communities that are working together to prevent child abuse and neglect. Our hope is that you promote and recognize both the importance of social and emotional well-being for children and families.

Here's one way to get involved:

"Go Blue Friday" – every Friday during April, show your support by wearing blue, the national color for child abuse awareness. Email pictures of your family or office "going blue" to agiminez@casaofwillcounty.org.

The idea is to spread awareness, so show that you are the voice of children everywhere by recognizing the reality of child abuse, and to do your part in prevention.

CASA of Will County is a United Way agency, a recipient of the Will County Community Development Block Grant and a member of the National CASA Association.  United Way of Will County

What's Inside:

- APRIL IS NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH
PAGE 1
- BOYHOOD: DAVID'S STORY
PAGE 2
- CASA'S GALA HONORS BOB CARR, LAUNCHES PARTNERSHIP WITH GIVEBACK
PAGE 3
- GET READY FOR CASA'S 6TH ANNUAL GOLF FOR THE CHILD CLASSIC
PAGE 3

Next Issue:

- RECAP OF OUR 6TH ANNUAL GOLF OUTING
- SUMMER STRATEGIES TO KEEP KIDS HEALTHY AND SAFE
- GET READY FOR OUR 3RD ANNUAL RUNNING 4 THE KIDS 5K/10K – FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY
- AND MORE!

WE NEED YOUR HELP.

We can't do what we do without you. CASA's goal is to ensure safe, permanent homes for every child in the juvenile court or foster care system.

We need your support, either through your financial donations, including attendance at our fundraising events, or by becoming an advocate. If you think it's in your heart to act, please call or visit our website to learn more.



READY TO VOLUNTEER? PLEASE CONTACT RITA FACCHINA AT 815.730.7072 OR VISIT WWW.CASAOFWILLCOUNTY.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION.



IT'S A FACT:

Last year, CASA of Will County advocated for 75% of the children in need. You can help us reach 100%.

Boyhood: David's Story



"In David's world of changing case workers, changing teachers, and changing doctors, Emma was the one constant face in his life."

It was a gray and muddy Wednesday afternoon when 13-year-old David first stepped foot in the Juvenile Court House. It was the first time in weeks since he and his sisters had seen their mother, who was seemingly sober in an orange jumpsuit. She and her boyfriend had been taken into custody for the sexual abuse of David and his two sisters.

Their mother, Ana, had fallen into various vices over the years to cope with her own childhood trauma as well as being a single mother. David often found his mother stuck in a daze, which left him and his sisters vulnerable to her latest boyfriend, Rick.

In the wake of a dark family history, David and his sisters started on a new path that rainy Wednesday afternoon, in the lobby of the court house, when they met their assigned CASA, Emma. It was a brief first encounter, which was fine with David, as his semi-deep voice had begun to start cracking throughout the interview.

David's case would go on for years. His CASA was the one person in David's life that remained constant. His mother and Rick were charged and sentenced to prison. Over the course of 1,930 hours, 52 family-team meetings, and 6 placements, CASA never gave up on David and his sisters. In David's world of changing case workers, changing teachers, and changing doctors, Emma was the one constant face in his life.

On David's 15th birthday, he asked his CASA to speak to the judge in working to become independent. With CASA supporting David he completed services which helped him learn how to budget his finances, find an apartment, and maintain a stable job. For 6 years CASA worked with David to achieve his goals. With every completed goal, David matured and

became even more ambitious and motivated to reach his true potential.

No longer a boy; David is now a happy and hardworking young man. At the age of 21 he now works a stable job, has his own apartment, and talks to his sisters frequently over the phone. His younger sister Chloe is now a freshman, studying Public Health at Northern Illinois

University while his youngest sister was happily adopted by a relative.

David speaks with confidence when working out his plans to finish college. He is thriving as a young adult and has even reconciled with his mother and speaks with her on the phone.

This April is Child Abuse Awareness Month and marks the

first of many months of David's successful emancipation. There are hundreds of children like David and his sisters who are in need of CASA volunteers like Emma to be there for them. Please consider becoming a CASA of Will County volunteer to "be the voice" for these children.

For more information visit us on our website: CASAofWillCounty.org

Gala Honors Bob Carr, Celebrates New Partnership

In February, CASA of Will County held its annual "Have a Heart for the Child" Gala at Ruffled Feathers Golf Club in Lemont.

The event was a great success, raising more than \$100,000 for CASA's programs. Part of the success was owed to the presence of special guest Bob Carr, founder of GiveBack Foundation, which provides mentors and college scholarships to at-risk kids with high academic potential.

Late last year the two organizations formed a partnership in which CASA will identify kids in its program who are potential candidates for GiveBack.

In addition to being honored at this year's gala, Mr. Carr brought a number of friends, family and guests to the event and also made a \$50,000 donation to kick off the partnership. In addition to honoring Mr. Carr,

CASA also recognized the work of the University of Illinois Extension Master Gardeners, which maintains its Children's Garden at the River Valley

Justice Center. The event sold out, with nearly 250 guests in attendance. Look for info on the 2019 event, celebrating CASA's 25th year, coming soon.



Get Ready to Tee Off

CASA OF WILL COUNTY TO HOST ITS 6TH ANNUAL GOLF FOR THE CHILD CLASSIC ON FRIDAY, JUNE 29 AT THE PRAIRIE BLUFF GOLF CLUB IN CREST HILL



Once again, Prairie Bluff will play host to CASA's annual golf outing, and we have a full schedule of fun and exciting events for everyone.

Our popular Bloody Mary Bar will be back, as will our on-course games, with a chance to show your skill and win prizes.

We also will have a silent auction and awards at the luncheon following the round of golf, which is sponsored by Strategic Retirement Partners.

Foursomes and sponsorships are on sale now, so make sure you secure yours by visiting our official website, www.GolfForTheChild.com. See you on the front nine!

Save the Date

Following the golf outing, we have two more great annual fundraising events that you won't want to miss:

Sunday, September 30

Running 4 the Kids 5K/10K
New Lenox, Illinois.
Registration open soon!

Saturday and Sunday December 1 and 2

CASA Christmas Express train ride from Joliet Union Station to Tinley Park Oak Park Avenue
Tickets on sale October 1!

Visit casaofwillcounty.org for info.