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CASA OF WILL COUNTY Summer Newsletter

Summer Strategies to Keep Kids Healthy and Safe

1. Practice Summer Sun Safety for Kids

Sunscreen plays an important role when guarding against the sun's damaging rays.

2. Protect Against Bugs

Bugs are one of those annoyances of summer. Insects such as potentially disease-carrying mosquitoes and bees can also be harmful to kids.

3. Prevent Dehydration

Whether your child is playing soccer with teammates or running around in the park with some buddies, it's important to keep in mind that frequent water breaks are very important to prevent dehydration.

4. Don't Forget Helmets

Your child should wear a helmet when playing on anything with wheels, such as a scooter, bicycle, or roller skates. A helmet is the most important device available that can reduce head injury.

5. Practice Food Safety

Foodborne illnesses increase in the summer because bacteria grow faster in warmer temperatures and humidity. On top of that, more people are eating and preparing food outdoors, at picnics and barbecues, where refrigeration and places to wash hands are not readily available.

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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.



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TRAIN RIDE

LOOK FOR OUR ANNUAL
REPORT THIS FALL TO
KICK OFF OUR 25TH
YEAR!

Take the Plunge. Change a Life.

As temperatures rise this summer, so can the number of child abuse cases. With less eyes and ears to watch out for a child's wellbeing, children can suffer abuse and neglect for months on end.

As CASA's we stay diligent through the heat of the summer through home visits, advocacy, and court recommendations in order to ensure a child's safety. We need your help to do what we do. We rely heavily on people like you to support us through donations, attending our fundraising events, or by becoming an advocate. Will you take the plunge and support CASA in any way you can?

WE ARE THE VOICE OF THE CHILD.



**CHANGE A LIFE THIS SUMMER, 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%.

Summer Strategies to Keep Kids Healthy and Safe continued



Angel Hooves By Melanie Buhle

When Tina and Dave became CASA volunteers, they knew that they wanted to help children in need. After going through the CASA training, they were matched with a family that included several young children. As they got to know the kids, they realized that while traditional services such as counseling and developmental therapy helped, there still seemed to be a piece missing from the puzzle that would help these children to heal.

Tina and Dave began to research other ways of helping children to overcome trauma. Through a series of social media interactions, they were able to acquire Tex and Wally, miniature therapy horses, from an established organization in Wisconsin. Like many of the children CASA serves, Tex and Wally were in need of finding a place to call home, as their previous owner was planning to retire and relocate, and could not bring them with. As luck would have it, Tina and Dave had extensive experience caring for animals – at home, they have horses, goats, chickens and dogs. When Tina and Dave reflected on the sadness and fear that they had seen firsthand on the faces of the foster children they had worked with, they knew that Tex and Wally could be the key that would help bring joy back into these children's lives.

Although Tina and Dave were used to caring for animals at home, they had little experience being the handlers of comfort animals. They immediately completed a course to

6. Guard Against Drowning

If you have a swimming pool or if your child will be near one, it is crucial to put multiple safety measures in place to keep kids safe.

7. Avoid Trampoline Danger

Never let more than one child use the trampoline at a time and no kids younger than 6 on a full-sized trampoline.

8. Warn Kids About Hiding in Enclosed Spaces

Teach children to never play hide and seek by crawling inside an enclosed space such as a car trunk, chest, or old cooler or appliance.

9. Use Caution When Doing Yardwork

Never allow children to ride on lawnmowers or to play near motorized lawn equipment. Do not allow children under age 12 to operate push mowers and do not allow children younger than 16 to operate ride-on lawnmowers.

10. Safeguard Home Playgrounds

If you have a backyard playground or play equipment, make sure the ground beneath the equipment is soft enough. Surfaces made of concrete, asphalt or dirt are too hard and do not absorb enough impact in the event of a fall. Instead, the CPSC recommends using at least 9 inches of mulch or wood chips.

"Summer Safety Checklist for Kids" by Katherine Lee and reviewed by Joel Forman, MD

become registered handlers for the therapy horses. At that time, they also formed a non-profit organization, Angel Hooves Healing Hearts, Inc.

By this time, it was just before Christmas, and the siblings on Tina and Dave's case had just been separated into separate foster homes. The children were devastated at the separation. In order to bring a bit more joy into the Christmas season, Tina and Dave decided to bring the therapy horses to have their first visit with the children.

On Christmas morning, Tina and Dave packed up their minivan with tiny horses and gifts, visiting the children in their different foster homes. It was the first time they had seen the children smile since they had entered into foster care. It was then that they realized just how special the little horses are.

Though Tina and Dave bring their horses to spread joy and bring smiles to the faces of those at nursing homes, hospitals, and schools, their main focus continues to be to utilize Tex and Wally as comfort animals for the foster children in Will County. CASA's mission has always been to help keep children safe and allow them to heal. With the assistance of Tex and Wally, we are now able to touch these children's hearts in a new way, helping to create happiness and fond childhood memories of the time they got to make friends with a tiny horse.

Recap of our 6th Annual Golf Outing

Thank you to all who attended our 6th Annual Golf for the Child Golf Outing. It was a huge success as we saw a record number of golfers in attendance!

An exciting and eventful day began with a continental breakfast featuring the Bloody Mary Bar sponsored by Minnesota Lawyers Mutual.

Between tee shots and sinking putts, golfers enjoyed the beverage cart sponsored by ComEd, who was also the Golf Cart sponsor.

Afterwards, attendees cooled off at the club house for a luncheon sponsored by D'Arcy Motors and Strategic Retirement Partners.

With so many generous hole sponsors, raffle and silent auction donations and more, a total of \$36,000 was raised.

"We are grateful to all of the sponsors who have come on board to support this event," said CASA of Will County Executive Director, Rita Fachina. "We have watched this event grow each year, which helps us to raise funds to better serve the children in our community. We do this with strong participation from golfers and corporate sponsors in events like the Golf for the Child Classic."



Ready, Set, Go!

CASA OF WILL COUNTY TO HOST ITS 4TH ANNUAL RUNNING 4 THE KIDS 5K/10K/8 MILE TAPER IN NEW LENOX



Registration now OPEN!

Join CASA of Will County at our 4th Annual "Running 4 the Kids" 5K, 10K, & 8 Mile Taper presented by Atrium Family Dental!

Run, Jog, or Walk to show your support for victims of child abuse and neglect.

All proceeds will go towards **CASA of Will County** in its mission to provide volunteers to become *Everyday Heroes* and advocate for abused and neglected children in our community.

To register, visit:
casaofwillcounty.org/running4thekids

Save the Date

We have two more great annual fundraising events that you won't want to miss:

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!

Saturday February 23

CASA Have a Heart for the Child Gala

Visit casaofwillcounty.org for info.