

The CASA Brief

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

Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children - OCTOBER 2010

Dr. Phil and his wife, Robin, are official spokespersons for CASA, the National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association. It is CASA's mission to support and promote court-appointed volunteer advocacy for abused and neglected children so they can thrive in safe, permanent homes.

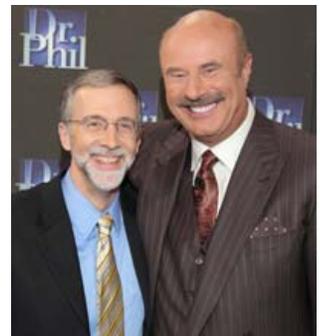


CASA Cause Featured on *Dr. Phil* Show

The *Dr. Phil Show* on Friday, October 1 focused on the experiences of the 25,000 older youth who are in foster care each year. In the recent episode, Dr. Phil called on caring adults to stand up as advocates for these youth, serve as their advisors, to help them develop specific transition plans, identify positive adult connections and achieve future success.

The show featured young people who are preparing to age out of foster care or have aged out of care, including youth who spent the summer on Capitol Hill as members of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute's internship program. Also appearing on the "No Child Forgotten" episode of *Dr. Phil* were US Senators Mary Landrieu and Chuck Grassley. Grassley is the co-founder of the Senate Caucus on Foster Youth, and both senators are longtime proponents of foster youth and of the CASA cause.

Dr. Phil and Robin McGraw are national spokespeople for the CASA network. Whether you are a fan of *Dr. Phil* or not, his support of the CASA cause on the *Dr. Phil* show has resulted in the recruitment of thousands of new volunteers nationwide to advocate for the safety and best interests of abused and neglected children. Following the airing of the October 1 episode, the Douglas County CASA office received numerous inquiries about volunteering as an advocate. **Pictured at right is National CASA CEO Michael Piraino who appeared on the "No Child Forgotten" program with Dr. Phil.**





Walmart Presents
\$1,000 Donation to
Douglas County CASA



Walmart continued a tradition of local support to Douglas County CASA with the presentation of a \$1,000 donation on Thursday, September 30, at the Walmart store located on Iowa Street in Lawrence.

Pictured at left is Walmart staff member Scott Matchell presenting a generous check to CASA Director Diana Frederick and CASA Board Member Cara Nossaman Anderson.

The Walmart store on Iowa Street provides hospitality for the CASA playhouse each year during

the *Casa for CASA* playhouse tour. The \$1,000 contribution reflects support from the Walmart foundation for this annual benefit for Douglas County CASA.

Douglas County CASA is proud to be a United Way agency.



**The annual United Way Campaign is officially underway.
We hope you will join the CASA staff in supporting the United Way.**

BEVERLY SMITH BILLINGS IS THE 2010 Campaign Chair

"Our theme for this year's campaign is once again **LIVE UNITED**. It's about all of us doing what we can to help others throughout Douglas County. It's a call to action. To give. To advocate. To volunteer. Please join me and so many others who live united and support the 2010 United Way Campaign. Together, united, we can inspire hope and create opportunities for everyone in our community."

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

OUR WISH LIST ...

- ☺ Fleece blankets, mittens and hats for children and teens.
- ☺ Jayhawks (stuffed animals) – large and small!
- ☺ Journals and gel pens.
- ☺ Diaper bags
- ☺ 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!
- ☺ Softball, baseball, and adult & child-size ball gloves for playing catch.
- ☺ Games (new or gently used) for the **Wii**.
- ☺ Financial donations to the Clothing Fund for **CASA Kids**.





Bring the whole family for **KIDS' night!**
 Clown and balloon animal artist from 6-8 pm
 Kids build your own pizzas & drink for \$4.59



Wednesday, October 13
 Dine-in or Carry Out
ALL DAY - 15% for
 Douglas County **CASA**



*Putting the FUN in
 FUNDRAISING for CASA:*

With numerous children in need of a CASA volunteer in Douglas County, we need your help to raise additional funds to make the goal of *a CASA for every abused and neglected child* a reality.

Here's how you can help:

- ♥ **Dine out (or carry out!) at Old Chicago restaurant any time on Wednesday, October 13.** Present the coupon on the left when you dine at Old Chicago, 2329 Iowa St, on 10/13; the flyer is also posted on our website (www.dccasa.org)
- ♥ **Use your GiveBack card** when you dine out or shop with participating merchants.
- ♥ **Stop by Carlos O'Kelley's restaurant, 707 W. 23rd St, on Friday, 10/15 and Thursday, 10/21, from 11:30-2:00 or 4:30-6:00** to purchase a *Satin Hands* set from Sharon Carr. This **"With a Soft Touch, We can Support Tough Causes"** fundraiser will benefit Douglas County CASA and the O'Connell Youth Ranch.
- ♥ **Enter the GiveBack Challenge at www.lawrencegiveback.com!**

A special THANK YOU to all of our wonderful CASA friends who participated in the dining out event at On the Border on Monday, September 27. Muchas gracias!!



The Give Back Challenge: October 1- December 31

Winners will be announced and honored in January

Use your Give Back Card at any of our participating merchants throughout the challenge period. Prizes go to the winning cardholders' registered charity. You earn personal points also!

There will be Gold (\$1,500), Silver (\$1,000) & Bronze (\$750) prizes for the top individual Give Back cardholders in **2 categories**: ***Most number of visits to merchants** -Cardholders who have the highest number of purchases during the contest period (only 1 purchase per day per merchant); ***Most number of merchants visited** - Cardholders who have made purchases with the most number of merchants. A clean sweep of both categories would earn \$6,500 for a charity!

Enter the Give Back Challenge by simply going to www.lawrencegiveback.com to register your card number.

Don't have a Give Back card? Stop by the CASA office (1009 New Hampshire, Ste B) to get yours today!

Jessica Cummings: Finding the Time to Help Children

CASA of the 5th Judicial Circuit, Jackson County, West Virginia

One day I saw an ad in our community newspaper announcing that a new CASA program was starting, and it called to me. I cut that ad out and set it on my desk. In the shuffle of papers, it kept rising to the top. About a week later, I called the program.

I was in the first class to be trained, that was about three years ago. I was the youngest member of that class, and to this day I am the youngest volunteer in the program.

I find that a lot of younger people—people in their 20s and 30s—feel that their lives are so busy that they cannot find time to become involved in CASA. That is simply not true.

We find time to do the things we love. We find time to watch television, we find time to talk on the phone, we find time to get onto Facebook. We can find some time in our day to devote to these children, who need us so desperately.

I was appointed my very first case five days after being sworn in. I went into the office and my coordinator told me that I was being appointed to a sibling group of five children ranging in age from 3 to 15 years old. The case involved physical abuse, emotional abuse, substance abuse. It was very complex, and I was pretty busy at the time.

But these children deserved to have somebody to stand up for them, so I took the case.

The oldest child was a teenage girl. I had been told by department folks that she was a problem: "She needs special education classes, she needs medication, she needs therapy, she has anger management issues...."

When I met the child, I immediately saw that she had been pegged completely wrong. The problem was with the home, not with the child. I was appalled to think that the critical, condemning information I had received about her was the only information the judge was receiving.

The minute she and her younger siblings were removed from that home into a good home—a safe home, a permanent home—she changed. Since the very semester that she was moved, she has had over a 3.8 grade point average. She's involved in school activities, in church. She's not bitter about what happened to her. She is a shining light, an example.

In the end, it isn't what I did for her, it is what she did for me. She showed me resilience, and that you can do anything.



October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

The American Psychological Association estimates that 40-70% of men who frequently abuse their partners also abuse their children.

Responding to Disclosure of Domestic Violence*

What to say to the child who has been exposed to domestic violence:

- I believe you.
- I'm glad you told me. Sometimes people are afraid to talk about it.
- No one deserves to be hurt.
- The abuse is not your fault.
- Let's talk about what you can do when something happens. Is there a safe place you can go (bedroom, neighbor's house, outside)?

(*excerpt from Summer 2010 issue of *The Connection*)

The Advocate

A special section for our Douglas County CASA Volunteers

If you are looking for activities to share with your CASA child in October, consider the following events:

River City Reading Festival 2010 – Saturday, October 9, 10 am-2 pm



Author readings and storytelling, featuring Leslie Campbell, Jennifer Glenn, Priscilla Howe, Ann Ingalls, Kate Klise, Ande Parks and Lois Ruby. Plus costumed characters and craft activities, promoting reading to kids pre-K through 6th grade! For more details: <http://www.lawrence.lib.ks.us/children/index.html>

A weekend
of *haunted*
mini golf
at the
library!



FUN FOR KIDS OF ALL AGES! Saturday, October 30, 9 am-5 pm and Sunday, October 31, noon-5 pm. Lawrence Public Library. Kids 3 and under are free; \$5 per person; \$20 per family. Contact the CASA office to claim FREE TICKETS for your CASA child. If you attend, be sure to

stop by the Douglas County CASA miniature golf hole with a Wizard of Oz theme:

“There’s no place like a safe, permanent home.”

OCTOBER 14 IN-SERVICE WORKSHOP: Educational Advocacy for CASA Kids

In order to best support the children with whom they work, CASA volunteers frequently solicit valuable feedback from teachers and other school personnel. This can include educational assessments, classroom behavioral observations and social functioning reports. Providing this information to the Court enhances a greater understanding of CASA kids, as permanency is pursued for these children.

Also, many CASA kids benefit from the additional school support provided by Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) and 504 Plans. Assisting with these plans, however, can be perplexing for Volunteers. Knowing if they might be useful or appropriate can be challenging and their implementation process can seem overwhelming for volunteers.

CASA volunteer Sue Richardson and School Psychologist Renee’ Dexter will answer all your questions about this type of school support at the October CASA In-Service. Sue has a Masters Degree in Special Education and worked as a Middle School Counselor in the Shawnee Heights School District for 25 years. Dr. Dexter is currently a school psychologist for the Shawnee Heights School District. Together, they probably know just about all there is to know about this process.

The in-service is scheduled for Thursday, October 14, 2010, from 6:00-7:30 at the CASA Office. We hope you can attend this informative event. Please RSVP by calling the office at 832-5172 or by email to edav@douglas-county.com.

Please join us at Café CASA on Thursday, October 21 at 10:30 am. Enjoy coffee, juice, fruit and pastries in the CASA office while mingling with CASA staff, fellow volunteers, and staff from KVC. The next *Café CASA* gathering will be held at 8:30 am on Wednesday, November 10.



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
Lawrence, KS 66044