CASA of Washington County Indiana Newsletter

CASA in the Community

CASA of Washington County Indiana will have a booth at the Washington County Fair this year! Please click here to sign up for a volunteer shift at the fair if you have not already!

Southern Hills Church in Salem has selected CASA of Washington County as one of their local missions! Southern Hills will begin donating $100 per month to CASA! We are very excited to be recognized for our great work within the community and appreciate the support of this church! CASA Volunteer Tracy Purkhiser and CASA Board Member Tom Scifres are active with Southern Hills. If you see them or anyone else you know that attends the church, make sure to say thank you!

IMPORTANT UPDATES

⇒ We will have another Volunteer Meeting at the end of June. The meeting will be from 5pm-7pm. Please complete this form and let Courtney know which dates you are available to attend!

⇒ Washington County DCS has a new attorney! James Van Cleave joined us in Washington County at the end of May. Mr. Van Cleave was previously a DCS attorney in Morgan County, Indiana.

⇒ CHINS dates for the summer months are going to be a bit different to accommodate the Judge and courts schedule. CHINS will occur:

- Monday 6/13 9am-12pm
- Tuesday 6/14 1pm-4pm
- Thursday 6/7 2pm-4pm
- Tuesday 7/12 1pm-4pm
- Thursday 7/21 2pm-4pm

If you are unable to make it to a hearing in your case, please let Courtney know ASAP. Thank you for being flexible during these date changes.

⇒ Please make sure you are regularly updating Optima! It seems our contact hours are down a bit this month, which is probably due to missing Optima entries. Please keep this up to date.

The State of Indiana GAL/CASA Office has a Code of Ethics that all Programs and CASA Volunteers must follow. The Code of Ethics provides Indiana Programs and Volunteers with guidelines for professional behavior and ethical conduct. There are many scenarios and situations that we may find ourselves in as CASA Volunteers and Staff that may merit a deeper look at and understanding of the State of Indiana Code of Ethics.

Consider the scenario below:

Everyone at your church knows you are a CASA volunteer. Because of this, many people consider you the in-house "expert" on all things child welfare related. One of your friends is really upset about the way her grandchild comes home to her son after having visits with her sons ex-wife. The child always comes home dirty and hungry. She just knows that the mother gives the child nothing but sugar when he is there with her, and your friend does not think her grandchild has appropriate supervision when he is with his mother. She has asked you to give the child's mother a call and tell her you area CASA, and let her know what could happen to her if she does not get her act together and DCS gets a call about her being an "unfit mother".

What do you do?

The Indiana State GAL/CASA Code of Ethics tells us! Code of Ethics #3 says:

"Employees and volunteers of GAL/CASA programs will not use their authority inappropriately, nor condone any illegal acts or unethical practices related to their program or community."

In this situation, it would be inappropriate **and** a violation of the Code of Ethics to call the mother in this scenario and tell her you are a CASA and that she needs to get her act together. How would you respond if you found yourself in this situation?

Please remember everyone in Indiana is a mandated reporter. If you or anyone else suspects child abuse or neglect, report it to the Hotline: 1-800-800-5556

Volunteer Spotlight

Laurie Carr

I moved from Orange County, New York to Pekin, Indiana in May of 2002. After experiencing a new marriage and a huge culture change I looked for ways to assimilate into my new home town. The desire to know people and my surroundings was only enhanced when in 2004 my husband Kevin and I welcomed our son Kevin into our family. Kevin would be the binding to our blended family of seven. Washington County would be the place our son would call his birth place and home. So beginning with a faith family and church we slowly got to know people in our community. Volunteerism became another way to get to know people and make a difference. The Center for Women's Ministry, Lifeline of Washington County, CARE Pregnancy Center, Domestic Violence Shelter are all ministries that reached out to help others find a better quality of life. Like so many other families mine too was plagued by addiction. I had to learn through trial and error how to help our children. At one point I needed to take guardianship of four of my grandchildren. I navigated with my adult children the DCS process, rehabilitation treatment centers, jail and some tough love. I am blessed to say that in my case the persistence worked and healing has come to our family. Because of this I felt a real tug at my heart for others who suffer under these circumstances. That is why I am a CASA, to use the lessons I have learned and help others navigate the frustrating events that come with addiction. My favorite part about being a CASA is being able to provide hope. To stay encouraging and champion the support systems that work for those who want to get better. I wish people knew that being a CASA is a selfless act. The volunteers that become a CASA do so with a genuine desire to assist others to have a greater quality of life. No money, no accolades are necessary, just the satisfaction of knowing that a child has a fighting chance at safety, security and a quality life. In my spare time I love to read and crochet/knit stuff for friends and family. Twenty years living in this community has made me a very rich woman, rich with memories and great relationships and I am proud to serve this community as a CASA.

May 12
Aubrey Dufour—7 years of CASA

WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

1– cases closed in May with Guardianship as the outcome!

1—child adopted by his longtime foster parents!

2—new children assigned to CASA in May

44—number of children served in May

- The State CASA Conference for all Directors, Staff, and Volunteers will be held in French Lick, IN on **Saturday October 1, 2022.** If you are interested in attending, please let Courtney know! It would be great to have as many volunteers there as possible to represent Washington County but also learn from presenters and other volunteers!
- Justin is working on creating an Optima refresher training for all current volunteers. Be on the lookout for information about the refresher training for Optima and how to receive this training!

AND REMEMBER

IF IT ISN'T IN

Optima™

THEN IT DIDN'T HAPPEN!