CASA of Washington County Indiana Newsletter

CASA
Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN
CASA OF WASHINGTON COUNTY INDIANA

CASA in the Community

Thank you to everyone who helped out at Friday Night on the Square! We had lots of visitors to our booth and a fun activity for all the kids who visited us! We even had a special visitor, State Senator Gary Byrne, who is interested in learning more about CASA of Washington County! If there is an event that you think CASA should participate in, let Courtney know!

In addition to a Code of Ethics, some of which were highlighted in previous newsletters, CASA of Washington County also operates under a set of Best Practices set forth by the State of Indiana GAL/CASA Office. Best Practices are in place to support and strengthen our program, and it is important we all understand them.

This month we are going to take a deeper look at the Social Media Policy our program, staff, and volunteers **must** follow. The policy is somewhat lengthy, however the following 3 items from the policy apply directly to volunteers and it is important to review them:

1. **No communications regarding any child welfare case (or regarding the parties to the case) by CASA volunteers, staff, or directors should be done through social networking sites or other online communication outlets, other than standard email. This includes private messaging on social networking sites.**
2. **Communication regarding the case should not be discussed on social media sites, including the site's private messaging option.**
3. **CASA staff and volunteers should not "friend" a parent, child, or foster/relative placement, on any social media site without prior approval from the program director. If "friending" is allowed, the volunteer or staff cannot openly or publicly communicate about the case with the parent/child. The volunteer or staff should also not utilize the private messaging option to communicate about the case.**

In today's world, social media is a widely accepted form of communication and it may be second nature to become "friends" with everyone you meet on social media. Please refrain from interacting with parents, placements, and children on social media sites, and be mindful when communicating with others who may be parties to a case while on social media. If you are going to discuss a case, party to a case, or share any other information about a case, **please use your official CASA email, not social media!**

You can find a full copy of the Social Media Policy here.

Volunteer Spotlight

Justin Elliott

I have worked in the technology and computer field basically my entire life. I started by hanging out at and working in a short lived computer store we had in town that was called "The Computery." Eventually, and through a family member, I found a job working as a contractor for the Naval Surface Warfare Center located in Crane, IN. Eventually, I changed companies and jobs, but my new company was still at NSWC Crane, and I just celebrated my 20th year with them in July.

Outside of work, I enjoy photography, mostly sports and portraits, though I do dabble some in landscape photography as well, I'm just not as good at landscape as I'd like to be. I also find joy in "vintage" technology. I run a time and temperature telephone line from my house, and I have quite the collection of telephones, including several payphones, and other coin operated items such as a jukebox and Coke machine. I have a YouTube channel with two of my friends that is completely focused on old technology, called "3 Old Tech Dudes." We've made videos on everything from answering machines, to old TV's and record players, to amateur radio. I also volunteer as an EMT with the fire departments in Jefferson and Monroe Townships here in county.

Why did I become a CASA Volunteer? Well, I first started thinking about it when I was doing my clinical hours in the ER while in school to become an EMT. I was about half way through my shift when a couple brought a toddler in with injuries that they said he sustained from falling down a couple of outside steps. Their story had big holes in it and changed several times while they were talking to us, and the child's injuries didn't really match up with what they told us happened. Before my shift ended, the ER doctor asked if I would type a statement into the chart describing what I saw, what I observed of the couple that brought the child in, and any other details that I could recall. That incident started me thinking about ways to help children in need, and it wasn't too long after that I heard a radio ad on a Lawrence County radio station about an organization called CASA. After hearing the ad, I started to Google CASA, and through that and YouTube, pieced together the basics of what a CASA Volunteer does. I thought it sounded like something that I could probably do, so I searched out the Washington County CASA program, and the rest is history!

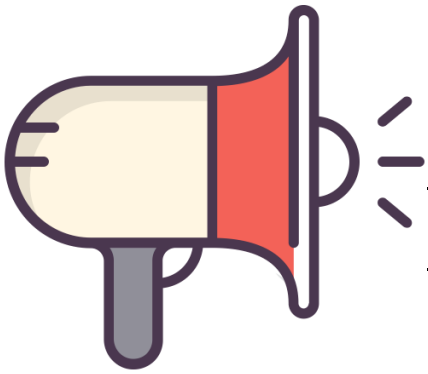
Birthdays and Anniversaries

September 22-Mickie Alexander and Kim Crady (2 years of CASA service)

September 25- Tom Scifres (Board Member)

September 26-Donna Collins

September 29-Dr. Chad Richards (Board Member)



Quarterly Reports are due to the State Office on 10/17/2022. Optima must be fully up to date for our reports to be accurate. Please enter all contact logs and training hours into Optima prior to 10/17/2022!

If you attended the State Conference and stayed the entire time, please log 8.5 hours of training time. If you did not attend the closing session, please log 7.5 hours

IF IT ISN'T Optima™

THEN IT DIDN'T HAPPEN