



CASAEP.ORG

FALL 2007



Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

At **CASA**, we believe that every abused child deserves a safe and permanent home. Toward that end, we recruit and train community volunteers to be Court Appointed Special Advocates for abused and neglected children. **CASA** of the Eastern Panhandle (**CASA-EP**) is an independent non-profit program that serves children who have been removed from their homes in Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan counties. **CASA** volunteers advocate on behalf of abused and neglected children within the court system, and make sure that the voices of these children are heard.

CASA-EP currently has 46 trained volunteers, and has provided services to more than 157 children in the Eastern Panhandle.

For more information on how you can help **CASA** help abused and neglected children, contact us at:

CASA
of the Eastern Panhandle, Inc.

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Letter from the Executive Director

Dear CASA-EP Friends,

As many of you are aware, there is an African Proverb that says, “It takes a whole village to raise a child.” Fortunately for the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia, and particularly the children we serve, there are many, many people here who believe in this concept; and they lend themselves in myriad ways to helping, protecting and caring for children and their families who might not otherwise be authentically, emotionally connected to the whole of their community/village.

While the CASA-EP staff and board members have been busy building the CASA-EP organization—exploring new development strategies, ratcheting up outreach and awareness efforts and the like, many of our volunteers and community partners have been intensely focused on doing the work specifically involved with attending to the needs of the children. And so, we are, as an organization and a member of the larger community fast becoming the “village” that our children need.

There are businesses, civic groups, community organizations and individual residents who have, in one way or another, participated in our mission to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children within the court system and to secure safe and permanent homes for each of those children as quickly as possible. That said, I want each of you to know that without you we could in no way even begin to approach and meet our objectives—bravo to all of you.

This is an ongoing process and requires consistent effort at every level of what we do. Raising money, recruiting and training volunteers, and generally keeping the community at-large informed and engaged are tasks that can not be put aside even for a brief moment lest we fall short of being the village we need to be. Based on the progress we’ve made thus far though, I’m not at all worried that we won’t continue to grow.

In fact, with summer behind us and the end of the year approaching, I’m happy to report that by year’s end we will have reached the halfway point of having at least 50 of the 100 volunteers we need to adequately serve the number of children currently being removed from their homes. Moreover, as we close the 2007 year I’m honored to note that CASA-EP enjoyed an increase in individual first time donations and walk-in volunteer inquiries.

We are indeed a village, and on behalf of the CASA-EP staff, we’re happy that you’re our neighbors.

Peace Be With You, *Vickey M. Wilcher, Executive Director*



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A NOTE FROM THE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Recruit a Volunteer, Get a Latte!

We need more CASA volunteers. Period.

We need more CASA volunteers in the Eastern Panhandle, in the State of West Virginia, and across the nation.

We need more CASA volunteers in screening, in training, assigned to cases, and even on a break.

We need more CASA volunteers on the phone, standing up in the courtroom, hugging a child, running a background check, and writing reports.

We need more CASA volunteers. Period.

It is very likely that you, personally, have been approached by us to volunteer but something got in the way: commitment, no daytime flexibility, a major life change. We need to call on you one more time. In an effort to recruit more volunteers, we are asking you to help us get the word out that there are countless children in foster care waiting for their advocates. We currently have 40 active CASA volunteers. We need

100 in order to assign a volunteer to each and every abused and neglected child in the Eastern Panhandle.

With that in mind, I am announcing our newest promotion: RECRUIT A VOLUNTEER, GET A LATTE! If you send a volunteer our way who successfully applies and becomes a CASA volunteer, we will treat you to a latte of your choice. It's that simple! There's no catch, so start recruiting and drink up!

"Of course, I am a CASA volunteer to try to help the children involved. Beyond that, I want to try to make a difference in the world that my grandchildren will live in."

– Tom L., Hedgesville

"I became a CASA worker because I had just retired and had found that I liked a little more definition in my life ... My kids in CASA are mine to protect and nothing feels better than finding them a safe haven, full of love."

– Sandy L., Berkeley Springs

Our Active Volunteers:

- Kaare A. Martinsburg
- Mary B. Berkeley Springs
- Tammy B. Kearneysville
- Sally B. Great Cacapon
- Frank B. Shenandoah Junction
- Vickie C. Martinsburg
- Debra C. Shepherdstown
- Daneille C. Frederick, MD
- Lorraine C. Berkeley Springs
- Paul D. Hedgesville
- Sharon D. Berkeley Springs
- John F. Kearneysville
- Marie F. Hedgesville
- Robin G. Hedgesville
- Mike H. Great Cacapon
- Sandy H. Berkeley Springs
- Nancy H. Shepherdstown
- Serina H. Shepherdstown
- Brenda J. Hedgesville
- Renee K. Martinsburg

- Kimberly L. Gerrardstown
- Thomas L. Hedgesville
- Jack & Nancy M. Hedgesville
- William M. Martinsburg
- Lorrie M. Inwood
- Allison N. Shepherdstown
- Quincy N. Shepherdstown
- Tonya P. Bunker Hill
- Pat P. Inwood
- Tally R. Berkeley Springs
- Kathy R. Shepherdstown
- Karen R. Harpers Ferry
- Teddy R. Martinsburg
- Joyce R. Charles Town
- Pam T. Martinsburg
- Michael T. Martinsburg
- Kelwin T. Martinsburg
- Anne T. Shepherdstown
- Lois W. Hedgesville

If you would like to support CASA-EP in our effort to find safe and permanent homes for abused and neglected children in the Eastern Panhandle, please use the enclosed envelope to send your tax-deductible gift; or visit our website at www.casaep.org



Everyday Heroes



I stand in awe of you.
 You are unafraid of the challenge and fearless and tenacious on behalf of the child.
 There is a life of hurt that you seek to replace with a safe and permanent space so that they can live life on the best of terms.
 You are incredible.
 You are vigilant.
 And you fight for their rights with commitment as your weapon, your resolute spirit as your shield.
 You show your courage and it is signed sealed and delivered on a platter full of hope for the child.
 And you do it right before our very eyes.

—Excerpt from a poem by Brenda Perryman

CASA Volunteers William and John wait outside the courtroom.

Always caring.
 Never to be pigeon-holed or ignored.
 Doing what needs to be done.
 Never retreating until the child has won a chance.
 A chance to live healthy.
 A chance to live whole.
 A chance to recognize and fulfill their goals.
 A chance that they can become a stakeholder when they grow healthy and grow older in their very own lives.
 And you, CASA volunteers, do it right before their very eyes.

—Excerpt from a poem by Brenda Perryman



This child is not just a number on a backlog of cases.
 With you they are paramount and you touch all the bases.
 You delve into their abuse.
 You investigate every misuse and every bad caretaker's excuse.
 You are the powerful voice who speaks up to the court.
 You implore for positive change and choice.
 And you do it right before the child's very eyes.

—Excerpt from a poem by Brenda Perryman

Amber, Patrick, and Ajia play in the CASA office.



When there is no one, there is you.
 You care where the child has been.
 You go where they've had to go to uncover the truth that has to be told.
 When a child can live in an unconscionable hell hole you know what the child needs in order to flourish and grow.
 But there have been too few to care or to show the love that the child needs to know.
 When you intercede and that child smiles they can watch their greatness unfold.
 As good as gold.
 Right before their very eyes.

—Excerpt from a poem by Brenda Perryman

CASA Volunteer Vickie.



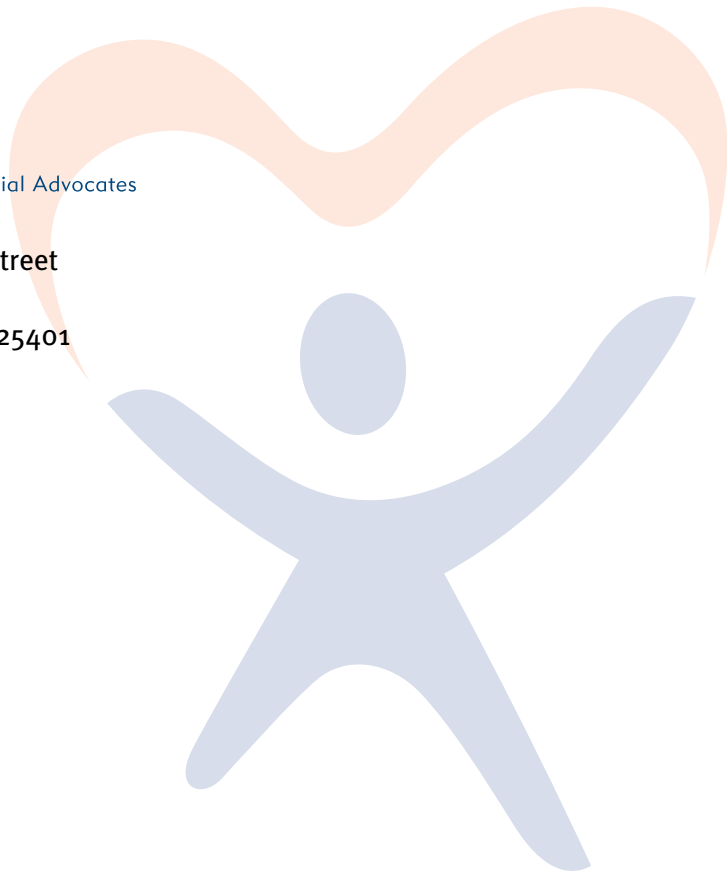
CASA Volunteer Daneille.





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CASA-EP Volunteers: Every Day Heroes

One child had been so severely neglected, emotionally and socially, that he thought day care was the greatest thing ever. In fact, the day care staff and children nick named him “Smiley Boy” as he could not stop smiling at day care. When his placement was suddenly disrupted, this threatened the continuance of day care for Smiley Boy. Rather than let him lose the most important part of his day, the CASA volunteer insisted that he continue in day care.



Check us out online! WWW.CASAEP.ORG