

SPECIAL POINTS
OF INTEREST:

- **Volunteers of the Month**
- **Through the Eyes of a Child Initiative**
- **CEU opportunities**
- **Fiscal Year Statistics**
- **Resources available!**

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KEARNEY BUFFALO COUNTY CASA

SUMMER NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4

SUMMER 2015

Child and Youth Court Forms

Ever been at a loss about how to best present your CASA kiddo's wishes and desires to the court? The Through the Eyes of the Child Initiative has created 2 helpful forms for this purpose of allowing children to communicate their wishes and desires to the Judge.

The form pictured is the first page of the form intended for children who are developmentally age 6 to age 10. It is colorful and intended to be completed by the child with assistance as needed from a trusted adult. A form for older youth is also available and can be completed on their own or with assistance as needed.

If the child has a therapist, the preference is that the child would complete the form with

the therapist. If no therapist is involved, please visit with your team to determine which team member would be most appropriate to assist the child with completing the form.

Both forms can be located on the Through the Eyes of the Child website under the youth and families tab. Click on youth in the left sidebar and the court forms show up as options underneath youth in the sidebar.

If you prefer, feel free to speak with

your supervisor about getting a copy of the forms from the CASA office.

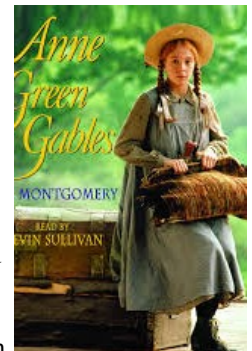
The form is titled 'All About' and includes a 'Today's Date' field. It has sections for 'Your Name', 'Who helped you fill this out?', 'The Judge makes decisions about your life', 'Stuff About Me' (with a drawing prompt), 'I do these things for fun:', 'My brothers and sisters are:', 'My Top 3 Wishes are:', and 'The 3 most important people to me are:'. It also has a 'I am awesome at!' section at the bottom.

CEU Central: Anne of Green Gables

Anne of Green Gables is a novel about Anne, a young orphan, who is sent to Prince Edward Island after a childhood spent in strangers' homes and orphanages. Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert, siblings in their fifties and sixties, had decided to adopt a boy from the orphanage to help Matthew run their farm. They live at Green Gables, their Avonlea farmhouse on Prince Edward Is-

land. Through a misunderstanding, the orphanage sends Anne Shirley. Anne is described as bright, eager to please, talkative, and extremely imaginative. She has a pale face with freckles and typically braids her red hair. Marilla at first says the girl must return to the orphanage. Marilla feels that she could be a good influence on the Anne and chooses to let her stay. As a child of imagination, Anne

takes much joy in life and adapts quickly, thriving in the close-knit farming village. Her talkativeness initially drives the prim, duty-driven Marilla to distraction, although Matthew falls for her charm immediately. Anne says that they are "kindred spirits." Following the novel, a movie series was created.





*"We make a living
by what we get,
but we make a life
by what we give."
-Winston Churchill*

August In-service: Poverty and Minimal Standards

Our New Volunteer Training is set to begin on August 4, 2015. We will host an in-service training available to all volunteers on August 20th, 2015 at the Kearney Public Library where we will hear from members of our community including

Bob Hock, who is a supervisor with Health and Human Services. In his career, he has been a trainer for CCFL (Center for Children and Families and the Law). He has been part of training the Children and Family Specialists for Health and

Human Services. We will also learn about the RAFT program through Mid Nebraska Community Action.

New CASA Volunteers



Left to Right: Judge Ide, Alli and Patrick Donohue, Matt Meller, Jody Lonn, and Ramona Mix.

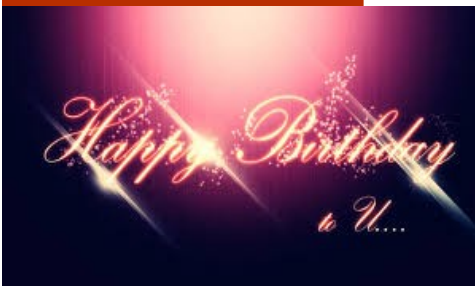
We are happy to welcome Jody Lonn to Kearney/ Buffalo County CASA after she took the new volunteer training with four volunteers for our sister program Phelps/Harlan County CASA. As all of our volunteers do, she completed a rigorous screening process including a background check and then underwent 30 hours of training covering everything from the role of a CASA to the impact of addiction on families, to the juvenile court process to child development to court report writing and dozens of other relevant and diverse topics. Jodi is now advocating for an abuse or neglected sibling group, and along with our more seasoned CASA volunteers, is helping to make the Kearney/ Buffalo County com-

Birthdays

We would like to wish our Volunteers and Staff with birthdays in July, August, and September a Happy Birthday!

Susan Jensen
Jeri Runions
Ramona Hill
Kelly Jensen
Kathryn Wilson
Kaleigh Johnson
Connie Broweleit
Cheryl Echtenkamp

Wanda Fedorchik
Janet Slegers
Jody Lonn
James Hudson





Volunteer of the Month: May

Kearney/
Buffalo
County
CASA
is
proud

to honor Trish Kenagy of Kearney, Nebraska for her dedication to advocacy for abused and neglected children. Trish is a retired educator who most recently worked as a Professional Development Coordinator with Educational Service Unit 10 and previously as Assistant Professor of Education and Ombudsperson at UNK. On her first case as a CASA volunteer Trish has shown a mastery of her role as a CASA volunteer. She meets with her CASA kiddos each month and has managed to build

rapport with them despite differences in culture and language. Trish spends the time each month to investigate the case by visiting with the school, therapists, the caseworker, biological parents, and foster parents. She thoroughly reports any information she gathers to the team at team meetings. As an educator and the placement coordinator for Royal Family Kids Camp she was aware of and helped locate camps, summer activities, and tutoring for the children. Trish says "I am so honored to be considered for this recognition so early in my service as a CASA volunteer. An educator by profession, taking on this role was on my "back burner" for several years. Setting aside time for the training seemed to be my stumbling block...and, as it turns out, that was a misperception. It is a privilege to advocate for the best

interests of some very special children, useful and thought-provoking to learn about the foster care system, and a pleasure to collaborate with my supervisors, the case worker, and attorneys who so thoughtfully offer their expertise to improve the lives of children. I greatly appreciate the foster parent, educators, therapist, social workers, family and friends of the children who support my efforts to gain a greater understanding of the larger picture and needs for the children on my case. I am drawn to the children and to do what I can to move them toward experiences and relationships that are safe and offer hope and opportunity for a healthy future."



June Volunteer of the Month

Kearney/Buffalo County CASA is proud to honor Nicole Peterson of Kearney, Nebraska for her hard work and dedication to children in the abuse and neglect system. Nicole has spent her career helping children within the court system as an Officer of Juvenile Services with Health and Human Services and is a Licensed School Social Worker for Kearney Public Schools. She received her master's degree and has an LMHP(Licensed Mental

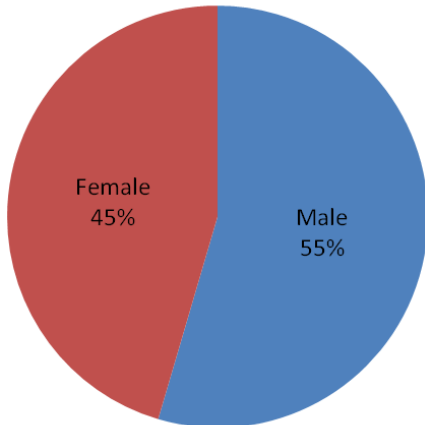
Health Practitioner) and LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker) license. Nicole has been with the Kearney/Buffalo County CASA for over two years and has been a great asset. Her education and experience allows her to really familiarize herself with case details and advocate for abused and neglected children. Her knowledge, research and communication with all parties involved have helped her gain trust when

advocating for her CASA children. She understands the importance of visiting the child every month. Her dedication in doing the home visits, allows other parties to listen to her suggestions to address bumps in the road as quickly as possible. One GAL, describes her as being the ideal CASA volunteer. Nicole says, "I have been blessed to have worked in numerous capacities throughout my professional career as a social worker. Volunteering with CASA has provided me with an opportunity to advocate on a more personal level for kids in need. I became a CASA volunteer to be the voice of a child. I am lucky to have an amazing team to work with and feel supported by the CASA staff."

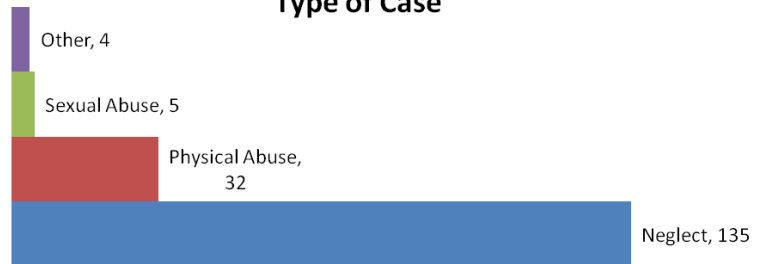
Fiscal Year Statistics

176 total children served

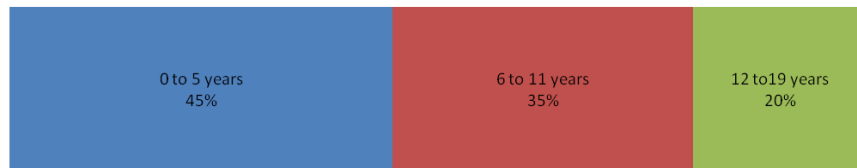
Gender



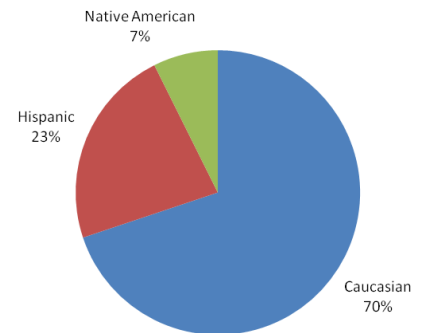
Type of Case



Age of children



Race



**72% OF CASES
ORIGINATED IN THE CITY
OF KEARNEY**

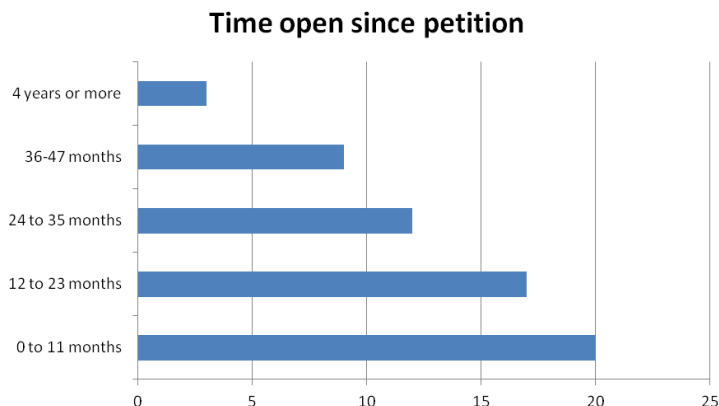
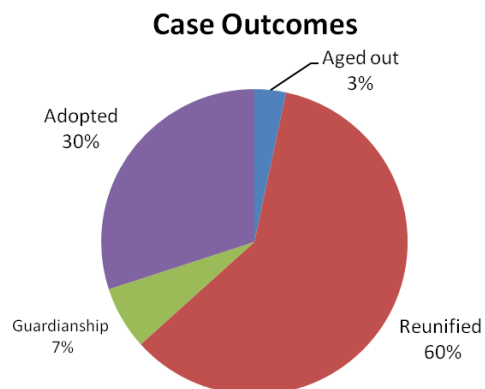
**15% OF CASES
ORIGINATED IN THE CITY
OF MINDEN**

**13% OF CASES
ORIGINATED IN THE
SURROUNDING AREAS
IN BUFFALO AND
KEARNEY COUNTIES**

The time at which the cases are assigned



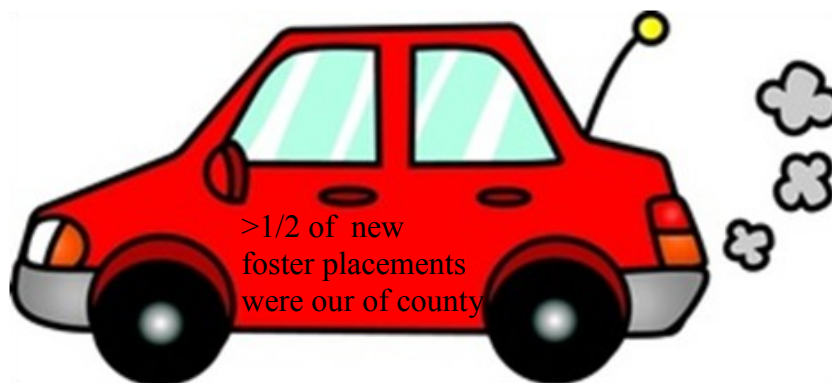
60 cases closed



**4,305 hours
of advocacy**



**46,006 miles
donated**



CEUS!

Thanks to All our volunteers who completed their 12 CEUs for ongoing training or who completed the 30 hour initial training this fiscal year.

Sherry Area
Rhonda Artrup
William Aviles
Katie Bean
Connie Broweleit
Teresa Carey
Connie Choquette
Wanda Davis
Gale Dorn
Cheryl Echtenkamp

Ron Eckloff
Wanda Fedorchik
Dorothy Feese
Ellen Geist
Angela Gibreal
Kathy Gifford
Becky Grimes
Amy Hendrickson
Ramona Hill
Susan Honeyman

Joe Hulquist
Janna Ingram
Kelly Jensen
Kaleigh Johnson
Atricia Kenagy
Marilyn Kenton
Amy Latter
Kent Lilly
Roberta Loescher
Tatiana Long

Jody Lonn
Diana Luscher
Emily Lyons
Linda Martin
Paul Mussman
Rebekah Mussman
Kris Parlier
Nicole Peterson
Tim Peterson
Barb Petska

Andrea Potthoff
Pam Radtke
Janet Rochford
Robin Stevens
Sarah Ternus
Kathryn Wilson
Deb Woollen



Kearney/Buffalo Co. CASA

16 W 11th St.

PO Box 2288

Kearney, NE 68848

Phone: 308-865-5675

Margot - Ext. 115, CASA@mnca.net

Claire - Extension 134

kearneybuffalococasa2@mnca.net

Christina - Extension 117

kearneybuffalococasa1@mnca.net

Fax: 308-865-9202

Court Appointed Special Advocates are appointed by the Court judge to represent the best interest of abused and neglected children in the court system. A CASA volunteer acts as the "eyes and ears" of children involved in court proceedings, and offer judges a critical perspective of what is in the best interests of each child, based on information gathered first-hand through research, interviews, and observations. Studies show that once a CASA volunteer is assigned to an abused or neglected child that the child is much more likely to receive vital services such as health care, education, and therapy. By getting involved as a CASA, you can help create healthier families and communities - and change the course of a child's life.

For more information please contact **Claire Morrison, CASA Volunteer Supervisor at 308-865-5675 ext. 134, Margot Icenogle-Larsen at ext. 115, or Christina McIntire at ext. 117.**

Featured Resource: Resource Binder, Nebraska Department of Corrections Inmate Locator, Vinelink, and Justice!

~Looking to help your family locate resources? Located in Volunteer Supervisor, Margot Icenogle-Larsen's office is a resource binder packed with tons of resources within our very own community. Resources will continue to be added to this binder and will be available to all of our staff and volunteers.

~Nebraska Department of Correction Inmate Locator is a great resource to locate an individuals who are incarcerated and to also see how long they will remain incarcerated. This website will also show you what they are incarcerated for, when the individual is qualified for parole, the offense and the possible time it carries, and their projected release date.
The website is: http://dcs-inmatesearch.ne.gov/Corrections/COR_input.html

~Vinelink is a great tool to look up and verify if an individual is currently incarcerated. Information provided will be their name, where they are located and if they are in or out of custody. You can sign up for notifications for any changes of custody.
The website is: <https://vinelink.com>.

~Justice is another great tool! Justice is a site in which court documents from either Criminal Court and Juvenile Court can be seen, next court dates, the history of the case. There is a computer in the lobby of the court complex that you can access Justice on or you can set up a time with your supervisor to view Justice.