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Welcome New CASA Volunteers



Bob Zuehlsdorf (Kearney), Jessica Knoell (Holdrege), Honorable Judge Jorgensen, and Shannon Cameron (Kearney).

Please help us welcome our new volunteers from our August and October trainings! They survived our screening process, and a 30 hour new volunteer training which culminated in attending a court hearing and being sworn in by the judge. They have now joined all of our seasoned volunteers in advocating for abused and neglected children and are helping to make the Kearney/ Buffalo County community a safer and happier place for many children.

Cody Dvorak (Kearney), Margot Icenogle-Larsen, Shawntel Daniell (Minden), Honorable Judge Jorgensen, Connie Larsen (Kearney), and Julianne Fitch (Holdrege).



Elm Creek teen Addison Simmerman donated about a dozen pillows with colorful homemade pillow cases to Kearney/ Buffalo County CASA so that the abused and neglected children advocated for by citizen advocates can have a comforting pillow that

Local Teen Pays it Forward

is just theirs. Abused and neglected children often move from one foster home to another and these pillows, much like the CASA volunteers who distributed them, will be a constant in the child's life during this time of transition.

When asked why she chose to donate these pillows Addison provided a prepared statement. "Hi I'm Addison Simmerman and I

7th grader at Elm Creek Public Schools. I want to give foster kids something they can call their own. I chose CASA to give foster kids something they can love. CASA has helped my family by being a voice in court for both my sisters and myself while we were in foster care. So I wanted to give these to CASA as a way of "paying it forward" for being such a help to my family."

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

CEU Central

In July, we added several books to our CEU independent study collection. Some of these books include the following:

The Glass Castle
by Jeannette Walls

Hope's Boy
by Andrew Bridge

On the Rez
by Ian Frazier

Room
by Emma Donoghue

Three Little Words by Ashley Rhodes-Courter

One Kid At A Time
by Jake Dekker

Click: Ten Truths for Building Extraordinary Relationships by George C. Fraser



Bridges Out of Poverty

In October, Kearney/Buffalo County CASA hosted an in-service training, Bridges Out of Poverty with guest speaker Alynn Sampson, Child Hunger Programs Director from the Food Bank of Lincoln.

Bridges is a model or framework, that provides an understanding and common language of the culture of poverty. It also provides a platform for innovative action and tools for change that can lead to lowering poverty rates.

If you missed out on this dynamic training, stop by the office to borrow the Bridges Out of Poverty book for 2 CEUs.



October, November, and December Birthdays



October

- Rhonda Artrup
- Dorothy Feese
- Marilyn Kenton
- Linda Younes
- Ellen Geist
- Christina McIntire
- Margot Icenogle-Larsen

November

- Paul Mussman
- Roberta Loescher
- Sherry Area
- Kristine Parlier
- Amy Hendrickson
- Gale Dorn
- Claire Morrison

December

- Shawntell Daniell
- Amy Latter
- Tatiana Long
- Kent Lilly
- Connie Larsen
- Robin Stevens
- Katie Bean
- Pam Radtko
- Jane Sattler



Volunteer of the Month: August

Janna Ingram is extremely dedicated to making the time to keep up with what is going on in her CASA children’s lives and what is important to them. While she is very new to navigating the court system,

she is determined to figure out how to best give voice to the needs of the children she advocates for. Janna does a

great job of working with the team to pursue the child’s best interest. Janna says, “I become interested in volunteering because a friend from church started volunteering. The kids really need a voice and so many do not have a voice. The court system doesn’t have the time to find out what is really going on in each individual child’s life due to the number of children in need and as a CASA volunteer I give that individual child a voice.”

September Volunteer of the Month

Emily Lyons has been with CASA for over one year and is extremely dedicated to taking the time to keep up with what is going on in her CASA children’s lives and what is important to them. She has gone above and beyond to make sure the kids are connected with one another by bringing them together and finding help to obtain services. Additionally,

she is wonderful in helping with events outside of her case, providing great ideas and suggestions, and supports not only our CASA program, but Phelps/Harlan County CASA as well. Emily shared that after listening to Matthew West “Do Something,” she realized she needed and wanted to do something. Emily says, “Being of service and what

we do is a blessing. It’s been a privilege to be in these kids’ lives. It has blessed me. If you are considering joining the CASA team but hesitated because you don’t have much time or aren’t sure about what they have to offer, the wonderful girls at CASA will find a place for you.”



October Volunteer of the Month

Diana Luscher has been with CASA for over three years. Diana is always willing to go above and beyond to familiarize herself with case details and advocate for abused and neglected children. She spends hours each month connecting with her family and provides the team with regular updates. She has gone above and beyond to make sure her

CASA children have all that they need as well as their parents. Additionally, Diana is an absolute joy to work with, always has a phenomenal attitude, and is dedicated to helping her CASA children. Diana said, “Every child deserves someone to stand up for them. I had heard about CASA years ago, but once I retired, I joined CASA.”

**Volunteer Anniversaries with
Kearney/Buffalo County CASA**

2007 (8 Years)

Linda Younes
Joe Hultquist

2008 (7 years)

Ramona Hill
Amy Latter

2010 (5 Years)

Connie Choquette
Marilyn Kenton
Tim Peterson

2011 (4 years)

Gale Dorn
Wanda Fedorchik
James Hudson
Jeri Runions

2012 (3 years)

Katie Bean
Connie Broweleit
Diana Luscher
Jane Sattler



*Thank you all for your years of
advocating for abused and
neglected children.*



Volunteer Anniversaries with Kearney/Buffalo County CASA

2013 (2 years)

Rhonda Artrup
Cheryl Echtenkamp
Kelly Jensen
Roberta Loescher
Linda Martin
Nicole Peterson
Pam Radtke

2014 (1 year)

William Aviles
Teresa Carey
Ron Eckloff
Angela Gibreal
Kathryn Gifford
Becky Grimes
Amy Hendrickson
Susan Honeyman
Janna Ingram
Susan Jensen
Kent Lilly
Emily Lyons
Kristine Parlier
Barbara Petska
Andrea Potthoff
Deborah Woollen

Volunteers with at least 12 CEUs this fiscal year

*Cameron Shannon
Shawntel Daniell
Cody Dvorak
Julianne Jefferis
Connie Larsen
Nicole Peterson
Bob Zuehlsdorf*

All our volunteers are required to get 12 continuing education credits each fiscal year. For our last fiscal year, July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015, our volunteers did a fantastic job of getting their continuing education hours. Thanks to all our volunteers who are ahead of the game and already have all their CEUs nailed down for this fiscal year



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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 CASA Volunteer Supervisor at ext. 115, or Christina McIntire Executive Director at ext. 117.

Featured Resource:



The Family Engagement Center is a place for families to come and gather to learn more about child development, parenting strategies, and developmentally appropriate ways to play with their children. The center will provide an avenue for parents to engage in meaningful play with their children, as well as to allow parents to connect with school staff and other parents. Together parents and children will learn about the world through play, music, art, and books.

The Family Engagement Center is a service provided by Kearney Public Schools. It is open to children age 5 and younger whose families live inside the Kearney Public Schools district area. They have play areas for children 0-3 and 3-5, art and book areas, and computers for parents to use. There is a Family Engagement Specialist to work with parents on parenting skills and interacting with their children. The center also has a lending library of boppy pillows and play mats, developmental toys, children's books, parenting books, and educational toys and games. • Lending Library

Weekly parent-child groups led by the Family Engagement Specialist will be held in the center. These will be based on various topics including social-emotional, cognitive, fine and gross motor, problem-solving skills, etc. In addition, the center will be the location for our Circle of Security-Parenting classes and infant massage trainings.

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