

CASA NEWS



Monthly newsletter of Casa for Kids of South Central Texas



June is National Reunification Month

by Mandy Wright

National Reunification Month is celebrated in June of each year to recognize the people and efforts around the country that help families stay together. It is also a time to celebrate the families who have overcome obstacles to providing a safe and loving home for their children and are able to reunify after their child was placed in the child welfare system.

In 2022, as CASA for Kids of South Central Texas continues to celebrate 16 years of impact, there is a focus on supporting families with community resources to reduce the number of interactions with the child welfare system. In 2022, 47% of CASA for Kids case closures were the result of reunification with parents or primary caretakers or children and youth remaining with parents throughout the life of the case.

Additionally, CASA for Kids of South Central Texas' second guiding principle focuses on and recognizes the importance of family preservation and/or reunification. The 2020 National CASA/GAL Standards for Local Programs states:

- It is in a child's best interests to remain with their family of origin when safely possible;
- The program acknowledges that children experience trauma when separated from their family of origin;
- If a child is removed from their family of origin, it is in the child's best interests to be reunified with their family of origin as soon as safely possible.

Our CASA volunteers can make a monumental difference by helping bridge the access gap and connecting families to services and support. CASA volunteers also make sure the children and parents they serve have a support system of family and other caring adults who are able to help in whatever ways needed and stay involved long after CASA and DFPS involvement ends. If parents and children have a good support system, it's much more likely that a plan for reunification will be successful and sustainable. That's what we want for the children we serve – for them to be able to grow up safe, happy, and supported, surrounded by people who love them.

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CASA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



CAKE SMASH RE-CAP

CASA for Kids of South Central Texas celebrated our Sweet 16 birthday Saturday, April 29th. The Banner-Press partnered with CASA for Kids allowing us use of their outdoor parking area and invaluable support as the party came together. Blue Bell Creamy was our capital sponsor again for the 2nd year, and we are so thankful for their continued support. Tuscany’s Italian Grill, HEB, Thomas Craft, and Bank of Brenham all helped make this event a success with their generous donations. We have over 100 attendees who enjoyed face painting, snow cones, balloon animals, and all types of games. We raised over \$15,000 with our cake smash challenge!

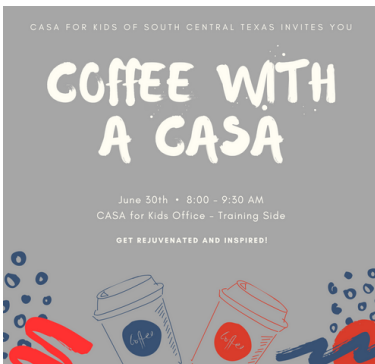
COFFEE WITH A CASA

Join a few of our current advocates as they share their role in fulfilling the mission of CASA for Kids of South Central Texas. Learn how to make a positive impact in your community. RSVP to Mandy Wright at ed@wespeak4kids.org 6/30 at 9:00 am.

CAKE SMASH RECAP



We had community partners join us and share their resources with the community, including Washington EMS, Brenham Fire, Washington County Sherriff, Citizen on Patrol, Brenham PD, BBAC, Community Closet, Brenham Blessings, Faith Mission, and Brenham ISD. Big thank you to Board Members Chelsea Bowie, Erin Hanley- Bostick, Nick Jordan and David Sommer; Advocate Vickie Pyle; Friend of CASA Trey Bostick, Leah Cook, Keith Domke, Michele Kwiatkowski, Grace May, Jason May, Jeff Parra, Nathan Stricker; and staff members Danielle Decoste, Nicole Guillory, Jo Reaves, Sharon Wehmeyer and Mandy Wright.



CASA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



CASA for Kids of South Central Texas

Advocate Training starting soon!

CASA for Kids Advocacy Training is 30 hours of combined in person and on line training as well as in-person court room observations. Classes will begin June 20th and run each Tuesday through August 15th from 5:30 - 8:30 pm. We will offer a lite meal and provide all needed materials. Application, interview and acceptance into the class is needed prior to June 20th.

Email Mandy Wright at ed@wespeak4kids.org for more information, visit our website at www.wespeak4kids.org; you can call our office at 979 277 0088.

Upcoming Classes and Events

June 9th - Empathy and the Art of Connection Training

June 20th - New Advocate Training Begins

June 21st - Youth Mental Health First Aid Training

June 30th - Coffee with a CASA



CASA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

The Art of Connection



Friday, June 9th, join Bren Hardt, CNVC Certified Facilitator of Nonviolent Communication™ and former CASA advocate, for an interactive and fun workshop about the art of Compassionate Communication to empower you to be an effective communicator and peacemaker.

Empathy (understanding at the heart level) underlies virtually everything that makes society work — like trust, altruism, collaboration, love, and charity. Each of us has the ability to increase our empathic skills for ourselves and others.

Free Workshop – Open to all. June 9th 9:30a – 12:00p
RSVP bbhardt@gmail.com

CASA SHOUT OUTS!!

We would like to wish a Happy June Birthday to:
Advocates - [Paula Fuchs](#)
and [Susan Cardiff](#)

Friend of Casa - [Jessica Bartels](#)

Executive Director -
[Mandy Wright](#)

Happy CASA
Anniversary to:
[Eric Morey](#) and [Cheryl Gaskamp \(1yr\)](#)
[Elysa Evergreen \(2yrs\)](#)
[Elecktra Berry](#) and
[Sondra Brau \(3yrs\)](#) and
[Susan Shifflett \(13yrs\)](#)

Summer Safety Checklist

Driving

- Buckle up... properly! Bottom strap across hips and shoulder strap across chest.
- Do not be distracted by other passengers, motorists, cell phones, radio, etc. Stay focused!
- Obey car and booster seat guidelines.

Swimming and diving

- Do not dive in less than nine feet of water.
- No board, no diving!

Personal watercrafts

- Be watchful, defensive, obey speeds, and keep your distance.

Body boarding

- Hold board so it extends past head.

General Water Safety

- No re-dos; do not combine alcohol and water-related activities!
- Be aware of sandbars.
- Feet-first entry.

Bicycle Riding

- Wear a helmet... properly! A helmet should be worn snug, fitted, and level.
- Replace helmet after three to five years and/or if cracked.

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TODAY'S CARE. TOMORROW'S CURE.

CASA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

TRAINING FOR YOUTH

Mental health first Aid

WHAT IT IS:

- An evidenced-based public education program that introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental illnesses for youth.
- Builds an understanding of the importance of early intervention.
- Teaches participants how to offer initial help to a youth experiencing a mental health challenge.

WHOM IT'S DESIGNED FOR:

Parents/Caregivers of youth, Coaches, Youth Group Leaders, People who work with youth, and Caring Individuals

WHEN & WHERE IS IT:

Wednesday, June 21st, 2023, 11:00 -3:30 @ CASA office. Registration is required.



Please contact Angie Bates at batesmhfa@gmail.com or call 979.279.2798 to register.

Caring for youths who are suffering from mental health issues is of utmost importance for several reasons. Firstly, adolescence is a crucial period of development, and the mental well-being of young people significantly impacts their overall growth and future prospects. By providing appropriate care and support, we can help them navigate challenges, develop resilience, and achieve their full potential. Secondly, untreated mental health issues in youth can have long-term consequences, affecting their academic performance, relationships, and overall quality of life. By addressing these issues early on, we can prevent further complications and promote healthy psychological development. Finally, caring for mentally distressed youths contributes to creating a compassionate and inclusive society that prioritizes the well-being of its members. By investing in their mental health, we foster a generation of resilient individuals who can contribute positively to their communities and lead fulfilling lives.

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