The Heart Beat of CASA

April 2013

The mission of CASA of Rock County is to have trained community volunteers advocate for the best interest of abused and neglected children within the Juvenile Justice Court System.

History of CASA

In 1977, the first CASA program was piloted in Seattle. CASA of Rock County is one of 950 programs nationwide and has been providing volunteer advocacy services to our community since October of 2005. Although our services are ordered by the Juvenile Justice Court Judge, this program is neither managed by the county nor affiliated with Child Protective Services (CPS). Rather, CASA of Rock County is a non-profit program under the umbrella of Family Services of SWANI, Inc. CASA of Rock County operates in compliance with National CASA Association Standards and is a member in good standing with the National CASA Association.

CASA of Rock County

51 S. Main Street • Janesville, WI 53545
608.305.0187 • Fax 608.305.0188
casarockcounty@yahoo.com
Someone, Somewhere Cared
A CASA Volunteer Testimonial

Today, when the darkness slid into the first light, I thought of you. I knew that today was our day for good-byes. Today, we laughed and we remembered our one and a half years together. I told you to remember all the things I told you, about how smart and kind and wonderful you truly are, how when you lie on your bed at night and you wonder if no one loves you, know that I am thinking about you. So with heavy hearts we walked back to your classroom and we hugged good-bye. And the one who was always the prickly pear said: “Kristi, thank you. Thank you for being there for me.” I bit my lip and hugged her quickly as I turned to walk away. I hope that when the night is long and the day is dark that you will remember that someone, somewhere cared.

-Your CASA Volunteer

Written by Kristi Powers, CASA Volunteer since July 2007

A letter from the intern:

My name is Maggie Crum. I am a Beloit College student working at CASA through the Duffy Community Partnerships Program. The Duffy experience gives students the wonderful opportunity to become involved in the community through placement at an organization that best fits their interests. CASA was the perfect place for me to work this semester! I am interested in pursuing a career in social services, specifically catered to children. During my time at CASA I have performed tasks around the office, participated in the volunteer training, and learned a lot about the field in which I wish to someday work. I believe CASA is an irreplaceable organization. The work the volunteers do has an immeasurable impact on the lives of the children they work with!

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”
-Margaret Mead
(1901-1978)
Children Need Their Voices Heard

Last year 113 cases were opened in the Rock County juvenile court system of Children in Need of Protection and Services (CHIPS). During that same year CASA of Rock County served 106 children from 51 families. Unfortunately, the program does not have enough volunteers to provide advocacy to all the appointed children so many are monitored by staff.

The children who are lucky enough to have a volunteer assigned to them have something other children in the system do not – they have a chance to have their voices heard. Of course all of these children are assigned a worker from Child Protective Services. However, the reality is the system is overburdened and those workers have a finite amount of time to devote to each family. CASA volunteers are assigned to one child or sibling group. They have the chance to focus on a limited number of children.

The time the CASA volunteers devote to their children allows them to serve in a role that no professional is able to do. Teachers educate, clinicians treat and social workers case manage; CASA volunteers play, listen, nurture and report. They report to the judge what the children need and want. They tell the judge what the children would like to happen. They give the children a voice.

If you would like to lift up a child’s voice please contact the CASA office at 608.305.0187 to find out more about volunteering or other ways you can support the program.
When volunteers pour out their hearts…
…needs are filled and lives are touched.

Volunteer Spotlight

Jane Foreman

Jane Foreman has been a volunteer at CASA for two years. In those two years she has had two cases and helped enrich the lives of three children! Prior to her time at CASA, Jane was a foster parent for ten years. Her time in that role prepared her for CASA and also directed her to it. A social worker suggested volunteering at CASA when Jane no longer wanted to be a foster parent 24/7 but didn’t want to give up having a role in the lives of children entirely. She says that CASA is a good fit for her because she parented a lot of children that could have been helped by a CASA volunteer. Her favorite part of being a CASA volunteer is the impact that the program allows you to have on children’s lives. She ended her first case with what program staff refers to as a success story. The case had closed but Jane again visited the children at Christmas time to deliver donated presents to them. While acknowledging the positives Jane is also aware of the hardships that come with this position. She says that working with the families is difficult at times but worth it!

“I’ts one child, one family, one case at a time, but it’s something!”

Thank you to the following individuals who volunteered their time over the last year to give a child a voice.

Kristi Baker          Daisy Gaines          Kristi Powers          Wanda Sonnentag
Deborah Bennett      Bobbi Haas            Stephen Prochaska     Jan Stebbins
Barbara Carter       Mary Jackson          Norm Prom              Maxine Steinmetz
Roy Carter           Jackie Jones          Heather Rude           Isaiah Redepenning Vance
Pat Crabtree         Connie Myers          Cindy Schelk          Ellen Vierthaler
Maggie Crum          Della Phipps          Lexi Siatos            Sandra Williams
Angie Farmakis       Jerry Phipps          Cathy Smith            Signe Whalen
Jane Foreman         Grace Policastro      Maggie Snyder