

# The CASA Advocate



December 2021

## CASA Spotlight *Parental Incarceration*

*No Child Should Have to Face This Alone*

Children whose parents are incarcerated are at risk of negative outcomes even if they are not in foster care these realities can make it harder for them to cope with other difficult circumstances in life.

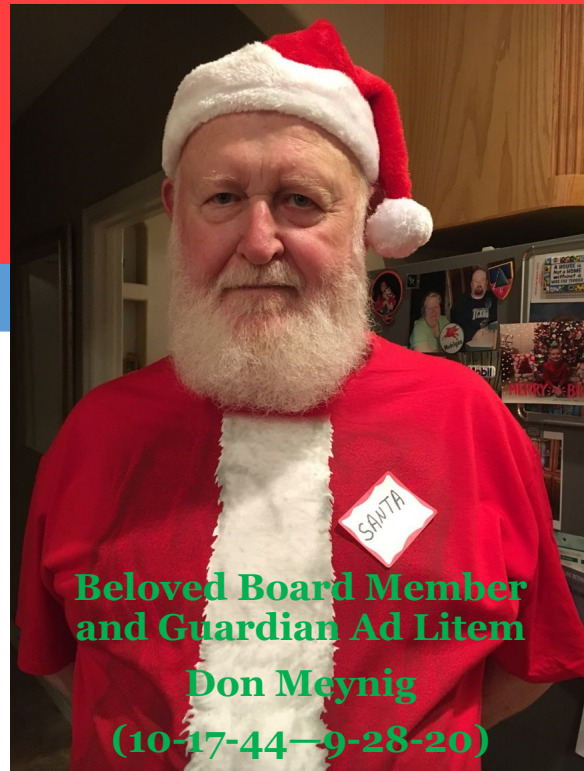
Studies show that:

- Parental incarceration can impact children's physical and mental health immediately and in the future.
- Parental incarceration can lead to problems in school and higher grade retention.
- Parental incarceration can cause increased aggression in children.

Throughout my years of working with children in foster care, some of the children's parents have been in prison. I recall one particular case where a volunteer shared her story about visiting a father of a foster child in prison. She stated how uncomfortable she felt, along with being a bit scared and intimidated yet knowing she wanted to talk to the child's father about his future plans when he was released. She was able to get information to help her make a recommendation to the judge based on the best interest for the child with the incarcerated parent's input.

Many of us are looking forward to gathering with family and loved ones this holiday season. Imagine what it is like for a child who is separated from their parents and other members due to being removed from their homes and placed in foster care during this time they are dealing with a new home, new school, new caregiver, as they cope with the trauma of abuse or neglect.

**No child should have to face this alone.**



### MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

419 Children

198 Cases

83 Volunteers

263 Children placed in safe, permanent & loving homes

### CURRENTLY SERVING

145 Children

63 Cases



### Good News

Starting January 25, 2021, we will be resuming the following in-person:

- In-Service Training – Fourth Tuesday of the month – 5:30 pm
- Recruitment and Retention Committee & Men of CASA – Fourth Tuesday of the month – 5:00pm

Merry Christmas and thank you all for sharing His love and the true spirit of Christmas by giving up yourself and the light of love to those who need it most.

# Your Gifts Will Bring Hope To A Child This Holiday Season



## Coastal Bend Day Of Giving

This was our first year to be asked to participate in Coastal Bend Day of Giving. Thanks to everyone's donations on, November 9, 2021, we met our funding goal. We would like to thank the following individuals for their generosity and support in helping CASA of Bee, Live Oak, McMullen, and San Patricio Counties:

- |                          |                         |                            |                         |                                  |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Carol Williams</b>    | <b>Donna McClure</b>    | <b>Kirkby Townsend</b>     | <b>Brucie Moore</b>     | <b>Pamela Jorgensen</b>          |
| <b>Lou May</b>           | <b>Lillie Alcalá</b>    | <b>Leah P Olivarri</b>     | <b>Sandra Carl</b>      | <b>Melissa Silva</b>             |
| <b>Anne Dehnisch</b>     | <b>Cheryl Meynig</b>    | <b>Josephine Miller</b>    | <b>Jennifer Knapp</b>   | <b>Margie Brooke</b>             |
| <b>Tani Mitchell</b>     | <b>Linda Knaust</b>     | <b>Feliciano Rodriguez</b> | <b>Pat Hartman</b>      | <b>Matt Hule</b>                 |
| <b>Martha Habluetzel</b> | <b>Anita Alcalá</b>     | <b>Meredith Thoms</b>      | <b>Brain Watson</b>     | <b>McMullen County</b>           |
| <b>Marla Krueger</b>     | <b>Alex W Kibler</b>    | <b>Patrick Flanigan</b>    | <b>Laura Miller</b>     | <b>Myrtle Lucke</b>              |
| <b>Margaret Mossler</b>  | <b>Kelly Richardson</b> | <b>Mary Campbell</b>       | <b>Mary Ulrich</b>      | <b>Wastequip</b>                 |
| <b>Dean Fleming</b>      | <b>Alice Trevino</b>    | <b>Christine Weber</b>     | <b>Mary Burnett</b>     | <b>Prosperity Bank</b>           |
| <b>Larry McClintock</b>  | <b>Filiberto Garcia</b> | <b>Cheri Enns</b>          | <b>Velia Smith</b>      | <b>Church of Good Samaritans</b> |
| <b>Mary Williams</b>     | <b>Clarence Moore</b>   | <b>Alex W Kibler</b>       | <b>Patrizia Gentile</b> | <b>Mike Knight</b>               |
| <b>Sarah Page</b>        | <b>Lucile Williams</b>  | <b>Timothy Raub</b>        | <b>Paul White</b>       | <b>Anonymous Donors</b>          |
| <b>Patricia Stine</b>    | <b>Robert Vaughn</b>    | <b>Catherine Hatch</b>     | <b>Norman Wilcox</b>    |                                  |
| <b>Benjamin Alcalá</b>   | <b>Steven Ueligger</b>  | <b>Bonnie Berry</b>        | <b>Windy Baker</b>      |                                  |

### Exxon Mobile



Picture left to right: Mary Williams and Mia Moore accept a donation from Exxon Mobile in Portland.

### Valero Three Rivers Refinery



Picture left to right: Alice Trevino, and Yvette Alvarez accept an award from Erik Simpson at Valero BFC Award Ceremony in George West.

### CASA Volunteer of the Month: Kathy Rittiman



Our CASA Volunteer of the Month is Kathy Rittiman. Mrs. Rittiman has served as a CASA Volunteer for 2 year and served on eight cases involving twenty six children. Because of Kathy's support and advocating for these children, they are, or will soon be in safe, stable, environments. We are grateful for her desire to be of service.

Hebrew 13:5b "He hath said, I'll never leave thee nor forsake thee."

Submitted By: Kathy Rittiman



# A Word from Our Director... *Family.... The Perfect Gift for Christmas*

Submitted By: *Brenda Dees, Executive Director*

When reunification with a child's family of origin is not possible, adoption offers children a stable and loving home. Our CASA family understands that connecting to family gives children and youth a sense of belonging and love. We deeply appreciate grandparents, aunts, uncles, other relatives and godparents who stand in the gap and avail themselves through kinship placement and adoption, to care for children when their parents are unable to care for them.

Kinship care placement allows children and youth to maintain family relationships, cultural heritage and connections to their own community and familiar surroundings. According to the National CASA/GAL Association for Children 2020 Annual Local Program Survey Report, of the children and youth served by CASA/GAL programs in out-of-home placements **26 percent** were in relative foster placements, meaning that the child was placed with a member of their extended family. By recommending services to help stabilize placements, CASA/GAL volunteers reduce the uncertainty in children's lives. CASA/GAL volunteers support children and youth as they grow. Their commitment, vigilance and persistence can offer hope where there may have been little before by.

1. Increase adoption for children in our four county service area who are waiting for permanent families.
2. We would like to raise awareness and elevate the conversation so we can normalize this notion that there are children in our backyards who are waiting to be adopted.
3. We need to support families who step forward to adopt.
4. As volunteers who advocate for what is best for the children; whether it is to advocate for termination of parental rights or return to the family or advocate for other services that maybe only the CASA volunteer has determined.
5. Our CASA volunteers truly are a key part that works for permanency. Our first goal and priority is to place a child back home. If that is not possible placement with kin families must be explored first before adoption with a family they do not know.
6. The most challenging and misconception in finding permanency/adoption for children are:
  - A. **Age**—By the time a child turns nine in foster care and parental rights are terminated, their likelihood of being adopted is reduced significantly.
  - B. **Sibling Groups**—Many families are not looking to adopt two or three children where there may also be teenagers, we must find ways for them to stay together.
  - C. **Children with special needs** (behavioral, physical, or health related) most foster children have one due to coming into care.

There are many misconceptions in the above challenges, it is our responsibility to educate the community to help children get adopted more easily. Our volunteers provide a sense of hope as a consistent presence in the child's life, especially during this holiday season. As we embark upon the season of gratitude and Christmas, on behalf of our CASA program and our volunteers, thank you for your ongoing support of our critical mission to provide best interest advocacy to 145 children and youth and for helping find a permanent home.



## DECEMBER EVENTS

21st— Brown Bag

28th—In-Service

Topic: Domestic Violence

## BIRTHDAYS

9th—Elia Martin

12th—Barbara Chesshir

21st—Maggie Mossler

## CASAversary

Hilda Argullin (1)

Andrea Bruns (1)

Natalya Zaytseva (1)

Elia Martin (3)



She will bear a son,  
and you shall call his  
name Jesus, for he  
will save His people  
from their sins

—Matthew 1:21