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CASA OF CENTRAL VIRGINIA



Issue No. 5

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March Activity

*74 Volunteers
Assigned
221 Children Served by
Program
15 New Children
25 Closed Children*

Message from the Executive Director **Youth Are Resilient!**

I, along with three CASA staff and a number of CASA volunteers, attended the excellent workshop on April 15, 2011, which was sponsored by VA's 24th Judicial District Juvenile and Domestic Relations' Best Practice Court Teams, Lynchburg Bar Association's Family Law Section, and the Court Improvement Program, Office of the Executive Secretary, of the Supreme Court of VA. Carly Dierkhising, M.A.; and Shawn Marsh, Ph.D., presented "Ten Things Everyone Working in Juvenile Courts Should Know about Trauma and Delinquency." I certainly learned a lot about the impact of traumatic stress on brain development, educational issues and the life span of the child.

When a child is exposed to trauma, it just doesn't happen and then goes away. The traumatic stress can affect the child's entire life, altering the circuitry of the child's brain, and increasing the risk of juvenile delinquency. It can also lead to the development of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Traumatic reminders can cause behaviors that are inappropriate, but are directly linked to the original traumatic event. Behaviors that are effective for survival can inhibit the development of executive functions in the child's brain, such as focus and self control. The implications of the effects of traumatic stress on the child's education are dramatic. At least half of all maltreated children will experience serious school problems, especially conduct issues. Maltreated children have three times the drop out rate of the general population.

So where is the positive side to all of this research? There are effective mental health treatments that can help youth who are experiencing child traumatic stress. The child must be correctly assessed and family support is very important. And the good news is that children ARE resilient.

An important "take away" for me is the following quote from Linda F. Winfield:

Buy a Beautiful Starfish Necklace from CASA of Central VA for \$20



[Order Starfish Necklaces On-line](#)

[Read the Starfish Story and View Additional Necklaces](#)

"Resilient children tend to have parents who are concerned with their children's education, who participate in that education, who direct their children's every day tasks, and who are aware of their children's interests and goals. Another important characteristic of resilient children is **having at least one significant adult in their lives.**"

Even if the parents are incapable of supporting the child, the CASA volunteer can fulfill the role of being that "significant adult" in the child's life. The CASA volunteer can help to turn a child's life around, help to reduce the risk factors and increase the protective factors that lead to the development of resiliency. If the children can develop resiliency, there is a better chance that the exposure to trauma does not have to completely dictate the course of the rest of their lives. Although CASA volunteers can not change what has happened to children, they can help to change the way the children respond to their past and help them to have a more positive future.

Jane Francis

CASA IN THE NEWS

American Legion Article Spotlights National CASA

The latest issue of *The American Legion Magazine* features an in-depth article about the work of the CASA network, including a profile of former foster youth Laura Nunes and Sally Payne, her volunteer from CASA of Santa Barbara County, CA. Read more in

[The American Legion Magazine](#)

Helpful Links

[CASA of Central Virginia](#)

[National CASA Association](#)

[Virginia's Judicial System](#)

[Virginia Department of Social Services](#)



**Volunteer Spotlight
Joyce Foster**

Advocate Manager: Lorna Rexrode
Court served: Lynchburg
Occupation: Speech Specialist
Length of time as a CASA volunteer:

2

Most Memorable CASA Moment: My most memorable CASA moment was attending a Permanency Hearing at which 2 children were reunited with their parents. These children came into care with the entire family facing some very destructive issues. With the help of many resources, these parents, as well as the children, were able to acknowledge their needs, commit to change and do the hard work required to make it happen. To have had even a small part in that process was most gratifying.

What means the most to you about being a CASA volunteer?

Having spent over 30 years as a public school educator; I have observed first hand on numerous occasions, the impact of an unstable family dynamic on a child's physical, emotional and academic well-being. As a CASA, I get to assist in assuring that a child gets the opportunity to have a nurturing, supportive home environment; thereby increasing his/her chance for success in school and in life. What an awesome and rewarding opportunity!!

Congratulations to Our Spring Class of CASA Volunteer Inductees

Voices for Virginia's Children



CASA
Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

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CASA of Central Virginia is pleased to announce the induction of fourteen CASA Volunteers on April 7, 2011 at the Lynchburg Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. The Honorable William Light performed the swearing-in ceremony. A reception for the volunteers and their families followed the ceremony.



Congratulations to all our new CASA Volunteers!

Heather Bennett,
Frances Berger, Frances Cunningham, Rosa Derricott, Daniel Herdtner, Jenine Horsely, Mary Luttrell, Robert Murphy, Elmona Reid, Stacey Reighard, Vicki Sharrett, Jenna Stuart, Shelly Tyree, Lindsay Wheeler



Thanks to Kroger for providing the refreshments for our induction reception.



12th Annual Heart and Sole Shoe Market

which was held on April 8 - 10 in the Lynchburg Armory. The success of the shoe sale reflects our caring community. Generous sponsors, dedicated volunteers and the faithful shoppers made this year's shoe sale so successful! The event raised over \$70,000!

The Board, staff, and volunteers of CASA of Central Virginia would like to say a heartfelt "Thank You" to everyone involved in CASA's 12th Annual Heart and Sole Shoe Market,

Erskine Proffitt
Anita Satterlee, EdD.
Inez St. John-Crews
Richard J. Sterne, Jr.
Ken Towler
Phyllis Webb
Consuella Woods



**United Way
of Central Virginia
Partner Agency**

***Congratulations to
Angela Skarp, CASA
Advocate Manager,
on her marriage to
Robert Mayfield on
April 19th in Las
Vegas.***



Without the over 250 volunteers who worked tirelessly for three days, the shoe sale would not have been possible. CASA also would like to thank the sponsors for providing the underwriting for the event. We are truly grateful to our Title Sponsor, Wachovia, and to our other sponsors: Consolidated Shoes, Old Dominion Footwear, and Beacon Credit Union, Gold Sponsors; Belvac Production Machinery, Inc., Genworth Financial employees, Fortune Footwear, Sonny Merryman, Inc.; Kroger, C.S. Hutter Company, and News and Advance, Silver Sponsors; AREVA, Bentley Commons at Lynchburg, Brooks Food Group, Central VA Chiropractic Center, Hurt and Proffitt, Inc., Dodson Pest Control, Retail Merchants Foundation, Schewel Furniture Co., Inc, WYYD, WJJS and Steve FM, Bronze Sponsors ; Bank of the James, Boudoir, Capps Shoe Company, Alan B. Pearson Regional Cancer Center, Elizabeth Arden, Graves Mill Storage, Keen Footwear and Real Estate 2000, Inc., Rainbow Sponsors.

However, the shoe sale is about more than shoes! All of the customers, the volunteers, and the many sponsors give hope for a better future to the abused and neglected children of Central Virginia. With the continued success of this fundraiser, CASA of Central Virginia is able to ensure that abused and neglected children have a voice in our court system through the assignment of a Court Appointed Special Advocate - or CASA volunteer - to their cases. The CASA volunteers help these children find safe and permanent homes. On behalf of our children, thanks again for another successful year!

Congratulations to the Winners of the Shoe Sale Art Contest

Students in kindergarten through fifth grade in Lynchburg City Schools and at James River Day School participated in the first ever Shoe Sale Art Contest. Their entries have been judged. The winners of the Shoe Sale Art Contest were announced at the Preview Party on Friday, April 8. In the kindergarten - first grade the winners are first prize: Carly Payne, Sandusky Elementary, grade 1; second prize: Linnea Sumpman, Paul Munro, grade 1; third prize: Erin Johnson, James River Day School, grade 1; and honorable mention: Elliot Putman, Linkhorne Elementary, grade 1. In second and third grades, the winners are first prize: Ethan Gerhardt, Bedford Hills, grade 3; second prize: Ella Rhodes, Bedford Hills, grade 2; third prize: Danny Kim, Sandusky Elementary, grade 3; honorable mention: Jamaya Tweedy, Robert S. Payne Elementary, grade 2. In fourth and fifth grades, the winners are first prize: Grace Sizemore, Bedford Hills, grade 5; second prize: Christopher Norfield, Dearington Elementary, grade 5; third prize: Darius Howard, Dearington Elementary, grade 5; and honorable mention: Madison Foster, T. C. Miller, grade 5. The children's entries were displayed in the Armory throughout the shoe sale and were available for sale at \$5.00 each.



Advocate Manager

Guidance and Support Corner

Using Crayons and Markers to Communicate with Children

Using art can be a creative outlet to allow CASA volunteers to communicate with their appointed children and spend quality time. Lisa Barsky Firsker, Ph.D., Executive Director of CASA of Morris and Sussex Counties in New Jersey, shares the experience of how to use crayons and markers to communicate with children in two informative resources below:

The first is a handout from her workshop at this year's National CASA conference. During the workshop participants learned to use art and listening skills to establish trusting relationships that facilitate mutual respect and open sharing with children.

[Handout-Using Crayons to Communicate with Children](#)

Next, is a link to a podcast on our National CASA website, casaforchildren.org, Lisa Barsky Firsker, Ph. D. explains how the use of simple materials such as crayons, paper, colored pencils and markers can be a powerful way to communicate with a child. As she says: "Inside every quiet child there is a loud voice trying to get out."

[Podcast - Using Crayons to Communicate with Children](#)

On the podcast link above, you can also find a variety of archived podcast including Autism Spectrum Disorder, Families Living in Poverty, The Diagnosis and the Drug: Use of Psychotropic Medications in the Foster Care System; just to name a few. CASA Volunteers can receive in-service training credit for listening to the podcasts.

Lorna Rexrode Awarded United Way Nancy L. Sorrells Memorial Award

Lorna Rexrode, Associate Director for CASA of Central Virginia was awarded the Nancy L Sorrells Memorial Award at the 2010 United Way Community Celebration Awards Breakfast on March 30, 2011. The award was presented in recognition of her contribution to the community as a social service professional whose dedication and commitment is an example to her peers and all the citizens of our region. Those characteristics were embodied by Nancy Sorrells during her 24 years of service to the United Way of Central Virginia.



Mrs. Rexrode has committed 17 years to CASA of Central Virginia - ten years as a CASA volunteer and seven years as an employee. She was

nominated by Jane Francis, Executive Director, CASA of Central Virginia and Octavia Starbuck, CASA Volunteer. whom Mrs. Rexrode supervises. Mrs. Starbuck noted, "She has given me encouragement, guidance, direction, and a true desire to do this job for the well being of each child I have represented. Lorna is my cheerleader! I value her as a person but also as a leader in this field of advocacy for children. The bottom line is that she is an amazing person who does an incredible job called CASA with dedication, professionalism, enthusiasm, commitment and perseverance - characteristics that reflect the spirit of Nancy L. Sorrells."

CASA Volunteer Training

CASA Volunteer Pre-Service Training

Applications are being accepted for our upcoming Volunteer training. Classes begin August 11, 2011 and run through October 20, 2011. Classes will be held on Thursday evenings from 5:30-8:30 at the Pearson Regional Cancer Center in Lynchburg.

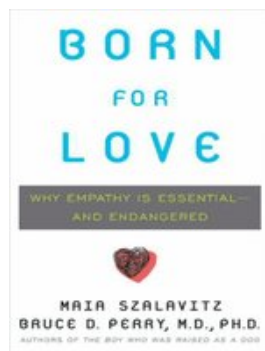
If you know anyone that may be interested, please spread the word and direct them our way.



Training funded by The Greater Lynchburg Community Trust

[CASA Volunteer Training Flyer](#)

[CASA Volunteer Application](#)



The CASA Library

This Month's Featured Resource

Born for Love - In this provocative book, renowned child psychiatrist Bruce D. Perry and award-winning science journalist Maia Szalavitz explain how empathy develops, why it is essential for our development into healthy adults, and how it is threatened in the modern world.

Perry and Szalavitz show that compassion underlies the qualities that make society work-trust, altruism, collaboration, love, charity-and how difficulties related to empathy are key factors in social problems such as war, crime, racism, and mental illness. Even physical health, from infectious diseases to heart attacks, is deeply affected by our human connections to one another.

As *Born for Love* reveals, recent changes in technology, child-rearing practices, education, and lifestyles are starting to rob children of necessary human contact and deep relationships-the essential foundation for empathy and a caring, healthy society. It offers practical ideas for combating the negative influences of modern life and fostering positive social change to benefit us all.

Many additional books, DVD's, manuals, and additional resources available for check-out in the downtown CASA office. CASA Volunteers can utilize library resources as an additional option for completing their yearly requirement of 12 hours of in-service training.

Library Resources funded by



Upcoming Events

CASA of Central Virginia Volunteer Recognition Dinner will be held May 19, 2011 from 5:30 - 8:00 in the East Room of the Burton Student Center at Lynchburg College. Included in the event is a keynote address from Mr. Robert Day, Executive Director of Patrick Henry Boys and Girls Plantation. During the event, twenty-six CASA volunteers will be presented with the Presidential Service Award and five CASA volunteers and one former board members will be inducted into the Honorable Dale H. Harris Hall of Fame.

Funding for this newsletter is provided by a grant from
Retail Merchants Foundation, Inc.



Thank you for your interest and support of CASA of Central Virginia.

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