

Volunteers Needed



In the last year we launched two new recruiting campaigns to attract new volunteers: our "Blue Kids" plywood cut-outs that spread the word of our work in rain and shine, and our Quarterback Club, which focuses on recruiting male volunteers. As

a result, we have added another 74 volunteers to our list, and our most recent class of 26 included 11 men – a new record for us! We are on a roll, a very exciting time for us! Next phase is tapping into the Latino community to recruit bi-lingual volunteers.

We are currently serving 151 foster youth and 52 at-risk youth with 144 active volunteers. And yet, we are still meeting only about half of the need in our county. Therefore, we are conducting volunteer training classes in May, July, and September. If you know someone that would be a great volunteer, or if YOU would be a great volunteer, please call us at (530) 887-1006 and join us for an one-hour orientation, scheduled for April 4, 11 and 18. Visit our website for more details.

We are also helping the county with Finding Family for foster youth – our effort to locate extended family members for foster youth who will age out of the system. If have an interest in doing internet research and helping us create family trees for these youth, give us a call at (530) 887-1006.

By Kathryn Hart – Program Director

Program Launch: Simple Heroes



Our community has long recognized the need to support our foster youth in extracurricular

activities. Even with wonderful foster parents who lovingly give every effort to provide the best care possible, there is still a gap in resources and too often our youth struggle (and sometimes fail) to participate in normal childhood experiences that help lead a healthy and balanced life.

The only way to fill this critical gap is with the support of our community.

Simple Heroes connects foster youth's unique and individual wishes with community members that have the means necessary to make these simple dreams come true. Starting this summer, our new website will allow us to post Simple Wishes from the youth we serve. The Simple Heroes team will consist of community members who will meet on a regular basis, reach out to the community and provide individuals

the opportunity to donate small amounts of money that will have a huge impact. With these pooled resources we hope to ensure our youth's wishes do not go unmet.

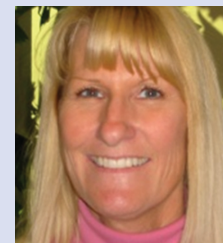
Common sense and research shows that when foster youth are able to attend a special field trip, get a new bike to go exploring with their friends, or attend gymnastics classes on a regular basis, their quality of life goes up dramatically. It gives them hope, injects more positive experiences into their lives, provides meaningful opportunities to participate in, teaches them important life skills and fills them with a sense of belongingness.

Just because children are in foster care does not mean they should miss out on their childhood. Simple Heroes will ensure this is never the case.

By Nick Cunningham – Case Supervisor



Family CASA Program and CASA Resource Group



In 2008, 24 percent of one to two-year-old foster children re-entered foster care within a year of reunifying with their parent(s). One major cause of this is that the parents (often young themselves) have never been taught basic life skills and have little or no support system.

As someone who provided foster care for over 70 children age 5 and under, I regularly observed parents who truly loved and cared about their kids, and did everything required of them to get their children back, but because of a lack of basic life skills, had great difficulty creating a functioning home. As I'd watch the child reunify from my home, I'd think "I want to go home with that parent and show them how to care for their child and maintain a home that is safe and clean."

Now, with the help of a grant from First 5 Placer, we are doing

just that. Our Family CASA program serves parents with small children in foster care that are returning home. Our Family CASA volunteers have undergone 10 hours of additional training that allows them to teach a variety of life skills (health, nutrition, budgeting, organization, home care, education, career and job search, etc.) each week in the family's home.

The Family CASA works on these skills with both parent(s) and child just prior to reunification and throughout the six to 12 months of Family Maintenance. The goals of the Family CASA program are to avoid the child's re-entry back into the system, help the parent(s) become more independent and change the cycle in families for the next generation. We look forward to sharing future outcomes of this new and exciting program that can only help improve our community!

By Laurie Tyrrell – Case Supervisor

child advocates

of Placer County

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Staff Spotlight



Introducing Jim Wood, Case Supervisor

We are pleased to introduce our newest Case Supervisor, Jim Wood. Jim has been a volunteer Case Supervisor for us since August of last year, overseeing about ten cases. He has been active as a CASA and mentor for the last year and a half. Then in January he took the plunge and became full-time staff. Jim is quickly learning the ins and outs of the juvenile dependency and social services systems as well as the names and faces of all the CASA and mentor volunteers.

Formerly, Jim worked at Teichert Construction, where he started as an apprentice pipe layer and worked his way up to superintendent of the underground department. He says he is amazed by the volunteers he manages, who have such a strong passion for what they do. Come and stop by for a visit.

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Spring 2011

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Inside this issue...

- o Program Updates: Volunteers Needed, Simple Heroes, Family CASA Program and CASA Resource Group
- o Highlight: CASA's Laura Vizenor
- o National Charity League Finds Time to Give
- o High Tea Recap
- o Walk 'N Rock
- o Staff Spotlight: Jim Wood



“You don't just hangout with a CASA kid, you get a new kid in your heart.”

By the Numbers:

2010 Statistics for Child Advocates of Placer County

Number of Volunteers Serving Foster and At-Risk Youth:	189
Number of Foster Youth and At-Risk Youth Served:	264
Total Hours Donated by Volunteers:	19,146
Total Miles Driven by Volunteers:	194,570
Value of Time and Mileage Donated by Volunteers:	\$473,160

From the Executive Director



As you'll read in this newsletter, Child Advocates continues to grow and prosper:

- Between our CASA and A2Y programs, we are now serving over 200 youth
- Our January training class added 26 new volunteers, eleven of which were men – the most ever!
- Our Friends of CASA ladies held a wonderful High Tea in February that netted \$16,000
- Our Family CASA program is taking off in a hurry, and we may soon be expanding it to include older foster children and the families of our mentees.

To keep up with these changes we turned our Volunteer Case Supervisor Jim Wood into a full-time employee, and enlisted the part-time help of Cara Mammon, who assists with all sorts of office and fundraising tasks.

With this growth we also welcome new

board members Dr. Renee Regacho-Anaclerio, Associate Superintendent, Educational Services, Placer County Office of Education, Josh Price, CPA, with GALLINA LLP, and Dennis Loo, Assistant Vice President, Business Deposit Consultant for Wells Fargo Bank. These new members bring great expertise and enthusiasm to the board, and, with their guidance, we look forward to the coming year.

Sadly, we also say goodbye to board members David Skitarelic, Scott Cunningham, and Janice Gage. Their past support and guidance is greatly appreciated.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge our 183 CASA and Mentor volunteers, both active and on-leave, who give so much to hundreds of foster and at-risk youth in our county. As Laura Vizenor, our featured CASA volunteer told us, "You don't just hangout with a CASA kid, you get a new kid in your heart." Thank you all for opening your hearts to our kids!

Upcoming Events

Walk 'N Rock for Kids
May 29, 2011 | Raley Field, Sacramento

By joining a team and seeking donations from your friends and family, you'll not only have great time, you'll help us achieve our goal of raising \$20,000! Visit www.walknrock.org for more information.

Casino de Paris
October 15, 2011 | Mercedes Benz - Rocklin

Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 15, 7-11pm! Casino de Paris is held in the beautiful Mercedes Benz - Rocklin dealership.

Meet Laura Vizenor, CASA Volunteer



Laura Vizenor became a CASA volunteer in early 2006. Her first case was Brian (not his real name), an eleven year old foster boy, whom she worked with until he was adopted in January 2011. Here is her (and his) story.

I became a CASA out of a need to do something for others. My brother was habitually homeless, and I looked to help that population, but soon found that I wanted to work more “upstream,” and youth seemed like a good fit. My sister suggested CASA, and I soon found myself in training at Child Advocates of Placer County.

Brian came from a home full of violence, substance abuse and neglect. When I met him, he was just a little kid who barely reached my shoulders (and I’m only 5’3”), but he was placed in a level 14 lockdown group home. Whereas most of the boys in the home were there because of inappropriate behavior, Brian was there because he had tried to hang himself.

In our first meeting he was very quiet, somewhat anti-social and displayed various nervous twitches. One of the group home workers told me, “When he likes you, he will poke you hard.” Our first visits, which usually involved going somewhere to eat, were very quiet and uneventful. If I asked him about his family, he shut down. I had no idea if I was doing any good, until one day at the end of our visit he poked me in the ribs, and I thought “Aha! He likes me!”

Changes in his behavior were slow, but eventually he progressed to a level 10 group home, and then to a foster home. Here, everything changed. The foster father was kind, consistent, patient and solid, and he and I were on the exact same page when it came to discipline and behavior. Brian’s behavior changed from awkward and “pokey” to polite and “huggie,” and he realized he was lovable and capable.



Laura and her CASA Kid “Brian” hiking at Meadow Lake

Now, he is a lanky 6-foot tall lovable kid, adopted by a “new” dad. Although I have two kids of my own, Brian is also “mine,” and he’ll be a part of my life forever.

To me, this is what being a CASA is all about: you spend time with a kid, earn his trust, help him through a rough patch, laugh, cry, love.

You get PUSHED out of your comfort zone, constantly challenged –to figure out how to help this kid, how to keep your mind open, how to gather information from vastly different sources, how to speak up when needed.

There were scary turning points, some minor disasters and a few major miracles. I learned so much! I see through different eyes. My mind is blown. That’s what I got from being a CASA. And I am really, really grateful. Thank you Brian.

National Charity League Finds Time to Give

As laughter and excitement of children filled the air, members of the Granite Bay Area Chapter of the National Charity League (NCL) were busy making sure the 2010 Children’s Holiday Party was a huge success. NCL is a mother and daughter organization dedicated to donating volunteer hours to philanthropic causes. In the fall of last year, the NCL selected Child Advocates as a recipient of their goodwill. Since then, they have planned and held the CASA Holiday Party for our foster youth, fulfilled holiday wishes and provided volunteer help at the High Tea. Upcoming projects for the NCL include helping us put on our annual CASA Volunteer/ Foster Youth picnic and assisting us during the Casino de Paris event on October 15th, 2011. We are thrilled to have the support of such a wonderful organization!



Winners of the M & M contest, Michael Ford and his mentor Gene Glaser enjoy their victory at the Holiday Party.

Event Revisited: High Tea



Ginny Simms
Sharon Steele
Barbara Tonso
Stephanie Toso
Diane Williams
Debby Ziegler

The entire Friends team worked enthusiastically to make the event a sellout and perfect in every way!

Event Co-Chairs:
Linda Brewer, Debby Ziegler

Registration and Ticket Sales:
Stephanie Toso, Mary Jane Kelley

Silent Auction and Raffle:
Ginny Simms, Liz Kiener

Table Hostess Coordinator:
Barbara Awalt

Beverage Donations:
Katy Carlsen, Diane Williams, Stephanie Toso

Fashion Show:
Linda Brewer, Barbara Tonso, Gloria Johnston, Jeanne Gewalt, Lisa Baker

Music:
Trish Cvetovac

Invitation and Ticket Design:
Stephanie Toso

CASA Messaging:
Melinda Davidson

Program and Signage:
Cara Mammon

A tip of our hat to our men in Black:
Bob Brewer, Tom Simms, Don Kleinfelder, Nick Cunningham

A special thanks to Catta Verdera for being stellar event hosts.



We are proud to announce that Child Advocates of Placer County will participate in Sacramento’s highly anticipated Walk ‘N Rock for Kids! This year’s event will take place Sunday, May 29, 2011 at Raley Field in West Sacramento.

The fundraising walk and benefit concert is put on by Hope Productions Foundation whose mission is to provide support and training at no cost to children and youth charities to ensure sustainability, viability and awareness. This will be our first year as one Hope Productions Foundation’s 15 Nonprofit Affiliates and we want to make a huge impact!

The event kicks off with a community 5K walk and festival in the morning. In the evening there will be an exclusive VIP reception and a benefit concert open to the general public featuring the legendary rock band KISS.

Our goal is to raise over \$20,000 through walk teams supporting Child Advocates of Placer County. Create your own team, join one of our existing teams or make a donation today by visiting www.walknrock.org and selecting Child Advocates of Placer County - A2Y Mentors as your non-profit of choice!

Thanks!

Thank You to Our Wonderful CASA/Mentor Volunteers!

John Adams	Shari Conley	Cammy Grimes	Tamara Larson	Roya Pourvakil
Grant Adorador	Dominique Cordero	Julie Gustafson	Katy Leahy	Allyson Prero
Debbie Ahrens	Nick Cunningham	Denise Hallisey	Paula Leahy	Stacy Quatela
Sharalee Andrew	Francine Curtis	Cathy Hamilton	Monica Lee	Marianne Quinn
Lili Aram	Trish Cvetovac	Alexandria Hansen	Christine Lemonds-Shea	Janis Rau
Cindy Baldwin	Connie Davis	Margaret Harrit	Ron Little	Peter Rau
Sara Ballantine	Sarah Davis-Morales	Kathryn Hart	Cathy MacHold	Susan Reed
Kathy Bannon	Anne Dixon	Noelle Hayes	Matthew Manjarrez	Sherri Reyes
Carole Batt	Linda Durham	Rebecca Heath	Deborah Mann	Tom Richie
Randy Beaver	Rebecca Duncan	Lacian Henderson	Jennifer Massa	Kathryn Ries
Cheryl Berger	Maureen Dwinell	Brien Hensley	Katherine McCarthy	Heidi Robertson
Joan Berry	Dana Eggerts	Toni Higgins	Terri McClung	Maureen Rodarte
Larry Boehm	Robyn Emme	Betsy Hirsch	Randy Mead	Rita Rogers
Patricia Bomberger	Fran Estacio	Bill Hirsch	Michelle Meier	Cori Rosman
Sierra Borden	Maxine Ferguson	Jennifer Hogan	Frederick Miller	Fiona Ross
Danny Brill	Leslie Ferrini	Judd Holiday	Ashley Millspaugh	Jeanne Ross
Valerie Brown	Dave Fischer	Kevin Horan	Mary Minnick	Louise Santana
Ninna Bryan	Deborah Forester	Thad Huston	Zeinab Mohamed	Norene Shaffer
Bill Burchfield	Jerry Foster	Jenni Isaac-Lisk	Joe Moore	Thomas Simms
Marilyn Burchfield	Linda Franklin	Linda Jansen	Murial Moore	Christen Sivyer
Dina Burns	Dan Freeman	Janet Jimenez	Carol Murschel	Julie Stadel
Audrey Burton	Gerina Freeman	Dale Johnston	Patricia Nielsen	Julie Stark
Elena Byard	Karen Frey	Tamala Johnston	Diana Nyman	Keith Stepko
April Cadran	Roxanna Friedrich	Ted Jonas	Lia Onnias	Christine Stroiney
Don Callahan	Jennifer Gann	Linda Jones	Gracie Panter	Lynda Strong
Wendy Campbell	Lance Gannett	Terry Karnezis	James Patterson	Alan Telford
Dawn Cannon	Sheryl Garrity	Mary Jane Kelley	Leanna Patterson	Larry Thompson
Christy Carlisle	Don Genasci	Linda Kelly	Susan Payne	Barbara Tonso
Carolyn Carlson	Caroline Ghinassi	Don Kleinfelder	Lisa Peat	Barbara Torgerson
Tom Cavallero	Gene Glaser	Lynn Knoll	Vicki Perkins	Jeffery Torgerson
Neil Claiborne	James Goddard	Daisy Kong	Susan Petersen	
Renee Clark	Earl Goldstein	Hillary Konrad	Kathleen Peterson	
Jim Coats	Connie Gravelle	Amira Kotb	Diane Pingree	
Nancy Colwell	Jean Gray	Pam Kotler	Denise Plaiçe-Gordon	