

CASA of DuPage County, Inc.
 505 North County Farm Road, 3rd Floor, Suite C, Wheaton Illinois 630-221-0889

The CASA Link

January 2008

Note from Kay



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Happy 2008 to all! A new calendar year brings New Year's resolutions, they are easy to make. Speaking from personal experience I know they are easy to bend or break, or put off until another day. But your conscience may not rest easy as your resolutions are quietly put on the back burner.

What resolutions did you make on January 1st? Take off a few pounds? Exercise regularly? Repair a strained relationship? Take a cruise to an exotic location?

Today I ask that you reflect on your personal resolutions for 2008 and to please remember that the most precious resource we have, and need to protect, are the children that have been brought into this world. Join me in resolving to do all that you can to ensure that all children are protected from abuse and neglect, and keep that resolution.

There are many ways one can choose to help; time and money are the first two on my list, as they are both so very important to any not-for-profit organization. As a reader of this newsletter you more than likely are a **Court Appointed Special Advocate** and already give of your time to the court process. Perhaps you also give a monetary donation to CASA, and for that I am extremely grateful. Consider assisting with a CASA fundraiser, by volunteering for a planning committee or soliciting items to be auctioned at a special event; make some phone calls to schedule speaking engagements for the CASA staff, or volunteer in the office for light office work. The list goes on, but I am sure that you get the point. We are half way through the fiscal year and there is much to do before the end of our fiscal year on June 30th, how you determine to help is your choice...but please choose to help.

My wish is that 2008 will be the best year possible for each and every one of you.

Welcome Our Newest Advocates

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In November we were excited to swear in our latest class of advocates. They attended over thirty hours of training and are eager to try out their new skills. Please help us welcome:

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Kristin Dixon | John Murphy | Margie Manietta |
| Judy Green | Barbara Rupp | Wendy McCaffrey |
| Marion Harless | Anne Zeidman | Carol Miecznikowski |
| Mike Hoffer | Maria English | Carol Papke |
| Katie Martin | Gloria Griseto | Nancy Vlasak |
| Susan McKenna | Shawna Heike | |

In-Service Opportunities

Thursday, January 17
Relationship Development Intervention with Autism

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon
 Erickson Institute, Chicago
 Free of charge

May fill up quickly. Learn about the goals and approaches used in RDI and how this treatment can increase shared enjoyment and quality of life for children with autism. Session will conclude with discussion of how RDI differs from other treatment approaches for children with autism spectrum disorders. For more information: www.erikson.edu or call 312-755-2250.

Wednesday, January 16
Overview of Our Children's Homestead

7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
 Home of Advocate Paul Carmignani
 908 Brocks End Court, Naperville

Cindy Jasionowksi of Our Children's Homestead will provide an overview of this agency and her role and responsibilities. Cindy was formerly a CASA advocate and so has a unique perspective to share. Call or email Melissa Auer to register: 630-221-0889 ext. 306 or melissa@dupagecasa.org.

Wednesday, January 30
Helping Children Thrive in a Socially Challenging Environment

7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
 Community House
 415 W. 8th Street
 Hinsdale
 No charge for program

James Garbarino, PhD, director of the Center for Human Rights of Children at Loyola, will present the program, which will focus on the power of the environment on the development of children, the pervasiveness of negative influences, how bad things sometimes happen to good families, and how parents and schools can

teach children resilience and social competence. Free and open to the public.

Saturday, January 26
Supporting the Educational Needs of Foster Children

8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
 No charge

Sponsored by CASA of Lake County, this program include: IEPs - Advocacy and Strategies, Educational Testing, DCFS Transition Service Programs, and Developmental Needs of Children 0-3. It will be held at Hewitt, located at 4 Overlook Point, Lincolnshire Corporate Center. This would be the west campus of Hewitt. A continental breakfast and lunch will be served. For more info or to register contact Leslie Claiborne at 847-808-9154 or go to: www.casalakecounty.com. Six hours of in-service credit will be offered for this day of training.

Tuesday, January 29
Brown Bag Lunch

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
 CASA office

We will watch a video on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome - this is a different video than the one we watched last summer. Bring your lunch - no RSVP required.

Friday, February 1
Meth 101 & How To Keep Youth from Using Methamphetamine

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
 (registrations starts 8:30 a.m.)
 Orland Park Civic Center
 14750 S. Ravinia Avenue
 Orland Park
 No charge

Meth 101 will provide an overview of meth production and usage, meth labs, and the effects of

In-Service Opportunities

meth on users, children, and on the community. How To Keep Youth from Using Meth will focus on approaches to the prevention of substance abuse with a particular emphasis on meth. This workshop is free but space is limited to the first 150 who sign up.

Contact Michele Chalifoux 773-636-1070 for more information or go to www.preventchildabuseillinois.org.

(the civic center is one block west of LaGrange Road on 147 Street)

Friday, February 8
Developmental Pathways for Aggression in Girls and Boys

11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Children's Memorial Hospital, Bigler Auditorium
Bigler Auditorium is located across the driveway from the hospital's main entrance.

This program will be presented by James Garbarino, PhD. A luncheon buffet is served prior to the lecture from 11:30 a.m. to 12 noon.. Pre-registration is absolutely necessary. For more information call 773-880-4811.

Tuesday, February 12
CASA Book Discussion Group

7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Faith Evangelical Church
41 Park Blvd.
Glen Ellyn

We will be discussing the book the Tortilla Curtain, by T.C. Boyle. Call Melissa Auer at 630-221-0889 ext. 306 or Melissa@dupagecasa.org if you plan to attend.

Tuesday, February 26
Brown Bag Lunch

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
CASA office

We will watch a video on Young Children and Attention Deficit Disorder. Bring your lunch and join us - no RSVP required.

Saturday, March 1
The Dynamic Child: Connecting to Self, Family, and the World

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Kaneland High School
47W326 Keslinger Road
Maple Park, IL

This workshop will address autism spectrum disorders, sensory integration dysfunction and social, emotional or learning challenges.

The keynote speaker is Temple Grandin, PhD, an autistic woman who is a Professor of Animal Science, Author and Animal Rights Activist.

Early bird registration (received by Monday, January 21)

\$80 per person (workshop, continental breakfast and lunch)

Regular registration (received after Monday, January 21 or at door)

\$99 per person (workshop, continental breakfast and lunch)

To register or for more information contact:

Community Therapy Services, PC
40W310 LaFox Road, Suite A1-B1
St. Charles, IL 60175
630-444-0077

Maple Park is approximately 10 miles west of Geneva.

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In-Service Opportunities & News You Can Use

Tuesday, March 25 Brown Bag Lunch

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
CASA office

A speaker from NAMI - the National Association for the Mentally Ill will provide insights. Bring your lunch and join us - no need to RSVP.

Wednesday, April 2 Child Maltreatment: Moving From Intervention to Prevention

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Northwestern Memorial Hospital
Conference Center, Third Floor
251 E. Huron
Chicago, IL
\$100 registration fee

This conference will benefit physicians, social workers, teachers, psychologists, law enforcement nurses, **child advocates** and others whose profession involves interaction with child maltreatment. At the conclusion of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Identify the mechanisms of childhood fractures and use this information to help determine if an injury was caused by child abuse;
2. Describe how to assess culturally diverse families for child maltreatment;
3. Discuss several primary and secondary approaches to child maltreatment.

For more information, contact Ramona Godbole at 773-880-4322, or at rgobole@childrensmemorial.org

Or go to: <http://www.childrensmemorial.org/depts./protective/annual.asp>

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### CASA Office Closings:

January 21, 2008 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
February 12, 2008 - Lincoln's Birthday  
February 18, 2008 - Washington's Birthday

### January is National Stalking Awareness Month

(Reproduced from State of Illinois Attorney General Office Crime Victim Services News, Vol. 2 Issue 3, January 2008)

Stalking is a serious and deadly crime that victimizes 1,006,970 women and 370,90 men each year. One in 12 women and 1 in 45 men will be stalked in their lifetime. 20-25% of stalkers target a complete stranger or a casual acquaintance. The majority of stalkers (75-80%) are currently or have been involved in a personal or romantic relationship with their victims. It is difficult to predict both what a stalker might do to intimidate the victim and when the stalker might do it. Some stalking behavior is obvious to most everyone: the stalker follows the victim in a grocery store shouting that he is going to kill her; the stalker sends letters or emails to the victim saying that he is going to hurt her.

Other stalking behavior, when viewed in isolation, is not so apparent. For example, the stalker who follows the victim in a grocery store, but says nothing to her or anyone else may be placing the victim in fear. Similarly, the stalker who sits behind the victim in a movie theater but says nothing, may place the victim in fear. The stalker may claim that his presence in the store or theater was happenstance and he intended no harm. For this reason, the stalker's entire course of conduct should be considered (e.g. prior assaults or threats), as well as his knowledge that his presence places the victim in fear (e.g. protective order).

Stalking is not a new phenomenon; however, it is only recently that Illinois and other states have made stalking a separate and distinct crime. In Illinois, a person commits stalking when he, knowingly and without lawful justification, on at least two separate occasions follows another person or places the other person under surveillance and (a) transmits a threat of immediate or future bodily harm directed toward the person or a family member, or (b) places the person in reasonable apprehension of immediate or future bodily harm, or (c) places the person in reasonable apprehension that a family member will be hurt. See 720 ILCS 5/12-7.3 and 7.4.

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## A Message from Ruth Laughlin

I have an inclination to be excruciatingly literal. My default position is the literal one, and I work at being mindful of this. I suspect many people experience this to some degree.

I do have a point – we “literals” tend also to be rule followers. That doesn’t mean that we agree with the rules, or even that we have a moral objection to breaking them. It just doesn’t occur to those of us who are die-hards to do otherwise. This brings me to a recent dilemma. A couple of my cases took unusual turns. The dilemma for me was that, in no way I could foresee, could a traditional CASA report suffice to convey the information that needed conveying. Really, this ate at me. It’s like I had to pick between two idols: the rules, or the kids.

The respective advocates and I worked hard to identify the best way to present information effectively without violating CASA’s fundamental premise of objectivity. The finished products were not huge departures from our format at all, but the way in which the information was organized delivered a punch.

Here is what transpired. In case #1, a natural father appeared for the first time in a case that is almost 2½ years old. The natural mother has surrendered her rights, the children (who are small) are well on their way to adoption, and this father was defaulted a long time ago. But – in spite of the fact that he has never met his youngest, lives in a different state and speaks a different language - he presented himself as an interested party, attorney in tow, a few weeks ago at a PRH that should have been routine. A new PRH date was set for which we felt an addendum CASA report needed to be submitted.

Under Case History, the readers were referred back to the original CASA PRH report as nothing of substance had changed with the children or the FP; it was explained that this report would serve as an extrapolation of every reference that had been made to this NF in every report and conversation (noted by the advocate) in the life of the case, with the intention that it be all-inclusive. This enabled all these references to be on a few pages, sparing the possibility that any information pertinent to best interest could be overlooked in the maze of paper accrued on everyone’s desk. The pattern of oppor-

tunity this NF had been offered and choices he had exercised were made unmistakably clear and concise. Each entry was documented with the report in which the information was originally contained.

Case #2 involves a 17 year old male who has been in DCFS custody for about a year. He is a perfect example of someone who has been aggressively failed and betrayed by everyone since his birth. He is seriously angry, and there is one year remaining for any impact to be made on him. Largely because no one knows where else to put him, he is currently in a facility for the most extreme sexual offenders of his age group in the state. The irony is that he isn’t one. Yet. He is managing to put his anger aside and is displaying tremendous initiative, persistence and cooperation to get his placement changed. Even though he does what he is told to do in order for this to be considered, continuances keep happening because of changes in professional staffs and failures of these professionals to get the court the reports it needs for the court to make any kind of determination. The only one being punished for these failings is the one not responsible – every time this happens, he is sent back to the environment he is seeking to escape for several more weeks like it’s not a big deal. I bet it is to him.

For this report, we decided to do a timeline. Every condition, promise, assurance, task that was asserted was detailed chronologically, as were the outcomes of the same. The information in the CASA report was not diluted with any extraneous information. We invented nothing; no editorializing was done. But - I hope and believe - accountability has been exposed.

Both reports are for January 8<sup>th</sup> hearings. I am prepared for agency unhappiness, as is my boss, whose approval I made sure these approaches had.

Working on these reports with these two spectacular advocates was exhilarating. I have never felt more like an advocate, have rarely felt the potential for such an immediate cause and effect that will likely be generated by a CASA report.

I will probably never be one to really buck the system. But this I do believe – kids first, rules.

## Advocate Training 2008

## Events

Our next Advocate Training Program will begin on January 25th and will meet in the CASA office every Friday afternoon for eleven weeks. The class is full, so we are no longer accepting applications, but you are welcome to attend as a refresher or for in-service credit or to make up classes you missed. Please let Melissa know if you plan to attend. The tentative schedule is as follows:

January 25 – History and Mission, Expectations of volunteers, Components of Advocacy, Best Interest, Minimum Sufficient Level of Care, Court Appointments, Intro to Court Players

February 1 – Definitions of Abuse and Neglect, Applicable State and Federal Laws, How a Case Enters the System

February 8 – Agencies We Work With, Court Process, Types of Hearings

February 15 – Domestic Violence, Substance Abuse, Mental Health Issues

February 22 – Understanding Children, Impact of Child Abuse and Neglect on Child Development, Attachment and Separation, Dynamics of Families and Resiliency

February 29 – Resource vs. Deficit Lens, Cultural Awareness, Poverty, Stress

March 7 – Permanency, Service Plans, Administrative Case Reviews (ACRs), Resources

March 14 – Working a Case, Gathering Information, Introductions, Note Taking, Record Keeping, Developing a Plan, Report Writing I

March 28 – Report Writing II, Educational Advocacy

April 4 – Pulling It Altogether, Policies and Procedures

### Mark Your Calendars!!



### Third Annual CASA Cares

McCullum Park,  
Downers Grove, IL  
April 27th

The Race begins at 8:00AM

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CASA of DuPage County, Inc. 15th Anniversary Celebration

Arrowhead Golf Club,
Wheaton, IL
on April 19th

6:00 pm until 12:00 Midnight

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### National Stalking Awareness Month

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Cyberstalking is also a crime in Illinois. A person commits cyberstalking if he, knowingly and without lawful excuse, on at least 2 separate occasions, harasses another through the use of electronic communication and either (a) transmits a threat of harm directed at the victim or a family member, or (b) places the person or a family member in reasonable apprehension of physical harm. See 720 ILCS 5/12-7.5.

# Powerless Children Need Powerful Friends!

## Our Gratitude to Advocates & Friends

# THANK YOU



Advocates assigned to new cases were:

**Lorraine Balsitis, Maria English, Judy Green, Gloria Griseto, Mike Hoffer, Dave Johnson, Mary Pat Mittelstaedt, John Murphy, Eileen Petitto, Helen Spetly and Nancy Vlasak.**

Advocates whose cases have closed:

**Lorraine Balsitis, Karen Helm, Brian Mazzoni, Connie Puchalski, Amy Schwartz, and Bonnie Vozar.**

Thank you for all the wonderful work that you do!

### Thank you for your generous financial support!!

- Topfer Family Foundation- \$50,000
- McMaster-Carr - \$3,500
- Anonymous - \$10,000
- BP Fabric of American Fund – \$1,000
- Elmhurst American Legion - \$750.00
- BP Foundation - \$3,300 (matching 2007 5K)

### Annual Appeal

Our annual appeal is going strong with donations still coming in; as of 12/31/07 our total is \$22,000!

### Office Volunteers Make A Difference

We are grateful for all of the volunteers who have helped out in the office during the last half of 2007. Over 86 hours were documented and The Independent Sector places a value of \$18.77 on each hour of volunteer work – so our office volunteers “contributed” over \$1600! Because this does not include the hours put in by **Ted Semon**, who helps with our computers, or **Denise Niesman**, who manages our website

and edits the LINK, the total would actually be much higher.

The following volunteers have helped with filing, shredding, data entry, stamping, stuffing, stickering, and organizing our library: **Marianne Broussard, Arlene Chval, Jane Cox, Becky Erdmann, Fred Murman, Eileen Petitto, Marj Walters, Jennifer Christ, Marjorie Cole, JoAnna Doherty, Mary Anne Kiser, Holly Osterman and Lois Seijo.**

## Happy Birthday!

Phoebe Bickhaus  
 Michelle Donnelly  
 Barb Gulick  
 Tracie Lefaver  
 Vanessa Luna  
 Erin McLaughlin  
 Laura Packer  
 Renee Pollock  
 Delanne Reiss  
 Stephanie Schmoker  
 Deborah Chenery-Wasko

Janet Courter  
 Nancy Gage  
 Claudia Kappel  
 Karen Lindflott  
 Marty McCarthy  
 Marsha Nathan  
 Nina Petru  
 Shawn Preuss  
 Eileen Robbins  
 Anne Wentz

### Fun at Oktoberfest

A big thank you goes to all who volunteered at the Oktoberfest sponsored by the **Naperville Rotary Club**. The number of volunteers needed to put on such a community event is amazing! In addition to CASA volunteers, **Kohl's** graciously supplied 21 staff members to work in our name. With their help we sold pretzels, served beer and bratwurst, worked in the sponsor tent, checked wristbands, counted participants, assisted with security, checked strollers, handed out hats and these are only a few examples of the many tasks we helped with. The Rotary Club will not disperse funds until May or June, so we do not

# Powerless Children Need Powerful Friends!

have a dollar amount yet. More information will be forthcoming on this successful fundraiser and again, we are grateful for the support of everyone who was there for CASA of DuPage. Helpers included: **Mary Anthony, Valeria Boudreau, Marianne Brouard, Susan and Marty Casey, Kecia Christofferson, Joseph R. Craig, Susan Denker, Gloria Griseto, Kay and Ed Hedeem, Karen Helm, Christina Herrera, Mary McAuliffe, Erin McLaughlin, Tracey Power, Rita Rebhan, Renae Riley, Lyn Shean, Connie Shipman, Jessica Yates and Steve Yoo.**

## Kiwanis Peanut Day

On September 29th, several volunteers braved the elements (and the traffic) to offer peanuts and accept donations as part of Kiwanis Peanut Days in Darien. **Nancy Battaglia** organized this fundraiser and over \$400 was collected for CASA. A big thanks to Nancy and the following volunteers: **Rosemary and Martha Grant, Mary Anthony, Ruth Jewell, Mary McAuliffe, Peach and Marlan Matthes, Nancy Battaglia and Curtis Reed.**

## All Wrapped Up

Our gift-wrapping fund-raiser at Barnes and Noble brought in over \$1,500, thanks to the dedication of **Nancy Battaglia**. In addition to organizing the whole event, she was a day manager for two of the days. **Marilyn Miklos** also graciously agreed to be the day manager on two separate days. A special thanks also goes to **Vivien Sharkey**, who agreed to be a day manager, but several of her wrappers came down with the flu. As a result Vivien was at the store from 9 am to 11 pm – a very generous gift of time during the busy holidays. A big thank you to all of the volunteers whose nimble fingers helped make this event a success:

**Allison & Melissa Auer, Nancy Battaglia, Deb Bolander, Dee Borkovec, Joy Bowler, JoAnna Doherty & Jay Kelty, Sandy Dunlap, Diane Garcia, Silvia Golueke, Shirley Headlee, Elaine & Richard Hummer, Linda Lewis and Family, Chris & Liz Johnson, Peach & Marlan Matthes, Andrew Miklos, Marilyn Miklos, Margaret Murphy, Denise & Diane Niesman, Cate Nufer, Carol Lee Obis, Gayle Parker, Faith Peterson, Connie Puchalski, Mary Pulsifer, Joan Ranz, Lois Seijo, Edie & Emily Sharkey, Vivien Sharkey, Lynn Shean, Emma Smoczynski, Amy Schwartz, Arlene & Niel Stokke, The Vardas Family, Jan Wallin, and Deb & Christopher Wasko.**



### Quote for the Quarter:

**Nothing is stronger than the heart of a volunteer. With it beats the spirit of service, generosity, and compassion. The health and well-being of our community, our country, and our world depends on volunteers.**

~Kobi Yamada

**CASA Wish List: DVD Player**  
TV with DVD or DVR & VCR  
please contact Melissa at  
630-221-0889 ext. 306