

Improving children's lives and strengthening families through education, advocacy and family support.

The Advocate

The voice of children and families for those who support them

CASA Volunteers are vital to youth in the foster care system.

Read more inside...



May is National Foster Care Month

The Ottawa and Saline County CASA Program, a program of CAPS, served 53 foster care children in 2020. CAPS thanks the volunteers for their time, resilience and commitment to the children and families they serve.

CASA volunteers, or Court Appointed Special Advocates, are safe adults whose primary commitment is to a child's right

to learn, grow and be treated with dignity and respect. These volunteers are vital to the welfare of children and youth who are thrust into the court system through no fault of their own. CASA volunteers provide an anchor for the children as they navigate through turbulent emotions and difficult and confusing situations.

The Ottawa and Saline County CASA program recruits, trains and supports community volunteers to speak up for children who have been

abused or neglected and placed in the foster care system. They ensure each child has an opportunity to thrive. CAPS recognizes and celebrates the important work that CASA volunteers do for children in the foster care system.

You can Change a Child's Story™ by becoming a CASA volunteer. Contact Angela Owens, CASA Program Director, at angela@capsosalina.org. You can also make a donation directly to the program by calling CAPS at (785) 825-4493.



I am for the child™

Saline and Ottawa County CASA Volunteers

Roxanne Bell
Karie Bogart
Libby Charvat
Teresa Cochran
Barbara Crist
Vicky Donley
Lola Fair
Amy Freelove
Rebecca Gassman
Glenn Gustitus
Susan Holmes
Debra Jensen

Rebecca Jordan
Bryan Lorenson
Deborah Lorenson
Annalynn Lorenson
Nely Maldonado
Caitlin Ogorzolka
Angela Owens
Cynthia Ramsey
Douglas Randolph
Penny Randolph
Darrell Riekenberg
Carmen San Martin

Cheryl Santiago
David Sellers
Debra Sellers
Joyce Steen
Penny Thompson
Carly Tinkler
Carol Viar
Mary Wells
Dan Wells
Kathryn White
Karen Wygal

"I volunteer because I believe in the quote "Strong Roots, Healthy Wings." [...] We follow the child as long as they are in the system, providing continuity. In my heart, I pledge to do the very best I can to make sure this child has the tools to succeed, whether it be returning to a safe home, moving into a safe and nurturing foster home, or becoming independent. I will be there every step of the way."

-Glenn Gustitus
CASA Volunteer

Many Thanks!

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Mathew Howard
David Kohart
Kimberly Mick
Kyle Wright
Nathan Wuthnow

Rolling Hills Zoo
Linda Henderson
Cody Miller
Hilary Mullane
Evan Velasquez

Volunteers

Mindi Carlson
Anne Johnson
Rita Johnson
Mary Jane Mortimer
Karen Sutton
Ro Williams
Staff at Sunflower Bank

Dismantling White Supremacy Takes Courage

What originally started as a family ski trip over spring break turned into a seven-day, solo retreat in the mountains when my teenaged boys decided they'd rather stay home without a schedule to rest, fish and earn some extra spending money. I headed west after their spring break ended on a quest to relax, reflect, and reset. For the first time in my life, I went on vacation by myself without a schedule or any plans beyond where I would rest my head at night. 2020 had already sent me on a journey of isolation and introspection, so this trip had strange timing. What I found through adventures in the crisp Colorado air and crunching snow, soaking in sulfur springs and reading in front of the fireplace of my condo was calm, clarity and courage.

Three events led me to finding my voice: a tow from a middle-aged white man in Rocky Mountain National Park; a mass shooting in Boulder, CO; and the completion of a book I had not made time for at home. The tow gave me a glimpse of the polarized country we live in based upon political divide. The response to the shooter walking away in handcuffs from a scene where ten people lost their lives gave me another harsh glimpse into the realities of white privilege. The book gave me a mirror to realize I was not using my voice and hiding behind a mask, framed by the fear that comes from the unknown.

“I am seeking relationships that unite voices to be in power over hate, injustice and inequity, not in power over people.”

The calm I felt when discussing why I voted differently than the tow driver gave me great hope for our nation. The 45-minute dialogue

was genuine, respectful, and authentic. We treated each other with curiosity trying to understand each other's perspective. I felt courageous to speak my truth and to listen to his. When we parted, it was clear that we both had learned from the other. The next day, the shooting occurred, and I was sent back to wrestling with the subject of racism and white supremacy. Why did the armed, white shooter walk away when so many black people lose their lives?

In the last year I have read Ibram X. Kendi's *How to Be an Antiracist*, Austin Channing Brown's *I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in World Made for Whiteness* and Robin DiAngelo's *White Fragility*. I have stewed on discussions facilitated by Breneé Brown, Oprah Winfrey and Malcolm Gladwell on their podcasts. Because of these authors,

I have changed my language to see color for what it is. Claiming “I don't see color” has the opposite effect of the intention. It disregards each person's identity. I have learned the issues of color are not unique to America and that many policies creating division originate in discrimination and create poverty. I am learning to separate the person from a racist idea that they have perpetuated. I am seeking relationships that unite voices to be in power over hate, injustice and inequity, not in power over people.

The clarity came when reading James Bryan Smith's book, *The Room of Marvels*. It was a gift from my co-worker when my grandmother of 107 years passed away last summer. I had not made time to read it. It is a beautiful interpretation of what heaven may look like. Smith writes about the importance of taking off our masks to fully use the unique gifts we are given. He talks about the importance of walking through pain because

“The discomfort that comes from asking the hard questions brings understanding. With understanding, comes opportunity for real change.”

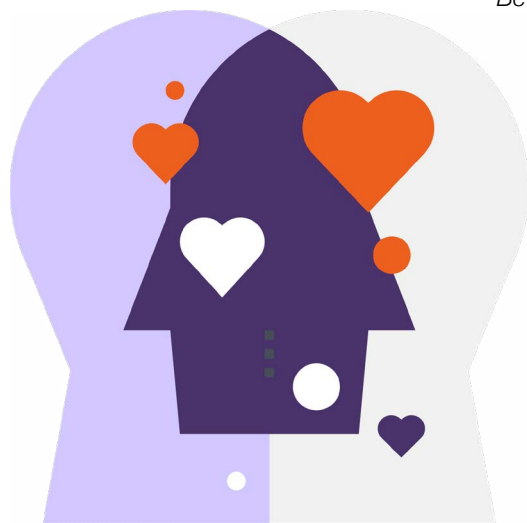
those feelings are ultimately rooted from losing the joy that comes from love and deep relationships. That's when it hit me. I have been publicly avoiding some of the hard stuff because I have been afraid of the pain that may come.

Instead, I need to focus on the joy of being in relationship with each other. The discomfort that comes from asking the hard questions brings understanding. With understanding, comes opportunity for real change.

And that is where you join me on this journey. We have a chance to listen to hear what others are really saying. We have a chance to read and learn what unintended consequences come from our policies and practices. We have a chance to be courageous, to put aside our differences and to find a way forward, together. It starts in our homes and bleeds out in our neighborhoods, in our schools, in local board rooms and in the Capitol. We must be the change we expect, and the only real change will come through open, honest reflection. I hope you will take some time to hear your voice and then use it.

With abounding hope,

Lori C. Blake, Executive Director
Child Advocacy and Parenting Services



Help support us with Target Circle.

Vote for CAPS in the Target App by June 30.

circle
NONPROFIT PARTNER

April was Child Abuse Prevention Month Activities raise \$3,164.00

In Kansas, reports of abuse have increased by 64.97% over the last 20 years which indicates people are recognizing the signs and standing up for child abuse victims.

The global pandemic brought unique challenges by removing children from the regular interaction of safe, caring adults with increased isolation and in many cases, increased stress by changing roles and unemployment. In the “before times,” CAPS would host a pancake feed at Robby’s Famous Cakes Cheesecakes & Bakery and participate in Speak Night at Ad Astra to spread awareness about child abuse and neglect. As with all activities in the past year, these gatherings could not happen. Instead, we participated in socially-distanced activities and moved to the virtual space.

Pinwheel Gardens

During the month of April, stationary pinwheel gardens were planted around the Salina community by Bikers Against Child Abuse (BACA). Four roaming pinwheel gardens sprouted in the yards of various Salina families to plant the seeds of awareness. The gardens were replanted nearly every day in new yards thanks to donations from the families who received them.

Photos of the gardens were shared to the CAPS Facebook and Instagram pages.



Pinwheels on display in Sandra Hernandez’s yard.



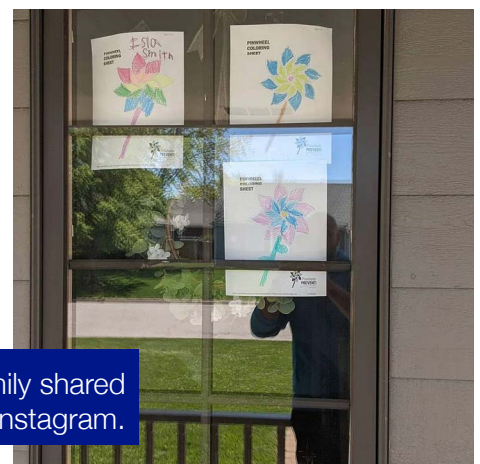
The Human Resources Team at Schwan’s Company shows off their blue.

Go Blue Salina

Advocates wore royal blue and denim to bring awareness to the issue of child abuse and neglect. Businesses collected funds for CAPS by encouraging employees to wear blue jeans and/or royal blue for a suggested donation of \$5/person. Photos of employees were shared on the CAPS Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages. Participants included: Schwan’s Company, First Bank Kansas, Bank VI, Sunflower Bank, Central National Bank, Schilling Elementary, Coronado Elementary, Stewart Elementary and Presbyterian Manor.

Pinwheel Parade

Families participated in a colorful and socially-distanced pinwheel parade both virtually and in-person. A pinwheel coloring sheet, colored by the families, adorned windows so passersby could enjoy them while enjoying spring weather. The displays were shared via Facebook and Instagram, and each family was entered to win a \$50 Silver Certificate. Mallory Zweygardt and her family were the lucky winners!



Pinwheels colored by Trey Potter’s family shared via Instagram.

Upcoming Parenting Classes

Free • Childcare provided • In-person

Register for any these classes at capsofsalina.org/parenting-classes/

The Incredible Years: Parents and Toddlers

Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

May 18, 20, 25, and 27 and June 1, 3, 8 and 10

Masks required

This class is taught by Emily Walker, ECSE/FSC, and Meghan Diehl. Parents of children ages 9 months to 3 years are encouraged to attend. In this class, parents will learn how to promote a positive relationship with their toddler, encourage their toddler's language development, and understand their toddler's social and emotional development.

The Grief Recovery Method Grief Support Group

Monday evenings from 6:30 - 9:30 p.m.

May 24; June 7, 14, 21 and 28; July 5, 12 and 19

Masks required

The Grief Support Group for adults is hosted by Rex Cearley, MS, CAPS Parent Education Partner and Certified Grief Recovery Specialist. This program is for anyone who has experienced loss, whether that is loss of trust, loss of faith, death, divorce or end of relationship, or other form of loss. The program will give you partnerships and guidance to help you overcome your grief.

The Parent Project - El Proyecto Padre

Jueves por la noche a partir de las 5:15 - 8:45 p.m.

Junio 3, 10, 17 y 24; Julio 1, 8, 15, 22 y 29; Agosto 5

Máscaras necesarias

Esta clase ayudará a mejorar la asistencia escolar y el rendimiento académico de sus hijos. Los padres aprenderán a evitar discusiones y peleas con sus hijos, a prevenir el uso de drogas y alcohol y a intervenir para eliminar la membresía en pandillas. Guardería disponible para niños menores de diez años.



“Helping good parents...
become GREAT parents!”

Happy Bear is on YouTube!

Due to COVID-19, Happy Bear could not visit schools.

We took her virtual!

You can view the videos on our YouTube Channel: [CAPS of Salina Parenting Education.](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)



Get Connected!



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Champions raise \$18,648.92 during the Greater Salina Community Foundation Match Madness.

THANK YOU SALINA!

greater salina community foundation

MATCH MADNESS

32nd Annual Benefit Auction raises \$52,323 THANK YOU SALINA!



I want to be a CAPS partner to help change the lives of children

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE / ZIP _____

EMAIL _____

Please contact me regarding CAPS being included in my estate planning.

So Many Possibilities!
Your gift can provide...



- \$50** 1 Bullying Prevention class OR 3 hours of respite child care for an overwhelmed parent
- \$100** 4 Hours of parenting instruction OR 1 Happy Bear session for 25 children
- \$250** Family mentoring services for in-home visitation and parenting education
- \$500** Advocacy and support services for 1 victim and their non-offending parent
- \$1,000** One year of court advocacy and professional support for a CASA volunteer for a foster child
- \$2,000** 3 Months of 24/7 on-call support for children and their families
- ANY** Support for School Readiness activities

CAPS operates on 6% administrative and 2% fundraising expenses, 92% of your contribution goes to direct services for children and families. As a 501(c) 3 charitable corporation, your contribution is tax deductible.

Mail to: CAPS, 155 N. Oakdale Ave., Suite 200, Salina KS 67401 or call 785-825-4493 or DONATE TODAY at www.capssofsalina.org through PayPal.