

CASA of Lexington Board of Directors

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FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Greetings to all!

IT'S FITNESS TIME!! Okay, so every day should be fitness time, but if you are like me, I have my lapses. I join the masses that starts anew several times a year. Particularly at the beginning of a new year. Then in short time, I find myself slipping. However, the other morning I was listening to Dr. Nancy Snyderman on the Today Show. She was talking about the HEALTH benefits of giving-of your time or money. I found myself thinking more and more about the concept of giving, helping those who give, as much as it helps those who receive. I started my research into the secret benefits of generosity. I found several studies that confirm that helping others can not only make us feel good about ourselves, it can also increase our physical well-being. The mind and body are not separate, therefore, anything we do to elevate our spirits may also have a beneficial effect on our health. According to a recent study by Cornell University, volunteering increases a person's energy, sense of mastery over life, and self esteem. Other studies have demonstrated that such positive feelings can actually strengthen and enhance the immune system helping the body to resist disease and recover quicker from illness. Positive emotions also release endorphins into the bloodstream. Endorphins are the body's natural tranquilizers and painkillers. They stimulate dilation of the blood vessels which leads to a relaxed heart. Study after study cited decreased pain, decreased depression, lowered blood pressure etc. According to Anne Lamott in her book, *Operating Instructions*, generosity also alleviates fear. She sites herself as one who has a great deal of fear when it comes to money stating that it terrified her to donate hard earned funds. But upon experimenting she found that when she felt deprivation or fear about money, she tried giving. She decided that "...giving is the way we can feel abundant." "...For me, the way to fill up is through service and sharing and getting myself to give more than I feel comfortable giving." In summary, I suggest, yes eat a healthy diet and get exercise but don't forget to give a little of your time and your pocketbook-help others while helping yourself.

Debi

Mark Your Calendars!



In Service: Educational Advocacy: March 2nd, 5:30 at the CASA office. Carol Cecil presenter. A great workshop for 3 CEUs.

April 5th 6:00 pm: Our annual Light of Hope will be held again in the multi-disciplinary room in the Circuit Court House. Key note speaker who was victim of child neglect, child entertainers, child abuse prevention month proclamation, swearing in ceremony of new advocates. All welcome to join us in promoting awareness of child abuse/neglect in our community!

April 29th 5:00 pm-Friends of Children Annual Resource Fair for Child Abuse Prevention Month. Martin Luther King Jr. Academy 2208 Liberty Road. Bring children/family to learn more about community resource, join in on winning prizes, free food and lots of fun!

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I AM A VOICE

To a child silenced by injustice,
I am a voice.

To a child with whom the world
has broken faith,
I am someone to believe in.
To a child who knows only rejection,
I am unconditional acceptance.

To a child lost in a nightmare,
I am permission to dream.

Amid confusion, I am certainty;
Amid instability, constancy.

Amid cynicism and shame,
I am innocence restored.

In a dark labyrinth of bureaucracy,
I am a way through-
A steady arm around the shoulder,
A calming voice in the ear.

Where others are moved to pity,
I am moved to action.

I am as quick to confront the powerful
As I am to comfort the powerless.

Though I may be visited by discouragement,
I do not play host to despair.

I do not relent;
I do not back down;
I do not give up.

In a system of shifting loyalties,
My loyalty never waivers.

For while my appointment may come from a court,
My calling comes from within.

To the child neglected,
the child abused,
the child cast upon the mercy of an often merciless system,
I am heart and caring and courage personified.

I am a CASA volunteer.



Volunteers!

January

Jill Johnson	25th
Martha Jenkins	28th

February

Courtney Ross	4th
Kathy Ice-Wedding	5th
Jean Addleton	3rd
Laura Herron	12th
Harmonie Field	14th
Karen Hudson	14th
Janet Hoffman	16th
Jordan Stivers	23rd
Brandy Simpson	27th

March

Kari Evely	4th
Elaine Tribble	7th
Michael Adams	10th
Nancy Goulson	28th
Jessica Barnes	31st

CASA receives grant from Friends of Children- A Community Partnership

We have received notification that we were awarded a mini grant in the amount of \$902. The money will be used to pay for our Child Abuse Prevention Month annual Light of Hope activities. Thank you FOC!

Printing of this Newsletter made possible by a grant from the National CASA Association.

New Class of Volunteers Sworn into Action!



In the photo: Mary Pat Nixon-Axbill, sworn in at court house by Judge Tim Philpot.

Also in photo: Colleen West, Volunteer Coordinator.

In the photo, top row left to right: Laura Herron, Ranetta Wells, Janet Hoffman, Karen Pannell, Raven Turner, Alan Morgan, Debi King, Judge Jo Ann Wise. Bottom row left to right: Emily Geary, Julie Gosky, Nancy Goulson, & Amy Haag at December swearing in ceremony.

Did you know?

Kentucky ranks #1 in the nation for child fatalities due to abuse/neglect?

For years KY has been tracking child fatalities and near fatalities. Below are some statistics concerning the 304 cases where children were killed or nearly killed since the year 2000:

**73% were age 3 or younger
82% were Caucasian
76% of the perpetrators were either one or both parents**

**Type of Maltreatment:
59% neglect
41% physical abuse**

**Caregiver risk factors:
Substance abuse-72%
Criminal history-64%
Domestic violence-56%
Mental Illness-34%**



Kudos to:

Our financial donors for this quarter: Chester Stevenson, Price, Stagner & CO. LLLC; Pamela Weeks, John Price, Kappa Sig Fraternity, Fister, Williams & Oberlander PLLC, Ky CASA Association, NCASA, & Kappa Alpha Theta.

Our In Kind Supporters for this quarter: Herald Leader, WKTY, WTVQ, LFUCG, Crowne Plaza, Numerous unnamed individuals who sponsored children on our Angel

Tree including all those great folks at Leslie, McBrayer, & Kirkland Law Firm: Missy Maclin, Board members who provided for our Holiday Gathering.

Arthur Hayden & Jennifer Dishman: Thanks for taking very complicated cases on very short notice and writing great reports!

Kathy Ice-Wedding: Thanks for writing a great report on a complex case, and for standing up for your recommendations despite adversity. The Judge thought the report was great and so did we!

Ourselves! CASA of Lexington received certification that we are in compliance with all standards set forth by the National CASA Association!

ATTENTION: BOARD OF DIRECTORS



The next meeting will be Thursday, March 18 at 3:45 PM. We will be meeting in the fifth floor conference room of the Government Center Building, 200 East Main St. All meetings are open to the public.

Finance Committee Meeting: March 8th 4:00

**CASA of Lexington
115 Cisco Rd
Lexington, KY 40504**



Don't spend your precious time asking "Why isn't the world a better place?" It will only be time wasted.

The question to ask is: "How can I make It better?" To that there is an answer. Leo Buscalia

Last year in Fayette County the Cabinet for Health and Family Services investigated 5908 children in cases of abuse and/or neglect. The police investigated 2182 cases, 278 involving sexual abuse and 890 new abuse/neglect cases came before our judges in Family Court. ***Indeed, Kentucky ranks highest in the nation for reported child fatality cases!***

What can we do for these children, the ones who don't feel safe or haven't been properly provided for? We can be the difference in their lives. We can be advocates for their best interests and help restore them to safe and loving homes where they can thrive and be given a chance for a brighter future. To be considered as a trainee in child advocacy or if you are interested in board membership, please contact our offices today at **859-246-4313** to speak with staff.

If you don't have the time to volunteer as an advocate or board member you can also help tremendously by making a monetary donation supporting CASA of Lexington which is a registered 501c3 non profit. 100% of our donated funds are used to recruit, train and support our volunteer advocates, and, to provide advocacy services to these children in need of our services. ***Please consider a tax-deductible donation today.***

Advocate. Donate. Be the difference!

Visit us on the web at: www.lexingtoncasa.com