

A child's voice

A child's life
Lifted up
By you



I am for the child



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

We Advocate

for Abused

and Neglected

Children in Court

q u o t e

"When the lives and rights of children are at stake, there must be no silent witnesses." ~ Carol Bellamy

"If our American way of life fails the child, it fails us all." ~ Pearl S. Buck



You can be a hero in the life of a child through your financial support or by becoming a CASA volunteer.

n e w s l e t t e r

April 2012

1203 Hwy 2 West, Suite 39, Kalispell, MT 59901 • 755-7208

CASA* FOR KIDS

* court appointed special advocate

Every child deserves a hero – someone who will defend them against the bullies in the world, who will recognize their strengths and encourage them to greatness, who will walk beside them in their weakness and who will help them find their footing when they fall. This person might be their parent, their teacher, their neighbor or an older sibling; most children don't need to search very far to find their champion. This is a good thing. Without someone in our corner to support us along the way we might find ourselves facing a goliath size problem alone. In these situations, the odds of experiencing success can be insurmountable – particularly if you are a child.

Imagine a five year old boy, beaten and severely neglected by the only parent he knows, placed in a hospital as a result only to remain there for 175 days without a visitor. Or a young lady who looks in the mirror every day to see a beautiful Native American girl looking back at her– but she is unable to see the beauty because she has been taught to despise her heritage. For these children their life is their Goliath. Common developmental challenges that most children face and deal with successfully can be overwhelming. For them, every perceived shortcoming only confirms their lack of worth in this world. For these children a common hero isn't enough. They need a superhero.

These are the children who need someone who refuses to turn away when the child shouts, "I hate you!" They need someone who can navigate the complicated systems they find themselves tangled up in. Someone who is willing to visit them in yet another foster home, in their third group home, at the mental health facility they were placed in after an attempted suicide or in jail after they attacked their teacher. They need someone with x-ray vision - who can see through the façade to the soul of a hurting child. Someone with supernatural strength – someone who can battle the goliaths on their behalf; who can overcome the barriers the child places around themselves in an effort to hide from a hostile world; who can tear down the walls around them; who can carry them through the storms. These children need a super hero – and for many, that super hero is their CASA volunteer.

It isn't easy being a CASA volunteer. There are days when the thought of facing yet another challenge seem unbearable. Sometimes circumstances knock you down and you don't think you can get up again to dust off the cape someone draped on your shoulders. You wonder why you are doing this work when there are thousands of other things you could be doing with your time. Just when you feel like it's time to quit something happens – something magical.

You remember the way your CASA child looked at you when they finally figured out that you really cared about them. Or maybe you are sitting beside them in yet another waiting room, you happen to



advisory council

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glance down at the etch-a-sketch on their lap and read, "Thank you for helping me." In that moment you remember you can fly. You know that you will fly anywhere and overcome any obstacle to support the child in your charge. Not because you were born with these miraculous gifts, but because a child needs you to exercise them. Somehow, that gives you the power you need to put on your cape and be the superhero for your special child.

New Western Route for Park-2-Park 2012

Join riders from Montana and across the U.S. September 10-14 on an epic adventure cycling from Glacier National Park to Yellowstone National Park in 5 days. A past rider described his ride as "an absolutely wonderful adventure. A life-changing week."

The 418 miles of Park-2-Park Montana 2012 will traverse the roads of western Montana tucked away in towering trees, climbing over mountain passes bordered by awe-inspiring peaks, and rolling across the high mountain plateaus of southern Montana.

Cycling for CASA



Majestic Glacier Park

On Saturday, July 28, 2012, there will be a local ride to benefit CASA for Kids of Flathead County. The event will begin at the fitness center at Meadow Lake Resort and then proceed to Bigfork with a return to Meadow Lake Resort. For those who have participated in the Park to Park ride in previous years this is a "mini" trip of just 80 miles! Lunch will be provided along the route as well as at the end of the ride! Join us for a great outdoor event!



Grandeur of Eastern Montana's prairies and mountains.

For 7 years Park-2-Park riders have traveled the eastern prairies of Montana from St. Mary in Glacier Park to Gardiner at the north entrance of Yellowstone Park. The new 2012 route will start near West Glacier and end at West Yellowstone. The ride is open to just 50 riders who will be raising funds for CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) programs in Montana. The website for the 2012 ride is currently being updated. See the For Riders page for the most current information. Keep an eye on the website for updates on the route as it becomes available.

Klothes Kloset

In November of 2011, Director Jamie Campbell as well as several advisory council members of CASA for Kids attended the annual Church Women United of Columbia Falls Klothes Kloset breakfast celebration.



**Check us out
on facebook
and at our
website!**

www.flatheadcasa.org



A service of the



This organization not only provided clothing, quilts, school supplies and many other items to 23 organizations, they gave 21 mini-grants to various organizations throughout the Flathead Valley, including CASA for Kids!

Their motto "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give" was certainly evident at this celebration! Thank you, Church Women United for our gift!

Save the Date-New Fundraising Event!

"Searching for Super Heroes" is the theme of our new fundraising event. The event will be held at the home of Judah and Tanya Gersh, 166 South Shooting Star Circle, Iron Horse at Whitefish. The cocktail supper and auction will be held on Saturday, April 28th, beginning at 5:00 P.M. Well known local artist Marshall Noice is donating an original oil painting for the live auction. Tickets are \$100 and can be purchased at the CASA for Kids office located in the Gateway Community Center. Tickets are limited and advance ticket purchase is required. Proceeds from this event will help provide training and support for CASA volunteers. For further information contact CASA for Kids at 755-7208.



Thank You Doug and Vonnie

CASA would like to thank Doug and Vonnie Day of Capers for their many years of providing their venue, staff and talents on behalf of the children served by CASA. Their personal contributions have been outstanding and will always be remembered with thoughts of great food and an incredible dining experience.



active CASAs

Cindy Basnett	Chris Lindsay
Lynne Beauclair	Janet Loranger
Debbie Biggar	Shannon Lund
Alex Bokor	Marcy Mangold
Rex Boller	Stacie Martin
John Brakefield	Carol McElwain
Mary Buenz	Sherry Miller
Don Clark	Sally Modie
Anne Collins	Susie Moore
Joan Creek	Beth Morgenstern
Vicki Dickinson	Kathy Norlander
Joyce Funda	Chany Ockert
Gordon Gibbs	Betty Olson
Kim Gress	Pati Pennington
Doris Guidi	Annabel Petty
Terry Hamik	Michelle Rensel
Debbie Hawkins	Shari Roubinek
Bonnie Hegwald	Heather Sande
Mary Ann Hemp	Christian Shaeffer
Dory Hicks	Mary Sillstrop
Marge Hoene	Randy Snyder
Jan Jarvis	DJ Steines
Teresa Kennedy	Lynn Sundelius
Deb Knaff	Marcia Tharp
Joanne Knutson	Holly Walsh
Tami Kreitinger	Myrt Webb
Devin Kuntz	Dawn Westphall
Connie Leistiko	Sue Wilkinson
Lila Leuning	

thanks for all that you do!

Support CASA for Kids, a child's voice in court.

Lift up a child's voice. A child's life.

SPONSORSHIP: CASA for Kids spends \$1,083 per year, per each match of volunteer and abused or neglected child

- Philanthropist, \$1083 and up**
- Benefactor, \$500** **Patron, \$100**
- Mentor \$50** **Supporter, \$25**
- Enclosed is a check to CASA for Kids in the amount of \$ _____**

VOLUNTEER: **Yes, I am interested in learning more about the CASA for Kids Program.**

OTHER: **Use your imagination and let us know what you can do**

Name

Address

Phone

E-mail

Bill my credit card in the amount of \$ _____

MC **Visa** **Discover** **AMEX**

Credit Card Number _____ **Exp. Date** _____

Please do not publish my name as a financial supporter of CASA for Kids

All contributions are tax deductible.

Mail to: *CASA for Kids*, Gateway Community Center,
1203 Hwy 2 West, Suite 39, Kalispell, MT 59901 • (406) 755-7208

Spirit of Christmas Concert 2011

The annual Spirit of Christmas Concert held December 15, 2011, began with a CASA video entitled "I Am for the Child". The video reminded the audience how important it is for the children who have been placed in foster care to have a voice, an advocate to speak for their best interests as they move through the system. The concert was filled with traditional holiday music and songs, presented with special flair by Pastor Dave Merkel and Penni Chisholm; the Columbia Falls United Methodist Church also entertained the enthusiastic audience. CASA for Kids of Flathead County deeply appreciates the sponsors and all those who attended the concert for their continued support. And a special thank you also to those who donated food items for the Flathead Valley food banks!



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