



CASA Connection

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Abuse Hotline
1-800-222-8000

September 2021

Jackson County CASA, Inc.
4903 Telephone Road
Pascagoula, MS 39567

Phone: 228-762-7370
Fax: 228-762-7385

www.jccasa.net



Staff

Frances L. Allsup
Executive Director

Brenda M. Lancaster
Sr. Advocate Supervisor

Mark Roberts
Administration and Planner
Coordinator

Advocate Supervisors
Laura Hasty
Angela Lynn
Jonathan Mills

Co-Mentoring Coordinators
Beverly Goff
Sarah Young

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Santa Is On His Way



As you know, it is the CASA mission to provide a voice for the abused and neglected children on their journey through the youth court system. We are constantly recruiting and training everyday citizens to be this voice. These trained CASA volunteers will be with the children throughout their journey, no matter how long it takes. Without these dedicated community-minded citizens, we would not be able to serve these deserving children.

The holiday season is the time of the year when community supporters begin reaching out to us asking what can they do to help. Many have already contacted us to let us know their plans. Whether it is providing gifts for a child or a group of children, making a monetary donation, or even helping out around the office, your support is needed and always appreciated. We are very fortunate to have such a supportive community willing to make a difference.

Contact the office for further assistance or to discuss ways that you would like to help. Call 228-762-7370 or email Brenda Lancaster at brenda_lancaster@co.jackson.ms.us

Volunteer Training

The last scheduled 2021 pre-service volunteer training begins **September 14.**

We use National CASA's *Guided Learning* curriculum. It provides an individualized, self-paced training that is guided by a National CASA certified training facilitator.

If you would like an application or additional information:

- ♦ Check our website, jccasa.net
- ♦ Call 228-762-7370
- ♦ Email brenda_lancaster@co.jackson.ms.us

Become a
Court Appointed Special Advocate
and help

Change a Child's Story®

Jackson County CASA, Inc.
2021 FALL VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Overview: Part 1 and interview	September 14	6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.
Overview: Part 2	September 16	6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.
The Bleux Case	September 21	6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.
The Green Case	September 28	6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.
The Amarillo Case	October 5	6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.
The Redd Case/Fostering Futures	October 12	6:00 p.m. — 7:30 p.m.
Wrap-up and Optima	October 19	
Law and Induction	October 21 *	

Court Dates

Your Court date is **very important**. Your **presence is needed** at all Court hearings. However, if you are unavailable to attend, please contact the CASA office and provide an update of your case. CASA staff will present your report to the Court. **Your input is essential. Your child/children are counting on you to provide a voice in Court. Please review the schedule carefully. If you have any questions, contact any staff for assistance.**

Confidential

Information unavailable

Foster Care Review

County Conferences are held every six months to discuss and review the permanency plan of the child/children in foster care. Your attendance and input is requested. The review is **NOT** a court hearing, however, the testimony delivered during the conference will be provided to the Court to aid in making decisions about the child's best interest. **Please contact the CASA staff if you are not able to attend.**

Confidential

Information unavailable

In-Service Dates for Volunteers

To maintain your CASA standing you are required to complete 12 hours of In-Service training each year. **Be sure to include any completed In-Service hours on your monthly reports.** We would like to discuss topics that would be beneficial to you. Please contact the CASA staff if you have special requests.

NOTE: You can participate in any of the webinars listed below with the CASA staff at the CASA office. Call or email your Advocate Supervisor or any CASA staff to reserve your spot. If you prefer, you can participate in any of the webinars in your home or office.

September 7, 1:00 p.m. National CASA Association presents a Zoom webinar *Understanding Relationships and their Importance to Early Childhood Development*—Within this presentation, we will discuss how children develop within the context of their primary relationships and the way in which our formative relationships contribute to the development of resiliency and vulnerability. By enriching a child's relational opportunities, we can shift the trajectory of their development toward a life of physical and mental health. Number of in-service hours: 1

Registration Link: https://nationalcasagal.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_iF7vCTA-QiSD4uBp-F8bCA

September 13, 1:00 p.m. National CASA Association presents a Zoom webinar *Bullying and Cyberbullying 101*—This webinar will highlight and describe different types of bullying to include cyberbullying. Participants will understand the impact of bullying on the youth they serve and will be able to present assistance and advocate on their behalf. Individuals who engage in this learning experience will learn about perspectives of bullying observed by diverse professionals. Each participant will leave more knowledgeable of bullying, warning signs, risk factors, and how it affects youth and their mental health. Number of in-service hours: 1

September 22, 5:30—7:30 p.m. We will host *Movie Night* at the Jackson County CASA offices. We will view a documentary, "Kids on the Edge, Last Chance School". The documentary follows children with severe behavioral issues at the Gloucester School in England, a special facility that deals specifically with a broad range of children from varied backgrounds and with a full range of emotional issues. Considering the nature of the program, there is some harsh language from some of the children, so please keep that in mind. We will have a discussion afterwards. Hot dogs, drinks, and popcorn will be served.

The following webinar can be accessed on our website, www.jccasa.net, and viewed at anytime.

Recognizing the effects of trauma and understanding how to address trauma are important objectives in the Trauma and Justice Strategic Initiative at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). SAMHSA is leading the way in integrating a trauma-informed approach throughout health, behavioral health, and related systems to reduce the harmful effects of trauma and violence on individuals, families, and communities, and using innovative strategies to reduce the involvement of individuals with trauma and behavioral health issues in the criminal and juvenile justice systems. Click the link below to view the slides and webinar recording to learn more.

<https://youth.gov/youth-topics/youth-mental-health/trauma-informed-approaches>

The following webinar can be accessed on our website, www.jccasa.net, and viewed at anytime.

Amy Speidel discusses the link between foster care and trauma. She also shares what to expect during the initial meeting stages and how you can begin building safety and connection from the start. Amy wraps up the session by providing a basic understanding of the Brain State Model, which helps you recognize and respond to a child's needs in order to begin building trust and open communication. Click the link below to view the webinar recording.

<https://consciousdiscipline.com/e-learning/webinars/building-safety-and-connection-in-foster-and-adoptive-families-session-1/>

Additionally, many independent In-Service opportunities can be found on our website, www.jccasa.net

Change a Child's Story ®

An agency of United Way for Jackson and George Counties since 1999



Welcome to the new Volunteers

Our late summer Pre-Service Volunteer Training began July 12 and continued through August. The training was conducted by our National CASA certified training facilitator Patty Waters and Laura Hasty, with assistance from the CASA staff. Throughout the training, the volunteer candidates were provided information on two volunteer opportunities with our program, the CASA advocate and the Fostering Futures Mentoring Advocate. CASA volunteers advocate for children ages 0—18. Mentor advocates advocate for children 14—18, preparing them for transitioning out of the system, into a life of independence. August 19, Youth Court Judge, Sharon Sigalas, inducted them as CASA Volunteers. We are delighted to welcome the new volunteers.



Haley Aziz



Denise King



Marci Pringle



Brianna Ricks



Tahnya Tremonte

September Birthdays

September 1

Sherry Hodges-Thornton

September 14

Samantha Bignell

September 29

Megan Rogers

September 4

Shana Lane

September 17

Marie Souza



Latest Program Statistics

JC CASA is a volunteer-powered organization that advocates for the abused and neglected children of our county. We have an amazing group of dedicated volunteers that provide a voice for these children throughout their court process. As of July 31, 2021, **103 Volunteers** have served **182 children** from **103 families** with **2883 donated hours of service for the 2021 calendar year.**

FYI



CASA loves Planting the Seed to Change a Child's Story®! Jackson County CASA has been changing a child's story for over 35 years. The program is privileged to be a part of community events that help bring awareness to the CASA mission. On Wednesday, August 4, staff members, Laura Hasty and Sarah Young, headed to the St. Martin Indoor Market. We strive to make each community event stand out on its own with our table design. The staff adopted the "planting" theme to symbolize the growth that our volunteers sew and reap. Change a Child's Story® is National CASA Association's new logo, making it the logo for all CASA programs. Change a Child's Story® is always near and dear to our hearts when integrating our mission into our designs.

Laura and Sarah tackled Ocean Springs Farmer's Market on August 21 with the same stellar table design and shared the CASA mission with attendees. Each time we participate in community markets, it gives us the opportunity to share our hearts with all. If you ever see us at any of these markets, come by and say hello!

On Wednesday, August 18th, *The Lady May* in Ocean Springs honored United Way for Jackson and George Counties with a "Give Back Day." From 3:00pm-9:00pm, 10% of every purchase directly impacted United Way. United Way's motto is "Live United," and we take immense pride in uniting for events such as this. We have been an agency of United Way since 1999, and their unprecedented support has been a guiding light in our mission from the very beginning. Not only were we able to make a huge impact just by being a part of the "Give Back Day," but we were able to enjoy some yummy food with friends, staff, governing board members, and volunteers. A special thank you to all who joined us on the 18th! This is how we *Live United*!



On August 24th Jackson County CASA hosted a recruitment rally at the Mississippi Gulf Coast YMCA, Blossman Family Branch in Ocean Springs. Guest speaker, District Attorney Angel Myers, praised CASA volunteers, explaining why they are so special and needed in the community. Also, in attendance was Attorney Stacy Zorn. The master of ceremonies was JC CASA, Inc. board member, the honorable Brandon Riches. Lost Pizza Company of Ocean Springs donated their amazing pizzas for all to enjoy, along with wonderful brownies from Anderson's Bakery. One of our newest volunteers and a local entrepreneur, Haley Aziz of LunaBelles Cookie Crumbs, provided adorable cookies with the CASA logo on them. We also had energy drinks donated by Allen Beverage to give all the superheroes the energy they need to help change a child's story.



*We have a
new tent.
Yeah!!!*

