



CASA DAY AT THE CAPITOL HUGE SUCCESS

Thank you to our local Legislative Advocacy Team (LAT) for an exceptional trip to Austin to visit with our legislators, Senator Perry's District Manager, Laura Lewis and Representative Lambert. and his District Manager, Robyn Wertheim. To track Texas CASA's Champion bill and others relevant to Child Welfare click here. [Bookmark the 87th Session Bill Tracker! - The CASA Voice \(texascasa.org\)](#)

Over 100 bills have been filed by Texas lawmakers aimed to improve the troubled Department of Family and Protective Services. Big Country CASA staff met with both Rep. Lambert's Senator Perry's office to discuss the top priorities and the roll-out of Community Based Care. Those attending from our program and pictured below were Garner Roberts, Holly Irvin, Rebel Taylor, Lee Ann Millender, Rep. Lambert, Michael Dean, Kimberly Putnam, and Gordon Gloria.



Also meeting with Sen. Perry's office were members from CASA of the Highland Lakes and North Star CASA.

New Staff Member

Alex Garcia, former Supervisor with 2INgage and CVS worker with CPS, has joined our staff as a Program Specialist. He also served in the Air Force before beginning his career in Child Welfare. Alex says he is excited to continue serving children and families! He will be overseeing Collaborative Family Engagement (CFE) and working with staff and volunteers identifying and assessing ways we can advocate even more for our children.



Can Collaborative Family Engagement (CFE) Help Solve the Placement Crisis for our Children & Youth?

Watch the Mobility Map in Action

[Mobility Mapping Part 1 on Vimeo](#)
[Mobility Mapping Part 2 on Vimeo](#)

CFE starts the work of building connections for children and families from the earliest point in the case. Through introduction of CFE engagement and connection tools, the CASA volunteer can ensure that the child remains connected to those important, safe people in their lives.

SAVE THE DATE!!!

The "Courts Perspective Forum"



Save the date!

April 3, 2023

5:30 P.M.

Community Foundation of Abilene

850 N. 1st St., Abilene, Tx

Food Provided

Children are the heart of the work we do at Big Country CASA. Judges Rotenberry and Propst are speaking to our CASA program about what they see from the bench and concerns they have for all children involved in the court system. Please come and listen to their hearts about our children and families. Afterwards, we as a CASA body will discuss our thoughts and possible solutions that Big Country CASA can assist with. All staff, board, and volunteers are invited to attend. Brainstorming from all levels is what is needed to ensure we advocate for our children in the best ways possible. This will be a very impactful meeting. Please come. Your input is needed. RSVP preferred. (325) 677-6448

GET YOUR SHOES LACED UP & YOUR CAPE READY...

THE CASA SUPERHERO 5K FUN RUN IS COMING



Contact Rebel Taylor for more information.

rebeltaylor@bigcountrycasa.org

(325) 677-6448

Interesting Information to Read

The Child Welfare Information Gateway has an interesting piece on being a support for families with mental health and substance use disorders including working with children and youth as well as parents and caregivers. [Supporting Families With Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders - Child Welfare Information Gateway](#)

Texas Permanency Outcomes Project has excellent training for those seeking a Social Work Certificate in Child Welfare Services. [Social Work Certificate in Child Welfare Services – Texas Permanency Outcomes Project \(utexas.edu\)](#) They will be here in Abilene on Monday, May 15th.

The Texas Alliance for Child and Family Studies released a report the gratefulness for the legislature focusing on needs of foster children. [Rate Modernization Reports Published - TACFS](#)

Upcoming Big Country CASA Training

- **New Advocate Training** class kicks off March 23rd at 6pm. It's not too late to sign up or refer a friend!
- **CASA Café** – March 14th at 12pm – Updates to ETC benefits. See email for Zoom registration.
- **Lunch & Learn** – March 21st at 12pm – Best Practices for LGBTQ+ Foster Youth. Please email michaeldean@bigcountrycasa.org to sign up.

Children with CASA volunteers on their cases:

- Receive more services than those without CASA volunteers.
- Perform better in school (more likely to pass courses, less likely to exhibit poor conduct, and less likely to be expelled).
- Are substantially less likely to remain in long term foster care.

National CASA [CASA for KidsVolunteering](#)