



## Family Fun Night at the Zoo

In recognition of Child Abuse Awareness Month

FREE ADMISSION to the zoo.  
FREE drinks and snacks.

FREE ACTIVITIES:  
Carousel Rides  
Train Rides  
Animal Encounters  
Giraffe Feedings

Community partners will be on-site with valuable resources.

**FRIDAY** 6-9p.m.  
**APRIL 10TH** Last entry at 8p.m.



### EVENT SPONSORED BY:

**BC HFS**  
Health and Human Services - Est. 1944

**NEW HORIZONS**  
Keeping Kids First

**CASA**  
Court Appointed Special Advocates  
FOR CHILDREN  
BIG COUNTRY CASA

Child Welfare Board  
Community Partners

**PUBLIC HEALTH**  
CITY OF ABILENE TEXAS

**INgage**  
Community Engagement

For questions contact Heather Champion  
(325) 201-6672 or hc1917@bcfs.net



## Share Your Story with Texas CASA!

The Texas CASA Communications team is looking to share powerful stories that highlight your successes, the evolving realities of the child welfare system and the vital role CASA plays in the lives of children and families.

If you have an inspiring story about a volunteer or staff member that you'd like to share with our statewide network, we'd love to hear it. You can send us the completed story or simply share the idea with us, and we will be happy to write it for you.

Here are the types of stories we're hoping to feature in the coming months:

- How CASA volunteers change lives
- Your experience with the rollout of Community-Based Care
- Your experience managing more severe cases

## Confidential Companions!

We know that being a CASA volunteer is hard on the heart! Please know that you are more than welcome to have a Confidential Companion if you are interested! Reach out to Jen at [jenniferlemke@bigcountrycasa.org](mailto:jenniferlemke@bigcountrycasa.org) for more information!

## Big Country Navigator App!

Big Country Navigator is a Texas-based mobile and desktop app designed to share services, resources, and information with young people and families, particularly those experiencing homelessness. While using the app, users can search for and request assistance with services and resources in their current location, local communities, and throughout the Big Country region of Texas to connect them with helpful supports.



**BIG COUNTRY**  
NAVIGATOR

## Check out Gordon and Vernetta's Spot on the Abilene People Podcast!



Watch the Abilene People podcast at [BigCountryHomepage.com](http://BigCountryHomepage.com) to see more CASA content!



## Tour de Abilene!

We are fortunate to be invited to tour Oceans Behavioral Hospital this month on March 10th at 2:30. 4225 Woods Place 79602



Don't forget to like, share, and comment on our social media posts!



### Info Meet Thursdays!

**In Person:**

- March 5<sup>th</sup>, 9-10am @Summer Moon
- March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2-3pm @Tea2Go (South)
- March 26<sup>th</sup>, 5:15-6:15@Mezamiz Coffee House

Volunteers are Welcome to Attend Info Meets and Bring a Friend!

### Spring New Volunteer Training

- Thurs Mar 19th @ 6pm – 7:30pm
- Mon Mar 23rd @ 5:45pm – 9:00pm
- Thurs Mar 26th @ 5:45pm – 9:00pm
- Mon Mar 30th @ 5:45pm – 9:00pm
- Thurs Apr 2nd @ 5:45pm – 9:00pm
- Mon Apr 6th @ 5:45pm – 9:00pm
- Thurs Apr 9th @ 5:45pm – 9:00pm

Please feel free to attend to refresh your CASA knowledge. Let Jennifer know so she can have dinner for you.

### March CEU Opportunities:

Lunch and Learn -March 4<sup>th</sup> New Horizons  
Keep an eye out for other opportunities!

### Tour de Abilene Dates:

March 10th @2:30pm @ Oceans Behavioral Hospital: [4225 Woods Place 79602](https://www.google.com/maps/place/4225+Woods+Place+79602,+Abilene,+TX,+79602)

### Reminder:

You have about 10 months to get your 12 hours of CEUs for the year! Please contact Jen at [jenniferlemke@bigcountrycasa.org](mailto:jenniferlemke@bigcountrycasa.org) if you have any questions.

*Hope needs a helping hand*



Please reach out to staff or supervisors if you are feeling overwhelmed or in need of assistance!



### Advocates in Action!

**Family Research:**

Advocates often rely on creative research strategies to locate relatives who may not be immediately visible in case files. Recently an advocate was working with a youth in foster care who had very limited known family connections. While reviewing a life-event notice, connections were made to some extended family members listed. This type of research can lead to conversations and potentially to the identification of safe, appropriate relatives who were willing to step forward.

**Big Country CASA will be assisting Communities in Schools with their coffee sleeves for Mental Health Awareness Month. Please grab a couple coffee sleeves to color with your CASA Kiddos from Dana!**



### Fun Run 2026!



Click the image for a link to register to run our 5K!

Follow the link below to sign up to volunteer!  
<https://runsignup.com/Race/Volunteer/TX/Abilene/BigCountryCASASuperhero5K>



Check out the Back to School Resource Fair & Family Fun Day Facebook page! Big Country CASA helps host this community event every year. Please share with your families and neighbors!

### Quote of the month:

*"I think luck falls on not just the brave but also the ones who believe they belong there."*  
— Novak Djokovic

