



## Introducing Our Newest Advocates !

The fourth class of Court Appointed Special Advocates was sworn-in on August 25, 2004 by Commissioner J. Paul Coan at the Hall of Justice in Fairfield. This class produced a total of 5 new volunteers, all of which have been assigned children who have been deemed in need of an advocate. As Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), volunteers go through an intensive forty-hour training program which prepares them to carry out an unbiased and organized examination of the abused child's court dependency situation. Volunteers must identify resources and services for the child, speak up for and plead the case of the child and keep track of court orders and plans of the child welfare agency, all with the goal of securing a safe and permanent home for the child.

*Newly Sworn-In Volunteers are pictured here with Presiding Judge Peter B. Foor, Supervisor Barbara Kondylis & Commissioner Paul Coan: G. Rodney Moses, Timothy Sutherland, Lillian Torres, Michele Knox-Thomas and Jennifer Brusso.*



**A**s we bring 2004 to a close, it provides us a time to reflect on our accomplishments of the past year and to look forward to the promise of a new year. In 2004, the CASA program saw many changes. We have a new Board of Directors dedicated to assuring the sustainability of the program; we've recruited and graduated 2 new classes of volunteer advocates; we've made new friends and built new relationships through our outreach and fundraising efforts; and we've brought hope to the 22 children we've served in our program over the past year.

**A**s we look forward to 2005, we realize we must continue to support the efforts of our dedicated volunteers, as well as the efforts of all of our partners in advocating for children in the dependency court system. We will continue to collaborate with Child Welfare Services, attorneys, the court, foster parents, teachers, therapists, and policy makers, in assuring children who have been removed from their homes because of abuse and neglect receive the benefits of our work together.

**W**e will continue to strengthen our Board of Directors and support them as they take on the responsibility of nurturing the CASA program into the future.



## From the Director's Desk

**W**e will continue to recruit new Board members and provide them with the training and assistance they need to become an integral part of the program. We will continue to recruit and train dedicated volunteer advocates to improve our capacity to serve the many children in need of a special advocate to guide them through this difficult phase of their lives.

**F**inally, we will continue to invite and encourage our community members to become involved in this important project through fundraising and public awareness activities. We know that through the support of our communities, children will have a better opportunity to thrive.

**Carolyn Thomas-Wold**

### -- SAVE THE DATE --

California CASA Association's CASA Academy & 2005 Symposium: *Advocating for Paths to Permanency*

Date

January 27 - 29, 2005

Location

Hilton Long Beach Hotel & Executive Center  
701 W. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach  
(562) 983-3478

Registration Fees

Standard Fee: \$400.00  
CASA Board Members: \$350.00  
CASA Staff & Volunteers: \$250.00

Hotel Room Rate

\$123.26 per night including tax. No additional charge for double occupancy.

**For additional information, please contact the CASA office at (707) 421-7945**

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## Web Sites of Interest

[www.parentsoup.com](http://www.parentsoup.com)  
[www.parentstages.com](http://www.parentstages.com)  
[www.focusonyourchild.com](http://www.focusonyourchild.com)  
[www.successfuldiscipline.com](http://www.successfuldiscipline.com)  
[www.parenting.com](http://www.parenting.com)  
[www.parenthood.com](http://www.parenthood.com)  
[www.familyeducation.com](http://www.familyeducation.com)  
[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)  
[www.parentingadolescents.com](http://www.parentingadolescents.com)

## Buying Safe Toys

By Vincent Lannelli, M.D., [www.pediatrics.about.com](http://www.pediatrics.about.com)

The United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) Chairman Hal Stratton recently warned holiday season gift buyers to be on the lookout for recently recalled toys and children's products that pose serious safety threats to youngsters.

"Before purchasing or giving any gift, particularly one intended for a child, double-check to make sure it does not pose a hazard," Stratton said. "Visit CPSC's web site to determine if it has been recalled."

While considering product safety when shopping for new gift items, Stratton also urged Americans to examine older toys and products in their possession that can pose hazards. He urged operators of daycare centers and thrift stores to be especially vigilant in removing previously recalled items such as older baby cribs, baby walkers, and high chairs from their premises.

Consumers can get the list of recalled toys and children's products by going to the CPSC web site, [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov), or by calling toll-free (800) 638-2772.

## WORD SCRAMBLE

(see back page for solutions)

A D H O I Y L

S N A K W O L S E F

V C O I A T A N

P S N S R E E T

Y P H P A W N E E A Y R

## What Every Child Needs

1. **Interaction**  
Consistent, long-term attention from caring adults actually increases your child's capacity to learn.
2. **Touch**  
Holding and cuddling do more than just comfort your baby—they help his/her brain grow.
3. **Stable Relationships**  
Relationships with parents and other caregivers buffer stress that can harm your child.
4. **Safe, Healthy Environments**  
Environments should be free of lead, loud noises, sharp objects, and other hazards.
5. **Self-Esteem**  
Self-esteem grows with respect, encouragement and positive role models from the beginning.
6. **Quality Care**  
Quality care from trained professionals can make the difference when you can't be with your child.
7. **Play**  
Play helps your child explore his/her senses and discover how the world works.
8. **Communication**  
Talking with your child builds verbal skills.
9. **Music**  
Music expands your child's world, teaches new skills and offers a fun way to interact with your child.
10. **Reading**  
Reading to your child from the earliest days of life shows its importance and creates a lifelong love of books and helps a healthy brain.

Source: The McCormick Tribune Foundation

## Community Events

### Benicia:

- ≈ 12/11 Christmas Parade, downtown
- ≈ Tour the Benicia Historical Museum: war artifacts, doll collections, California Indian display, gold mining display. 2060 Carmel Rd. 745-5435

### Dixon:

- ≈ 11/20 Holiday Open House, Downtown, all day.
- ≈ 12/2 Christmas Tree Lighting, caroling and carriage rides, in front of public library, 5:30pm

### Fairfield:

- ≈ 12/3 Holiday Night of Lights, 6:30pm, Texas Street
- ≈ 12/9 United States Air Force Band of the Golden West, 7:30pm, Fairfield Center for the Creative Arts. Free tickets available at City Hall at the Mall (CHAM)
- ≈ 12/10 Handel's Sing It Yourself Messiah, 7pm. Free tickets and information at CHAM
- ≈ 12/18 Breakfast w/Santa, 10-1pm, \$6 sign up at CHAM
- ≈ 12/26 Community Kwanzaa Celebration, free tickets and information at CHAM

### Suisun City:

- ≈ 12/4 Christmas in Old Town, for information call 421-7309
- ≈ Western Railway Museum, Saturday/Sunday 10-5pm, Highway 12

### Vacaville:

- ≈ 11/30 Festival of Trees, Vacaville Skate Center, 11-6pm
- ≈ 11/30 Merriment on Main Street, Tree Lighting & Festival, 5-9pm
- ≈ 12/10 USAF Band of the Golden West, 7:30pm, Vacaville Cultural Center (pick up free tickets at box office after 11/20/04)
- ≈ 12/11 USAF Band of the Golden West, 3pm (free)

### Vallejo:

- ≈ Ongoing Vallejo Farmer's Market, every Saturday, 9-1pm, 200-400 Georgia Street.
- ≈ 12/5 Sing Along Messiah, 6-8pm, First Presbyterian Church, 1350 Amador Street. All seats \$10, kids 5 and under free.
- ≈ 1/29 Doll Show, Solano County Fairgrounds, 9-4pm

Free Days at the Naval & Historical Museum, for information call 643-0077:

- ≈ 11/20 CA Maritime Academy Education
- ≈ 12/18 Teddy Bear Tea Party
- ≈ 1/17 Family Fun Day

### Everywhere:

- ≈ 1/1 Happy New Year !!!
- ≈ 1/15 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day



# Volunteer Support Group (a.k.a. Case Review)

"I would like to attend a Case Review but ..." Does this sound familiar? Is this the little voice speaking to you while another little voice inside is saying, "I really do want to discuss some issues I've been thinking about"? We're making it even easier for you! Mark your calendar right NOW so you will attend an upcoming "Volunteer Support Group" meeting. It's a great place to share concerns, discuss issues and learn how to meet any challenges you or your child may be facing. Who knows, you might just really enjoy it and want to join us every quarter!

**Location:**

CASA Office, 2300 Boynton Ave., Suite 103, Fairfield, CA. 94533

**Dates:**

Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup>  
10am-12:00pm

Saturday, March 5<sup>th</sup>  
10am-12pm

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO RSVP, CALL CATHI AT (707) 399-4961.

## Opportunity for CASA Volunteers to Earn CEUs

**Event:** Integrated Family Support Initiative (IFSI) Lunch Bag Training

**Location:** Child Haven Conference Room

733 Webster St., Fairfield, CA.

November 16 - Working with Teen Parents and Teens Who Are Aging Out of Foster Care, Lorraine Hargrave, Director, Children In Need of Hugs

December 7 - Holiday Safety Issues

For information on their 2005 schedule, Call U-Sef Barnes at CHILD HAVEN AT (707) 425-5744 x120.

### WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT CASA?

COME TO ONE OF OUR ORIENTATIONS! THEY ARE HELD THE FIRST WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

(DEC. 1, JAN. 5, FEB. 2, MAR. 2) FROM 6-7:00 P.M. AT THE CASA OFFICE.

FOR INFORMATION CALL CATHI AT (707) 399-4961.

### DONATIONS NEEDED

The children in our program are just like any other children in that they have birthdays, graduations, holiday events and other special occasions to celebrate. Gift donations from the community let these children know they are recognized and cared about. The following donations will bring a smile to a child's face in the coming months:

- ♥ Gift certificates to retail, video and book stores, and restaurants
- ♥ Passes for movies, musicals, ballets, ball games and amusement parks such as miniature golf, ice skating, bowling or bounce house companies.
- ♥ Tape Recorders
- ♥ CD Players
- ♥ Hair Products
- ♥ Educational Toys
- ♥ Board Games
- ♥ Journals
- ♥ Disposable Cameras
- ♥ Sports Equipment
- ♥ Wallets & Purses
- ♥ Jewelry

*Every gift from the heart plants a new seed of love.*

**Welcome Cathi Engel, our new CASA Volunteer Coordinator! Cathi has worked for many years with nonprofit agencies, including Big Brothers Big Sisters, North Bay Regional Center, Child Haven & Children's Network. She has also partnered with CASA agencies and is well acquainted with our mission. You can now contact Cathi at 399-4961.**

### DONATION SLIP

We greatly appreciate your donation. Your generosity assists us in realizing our goal of providing the abused and at-risk children of Solano County with a CASA volunteer whenever one is needed.

Donor Information:

Enclosed is a check or cash for this amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (You will not be contacted unless there is a problem): \_\_\_\_\_

Please cut and mail to: Solano County CASA 2300 Boynton Ave. Suite 103 Fairfield, CA. 94533



## Solano County CASA thanks all of our volunteers and supporters!

We also wish to thank the Rainbow Children’s Center for partnering with CASA to hold a fun golf tournament in August. The tournament and silent auction raised \$2,500 for CASA! Special thanks to Forever Young Foundation, Office Depot, Johnny Miller, Inc., Thornton & Sons Jewelers, Carolyn Thomas-Wold, Carmen Ward and Maria Moses for their donations and all those golfers for supporting our agencies!

Word Scramble Solutions: holiday, snowflakes, vacation, presents, Happy New Year

<p><b>Solano County CASA</b>          2300 Boynton Ave.          Suite 103          Fairfield, CA. 94533          (707) 421-7945</p>	<p><b>Board of Directors</b>          Ann Hamilton-Short          Karen McCord          Julie Pascual          Rojana Turner          Carmen Ward</p>	<p><b>Advisory Committee</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Pam Boskin</td> <td>JoAnn Parker</td> </tr> <tr> <td>J. Paul Coan</td> <td>Chuck Ramey</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Garry Ichikawa</td> <td>Carmen Ward</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Barbara Kondylis</td> <td>Robbie Wilson</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lucy Marquart</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Pam Boskin	JoAnn Parker	J. Paul Coan	Chuck Ramey	Garry Ichikawa	Carmen Ward	Barbara Kondylis	Robbie Wilson	Lucy Marquart	
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ADDRESS  
 CORRECTION  
 REQUESTED