

CASA PROGRAM OF ST. JOSEPH COUNTY, INDIANA

THE CASA MONTHLY

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1 JANUARY 1, 2012

CASA INTRODUCES *MONTHLY* NEWSLETTER

The Court Appointed Special Advocates Program of St. Joseph County, Indiana (CASA of SJC) is excited to introduce the first issue of *The CASA Monthly*.

On every first of the month, CASA of SJC will send *The CASA Monthly* to report on the status of the CASA of SJC Program. *The Monthly* Newsletter will update volunteers on the latest and greatest in the world of CASA, which includes local, state and federal news about the child welfare system.

The CASA Monthly will include reminders for up-

coming trainings, in-services, and monthly reporting.

Furthermore, each month, *The Monthly* will feature a "Spotlight Article" on a volunteer who has demonstrated the role of a CASA in an exceptional manner.

The Monthly welcomes all CASAs to submit articles, stories, or information they wish to share with fellow CASA volunteers. Please email casa@jjconline.org with these submissions or feedback about *The Monthly*.



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY

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JOSEPH COUNTY](#)

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JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- *Judy G.*
- *Erin I.*
- *Jenny K.*
- *Judy L.*
- *Jimmy M.*

Happy Birthday!

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KNOW YOUR MANDATORY REPORTING LAWS

The wake of recent news stories about child abuse, including the Penn State scandal and the untimely death of Tranelle Sturgis, has caused for much reflection about child abuse prevention in St. Joseph County. Prevent Child Abuse (PCA) has partnered with a variety of service providers to spread the word about "what to do" if

one suspects a child has been neglected or abused.

Jennifer Pickering, PCA Director, explains to the [South Bend Tribune](#) that there are many misconceptions about the mandatory reporting laws in Indiana. She says that many institutions, such as schools or hospitals, have their own internal policy

on how to handle suspected child abuse, but Ms. Pickering emphasizes that everyone in the State of Indiana is legally obligated to report any suspected child abuse or neglect directly to the Department of Child Services at 800.800.5556.

MONTHLY SPOTLIGHT: JAY AND JOANNA W.

The *Monthly* recognizes Jay and Joanna W. as exemplary CASAs of the month. They have quietly yet relentlessly persevered through many road blocks of “the system” on one of the biggest cases to which our CASA Program has been assigned. They have portrayed ample amounts of “grace under pressure” in court and in many meetings



that have taken place throughout the month. *The Monthly* also applauds Jay and Joanna because of their humility and tenacity in advocating for the best interests

of their CASA children. They have been integral to getting their CASA children what they need by making sound and well-thought out recommendations to the Court. The *CASA Monthly* is grateful and appreciative of Jay and Joanna’s hard work. Congratulations!

JANUARY REMINDERS

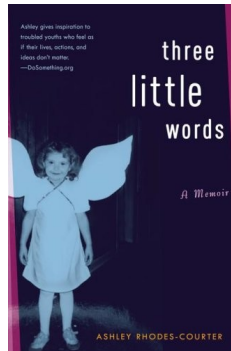
SUBMIT YOUR MONTHLY HOURS AND REPORTS TO YOUR SUPERVISOR

THE CASA OFFICE IS CLOSED ON JANUARY 2ND AND JANUARY 16TH

“73 WELFARE ADMINS
44 CASEWORKERS
19 FOSTER PARENTS
23 ATTORNEYS
17 PSYCHOLOGISTS,
PSYCHIATRISTS,
THERAPISTS
5 GAL STAFF
4 JUDGES
3 ABUSE REGISTRY WORKERS
2 PRIMARY CASEWORKERS
1 GUARDIAN AD LITEM”

THREE LITTLE WORDS

BOOK CLUB RECOMMENDS *THREE LITTLE WORDS*



In *Three Little Words*, author Ashley Rhodes-Courter writes about her life and experiences in a broken foster care system. Yet, despite the odds that were consistently stacked up against her, the memoir tells an inspiring story of her growth and success. Rhodes-Courter also recounts her positive experience with her Guardian ad

Litem (GAL) and how her GAL played a fundamental role in providing her the ultimate gift for a foster child: a safe, loving, and permanent home. The *CASA Monthly* recommends this book to any CASA who enjoys a quick, inspiring and informative read!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2012 WINTER CASA TRAINING:

JANUARY 3RD —
FEBRUARY 23RD

SPREAD THE WORD!

CASA CEO PIRAINO DISCUSSES OVERMEDICATION OF FOSTER KIDS

Throughout this past December, National CASA CEO Michael Piraino has made guest appearances on ABC’s [20/20](#) and CNN’s [Anderson Cooper 360](#) to discuss the apparent overmedication of foster youth.

As the [Governmental Accountability Office \(GAO\)](#) reports, foster youth are 4.5 times more likely to be

prescribed psychotropic drugs (and often multiple kinds of drugs) than children who remain in their families’ homes.

While the CASA Program tries to combat this unfortunate statistic, CEO Piraino urges all volunteers to continue to fight for the best interests of our CASA chil-

dren by keeping a watchful eye on the amounts, levels, and kinds of medication being prescribed.

More information about National CASA’s involvement with the fight against overmedication of foster youth can be found at the [National CASA web site](#).

CURRENT CASA OF SIC STATS

97 CASAS SERVING
306 CHILDREN