

## CASA Weekly Happenings

Dear CASA Volunteers:



**Valentines Gifts for your CASA Kids.** Thank you to CASA Vicki Grinnell who made heart-shaped pillows for our CASA kids. These pillows are adorable! You'll want to stop by the CASA offices to pick some up for your CASA kids. There are a dozen pillows so come soon.

**CASA Children's Birthdays.** We all like to receive birthday cards, maybe a birthday cake, and some presents. I'll never forget watching a training video where a young teenage foster girl, who was recently adopted, was surprised when her family gave her a birthday party and a birthday cake. She started to cry and smile at the same time saying no one had ever given her a birthday cake. Thanks for communicating with foster parents about upcoming birthdays. We have had CASA volunteers do anything from sending a child a birthday card to attending a birthday party.

At the 2007 Healthy Children, Healthy Community Conference in Klamath Falls, the keynote speaker was Dr. David Willis, a Behavioral-Developmental Pediatrician and leader in Community Pediatrics. In talking about the importance of relationships and early childhood social-emotional development, Dr. Willis said something that stuck with me. He said "Every child needs at least one person who is crazy about them."

Thank you for being possibly that one person in a child's life who cares about the little things and the big things. "By focusing on positive relationships we impart prevention, promotion and healing forces to our youngest citizens in order to promote their healthy and sturdy development." David W. Willis, M.D., Healthy Children, Healthy Community Conference, Klamath Falls, Oregon, 2007.

**RSVP for CASA Soup Luncheon.** You are invited to attend a CASA Soup Luncheon at the CASA offices, 3rd floor conference room, on Thursday, January 28, from 12 to 1 pm. Please RSVP to [sberger@klamathfallscasa.org](mailto:sberger@klamathfallscasa.org). This is an opportunity to network with other CASA volunteers. CASA volunteers are allowed to discuss their case with other CASA volunteers to gain their perspective, encouragement and recommendations.

**RSVP for Judges Luncheon.** You are invited to attend the Judges Luncheon with our new volunteers on Monday, January 25, from 12 to 1 pm. Please bring a dessert. Lunch is provided.

**Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.** A majority of the cases we work on involve drug and alcohol issues. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) is a devastating disease with no cure. The effects can include physical problems and problems with behavior and learning. Children with FAS struggle in school, especially with math, so early intervention and treatment is key to helping these children succeed.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) talks about the importance of early intervention to ensure a child receives the appropriate medical and social services and education. As a CASA, you can make recommendations that will help a child with FAS.

Since these kids struggle with school and are at high risk for juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, and mental health problems, it is important for our CASA volunteers to advocate for a referral to a specialist; e.g., a developmental pediatrician, child psychologist, or clinical geneticists. Thank you for speaking to the caseworker about having the foster parent take a child to the child's pediatrician for an evaluation and possible referral if there is a possibility the mom used alcohol during pregnancy and if a child has any of the following symptoms :

- Abnormal facial features, such as a smooth ridge between the nose and upper lip (this ridge is called the philtrum)
- Small head size
- Shorter-than-average height
- Low body weight
- Poor coordination
- Hyperactive behavior
- Difficulty paying attention
- Poor memory
- Difficulty in school (especially with math)
- Learning disabilities
- Speech and language delays
- Intellectual disability or low IQ
- Poor reasoning and judgment skills
- Sleep and sucking problems as a baby
- Vision or hearing problems
- Problems with the heart, kidneys, or bones

Thank you for the great work you do as CASA volunteers!

Sincerely,  
Sandy Berger  
Executive Director  
CASA for Children of Klamath County  
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