

THE FORSYTH VOICE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

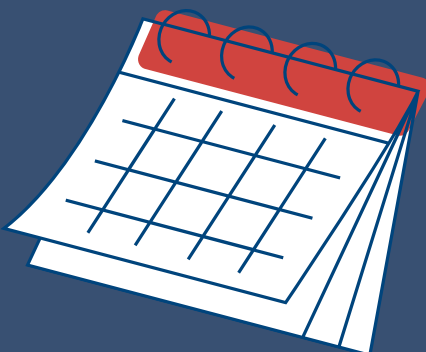
- *What would you do?*
- *National Foster Care Month*
- *Mental Health Awareness Month*



UPCOMING EVENTS:

MAY

Tuesday, May 26th
CASA Book Club
CASA Office | 5:30PM



JULY

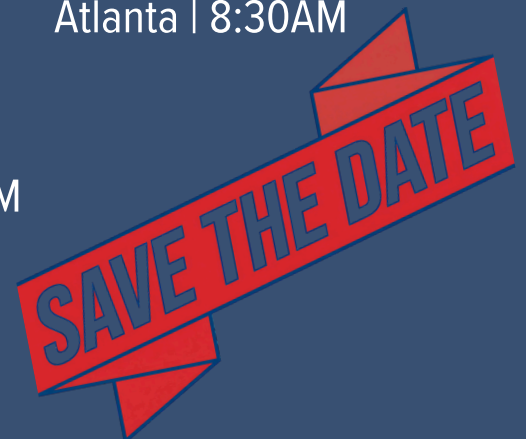
Friday, July 10th
Lunch with the Judges
Juvenile Courthouse | 12PM

Friday, July 24th
Back to School Bash
Cumming First UMC | 11:30AM

Tuesday, July 28th
CASA Book Club
CASA Office | 5:30PM

AUGUST

Saturday, August 22nd
GA CASA Conference
Atlanta | 8:30AM





320 advocacy hours



39 hearings attended



2,510 miles driven

APRIL BY THE NUMBERS

April Monthly Recap

- We proudly hosted our very first **Boots & Boogie** event! Thank you to everyone who attended, volunteered, donated, and supported CASA's mission to advocate for children in foster care.
- We are also celebrating a meaningful milestone — **3 children achieved permanency** through permanent guardianship last month, helping provide them with stability, support, and lasting connections.







Boots were on the ground and support was in full swing!
Thank you for making our first
BOOTS & BOOGIE
such a success!

What Would You Do?

Real-Life Advocacy Scenarios

Last month, we asked you how you would respond in the following situation:

A 9-year-old child on your case has a history of trauma and multiple placement changes. In the current foster home, the child is showing frequent mood swings, impulsive behavior, and increasing aggression at home and school. The caregiver and school report ongoing concerns, and progress in therapy has been limited.

No psychological or psychiatric evaluation has been completed to further assess the child's needs. As the case moves forward, there are questions about what additional supports may be necessary to help the child stabilize and succeed.




Next month's scenario:

A 12-year-old child on your case has recently begun engaging in behaviors that appear intended to disrupt the current foster placement, including lying about the caregiver, refusing household rules, damaging property, and telling others they want to be moved. When spoken to privately, the child shares that they do not believe placements ever last and would “rather leave first” before getting attached. The caregiver feels overwhelmed and is considering requesting the child's removal from the home.

The child has a significant history of trauma and multiple prior placement disruptions.

What would you do?

 ***Look to next month's newsletter to see what the most effective course of action might be!***

What would you do?

Here's how we recommend responding:

- Recognize that the child's aggression, impulsivity, and mood swings may be trauma responses connected to repeated placement changes and disrupted attachment.
- Advocate for a psychological and/or psychiatric evaluation to better understand the child's emotional and behavioral needs and identify appropriate supports or diagnoses.
- Encourage consistent collaboration between the caregiver, school, therapist, and case team to provide predictable structure and unified behavioral responses across environments.
- Monitor the child's school functioning closely and advocate for educational or behavioral supports if needed.

Sample court report recommendation: “CASA recommends that the child receive a comprehensive psychological and/or psychiatric evaluation to further assess emotional and behavioral needs given the child's trauma history, placement instability, and increasing behavioral concerns. CASA further recommends continued placement stability, trauma-informed caregiving, and ongoing collaboration among the caregiver, school, therapist, and case team to support the child's emotional regulation and overall well-being.”

Mental Health Matters in Foster Care

May is both **Mental Health Awareness Month** and **National Foster Care Month**, offering an important opportunity to recognize the unique challenges faced by children in foster care. Currently, more than **328,000 children** are in foster care across the United States, and studies estimate that up to **80% experience significant mental health concerns** related to trauma, abuse, neglect, grief, or instability, compared to roughly **20% of children** in the general population.

Children in foster care often face repeated disruptions in relationships, school placements, and living environments, which can impact emotional regulation, trust, self-esteem, and overall well-being. Without proper support, these experiences may contribute to anxiety, depression, behavioral challenges, or difficulty forming healthy connections later in life.

Research consistently shows that one of the strongest protective factors for children who have experienced trauma is the presence of a **safe, supportive, and consistent adult relationship**. Stability, advocacy, and emotional support can make a meaningful difference in a child's healing journey.

CASA volunteers help support children's emotional well-being by:

- Advocating for trauma-informed services and mental health support.
- Providing consistency and positive adult connection during times of uncertainty.
- Helping children feel heard, valued, and supported throughout their case.
- Promoting safe, stable, and permanent outcomes that reduce further trauma.



Did you know?

- ***During 2025, Georgia served approximately 16,031 children through the foster care system.***
- ***1 in 5 children ages 3-17 in the U.S. experience a mental, emotional, or behavioral disorder in a given year.***

CASA-versaries

May 1 - Deborah Cox (7 years!)

May 22 - Christina Catchpole (7 years!)

May 22 - Sherri Harris (7 years!)

Thank you
FOR YOUR
Hardwork

Birthdays

May 1 - Marybeth Leamer

May 19 - Susan Phelps

May 20 - Kristin Turney Jones

May 22 - Mark Najjar

May 23 - Tracy Douchy

May 28 - Jean Cain

CASA volunteers! Did you know that one of your fellow advocates serves as a liaison to the Board, helping bring your feedback and experiences straight to leadership?! If you have feedback, suggestions, or concerns you'd like elevated, **Diana Arnold** is a great resource and connection point!

dianaarmold1.casa@gmail.com

Susan Lancaster, a recent graduate of the University of North Georgia counseling program and former CASA volunteer with Enotah CASA, is offering free counseling support to volunteers through CASA of Forsyth County. She understands firsthand the emotional impact of advocacy work, including secondary trauma, and provides a supportive space to process experiences and build resilience.

CASAs are encouraged to reach out if they would benefit from confidential counseling support at any point in their advocacy journey.

Susanlancaster.pc@gmail.com

Learning & Growth

In-Person, Virtual, & Self-Guided Training Opportunities



Mental Health Trainings & Films

Depression in Children and Teens

- Pre-recorded

GA Center for Resources and Support

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS](#)

A View from the Bench: Parents Struggling with Mental Health Issues

- Pre-recorded

National CASA/GAL Association

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS](#)

How to Support a Child with a Mental Illness

- Pre-recorded

GA Center for Resources and Support

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS](#)

Foster Care Trainings & Films

Why So Many Foster Families Burn Out and How to Stop it from Happening

Stand Together

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS](#)

Possible Selves

PBS

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS](#)

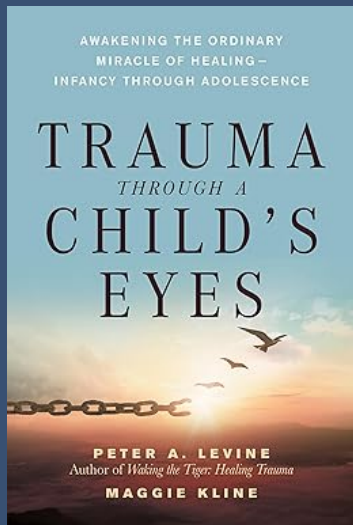
Our America: Children of the System

OWN

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS](#)

Stay tuned for an email from Ellie with more details and to RSVP!

Please remember to log your training in the tab marked "Training" on the main page in Optima- you need to log 12 hours of continuing education each year.



Trauma Through a Child's Eyes

by Peter A. Levine and Maggie Kline

Trauma can result not only from catastrophic events such as abuse, violence, or loss of loved ones, but from natural disasters and everyday incidents like auto accidents, medical procedures, divorce, or even falling off a bicycle. At the core of this book is the understanding of how trauma is imprinted on the body, brain, and spirit—often resulting in anxiety, nightmares, depression, physical illnesses, addictions, hyperactivity, and aggression.

Rich with case studies and hands-on activities, *Trauma Through a Child's Eyes* gives insight into children's innate ability to rebound with the appropriate support, and provides their caregivers with tools to overcome and prevent trauma.

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CHANGE A CHILD'S STORY



CASA
Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN
FORSYTH COUNTY