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CASA All Disc Tournament held on Sunday, September 4, 2011 to raise awareness and funds for the program.

Speak up for a child

Newsletter of Seward County CASA

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MISSION STATEMENT: Seward County CASA recruits, trains and supports community volunteers who advocate for the best interest of abused and neglected children in the Seward County court system.

Greetings from the Seward County CASA Office!



School has started again. The season of fall is upon us. Whether we like it or not, the weather is slowly shifting to chillier temperatures. Our hopes for another Nebraska football National Championship are ignited again with a new season of Coach Bo leading the charge. What isn't changing is our mission in the CASA office. We continue our efforts to advocate for all abused and neglected children in Seward County.

I do have some exciting news to share with you. In 2011, we have had a steady influx of new volunteer advocates who have been trained and subsequently taken on new court cases very quickly. As rapidly as we've been taking on new court cases, we've also been closing older court cases.

This combination has led to our ability to advocate for every abused and neglected child in the Seward County court system. What a joy it is to say that! As a result, we have begun exploring the possibility of expanding our program to a new county.

After researching this expansion process thoroughly, our board of directors has decided to expand our program to Jefferson County for this current fiscal year. This decision by the board was recently solidified after receiving word from the Jefferson County Commissioners that they would be providing funding for a CASA program to begin advocating in their communities. With this financial support along with the anticipation of future new funding sources in the county, we are moving forward to start recruiting new advocates to take cases in Jefferson. Because of our ability to serve all of the children in the court's care in Seward County, we are fortunate to have extra volunteer advocates who are able and willing to take cases in Jefferson County immediately. We've already received a phone call from someone interested in becoming a Jefferson County volunteer advocate. Our new vision (since we achieved our old one) for our program is to advocate for 100% of abused and neglected children in both Seward and Jefferson counties.

With this program expansion comes many new opportunities and challenges. Our main opportunities include advocating for more vulnerable children while also creating new relationships with community members and potential CASA volunteers in Jefferson County. Our main challenges will be figuring out the logistics of a new satellite program while also ensuring that Seward County's advocacy needs remain our program's continued focus.

After 15 years, Seward County CASA has reached this point because of the faithful support of our network of volunteers, donors, friends, community supporters, and staff members. I ask that you please continue to support us in the future with your dedication of time, talents, and resources. I specifically ask that if you have community connections within Jefferson County that you contact our office. Let us know how we can get in touch to build relationships with these potentially interested parties. Beyond expansion is the need for program sustainability.

Another opportunity for your engagement with CASA will be the continuation of our capital campaign (Growth Campaign) efforts from 2010. We will be seeking to secure lifetime financial gifts to ensure that CASA has a sustainable future in Seward County and beyond. Keep a lookout for this effort in the near future and please consider support of our continued Growth Campaign.

We truly don't know when abuse and neglect will happen in our community. We can only prepare for it by recruiting and training new volunteer advocates to be ready for the challenges and opportunities of advocating for precious children in our midst. Thank you for your past and future support of CASA. Our organization's strong advocacy in the community can be attributed to the strong individual support that we have received in the past. We anticipate marching forward with you in Seward and Jefferson counties as we seek to advocate for all abused and neglected children in the court system today and in the future.

Appreciatively,

Jonathan Jank, Executive Director
Seward County CASA