



**Volume No. 1
CASA for York County
Spring 2021**

Message from Jane Jensen, President, Board of Directors



Thank you to our CASA supporters for continuing to help provide for us throughout the last year. 2020 was a difficult year in so many ways, and we couldn't have managed without your donations.

When I look back on the year, I am especially proud of our staff and volunteers for continuing to work their hardest to serve the vulnerable children in our program. It took extra time and effort to make sure the children were safe during a time when vulnerabilities increased for everyone, and especially for our children while they didn't have the extra eyes of teachers and caregivers on them. Face to face contact was often not possible, but our volunteers continued to make sure to touch base regularly with the kids they serve to ensure they were doing okay.

As we move into 2021 with hope for a better year, we look to you for your continued support, whether that be through financial donations, participation in our fundraising events, or maybe considering taking on a volunteer position. Thank you for your continued commitment to helping us advocate for the abused and neglected youth in York County, enabling them to thrive in safe and permanent homes.

We Are All in This TOGETHER

During the pandemic child abuse and neglect have been on the rise. Children too often pay a heavy price when families are under increased financial stress.

There has been a surge in the number of child abuse and neglect cases in the courts. CASA programs across Nebraska are working hard to ensure these children don't go unnoticed.

This year volunteers have visited children online, read them stories, sent them songs, celebrated birthdays and holidays, ensuring children never feel alone. Our volunteers make a real difference in children's lives. CASA volunteers are needed now to meet our goal of serving every child in the system.



State of Nebraska CASA 2020

- **908 Volunteers served 2,108 abused and neglected children.**
- **Volunteers shared 37,575 hours of their time and traveled 100,000 miles**
- **248 NEW volunteers were recruited, screened, trained and sworn in by a judge.**
- **20 CASA programs served 52 Counties**
- **CASA programs in Nebraska now serve 82% more children with 120% more volunteers than 10 years ago; and still more than 1,300 children in Nebraska are in the Foster Care system without a CASA.**

Coffee with Elizabeth

Hello and Happy Spring! My morning coffee has looked a little different since I last checked in; it's now frantically gulped down between a diaper change and a feeding for this little lady. Despite the mix of chaos and joy that a new baby brings, I also find that each time I add to my family, I come back with renewed conviction for CASA's mission. As I snuggle up with my little babe, I can't help but think of the children who don't have the good fortune that my kids have. We serve children who lack stability, who desire love, and who face uncertainty at every juncture. In these moments I'm reminded that what CASA does matters, and it matters a lot. It's easy, even in my position, to distance ourselves from the realities around us. And the reality is that children are suffering. This is where CASA steps in. We may not always have the solutions, but our volunteers have the heart. I am so thankful to be a part of something bigger than myself, and a part of something that makes a difference. As I raise my children, I more fully realize the importance of raising awareness. I'm making a commitment going forward, to be open about the uncomfortable reality facing us. In this way, not only can we treat the problem, but we can begin to strive for prevention.



All children deserve great childhoods because our children are our future.

**April is Child Abuse Awareness Month
&
Volunteer Appreciation Month!**



"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart."

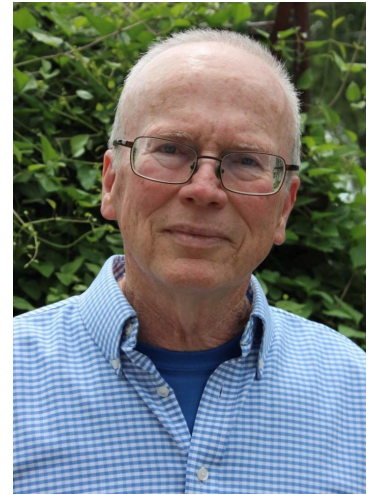


~ Elizabeth Andrew



From the desk of Dan

I want to share a story about Ms. Griffin, a fourth grade teacher I had over 57 years ago. Ms. Griffin planted a seed that would not blossom for 50 years. Ms. Griffin was a big fan of famous writer Willa Cather. Ms. Cather won a Pulitzer Prize for one of her works in the 1920's and was a gifted novelist who wrote about life on the Nebraska prairie. As a fourth grader I had no interest in Willa Cather and did not understand Ms. Griffin's passion for this famous writer or the constant references to her work. I could have cared less. Then, several years ago, my wife was featured in an art show at the Willa Cather Center in Red Cloud. I accompanied my wife to her show's opening night. Since I'd seen all of her paintings I wandered into the Willa Cather resource center at one point and found myself scanning a couple Willa Cather books. Unexpectedly, I ended up purchasing one by the end of the evening. I later found myself with a high regard for her writings. Not only would I have never believed I would end up a fan of Willa Cather, but Ms. Griffin would most likely have rolled over in her grave at the notion Dan Scarborough had developed an interest in Willa Cather after so many years of disinterest. I am highly grateful for Ms. Griffin's influence on me and the gift she gave me which would not be appreciated for many years.



What does this have to do with CASA? – Everything. Several of our CASA volunteers are, or have been, teachers. My story does not only apply to teachers, but also to those who volunteer and provide care, concern and advocacy for children. The gifts they provide may not be readily accepted or appreciated in real time, however, there is always a possibility at some point they will make a difference.

We thank these donors for Caring & Sharing September 2020 ~ February 2021

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CASA FOR YORK COUNTY
NEBRASKA

York County Courthouse
510 N Lincoln Ave.
York, NE 68467



Consider becoming a CASA volunteer.

There are children in York County who are in need of an advocate; someone to be in their corner and work in their best interest. Find more information at: www.casaforyork.org or by calling our office at 402-362-5454.

Our Advocates always show
How much they care
By the time, and the skills,
And the compassion they
share.



April is National Volunteer Appreciation Month



Thank you for making a difference in the lives of children!