



SPRING
2025



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

DENTON COUNTY

The mission of CASA of Denton County, Inc. is to advocate for the best interests of children who have experienced abuse and neglect. Our trained and supported community volunteers build a strong, consistent relationship with each child and their family, promote community resources, and make informed recommendations to the court.

CAITLIN GAVINA: A Steadfast CASA Voice



CASA advocate volunteers serve as a lifeline in a system where children can often feel lost and unheard. For Caitlin Gavina, being a CASA isn't just about advocacy—it's about persistence, trust, and ensuring every child has someone in their corner. Right now, due to a volunteer shortage, Caitlin is juggling four cases at once. But despite the challenge, she remains steady in her commitment to the kids who need her the most.

Caitlin became a CASA because she has always had a heart for children who need support. "Getting to be that person is incredible," she says. Unlike the Child Protective Service contracted caseworkers, who may change multiple times throughout a case, CASA advocates provide consistency. When asked what she found most rewarding about being a CASA advocate, she shared that one child she worked with had seven different caseworkers over three years—but Caitlin was the one person who

didn't change. "I feel like you're the only person that knows me," the child told her. "You're the person I trust."

That trust is why CASA advocates are so critical. They take the time to truly know the children they serve—what they like and dislike, their dreams, and their favorite subjects in school. With that level of understanding, they can advocate for a child's best interests in a way no one else can. CASA volunteers are often the only ones able to provide judges with a full picture of what a child needs, helping to shape decisions that will impact them for years to come.

Fighting for children's futures takes time and dedication. With so many

continued on page 3

“

**You're the only person
that knows me...you're
the person I trust**

”



**READ OUR 2024
IMPACT REPORT**



WWW.CASADENTON.ORG



Debbie Jensen
Executive Director

A Message from our Executive Director, **DEBBIE JENSEN**

As we begin the second quarter of 2025, we are working tirelessly to address the volunteer crisis we face. As child welfare cases rise and CASA volunteer numbers decline, we are doing everything possible to grow our volunteer pool and ensure every child receives critical advocacy.

Throughout 2019, before COVID-19, we had 267 active volunteers. Today, we have only 156, creating a severe shortage as more children enter the system. In January and February of 2025, we were appointed to serve 47 new children – an increase of 45% over the same period last year.

Currently, 55 children rely on CASA staff instead of volunteers. While our staff is highly qualified, their role is to support volunteers, not serve as advocates. Due to the shortage, many volunteers are taking multiple cases, and staff members are stepping in to fill the gaps.

The solution is clear: We need more CASA volunteers. Our next Advocacy Academy starts July 11, and we aim to recruit at least 20 new advocates during every Advocacy Academy. The first step is attending a one-hour Info Session.

If you've ever considered advocating for a child in need, now is the time. These children need someone to stand by them—you can be that person.

To learn more or schedule a presentation for your business, community, or faith-based group, contact our Volunteer Manager, Beth Potter, at bpotter@casadenton.org.



VOLUNTEER CRISIS

— 2019 —
**267 ACTIVE
VOLUNTEERS**
— 2025 —
**156 CURRENTLY
ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS**

— JAN-FEB 2025 —
**47 NEW CHILDREN
APPOINTED TO CASA**
**A 45% INCREASE
FROM SAME PERIOD
LAST YEAR**

UPCOMING INFO SESSIONS

APRIL
8

IN-PERSON
610 N. Bell Ave Denton, TX
12 PM - 1 PM
6 PM - 7 PM

MAY
14

VIRTUAL
via Zoom
5:30 PM - 6:30 PM

APRIL
16

VIRTUAL
via Zoom
5:30 PM - 6:30 PM

MAY
15

IN-PERSON
610 N. Bell Ave Denton, TX
12 PM - 1 PM
6 PM - 7 PM



SCAN HERE
TO RSVP



CAITLIN GAVINA: A Steadfast CASA Voice *continued from page 1*

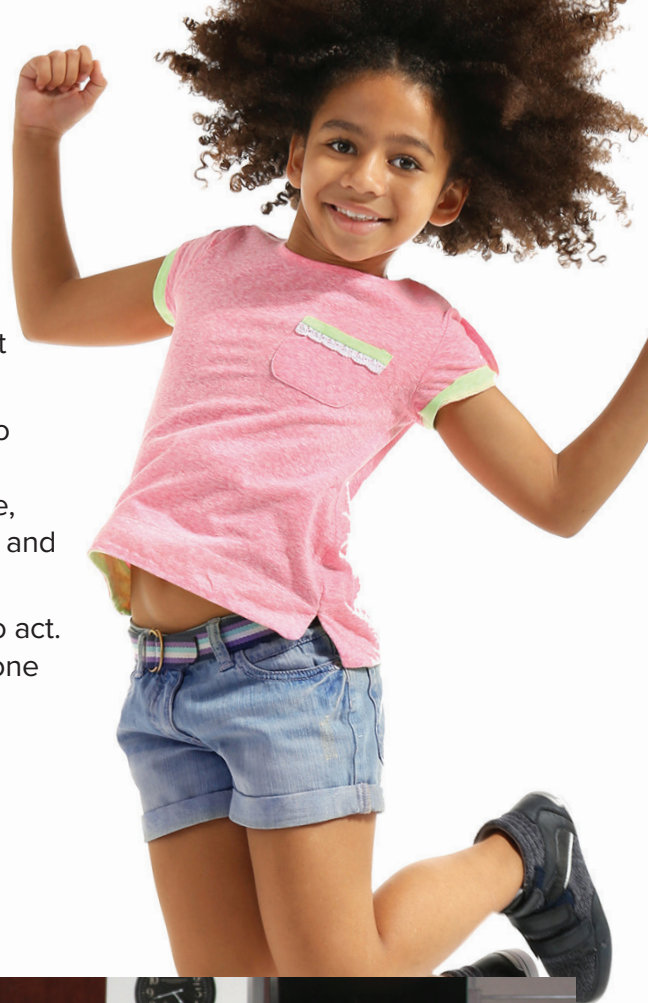
cases and not enough volunteers, the need for more advocates is urgent. CASA volunteers make sure a child's voice is heard in court, but they can only do that if enough people step up. "The journey isn't always straight," Caitlin admits, "but typically, we can get something at the end that feels like it's going to be okay for the kids."

To those considering becoming a CASA, Caitlin's advice is simple: "Do it. We get the good job." The work can be challenging, but the impact is life-changing. For the children who need a steady, reliable advocate, CASA volunteers are the difference between being lost in the system and having someone fight for their future.

If you have the heart to stand up for a child in need, now is the time to act. Because persistence changes lives—and every child deserves someone who won't give up on them.

WELCOME NEW ADVOCATES

This quarter, we welcomed 16 new CASA advocate volunteers ready to impact the lives of the children they serve.



April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

For many children who have lived through the trauma of abuse and neglect, their CASA advocate can be the one who helps them overcome and find their way to a brighter future!

Help children find a path to HOPE!

Make a Gift

Your gift to CASA of Denton County helps us recruit, train, and support CASA volunteers.

Become a CASA volunteer

The first step is to attend a one-hour Info Session to learn what it takes to be a CASA advocate volunteer.

**LEARN
MORE**



A NIGHT OF ELEGANCE, A LEGACY OF IMPACT



On Sunday, October 20, we celebrated the 25th anniversary of Evening of Elegance, a milestone event that continues to transform the lives of children who have experienced abuse and neglect. With DATCU as our presenting sponsor, the evening raised over \$350,000—critical funds that will directly support CASA's mission of advocacy and protection for Denton County's most vulnerable children.

A highlight of the evening was honoring Chef Morris Salerno, this year's honorary chair, for his 25 years of unwavering support of the event. To commemorate his dedication, he was presented with an embroidered CASA chef's apron adorned with the handprints of CASA children whose lives he has

helped to transform. Our honored guest, Secretary of State Jane Nelson, issued a proclamation recognizing his lasting impact.

Adding to the evening's success, Denton County judges and elected officials stepped into the role of celebrity waiters, continuing a time-honored tradition that underscores the dedicated support of CASA by our community leaders.

We are deeply grateful to our sponsors, in-kind donors, volunteers, and attendees who made this night possible. Because of your generosity, we move forward with strength, ensuring that every child navigating the child welfare system has a dedicated CASA advocate by their side.

*Thank you to
the following sponsors
who made this night
a success!*

Presenting Sponsor
DATCU Credit Union

Diamond Sponsors
Ciera Bank
Cima Solutions Group
Irwin Steel
Orison Holdings

Ruby Sponsors
DEX Imaging
Doug and Bonnie Robison
First United Bank
Red Door Operations
Secretary of State Jane Nelson
Wood Weatherly Trial Law

HANDBAGS FOR HOPE

Benefitting CASA of Denton County

SATURDAY, JULY 26, 2025

Sparrow on Main

105 E Main St
Lewisville, TX 75057

Join us for our inaugural **Handbags for Hope** event! Event features include 5 rounds of bingo, bottomless mimosas, lite bites, and chances to win stunning designer handbags. Every dollar raised directly supports our CASA program as we empower dedicated community volunteers to bring hope for a brighter future to children impacted by abuse & neglect.



TICKETS AND
SPONSORSHIPS
NOW AVAILABLE!

Community Partners



Apartment Association of Greater Dallas raised funds to provide Halloween costumes for the children we serve.



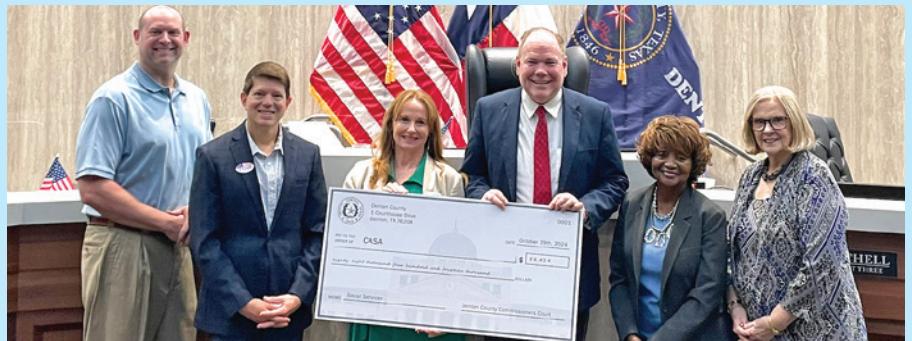
The Heart Hospital of Denton presented us with their annual holiday Care4Kids donations.



Fidelity Charitable designated us as a recipient of their Make More of a Difference award.



Exeter Finance nominated us for their competitive Giving Madness campaign.



The Denton Benefit League awarded us a grant to increase the number of offices for casework staff.



Beaver Builders held their annual playhouse raffle benefiting CASA of Denton County.

We would also like to thank the following community partners (not pictured) who helped us carry out our mission: Aromas on Oak, Bahama Bucks of Roanoke, Blue Moon Artistry, Cross Timbers Rotary, Infinite Electronics, Krum Lions Club, PEO Chapter IZ, Pilot Knob Rotary, Robson Ranch Women's Club, Scentsy, Team Izzy Foundation.



FRIDAY, MAY 2, 2025

FLIGHTS AT 9 AM & 1 PM

ELM FORK SHOOTING SPORTS

10751 LUNA RD

DALLAS, TX 75220

- 4 PERSON TEAMS
- FIREARMS RAFFLE
- MEALS INCLUDED



CASA of Denton County, Inc.
Phone: 940.243.2272
Fax: 940.243.1605
www.casadenton.org
info@casadenton.org



www.facebook.com/casadentontx

CASA of Denton County is a member agency of Texas CASA, Inc., the National CASA Association, and the United Way of Denton County.



DENTON COUNTY

614 North Bell Ave.
Denton, TX 76209

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Denton, Texas
Permit 1050

The mission of CASA of Denton County, Inc. is to advocate for the best interests of children who have experienced abuse and neglect. Our trained and supported community volunteers build a strong, consistent relationship with each child and their family, promote community resources, and make informed recommendations to the court.



KINSHIP FAIR

Oftentimes, children placed in kinship care lack the resources that many foster families have access to. In September, we held our Kinship Fair to celebrate kinship families and provide resources for them.



UNITED WAY

Our very own CASA of Denton County board member, Kirsten Pasha, represented us at the United Way's United Tribute: Dancing with Our Stars! Kirsten and her husband, Evan Pasha, danced their way to the Judges Choice trophy and raised crucial funds for the United Way of Denton County's annual campaign.