

# Spring into Action

April 2018 Quarterly Newsletter



Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Ventura County will be sending a quarterly newsletter to friends and volunteers to keep you updated, feature a CASA Spotlight to exemplify first-hand the amazing work of our Advocates, share how your generous support is being utilized, and preview upcoming events.

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## CASA Updates

### The Magic of CASA

We have officially announced the date of **The Magic of CASA**! Join us for a night of delicious food & drinks, a fabulous silent auction, and - of course - **MAGIC on June 14, 2018 at 6 pm** at the Tower Club in Oxnard.

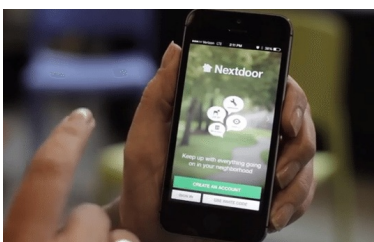


Pat and Bob O'Conner are being honored with the Spirit of CASA award.

[Click here to learn more.](#)



Our mandatory CSEC 102 Continuing Education course was introduced and taught for the first time this year. The goal of this course is to provide all CASAs with practical and useful strategies to support prevention of youth exploitation and to participate in effective response to youth who have been victimized. [Click here](#) to view the full schedule of our In-Services.



CASA of Ventura County is now on the Nextdoor app! This app, available on both mobile and desktop, allows communities to facilitate communication among neighbors and build stronger neighborhoods. You can recommend CASA of Ventura County to all your neighbors, friends, and family to spread awareness! [Click here](#) to sign in or create your Nextdoor account!



We are excited to officially announce CASA of Ventura County's new partnership with CARS, a nonprofit organization that uses vehicle donations to help other nonprofits raise extra revenue. CARS accepts and picks up all types of vehicles whether they're running or not, and each generous gift qualifies for a tax deduction! [Click here](#) for more information.

## April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month

During National Child Abuse Prevention Month in April, we challenge residents of Ventura County to stand against child abuse and take action to support children who have been

abused or neglected.

### MYTH

Babies are too young to suffer long-term effects of abuse or neglect.

### FACT

Abuse or neglect can change a baby's brain chemistry.



### MYTH

Child abuse is the main reason kids enter foster care.

### FACT

Neglect is more common and is associated with 61% of removals.



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## CASA Spotlight: Patricia Sampson

At the tender age of 16, my father and stepmother decided to divorce, and I found myself out of my home and being sent to live with a high school friend, her sisters and divorced mother. I was dazed and confused. Anxious and angry. Rebellious. Wondering what I did wrong? It was hard to transition and after a year, I went to live with another friend and her mother. And then, a blessing. A cousin and her husband invited me to live with them. Now, I had a safe place to live, with consistent, caring adults who gave me experiences I would not have had otherwise. They listened and helped me find the answers to my questions. I finished high school. I went to college. I got a full-time job. And I've never forgotten the difference they made in my life.



Some of this may sound familiar. My own experiences brought me to CASA.

I've been a CASA for a little over a year and met my first appointee, a mischievous 12-year-old boy, who loves basketball, last December. In that time, he's been in 2 placements (several others before then) and presents with behavioral issues,

especially with authority figures. He's currently in an intensive treatment foster home and is blossoming. There's still work to do but I have faith! We see each other several times a month and I notice how trust gradually builds. It comes from integrity - showing up when promised, doing what you say you will. It grows when there is no judgement and when you listen, encourage, and teach. I see how easily conversation happens and eye contact increases.

This summer, I became CASA for his 16-year-old brother, living in a group home. Again, there are behavioral issues. Our biggest challenge is around school - engaging in class, doing the work, understanding the importance it plays in life going forward. We are getting to know each other and building a relationship.

One day, on our way to get a hamburger, I told my 12-year-old I'd quit my full-time marketing job. "Why?" he asked. "I want to do something more important, where I support and encourage other people," I answered. With a big smile, he piped up, "but you are already doing that - you're a CASA." Happy heart dance. Moments like that are so rewarding.

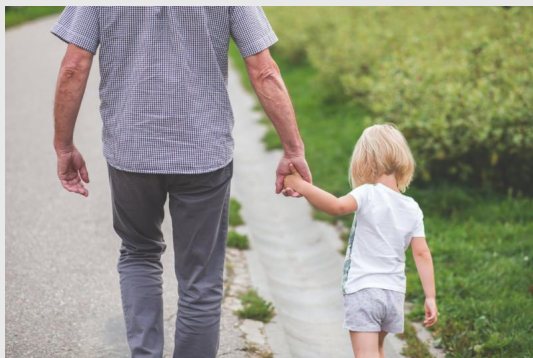
Being a CASA is most gratifying. I give and receive. And learn more than I thought possible about other cultures, contemporary kids, parenting, and more.

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## Because of Your Support...

... we have the ability to spring into action!

We are now responsible for serving the entire Ventura County foster system, which consists of approximately 1,000 children and non-minor dependents at any given time. Of the 1,000 children assigned to CASA, we are currently serving only 46% of the children who need us. Naturally, our ultimate goal is for every foster child who needs an Advocate to have one, and we know we can reach this goal with the continued support of our friends, service clubs, local businesses and foundations. Our ambitious 3 year plan is to recruit 60 new advocates per year and serve roughly 500 children by 2020. It costs about \$2,400 a year to support an advocate + child relationship, including recruiting, screening, training, and 24/7 support from staff. Your support leads directly to sending trained and compassionate volunteers into the community to effectively advocate for these children.



### DID YOU KNOW?

The cost of an Advocate + child(ren) relationship is about \$2,400 per year.

[Donate Now](#)

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## Upcoming Events

- **Ventura County District Attorney's Office Crime Victims' Rights March and Community Outreach Event**  
Ventura County Government Center  
Wednesday, April 11, 2018 from 11:30 am – 1:15 pm
- **"Stronger Families, Safer Kids" 5K by Partnership for Safe Families**  
VCCF Non-Profit Center  
Saturday, April 21, 2018 from 7:00 am – around 11:00 am
- **Foster VC Kids Town Hall Meeting**  
Ventura County Human Services Agency  
Saturday, April 21, 2018 from 10:00 am – 11:30 am
- **HOPE4Kids Festival and Run**  
Lake Sherwood in Thousand Oaks  
Saturday, April 28, 2018 from 8:00 am – 2:00 pm
- **Family Care & Volunteer Resource Fair**  
Ventura County Government Center, Main Courtyard  
Thursday, May 24, 2018 from 10:00 am - 1:00 pm
- **The Magic of CASA (CASA Fundraising Event)**  
Tower Club in Oxnard  
Thursday, June 14, 2018 at 6:00 pm

[Click here to view a full calendar of our events.](#)

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