

## IOWA CHILD ADVOCACY BOARD

*advocating for abused and neglected children in Iowa*



### **Monthly Morsels and Musings** from the Child Advocacy Board Administrator

Volunteers are the heart and soul of the CASA and FCRB programs in Iowa and across the nation. The time, energy and talents you contribute in your advocacy work are essential to the promotion of better outcomes for the abused and neglected children you serve. promote to helping. Over the years, we have collected information which shows that children who have the benefit of your advocacy efforts are far less likely to be re-abused than children who do not have advocates. April is National Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month. As staff members of the Child Advocacy Board, we recognize every day the important work you do in helping to prevent continued abuse of children. Thank you for your valiant efforts on behalf of Iowa's children.

We know also that you, as current volunteers in the CASA and FCRB programs share news of your work with others you know. Through this you spread the word about our need for volunteers. We are just beginning to have the ability, through the new automated CAMS system, to gather data to prove and recognize your "word of mouth" advertising prowess. Recently, I came across an Indiana study which showed that more than one-fourth of the persons who inquired about the CASA program cited "word of mouth" as their referral source, making this the largest source of referrals by far. And over 90% of those who inquired as a result of hearing about the opportunity from someone they know and trust actually applied to become Advocates. Anecdotally, we know that CASA and FCRB volunteers in Iowa have a similar effect on bringing in new volunteers here. Thank you very much for this extra effort as well - and please continue to let your family, friends and associates know of this important volunteer opportunity.

**Jim Hennessey**

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When the floodwaters come as they have in the last few weeks in Iowa, a state of emergency is declared, recovery efforts are begun immediately, and expanded disaster aid is offered. Emergency workers are on the frontline; they utilize the skills learned in their intense training, accept the stress and demands of the job, and live out their commitment to serve others when crises arise.

When child abuse happens as it does in every state, community and neighborhood, a child is hurt, an emergency is quietly declared, and aid is offered. Hundreds of frontline workers, the volunteers of ICAB – CASA Advocates and FCRB Members – respond to the call to action, joining countless others in the child welfare and juvenile court arenas. Our incredible volunteers rise to the occasion, use the skills learned in their intense training, accept the stress and demands of their position, and demonstrate their commitment to helping children in need.

April is the month designated as Child Abuse Prevention Month. We want to especially honor our CASA Advocates and FCRB Members and share our deep respect for them. Thank you – to each one of you - for your willingness to help prevent child abuse, one child at a time.

Your ICAB (CASA and FCRB) Staff

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## Volunteer Spotlight: Frank Cornwell, FCRB



Frank Cornwell, serving the Clinton, Iowa area, is glad that he became interested in child advocacy after watching his wife Fran work to help children in need as a CASA for 15 years at that time. She was very supportive of him and was his inspiration to become involved. The local Foster Care Review Board (FCRB) was looking for members to join the Clinton Board so he contacted Coordinator Nancy Manion. He received training and started his journey as a member on the board in March of 2009. A few years later, in 2015, he decided to join Fran as a CASA Advocate and now CASA Coach.

Frank shares that he was given examples of serving others by his parents. Over the years he has remained involved in organizations that help people in need. Frank and his wife, Fran, volunteer for the American Red Cross helping with local community disasters such as house fires and flooding, giving assistance at what might be the worst time in a

person's life. They deploy for national disasters such as hurricanes, flooding and fires, sometimes for two to three weeks at a time. In addition, they volunteer as called upon with their local Emergency Management chapter. Another organization Frank and Fran are involved with is Habitat for Humanity. Building homes and doing repairs for people less fortunate over the past 11 years has been very rewarding. Franks recognizes that each of these groups has a direct effect on the children involved.

As a FCRB member and CASA Advocate, Frank finds such satisfaction in knowing that he is working to help give safety and stability to vulnerable children. Frank believes the ICAB programs "improve the lives of these children by showing them that there are people who care about them and their needs, and will stay on the case until its conclusion." Frank states, "We are not afraid to ask the tough questions and make suggestions." There are cases in which Frank feels the length of time it takes to move these children through the system and get them settled in a permanent place is frustrating. He realizes that the courts have a specific timeline. Frank thinks it would be helpful to have more service provider participation at Board meetings so the Board's recommendations would be more timely.

FCRB Facilitator, Amy Combs states, "Frank is such a great asset to our FCRB team. He provides valuable perspective, insight, and wisdom on each case. His dedication and commitment to the families, community, and other volunteers is greatly appreciated."

Working with these children and their families has made Frank realize the struggles and challenges some people face day to day. He now looks at people with more empathy and compassion for their struggles and life decisions.

Frank, a FCRB Board member for the last ten years and a CASA for the last 4 years, along with his wife Fran, who remains a CASA of 25 years and a CASA Coach, are incredible individuals who have greatly impacted their communities and the children they have served through the years. It is with deep appreciation that we at the Iowa Child Advocacy Board say thank you to both Frank and Fran. We could never do this work without exceptional volunteers like yourselves and remain in your debt for devoting your lives to the service to others.

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## NEW ICFCRB LOGOS



ICAB is excited to introduce the new ICFCRB logos created by Carol Bamford based on input from staff. The new logos give a fresh visual for the Iowa Citizen Foster Care Review Board. The image, along with the new tagline, are symbolic of the purpose and mission of local review boards to advocate for legal and relational permanence for children in the foster care system.



Carol created three versions of the image and tagline to meet the many different ways we work to promote the identity of the ICFCRB program. ICAB will discontinue use of the former *foster the future* logos and begin using the new logos in April.



A special thanks to Carol for her work in creating the new package for our organization!

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## National CASA Conference is Just Around the Corner

The National CASA Association will be holding its annual conference June 2nd through 4th in Atlanta, GA at the downtown Hyatt Regency. This amazing event brings together CASA Advocates, Peer Coordinators (Coaches), Staff, Judges, Attorneys and Youth to learn more about the latest trends in child advocacy. This year's conference 'Better Together' will focus on building stronger families to achieve better outcomes for children. The conference will provide opportunities to learn more about achieving safe, permanent

placements for children, issues facing families today, supporting children and families through their child welfare journey and information on how the passage of the Family First Prevention Services Act intersects with CASA programming.

Each day of the conference is highlighted with at least one plenary session speaker who provides an uplifting message. This year's speakers include James & Patrice Comey, former senator Mary Landrieu, Vice President of Corporate and Social Responsibility for Chick-Fil-A, Rodney Bullard and author Jarrett Krosoczka.



To learn more about the conference, visit <http://conference.casaforchildren.org/#> or download the National CASA/GAL Conference app in the Google Play or Apple App Stores.



## A Big Welcome to Our New Volunteers!

Tiffany Abbe, CASA, Woodbury County	Melissa Davis, CASA, Benton County
Brittany Beard, CASA, Scott County	Pat Freilinger, CASA, Linn County
Kenneth Brooks, CASA, Scott County	Kathryn Hayden, CASA Woodbury County
Monica Colella, CASA, Woodbury County	Lesli Hill, CASA, Hardin County
Jennifer Cousins, CASA, Clinton County	Tyra Olson, CASA, Benton County

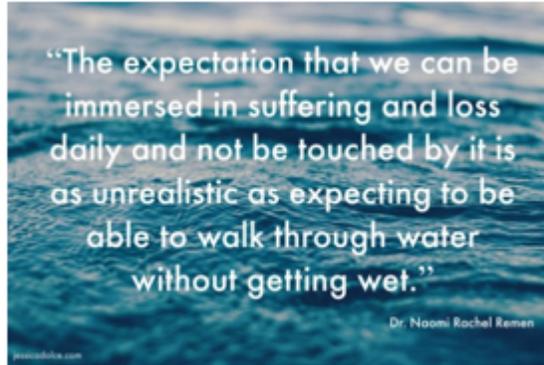


### The Impact of Helping: Compassion Fatigue and Tips for Self-Care

Many people feel an inner drive to be involved in the lives of others in a helpful capacity. In these roles, helping others improve their lives requires commitment, energy, and willingness to go an extra step on someone's behalf. *Wellspring Counseling staff psychologist, Marya Barey, PhD, helps you identify if you suffer from compassion fatigue and what you can do to reduce symptoms.*

It is easy to forget that our own self-care is an essential component of being able to help others. If we are depleted ourselves, we ultimately have less to offer someone else. Over time we can develop "compassion fatigue," a set of symptoms that can affect our health, emotions, thoughts, relationships, behaviors, and even how we feel about the world in general.

Helping roles in any capacity - as a volunteer, a paid professional or even as a family member - are most successful for the recipient and for us if we have good coping skills and if we actively address our own needs to "refill" our storehouse of energy.



**What are the effects of compassion fatigue?** Pay attention to any of the following symptoms you might notice in yourself as a result of your work with others.

### *Physical effects*

- Headaches
- Chronic tiredness or a sense of feeling drained
- Digestive problems
- Frequent colds or other illnesses
- High blood pressure
- Anxiety/stress symptoms

### *Emotional effects*

- Stress and anxiety
- Less enjoyment of pleasant activities
- Sadness or depression
- Feeling hopeless or helpless
- Irritability or having a "short fuse"
- Feeling overwhelmed

### *Behavioral effects*

- Increased drinking or smoking marijuana
- Anger outbursts
- Changes in eating or shopping habits
- "Surfing" the internet more than you intend to

### *Cognitive effects*

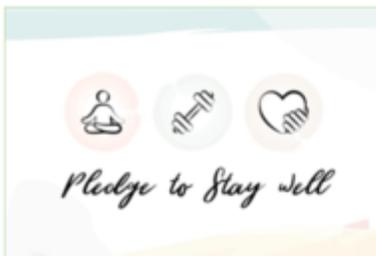
- Decreased concentration and focus
- Impaired memory
- "Seeing" scary images in your thoughts
- Nightmares or disrupted sleep patterns

### *Interpersonal effects*

- Less desire to be with friends or family
- Impatience with others
- Increased anxiety in public places
- Greater need to be in control in order to feel safe

### *World-view effects*

- Decrease in a sense of basic trust in others and in the world
- Decreased sense of purpose and meaning in life
- Feeling ineffective and cynical or negative about life in general



### **Ways to Prevent Compassion Fatigue and Restore Your Energies**

If our work with others can sometimes take a toll on us, what can we do about it? The more we can feel a sense of connection to ourselves, the better. It's helpful to have personal strategies that can help prevent compassion fatigue and aid in restoring your energies.

Making time for self-care every day will help you accomplish this.

Our bodies hold a lot of tension when we are stressed, so paying attention to your body's signals of distress is helpful.

- Move your body - taking a long walk and other moderate exercise is helpful, but even a short walk indoors for a few minutes helps your body release tension
- Notice how much caffeine (including soda) and alcohol you are drinking and decrease the amount so they don't become problems in your life
- Take deep, full breaths for a minute several times a day, especially in times of stress
- Check out information about "mindfulness practices" such as breathing, yoga and meditation and integrate them into your daily life
- Consider getting a massage on a regular basis
- Make sure you're sleeping enough, and stop using your cell phone or computer at least 30 minutes before bed every night

Sometimes the way we deal with compassion fatigue is by "closing off" from people, including ourselves, so it's important to reconnect with ourselves and others. Here are some behaviors that can help:

- Maintain good boundaries between your helping role and the rest of your life
- Make time for friends and family to engage in enjoyable activities
- Go on an adventure to a new place you've wanted to go, even if it's just down the street to a new coffee house
- Increase your sense of play and light-heartedness in your life
- Allow yourself sufficient "quiet time" to restore
- Engage in something creative - art, music, movies, reading
- If you belong to a faith community, spend time with like-minded people who are supportive

Self-awareness is an important component of being in a helping role. Recognize that we all have limitations on what we can do to be helpful and that we cannot individually solve all the problems in the world. Connect with your own sense of personal meaning and allow yourself opportunities to grow. Become aware of unresolved personal issues that might be affecting you. Consider seeking counseling for ongoing self-awareness, resolution of old wounds and increased personal growth.

*Source: [Marva Barev, PhD](#), Licensed Psychologist at Wellspring Counseling, provides workshops to those in helping professions on the subject of Compassion Fatigue.*




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### BREMER-BUTLER-CHICKASAW-FRANKLIN FCRB TAKES ON ADDITIONAL ROLE

In December 2018, the CAPTA and CJA Program Manager for the Iowa Department of Human Services invited FCRB to become a Citizen Review Panel. Citizen Review Panels (CRPs) are federally mandated mechanisms for citizen participation in child protection, through evaluation and public outreach. Iowa is required to have three Citizen Review Panels.



Citizen Review Panels were developed in response to a requirement set forth in the 1996 reauthorization for the Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA), section 106 (c). The CRPs are directed to evaluate state child welfare agencies and make recommendations for improvement in child protective services. The panels are to be composed of volunteer citizens who are broadly representative of their community. A key requirement for the CRP is to submit an annual report which details its work for the year and makes recommendations for improvement or changes in child protective services. The state child welfare agency is required to respond to this report within six months.

The diverse backgrounds of the Bremer-Butler-Chickasaw-Franklin FCRB members will be beneficial to the CRP process. Members of the Board/Citizen Review Panel include: **JoAnn Carey, Bob Greenlee, Jean Garventa, Marilyn Teig, Marcie Sharp, DeAnn Johnson, Ivan Lindloff, Melissa Appel** and facilitator, **Jamie Panning**.

The winter weather delayed implementation of this new process; they will have their first official CRP meeting in April. We look forward to working with the Board Members as they extend their reviewer role to include assessing strengths and areas of improvement for Iowa's child welfare system.

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# Trainer's Corner

## **For FCRB & CASA Advocates: April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month**



Communities and citizens across the county recognize the importance of increasing awareness of and providing resources to prevent child abuse and neglect during April and throughout the year. Millions of individuals from every walk of life and in numerous professional capacities, join together in their mission to improve the well-being of children.

The Iowa Child Advocacy Board staff join with all of our amazing Foster Care Review Board Members and CASA Advocates and Coaches in each of our unique roles to make a difference in the world. During April, we can be reminded to remain diligent in our continuous learning approach to how we recognize and address potential child abuse and neglect. We might commit to learning more about recognizing signs of

human trafficking in Iowa. Perhaps it is watching a documentary on predatory grooming behaviors of child sexual abuse. Or for some continuous learners, it might be utilizing the vast resources available through the internet or attending a local training being offered to learn more about the importance of early intervention for drug exposed infants.

Activities like these are important steps towards the goal of increasing our effectiveness in advocating for improvements in the lives of Iowa's children through each of our ICAB programs. We appreciate the efforts each of our volunteers make in their continuous learning journey and will continue to offer ongoing training opportunities to support application of gained knowledge to your specific role.



### **For CASA Advocates: In-Service Training Credit**

National CASA Standards outline that every Advocate will complete an annual training on the topic of *Recognizing Abuse and Neglect* as part of their required annual 12 in-service hours. Please use the link found here [Advocate In-Service Trainings](#) to identify specific trainings available in this category. Contact your Local Coordinator to register for one of these sessions.

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**Please print off and use to recruit a new volunteer!**



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