



The graphic features a black and white background of two hands shaking. In the top left is the logo for the Iowa Citizen Foster Care Review Board, and in the top right is the logo for CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate for Children). A cluster of red hearts is positioned to the right of the word "National". The words "National", "Adoption", and "Month" are written in a large, red, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

Iowa Citizen Foster Care Review Board
Advocating for Permanency

CASA
Court Appointed Special Advocate
FOR CHILDREN
IOWA

**National
Adoption
Month**

NOT EVERY CHILD WE WORK WITH NEEDS AN ADOPTIVE HOME.

FOR THOSE WHO DO, WE ARE GRATEFUL WHEN THEY ARE PLACED IN THEIR LOVING, FOREVER HOME!

FOR OUR VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE PROCESS, WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOU!

Welcome New Volunteers!



Barbara Andersen, CASA, Pottawattamie Co.
Deborah Bush, FCRB, Cherokee County
Susan Evans, CASA, Polk County
Megan Heath, CASA, Pottawattamie Co.
Cara Kline, CASA, Pottawattamie Co.
Connie Ladwig, FCRB, Cherokee County
Jessica Michalski, CASA, Pottawattamie Co.
Ashley Otte, CASA, Polk County
Rochelle Pfeifer, CASA, Woodbury County
Rebecca Robinson, FCRB, Scott County
Courtney Williams, CASA, Pottawattamie Co.

Sarah Biorn, CASA, Pottawattamie Co.
Lori Ebel, FCRB, Cherokee County
Patricia Grady, CASA, Polk County
Andrea Heyenga, FCRB, Bremer County
Nicole Knowles, CASA, Pottawattamie Co.
Sandra Lingard, CASA, Benton County
Caroline Nelson, FCRB, Clay County
Dagan Peacock-Fleming, CASA, Polk Co.
Michael Richards, FCRB, Scott County
Marti Strand, CASA, Mills County
Ken Williams, CASA, Pottawattamie Co.

North Central Iowa FCRB Facilitator

After several years with the Iowa Child Advocacy Board, Jamie Panning, stepped down from her most recent position as the FCRB facilitator for Black Hawk, Bremer, Butler, Chickasaw, Franklin and Grundy counties in early October. Jamie shared her wealth of child welfare knowledge and experience with the local boards and provided consistency for them throughout the past few years. We wish her the best in her new adventure as a Foster/Adoptive Licensing and Support Caseworker with Four Oaks.

As one door closes, another one opens. We welcome Beth Ochsner as the new FCRB facilitator for these north central Iowa counties. Beth has a background in elementary education and a strong desire to work with others to ensure the safety and well-being of children. We look forward to getting to know Beth better as she begins her work as a facilitator.

Trainer's Corner: Gratitude



November in the United States is typically considered the month to give thanks for our blessings. It's not a secret that feeling thankful for what you have can be a significant mood lifter, especially if done on a regular basis. But sometimes, gratitude might feel downright impossible to cultivate, in particular when times are difficult. Most of us might agree that 2020 has definitely been a challenging year!!

But the good news, it's easier than you might first think to change your mindset and embrace gratitude. Consider gratitude as your own personal path to self-care! The first step on that path, is becoming intentional about your daily practice of identifying, "I am grateful for..." and learning how you can best support that daily practice. For some, it might be while going on a walk out in nature, when practicing yoga, or keeping a gratitude journal. For many of our CASA and FCRB volunteers, this might occur while giving back to others through your donation of time and energy to our organization. But whichever method you choose to do as you cultivate your self-care and daily dose of gratitude, please hear us when we say: WE are Grateful for YOU!

"I appreciate the abundance in my life, and I allow myself to expand in gratitude, success and joy every day."

To learn more about practicing gratitude, click on the links below:

- [Self Care and Gratitude: How they go hand in hand](#)
- [Gratitude Practice](#)
- [The Little Things: A Grateful Self-Care Practice Initiation](#)
- [Gratitude as Focus, Frame and Fuel for Self-Care](#)

To begin practicing today, here are some potential phone apps that may support your journey!

- [365 Gratitude Journal](#)
- [365 Gratitude Journal - Self-Care App](#)



SEL Tip

Practice gratitude as a form of self-care

Practicing gratitude on a regular basis has been associated with enhanced optimism, better sleep, fewer physical ailments, and lower levels of anxiety and depression. Here are two practices to prime and re-wire the brain for increasingly more positive thoughts:

Focus on gratitude

1

Try these two steps first thing in the morning – or at any point in the day:

- Think of something (large or small) that you are grateful for: having hot water for your shower or a good cup of coffee. You might be grateful for having a job, for your family, for supportive colleagues or the students in your class. Whatever it is, direct your mind to go there.
- Consider how it makes you feel. Take a few moments to sit with that feeling before moving on to the rest of your day.

Redirect negative thinking

2

If you find your mind going in a negative direction, try redirecting your thoughts to recognize what's good about the person or situation.

- You think: The train is late. Again.
Redirect your thought to: *I'm really enjoying this podcast I've been listening to.*
- You think: Why does my student have such a bad attitude?
Try a strengths-based approach: *She made it to school despite the fact that she's obviously having a bad day. I appreciate her commitment to this class.*



CASA OF IOWA



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