

January 2024



Advocating for the protection of Iowa's children and improvement of the child welfare system.

Stay Up to Date



Updates to CAMS Data System

The CASA of Iowa and FCRB programs strive for continuous improvement of the data system, known as CAMS, to ensure it is user-friendly for all staff, facilitator, and volunteer users. System users may notice some updates and modifications to CAMS in the upcoming weeks. Information about the changes and updated user guides will be made available from local program staff once

revisions have been made. Users should continue to reach out to their coordinator or direct supervisor with questions or technical assistance related to using CAMS.

Resources

Friends of Iowa CASA and FCRB



Looking Ahead for 2024

Friends of Iowa CASA and ICFCRB has started to plan 2024 fundraising and public awareness events - be sure to check our social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn for upcoming events and opportunities!

Coffee + Chat

In 2024, Friends of Iowa CASA and ICFCRB will host a monthly Coffee + Chat for CASA and Foster Care Review Board volunteers. This virtual meeting over the lunch hour provides volunteers with more information about the Friends organization and how Friends can better serve volunteers in their communities and achieve the shared goal of changing a child's story. The first Coffee + Chat will be on January 18 from 12:00 -1:00 p.m. focused on the Quad Cities area (note: volunteers from across Iowa are welcome to join, but the discussions may be regionally specific). Join the meeting via link or call in:

Meeting Link: meet.google.com/qsh-yfqr-xpv

Call In: (US) +1 661-527-3126 PIN: 634 522 438#

Advocates Circle

In Iowa, on average it costs \$1,800 for one child to have a CASA volunteer for one year and \$850 for a Foster Care Review Board volunteer to review one child for one year. While Friends of Iowa CASA and ICFCRB has made progress towards serving every child in the child welfare system in Iowa, we still have work to do.

Friends has created the Advocates Circle, where any donor who contributes \$850 or more to Friends of Iowa CASA and ICFCRB on an annual basis will receive recognition in our Annual Report and verbal recognition at events in the donor's local area.

Your leadership gift today will help recruit, train and support more CASA and FCRB volunteers in Iowa who support outcomes for children in the child welfare system. You can make a one-time donation or a monthly gift (NOTE: please enter your gift in the custom field and set the frequency to recurring).

Membership Levels:

Ally: \$850 (or \$70 monthly)

Champion: \$1,800 (or \$150 monthly)

Guardian: \$2,650 (or \$220 monthly)

Visionary: \$3,000 (or \$250 monthly)

[Join the #AdvocatesCircle today.](#)

Trainer's Corner



For FCRB Members & CASA Advocates: 2024 Iowa Child Advocacy Board Speaker Series

Understanding QRTPs Presented by Kristen Konchalsk, HHS. CASAs will learn about Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTP) placements in Iowa, what to expect for youth placed in the programs, and the changes implemented July 1, 2023. Join us on January 18 from 12:00 - 1:00 pm. [Click here to register!](#) This session will be recorded, please only register to attend the live session.

Victim Assistance in the Attorney General's Office Join John Gist and Lisa Bickelhaupt on February 6, 2024, from 12:00 to 1:00 pm to learn about the resources available through the AG's office. From grants to free training and crime victim compensation, learn how these services could enhance advocacy efforts. Open to CASA and FCRB volunteers. [Click here to register!](#) This session will be recorded, please only register to attend the live session. A recording will be made available upon request following the session for independent study in-service credit.

Understanding Safety and Risk in Iowa Child Welfare System Sara Buis, Linda Dettmann, & Roxanne Riesberg from HHS will assist CASA volunteers in learning about definitions of safety and risk and how current practice is impacted by the understanding of each term for families being served by the child welfare system. Join us on March 5 from 12:00 - 1:00 pm. [Click here to register!](#) This session will be recorded, please only register to attend the live session.

Youth Suicide: A Silent Epidemic Suicide has been cited as a national public health issue among our youth since 1999, by Former Surgeon General David Satcher. Join Brett Marciel

from the Jason Foundation, Inc. on April 17, 2024 at 12:00 pm to learn about the rising concerns and problem of suicide among our youth, common signs of suicidal ideation, factors that increase suicide risk and common best practices after identifying young person who is struggling with their mental health or suicidal thoughts is identified. [Click here to register!](#) This session will be recorded, please only register to attend the live session. A recording can be made available upon request following the event for viewing to receive in-service credit.

CASA Advocates - If you would like a specific list of training options unique to your role or specific to your assigned case, contact your local coordinator or the State Trainer at lesa.christianson@dia.iowa.gov.

Years of Service and New Volunteers

December Anniversaries

Crystal Engstrom, Child Advocacy Program Coordinator,
CASA of North Central Iowa - 15 years

Jennifer Gericke, Child Advocacy Program Coordinator,
CASA of Iowa - Greater Cedar Rapids Area - 24 years

Welcome, New Volunteers!

Emma Anderson, CASA
Teresa Clevenger, CASA
Brooke Davis, CASA
Denny Gwendalynn, CASA
Ann Edgerton, CASA
Madison Espinoza, CASA
John Guinan, CASA
Meghan Hoppenworth, CASA
Angie Johnson, FCRB
Amanda Kremer, CASA
Kimberly Mayeski, CASA
Kayla Miller, CASA
Cheryl Miller, CASA
Traci Oberhaus, CASA
Roxanne Pinto, CASA
Wendy Sanders, CASA
Grace Tobin, CASA
Christine Wohlford, FCRB



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