

# COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE

## McDonough County, Illinois

### December 2017 Newsletter

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*Advocacy Network for Children Mission Statement: To protect and uphold the rights of children when wrongs have been committed against them; to help abused or neglected children have safe, permanent homes where they can thrive; to act as a powerful voice in these children's best interest and to educate the public about the plight of unrepresented children within the child welfare system.*

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Scott Cameron, Permanency Achievement Specialist, Department of Children and Family Service of Quincy, speaks to CASA volunteers and attorney Lisa Scalf about his program, the Family Finding Process.

### ***Family Finding . . .***

Kevin A. Campbell developed the Family Finding Model. The model offers methods and strategies to locate and engage relatives of children currently living in out-of-home care. *The goal of Family Finding is to connect each child with a family, so that every child may benefit from the lifelong connections that only a family provides.*

According to Scott Cameron, DCFS, Family Finding has become a federal mandate. The mandate requires that all known relatives be sent written notification within 30 days of the child(ren) being taken into protective custody. All other named supports must be sent written notification within 40 days of the child being taken into protective custody. Throughout the life of the case, the worker must send written notification within 7 calendar days to any other supports named by the parents after the first 40 days of the children being in substitute care. This is an ongoing process which should occur for the entire life of a case. Since this is a federal mandate, DCFS is required to comply with the process, as well as contracted, private agencies.

For more information on the Family Finding Model, visit [www.familyfinding.org](http://www.familyfinding.org)





### **Congratulations to recently sworn in CASA volunteers!**

On October 5<sup>th</sup>, Judge Walton swore in seven new CASA volunteers as the final step of an intensive 30-hour training program. For more information on how you can become an advocate for abused and neglected children, call 309-544-0003.

Pictured from left to right: Danielle Woodyard, CASA Volunteer Supervisor and Educator, Debbie Orton, Christine Staley, Michelle Hite, Ed Peters, Kayla Mountain, Darla Hornbaker, Lori Colley and Judge Walton.

### **YOU MADE A DIFFERENCE!**

Our agency, the ADVOCACY NETWORK FOR CHILDREN would like to thank everyone for their support this past year. With state budget issues and delays in grant payments, we could not have done it without you. Your generous support allowed us to continue helping abused and neglected children in our community.

Between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017, our Adams and McDonough County CASA volunteers were a voice for over 200 children in the court system because of abuse or neglect.

Our Children's Advocacy Center program coordinated nearly 330 cases of reported sexual abuse or severe physical abuse in the nine (9) area counties served.

Crisis intervention counseling is offered to any victim and their non-offending family member that come through one of our Children's Advocacy Centers.

Our Prevention Program made presentations to nearly 3500 students in Pre-K through 5th grade to teach these students about personal safety, how to respond to unwelcome touches and who to tell if someone gives them an unwelcome touch.

Together, we brought hope, promise, and healing to the most vulnerable victims of a crime, our children.

*Margarita Obregon, we wish you a Happy Birthday!  
December 12th*

***The Holidays . . .***

***Please respect the privacy of your CASA kids, their biological parents and their foster families. Do not schedule visits at this special time. However, it is important to find out beforehand where and who your CASA kids will be spending time with during the holidays!***

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**Calendar of Upcoming Opportunities!**

**December 12 – Holiday Open House, sponsored by Advocacy Network for Children.** 4:00 – 5:30 pm in the parlor of the First Presbyterian Church, Carroll and Dudley Streets. Welcome CASA volunteers, the Children's Advocacy Center team, and friends in the community! Email [vduba@advonet.org](mailto:vduba@advonet.org) with your attendance!

**December 14 – Opioid Overdose Awareness, Education and Prevention.** A McDonough County Town Hall Meeting held at Macomb City Hall from 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (1 ½ hours continuing education credit for CASA volunteers.) **RSVP your interest in meeting for an early dinner at 5:00 p.m. at Chubbys. Please reply no later than December 13<sup>th</sup> to Vicki Duba, PH: 309-544-0003.**

**March 9, 2018 – Advocacy Network for Children Fundraising Dinner.** Save the date. Details will follow.

**April 7, 2018 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Run for CASA's Kids.** Save the date! Would you like to help? Please contact Vicki Duba.

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**“Events in the Making”**  
Understanding the Integrated Assessment