

Change a Child's Story

JULY 2025

Yavapai County CASA Program Newsletter



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

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Happy Independence Day



Coordinators' Corner

**THANK
YOU!**

**THANK YOU CASAS FOR
YOUR PATIENCE WITH ALL
THE RECENT STAFFING
CHANGES**

Were you able to sign up your 0 - 5 age kiddo for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library? If so, could you please contact Amber or Jen to tell them about your experience with this valuable program? If not, please contact your coordinator to find out how to sign up!



**IF YOU RECENTLY RENEWED YOUR AUTO
INSURANCE, PLEASE SEND THE OFFICE
AN UPDATED COPY! THANKS**

**CHILD AND FAMILY
TEAM MEETINGS**

CFSS: please email: dawnr@cfssinc.com

Polaris Health: please email: whensthecft@polarishealth.com

Spectrum: please email: susans@spectrumhg.org

Please give the offices 48 hours to reply to your email

Prescott 2025

July



MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

1 **FTC 2:00**

Hearings

2

3

FCRB

4 **4TH OF JULY**

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7

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9 **9:00
CASA
Connecting**

10

FCRB

11

FCRB

14

15 **FTC 2:00**

Hearings

16

17

18

21

22

Hearings

23

24

25

28

29

30

31

**Tele-CASA
9:00**

Prescott 2025

AUGUST

MATH

SCIENCE

LITERATURE

MON TUE WED THU FRI

ART

History

MUSIC

GEOGRAPHY

4	5 FTC 2:00	6	7	8
			FCRB	FCRB
11	12	13 9:00 CASA Connecting	14	15
18	19 FTC 2:00	20	21	22
25	26	27	28 Tele-CASA 9:00	29

Verde

July

2025

MON

TUE

WED

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FRI

1 **FTC 2:00**

2

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4 **4TH OF JULY**

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10 **9:15
CASA
CONNECTING
COTTONWOOD
LIBRARY DEDE
EWALD ROOM
FCRB**

11

FCRB

14

15 **FTC 2:00
CASA
Presentation**

16

Hearings

17

18

21

22

23

24

25

28

29

30

Hearings

31

**Tele-CASA
9:00**



Rita Dennis 7/8

Rose Vallie-Norris 7/10

Georgi Walczyk 7/12

Dorie Scott 7/23

Cathy Johnson 7/15

Renee Ostwald 7/26

Scott Nave 7/29

Ann Michael 7/29

Diane McClure 7/30

Happy

ANNIVERSARY



KAREN DEEGAN 7 YEARS

ANN MICHAEL 2 YEARS





CASA Kudos

Kudos to Meg R. for taking her first case!

Kudos to Ron S. for taking a new teen boy!

Kudos to Carol H. for seeing one child on her case through to adoption and connecting the adoptive family with the County Attorney's office regarding father's criminal case. Adoptive parents really wanted to be heard and thanks to Carol, they were.

Kudos to Jan L. from April Goswick - for all of Jan's hard work with her teen sibling group. She follows through on their requests, researching phone plans and phone issues and summer camps, facilitating sibling visits and so much more!

Kudos to Leslie G. for seeing her case through to reunification!

Kudos to Amy Edwards for taking on a new Courtesy CASA case.

Kudos to Deb Schindler for supporting her CASA child and his family to case dismissal.

Kudos to Lis Avalos, Tricia Crean, Lauri Delfield, Sue Fitzsimmons, Ehren Falk, Lyn Herrington-Ekiss, Dan and Nan Hilton, Georgia Janik, Pat McKay, Melinda Mitchell, Chris Tompkins, Donna Tanzie, Georgi Walcyk, and Jo Zutell for completing all their required training hours for 2025!!!

Kudos to Rose V.N. for her continued efforts to ensure her CASA child's behavioral needs are being met!

Kudos to Dawn B. for her continued efforts to ensure her CASA children have the opportunities to partake in summer activities 😊

Kudos to Laura P. for going above and beyond to ensure her CASA youth has the opportunity to enjoy an outing in the community 😊

Kudos to Elizabeth S. for her continued efforts to ensure her CASA child's behavioral needs are being met!

Kudos to Miranda F. for her willingness to be appointed to two additional siblings and advocate for a total of three siblings in three different placements all placed outside of Yavapai County!

Kudos to Sharleen H. for being appointed to her first case!



Supporting Children Through Transitions in the Foster Care System



Change is an inevitable part of life, but for youth in the foster care system, it's often a constant companion, bringing both challenges and opportunities. Moving between homes, schools, and case managers can be disorienting, yet with the right support, these transitions can be moments of growth and resilience, fostering their ability to adapt and thrive.

Understanding the Landscape of Change for Foster Children

For children in foster care, "change" isn't just about a new address; it encompasses a multitude of shifts:

- **Placement Changes:** The most obvious and often most disruptive change is moving from one placement to another, or from their biological family into foster care. Each move involves new rules, routines, caregivers, and often, new siblings and pets.
- **School Transitions:** With each move, a child may change schools, encountering new teachers, classmates, curricula, and social dynamics. This can impact their academic progress and social development.
- **Loss and Grief:** Every change, even a positive one, involves a loss of familiarity, of relationships, of what was. Children may grieve the loss of their previous home, friends, or even a sense of stability.
- **Changes in Relationships:** Foster children often experience a revolving door of case managers, therapists, and even biological family visits, leading to a constant renegotiation of trust and attachment. CASA's can be long standing constant in their lives.
- **Developmental Changes:** Like all children, foster youth are navigating their own physical, emotional, and cognitive development, but they often do so under heightened stress and often with less consistent support.

Effective support for foster children undergoing change requires a multi-faceted approach, involving foster parents, CASAs, case managers, educators, and the community.

1. Prioritize Preparation and Communication:

- **Advance Notice (When Possible):** Whenever a change is anticipated, providing as much advance notice as possible allows children to mentally prepare. Explain why the change is happening in age-appropriate terms.
- **Open Dialogue:** Create a safe space for children to express their feelings, fears, and questions about the upcoming change. Listen actively and validate their emotions without judgment.
- **Visual Aids:** For younger children, using visual schedules, social stories, or even drawing pictures of the new environment can help them visualize and process the change.

2. Foster a Sense of Control and Predictability:

- **Involve Them in Decisions (Where Appropriate):** Even small choices, like picking out a new backpack for a new school or deciding how to arrange their room in a new home, can give children a sense of ownership.

- **Establish Routines Quickly:** Upon arrival in a new home or school, establishing predictable routines provides a sense of security and structure amidst the unfamiliar.
- **Create a "Transition Kit":** A small bag with familiar items like a favorite blanket, book, or toy can provide comfort and a sense of continuity during a move. Photos of loved ones can also be invaluable.

3. Nurture Emotional Well-being:

- **Acknowledge and Validate Feelings:** It's crucial to acknowledge that it's okay to feel sad, angry, scared, or confused about change. Avoid minimizing their feelings or telling them to "be strong."
- **Teach Coping Mechanisms:** Introduce healthy coping strategies such as deep breathing exercises, mindfulness, journaling, or engaging in creative outlets like art or music.
- **Seek Professional Support:** If a child is struggling significantly with a transition, connect them with a therapist or counselor specializing in trauma and attachment. Play therapy can be particularly helpful for younger children.

4. Maintain Connections and Continuity:

- **Facilitate Existing Relationships:** Where safe and appropriate, help children maintain connections with significant people from their past, such as biological family members, previous foster parents, or friends.
- **Communicate Between Systems:** Ensure seamless communication between foster parents, case managers, and schools to share relevant information about the child's needs, strengths, and any challenges they may be facing. This is an area where CASAs can help make the transition smoother for their appointed child.
- **Preserve Academic Records:** Ensuring school records are transferred efficiently helps prevent academic setbacks and allows new teachers to understand a child's learning history.

5. Promote Resilience and Strengths:

- **Highlight Past Successes:** Remind children of times they successfully navigated challenges in the past, reinforcing their inner strength and ability to adapt.
- **Focus on Strengths:** Identify and celebrate their individual strengths and talents. Encourage them to pursue activities they enjoy, which can provide stability and a sense of accomplishment.
- **Be a Consistent Presence:** For CASAs, foster parents, and case managers, being a consistent, reliable, and empathetic presence is perhaps the most powerful tool in helping children navigate change.

Change for foster children is an ongoing journey, often marked by uncertainty and loss. However, with thoughtful preparation, empathetic communication, consistent support, and a focus on building resilience, we can transform these challenging transitions into opportunities for growth.

By working together – as individuals, families, and communities – we can equip foster youth with the tools they need to not only survive change but to truly thrive amidst it, building a foundation for a stable and fulfilling future.



FAMILY TREATMENT COURT

What does the child think of it?

In this newsletter we have discussed the best qualities of Family Treatment Court from all types of perspectives. We've heard from team members such as court staff, behavioral health personnel, and our group facilitator. Participants and graduates themselves also weigh in from time to time. But wouldn't it be interesting to learn what it's like from the child's perspective? How does the child feel about his mom or dad working through the Family Treatment Court program?

Check out this beautiful quote about a recent Family Treatment Court graduate from her son.

“Having my mom in the program has made us a better family. I love my mom. And I love that I get to be back with her forever, not go back to the group home. I think my behavior and mood has changed. So has my mom's. I love her so much.”

He said, “I love her so much.” There you have it. It's obvious that most of the children we serve just want their parents back and they need to have their families whole again. He was in attendance for her graduation that day, with a big smile lighting up his face. What a wonderful sight. It's nice when we can do something to help them along, even if it's in our own very small way.



FAMILY TREATMENT COURT

Camp Verde

CASA PRESENTATION

Camp Verde Courthouse, Room 219

TUESDAY, July 15

1:30 PM - 5:00 PM

- Meet Judge Repp in person
- Learn about the benefits of FTC
- See staffing firsthand
- Attend the hearing to see it all come together

RSVP TO KRISTI NEWMAN AT

knewman@courts.az.gov



Pajama Drive

Pajama Drive in the Verde Valley

The Pajama Drive is a nationwide program that strives to provide a sense of security, comfort, and a positive bedtime routine for children who are encountering difficult situations.

Nightgowns handmade by Eileen Bond

Between the months of March and May, various Verde Valley businesses and organizations donated a 144 new packaged pajamas to the 1st Pajama Drive held in the Verde Valley. 16 additional nightgowns were handmade by Eileen Bond, Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation, Emeritus Board Member. In addition, 123 books were donated to the Pajama Drive. The Pajama Drive was organized by Sheri Earl, Verde Valley Family Visitation Center Assistant Manager, with the Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation.

In the early part of June, Verde Valley retirement center residents enjoyed a fun-filled day picking out pajamas and books for children along with a pretty gold bow to place them together. The pajamas and books were then distributed to the Verde Valley area and Prescott area to 15 CASAs who had requested the pajamas and books for their CASA children. Remaining pajamas were then distributed to both the Verde and Prescott DCS offices.

As Sheri reflects on her 1st Pajama Drive, her goal is to have a Pajama Drive held every April or May in the Verde Valley with continued distribution of pajamas and books to Verde and Prescott CASAs as well as any remaining pajamas and books distributed to the Verde and Prescott DCS offices in June.

With new cozy pajamas and a book for bedtime, children have the comfort of a good night's sleep 😊



Finished packages by Verde Valley Retirement Center Residents





2024-2025 Schedule

10:00am - 12:00pm
One Saturday every month

Park Rangers and community partners will lead child-centered play events at a different family friendly park and trail each month. At every Nature Niños event there will be take-home items, a healthy snack, creative nature activities, story time, and little fun lessons on Appreciate AZ Leave No Trace and Healthy Choices. Nature Niños events are led by Park Rangers and community partner staff with a strong understanding of child development and experience leading child-centered outdoor programs.

October 5th
Fain Park
2200 N. 5th Street
Prescott Valley, AZ 86314

November 2nd
Acker Park
421 S. Virginia Street
Prescott, AZ 86303

December 7th
Santa Fe Station Park
6751 E Santa Fe Loop
Prescott Valley, AZ 86314

January 4th
Vista Park
1701 Sarafina Drive
Prescott, AZ 86301

February 1st
Watson Lake
Upper Ramada
3101 Watson Lake Drive
Prescott, AZ 86301

March 1st
Pioneer Park
Brownlow Area
1195 Commerce Drive
Prescott, AZ 86305

April 5th
Community Nature Center
1980 W. Watson Valley
Prescott, AZ 86305

April 19th
Prescott Earth Day
Courthouse Square

May 3rd
Goldwater Lake
Upper
2900 S. Goldwater Lake Road
Prescott, AZ 86303

June 7th
Granite Creek Park
554 6th Street
Prescott, AZ 86301

July 5th
Antelope Park
6933 N. Cattletrack Road
Prescott Valley, AZ 86314

August 2nd
West Granite Creek
Splash Pad
350 N. Montezuma Street
Prescott, AZ 86301

September 6th
Thumb Butte
Prescott National Forest
2285 W. Thumb Butte Road
Prescott, AZ 86305



These organizations are equal opportunity providers

Attend CASAs Connecting Peer support group to help you be **successful on your case. Because the work of a **CASA** is **confidential**, it is important to have a **safe** place to talk about your case. **ALL** CASAs are **highly encouraged** to attend a **CASA** support group. This support group provides **lively and informative discussions**. The attendees include a mix of veteran and new **CASAs** and **CASA** staff. These discussions can **help you understand system issues, procedures, identify needs and solve unanswered questions.****

CASAs Connecting
7/9/25 9 am to 11 am
in person at the JJC

Tele-CASA (on-line)
7/31/25 9 am - 11 am
The link for this meeting will
be sent via email the
Tuesday before the meeting.



Book Club

August 25th
9:30 am
at JJC

Demon Copperhead by Barbara Kingsolver

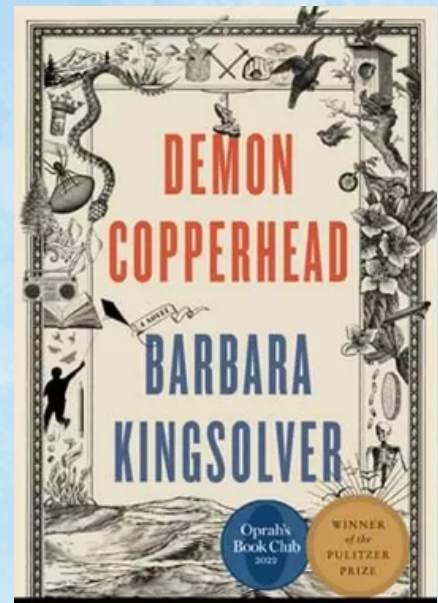
"Anyone will tell you the born of this world are marked from the get-out, win or lose."

Set in the mountains of southern Appalachia, this is the story of a boy born to a teenaged single mother in a single-wide trailer, with no assets beyond his dead father's good looks and copper-colored hair, a caustic wit, and a fierce talent for survival. In a plot that never pauses for breath, relayed in his own unsparing voice, he braves the modern perils of foster care, child labor, derelict schools, athletic success, addiction, disastrous loves, and crushing losses. Through all of it, he reckons with his own invisibility in a popular culture where even the superheroes have abandoned rural people in favor of cities.

Many generations ago, Charles Dickens wrote David Copperfield from his experience as a survivor of institutional poverty and its damages to children in his society. Those problems have yet to be solved in ours. Dickens is not a prerequisite for readers of this novel, but he provided its inspiration. In transposing a Victorian epic novel to the contemporary American South, Barbara Kingsolver enlists Dickens' anger and compassion, and above all, his faith in the transformative powers of a good story. *Demon Copperhead* speaks for a new generation of lost boys, and all those born into beautiful, cursed places they can't imagine leaving behind.

Books
Available

IN THE CASA OFFICE



Rise Above the Clouds Presents:

FREE SUMMER CAMP



JOIN US FOR OUR TRAUMA-
INFORMED SUMMER CAMP
FOR FOSTER YOUTH IN
YAVAPAI COUNTY



WHEN?
JULY 22ND -
JULY 26TH

AGE RANGE?
12-14

WHERE?
A BEAUTIFUL CAMP
IN THE PRESCOTT
NATIONAL FOREST



Activities

- ✓ Art
- ✓ Music
- ✓ Cooking Classes
- ✓ Flow arts
- ✓ Kayaking
- ✓ Ropes Courses
- ✓ Sex Education
- ✓ & so much more!



To register:



riseabovetheclouds8@gmail.com



Rise Above the Clouds 501c3 (928) 925-9559

@rise.abovetheclouds





Humboldt Education Foundation

June 21 at 11:38 AM ·

Mark your calendars!

The Humboldt Education Foundation invites all Quad City area families to our FREE Health and Wellness Fair!

Date: July 23

Time: 3-6pm

Location: Toyota Center, Prescott Valley

Join us for FREE backpacks, school supplies, services, and vital resources—open to ALL families in EVERY school district in the Quad City area!

YOU MUST REGISTER TO TAKE PART!

Don't miss this amazing opportunity to get ready for the new school year and connect with community partners!

Click the link to register now—see you there!

<https://www.eventbrite.com/.../humboldt-education...>

OPERATION Back to School



**Saturday July 26th
9am to Noon**

*Kids must be
present*

Old Town Mission

116 E Pinal St. Cottonwood

Everything is FREE!

Backpacks ~ Food ~ School Supplies

*Kids must be
present*

**With your help we can send kids back
to school ready to learn!!**

we are collecting...

- Paper
- Pens
- Binders
- Pencils
- Glue
- Notebooks
- Index Cards
- Crayons
- Highlighter

- Backpacks
- Lunch Boxes

Donate Today at oldtownmission.org

CELEBRATION!



Gift Cards



**Does your CASA kiddo have a birthday coming up?
Get a great report card or improve in a class they were
struggling with? Successfully complete potty training?
Any other event or milestone?**

**Stop by the CASA office to pick up a Celebration Gift
Card! Thank you YCFKF!**

WRAPPED IN LOVE



The Wrapped in Love (WiL) Diaper Bank provides diapers and supplies to struggling families across Yavapai County. Diapers are given to families through their affiliation with a service agency in the community. WiL promotes health and wellness by providing Yavapai County participants with diapers, wipes and referrals to local services. The overarching goal of WiL is to alleviate the cost of diapering and strengthen access to resources for struggling families in Yavapai County. The staff and volunteers at WiL coordinate with community agencies and family programs to ensure that needy families have access to the resources available to assist them in raising healthy children.

Yavapai County CASA Volunteers can request diapers for their foster or kinship families who are struggling to buy diapers.

If you would like to order diapers for your CASA baby's family, please contact your coordinator.



CASA OF YAVAPAI COUNTY



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FOLLOW US!

f
facebook

June in Yavapai County

4 New Cases filed

5 Children taken
into DCS custody

Kids who still need a CASA

229

Total number of
children in DCS Care

83

Number of CASAs

107

Children with
a CASA

122



Contact Information

www.casaofyavapaicounty.org

Prescott Office

(928) 771-3165

Amber Martin, Dependency Court Manager

email: amartin@courts.az.gov

Jessica Hines, Program Coordinator II

email: jhines@courts.az.gov

Amy Fillingim, Program Coordinator II

email: afillingim@courts.az.gov

Kathy McCormick, Mediator

email: kmccormi@courts.az.gov

Evelyn Hurtado, Admin Assistant I

email: ehurtado@courts.az.gov

Robin Fernandez Ames, Support Staff

email: rfernanzesames@courts.az.gov

Kristi Newman (928) 771-3398

Family Treatment Court Coordinator

email: knewman@courts.az.gov

Camp Verde Office

(928) 554-8900

Jen Bahr, Dependency Program Manager II

email: jbahr@courts.az.gov

Laura Gray, Admin Assistant I

email: lagray@courts.az.gov



www.YavapaiCASAforKids.org

P.O. Box 28070

Prescott Valley, AZ 86312

(928)445-0800



Board Members:

Lisa Watts, President

Greg Byrum, Vice President/Secretary

Luke Lewis, Treasurer

Cheryl Micholofki

Barbara Fox-Thomas

Eileen Bond, Emeritus Member

Jayne Schwantes

Yvonne Bartlett, Executive Director

Mona Stephens, Development

Sara Tillman, Grants for Kids Program

Questions about YC4KF?

email: info@yavapaicasaforkids.org