

ISSUE 1 ■ APRIL ■ 2019

# CASA OF WILL COUNTY Spring Newsletter

## April is Child Abuse Awareness Month

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### THE POWER OF A VOICE: BREAKING THE SILENCE OF SHAME

*How speaking up can stop child abuse*

At the start of 2019, child abuse came to the forefront of media attention with the release of "Abducted in Plain Sight", "Surviving R. Kelly", and "Leaving Neverland". The exposés shocked and captivated millions of viewers, as survivors spoke up against their abusers on national television. Guardian Angels' Prevention Coordinator and past CASA volunteer, Janice Masokas applauds the brave survivors for telling their story, "People are encouraged to speak out like never before. It gives people hope and courage to speak up."

"Abducted in Plain Sight," "Surviving R. Kelly," and "Neverland" focused on abuses that happened in the past and have the common theme of predators who were able to deceive and groom the public. Masokas explains, "Groomers are liars and master manipulators. Even if you may suspect something is off, we naturally shut down our instinct because we don't want to feel foolish if we're wrong".

*(continued on next page)*



## IT'S A FACT:

Last year, CASA of Will County advocated for 83% of the children in need. You can help us reach 100%.

## The Power of a Voice

(continued from front page)



*“Survivors need to know that they are worth the fight and there are people who will fight for them.”*

In the U.S., 1 in 10 children are sexually abused. As the Prevention Coordinator for Guardian Angels, Masokas visits schools and helps teach children body safety. She states, “The best way to prevent child sexual abuse is to talk about it. Teach children permission and boundaries. Kids need to learn words like ‘uncomfortable’ and ‘unsure’ so they can tell adults. Most importantly, teach kids that they are valuable and deserve to be treated right.”

Children in foster care are especially vulnerable. “This is where CASAs can help a whole lot. By bonding with the children and looking out for their wellbeing, a CASA can help guard them against predators.” said Masokas.

When it comes to what the average person can do, Masokas says, “**Be advocates and encouragers.** Be aware and believe survivors. We want children to disclose now and we have to show them that it’s safe to do so”. She adds, “Survivors need to know that they are worth the fight and there are people who will fight for them”.

*If you or a loved one has been sexually abused, call the Guardian Angels’ 24-hour sexual assault hotline at (815) 730-8984.*

## Gala Sets Fundraising Record Celebrating 25 Years

In February, CASA of Will County celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the “Have a Heart for the Child” Gala presented by **Castle Law** and special Silver Anniversary Sponsor **ComEd**.

With a record number of people in attendance, the event was a huge success as it was moved this year to Bolingbrook Golf Club.

Master of Ceremonies and Castle Law partner **Ed Jarot** kept the evening rolling along and also hosted the Fund-A-Need, which alone raised a record

\$40,000. Along with the silent and live auctions, wine pull and raffle, the evening raised more than **\$130,000** for CASA programs to help abused and neglected children in Will County – the most funds ever raised at the annual gala.

Highlights of the evening included a heartfelt testimonial from Ivy, a GiveBack Scholar, which is a CASA partnership that identifies and mentors students in the foster care system to receive college scholarships. We also

heard from the Camerons, volunteers whose actions made it possible for a foster child to reunite with their family in time for the Christmas holiday.

The evening was capped off with dancing to the entertainment of the Grace & John band. We look forward to next year’s event on February 29, 2020.



*CASA Staff and Advocates receive special recognition and gifts at the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Have a Heart for the Child Gala at Bolingbrook Golf Club.*

## D’Arcy Motors to Present Golf Outing

CASA OF WILL COUNTY IS EXCITED TO WELCOME D’ARCY MOTORS AS PRESENTING SPONSOR FOR THE GOLF FOR THE CHILD CLASSIC FRIDAY, JUNE 28, AT THE PRAIRIE BLUFF GOLF CLUB



Once again, Prairie Bluff will play host to CASA’s annual golf outing, and we are excited to have **D’Arcy Motors** as this year’s title sponsor.

Our popular Bloody Mary Bar will be back, presented by **TranSystems**, and we will have thrilling on-course entertainment with long drive pro Mick Yelovich from Charity Golf International!

We also will have a silent auction and awards at the luncheon following the round of golf, with a full schedule of fun and exciting events for everyone.

Foursomes and sponsorships are on sale now, so make sure you secure yours by visiting our official website, **GolfForTheChild.com**. See you on the front nine!

### Save the Date

Following the golf outing, we have two more great annual fundraising events that you won’t want to miss:

#### Sunday, October 6

Running 4 the Kids 5K/10K New Lenox, Illinois.  
*Registration now open!*

#### Saturday and Sunday December 7 and 8

CASA Christmas Express train ride from Joliet Union Station to Tinley Park Oak Park Avenue  
*Tickets on sale October 1!*  
Visit [casaofwillcounty.org](http://casaofwillcounty.org) for info.

## STATISTICS\*:



\*From CASA and the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services.

## Help a child weather the storms of life

April is Child Abuse Awareness Month. By the end of April, more children will enter foster care due to abuse and neglect. These children need a CASA to be their voice in court. As CASAs, we are there for a child rain or shine, through home visits, advocacy, and court recommendations in order to ensure a child's safety. We need your help to do what we do. We rely heavily on people like you to support us through donations, attending our fundraising events, or by becoming an advocate. Will you answer the call and support CASA in any way you can?

WE ARE THE VOICE OF THE CHILD.



### READY TO VOLUNTEER?

PLEASE CONTACT RITA FACCHINA AT 815.730.7072

OR VISIT [WWW.CASAOFWILLCOUNTY.ORG](http://WWW.CASAOFWILLCOUNTY.ORG)

FOR MORE INFORMATION.

### *Next Issue:*

RECAP OF OUR GOLF OUTING

GET READY FOR OUR 4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
RUNNING 4 THE KIDS 5K/10K –  
FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

AND MORE . . .



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