



**The National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association**

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**INVITATION**

On behalf of the National CASA Association, I want to extend an invitation to subscribe to THE JUDGE'S PAGE, an educational e-mail newsletter located at the National CASA Association website. The newsletter is co-sponsored by the National CASA Association and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. The newsletter is intended as an online resource for Judges, attorneys, child advocates, local CASA program staff and CASA volunteers.

THE JUDGES' PAGE was cited by the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law as "...a useful resource not just for judges, but for any child advocates involved in child abuse/neglect related cases. There are quick links to the National CASA Association and National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges websites...There are featured commentary items by juvenile court judges, case law articles, news entries, and other material that you may find nowhere else."

The subscription is free. To view and subscribe the THE JUDGES' PAGE go to: <http://www.nationalcasa.org/JudgesPage/index.htm>. Click on the button below the following message appearing on the lower right side of the home page which states: "Subscribers: Go to log in" and proceed to click on: "Click here to subscribe". An e-mail will alert you when the latest issue comes online. You do not have to be a Judge to subscribe.

If the Judges and attorneys who are involved with your program are not currently subscribers, I hope you will make them aware of this opportunity. Each issue can be downloaded to hard copy for those who do not want to use the internet.

Judge J. Dean Lewis (retired)  
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ILLINOIS

## Update from the Illinois CASA Network (Court Appointed Special Advocates)

Illinois CASA  
Network  
By County

Adams  
Boone  
Champaign  
Coles  
Cook  
DeKalb  
DuPage  
Franklin  
Fulton  
Jersey  
Kane  
Kankakee  
Kendall  
Knox  
Lake  
LaSalle  
Lee/Carroll  
Macon  
McHenry  
McLean/Livingston  
Peoria  
Randolph/Perry  
Saline  
Sangamon  
St. Clair/Monroe  
Whiteside  
Will  
Williamson  
Winnebago

CASA's primary role is to advocate for the best interests of children involved in abuse and neglect cases in our courts. Local CASA agencies do this through the services of intensively trained volunteers known as CASAs or Court Appointed Special Advocates. CASA volunteers are recruited, trained and managed by local agency staff. CASAs are sworn to confidentiality by the Chief Judge. CASAs are assigned to one or two cases at a time for the duration of the case. CASAs gather objective information on the status of each child involved in the case and reports it to the court regularly.

*Currently there are thirty local CASA agencies in Illinois. In 2004: more than 1,600 people in Illinois volunteered as CASA advocates; these volunteers served more than 4,300 Illinois children; CASA volunteers gave over 372,700 hours in advocacy.*

The Illinois CASA Association is the organizing body for CASA in Illinois. As a state association, National CASA has charged Illinois CASA with three basic responsibilities: provide ongoing technical assistance to CASA programs, manage the National CASA Quality Assurance program and establish new local CASA programs or expand existing programs into neighboring counties according to National CASA standards.

### *Ongoing Technical Assistance*

Illinois CASA provides technical assistance to CASA programs at no charge. Programs may be experiencing difficulties due to transition in staff or leadership, or difficulty due to decreased funding. Illinois CASA can work extensively with the Board and staff of an agency to facilitate a plan to strengthen the program and address specific needs.

### *National CASA Quality Assurance Program*

All thirty local CASA programs have completed the National CASA Quality Assurance Program. Programs must successfully complete the assessment every four years.

### *Program Start-Up and Expansion*

Illinois CASA organized new CASA agencies in Peoria County and McHenry County in 2004. Illinois CASA is currently organizing a new program in Jefferson County. The Illinois CASA Board of Directors is deciding where efforts will begin in the spring of 2006 to establish the next CASA agency. Several local CASA programs are considering expansion into neighboring counties. Illinois CASA will be facilitating feasibility plans with those Boards of Directors at no charge.

If you have questions about CASA in your community, please contact us!