

The VOICES of

CHILD **ADVOCATES** OF FORT BEND™

Inside /
CEO Update • Father's Day • WINGS &
NEST Programming • Monthly Spotlights
and MORE!



JUNE 2026

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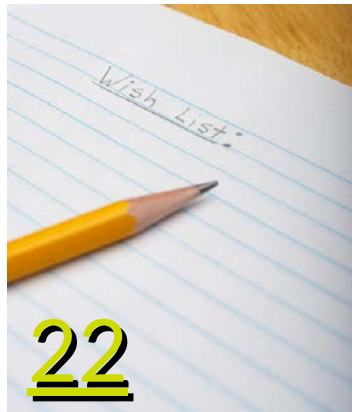


Keeping you informed on our mission:

Strengthen the Child's Voice, Heal the Hurt, and Break the Cycle of Abuse and Neglect for Children and Families in Fort Bend and surrounding counties.



MONTHLY SPOTLIGHTS



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Save these dates and plan to join us for these upcoming events



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WWW.CAFB.ORG



from the ceo

Welcome to our latest issue of VOICES. . . .

Welcome Friends,

Thanks to all 620 guests who attended our "Where The Wild Things Are" Gala in May! It was our best ever Gala in so many ways - we had the highest attendance ever, the theme resonated with our guests and we featured some amazing auction items. Thanks to your generosity, we raised over \$600,000 to support services and programs for our children. We deeply appreciate all our sponsors, donors and volunteers who made this happen!

With the school year coming to an end and Summer fast approaching, we're taking time this month to share the many activities and accomplishments that our children have achieved this school year. From celebrating our younger children who have met or surpassed their academic and behavioral

milestones with a NEST Incentive Party on May 29 to celebrating our graduating high school seniors who overcame countless challenges to graduate and earn their high school degrees with our Graduation Party on June 13, these milestones are testament to the resilience and determination that our children and youth demonstrate. We are so proud of them and thrilled for what comes next. We also celebrate our fathers in June on Fathers Day and throughout the month. Fathers are essential partners in children's welfare, and engaged fathers act as role models and lead to shorter stays in foster care, reduced trauma and improved emotional well-being for children, according to Casey Family Programs. When child welfare systems actively involve fathers, children experience a wide range of developmental benefits

-more



ranging from contributing to higher academic achievement, improved school attendance and reduced behavioral problems. When both parents are engaged with their children, outcomes are improved and support systems are strengthened. We encourage this through Collaborative Family Engagement, support for children's therapy treatment, and demonstrating trauma informed parenting care. Unfortunately, fathers have sometimes been marginalized in child protective cases due to traditional models of reliance on mothers as primary caregivers. They might be absent, unable to be located, identified or incarcerated, or they may be involved with substance abuse. Yet, when efforts are made to engage fathers, allowing them to voice concerns and values during family meetings, sharing their cultures and traditions with their children and building trauma-informed parenting skills, the benefits to children can be dramatically improved. We take time this month to applaud fathers for the hard work and joy of raising children in safe, positive households.

For The Children's Sake,

Ruthanne

Ruthanne Mefford, CEO



Did you hear? Dave & Busters is coming to Sugar Land!

CAFB is the beneficiary of their
Grand Opening on Monday, June 15th from 5-9pm

Show it on your phone or mention you are there supporting CAFB
when you order food or game cards
Bring your family & friends
Share with others



JUNE 15, 2026
5:00PM - 9:00PM

DAVE & BUSTER'S SUGAR LAND
19892 SOUTHWEST FWY, SUGAR LAND, TX 77479

CHILD
ADVOCATES
OF FORT BEND™

20% OF ALL FOOD, NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND GAME PLAY GO TOWARDS CAFB

MUST PRESENT FLYER AT TIME OF PURCHASE.
*ALCOHOL IS NOT INCLUDED IN SPIRIT NIGHTS TOTAL SALES.

FRIENDS of CAFB Social

By Lisa Moore

FRIENDS is an auxiliary volunteer group supporting Child Advocates of Fort Bend (CAFB) through a Special Needs Fund supported by its members. Friends' Special Needs Fund underwrites the needs of children in the foster care system and clients of the CAC that other providers are unable to offer - items that most people take for granted. The fund has underwritten backpacks filled with school supplies, summer camp tuition, tutoring, caps and gowns for graduating seniors, driving lessons, birthday parties, computers for college students and so much more.

One of our recent college graduates was away at college without a car. She was juggling a job and her school classes and was having trouble getting groceries. FRIENDS was able to provide this youth with a membership to Walmart+ that allowed her to have her items delivered directly to her apartment. She was so relieved and grateful to have caring people support her transition into adulthood.

Most recently, FRIENDS hosted it's annual Spring Social. In addition to visiting with friends and enjoying tasty hors d'oeuvres,





25 guests learned how FRIENDS membership supports the children we serve and how that integrates with the mission of CAFB.

FRIENDS has more than 100 members and is managed by a Council which provides volunteer opportunities and social events throughout the year. Annual membership dues are \$50 per year. Membership is open to anyone.

For membership information about FRIENDS of Child Advocates of Fort Bend go to <https://www.cafb.org/volunteer/volunteer-opportunities/friends-of-child-advocates-of-fort-bend/> or contact Pat at tootsomers@gmail.com or 281-782-9063.



FEATURE STORY

The Power of Presence: The Importance of Positive Male Volunteers in a Child's Life

By Jen Brown & Casey Davis

Every child deserves to grow up surrounded by loving and supportive adults who help them feel safe, valued, and connected. While children benefit from many kinds of healthy relationships, positive male role models can play an especially meaningful role.

For many children, that role may be filled by a father or stepfather. For others, it may come from extended family members, teachers, coaches, mentors, or family friends. What matters most is not the title someone holds, but the message they send to a child: You matter. You are capable. You are not alone.

Through their actions, our male CAFB Volunteers demonstrate connection through kindness and felt safety through compassion. For many children facing difficult

circumstances, one caring male volunteer can become a source of hope. This hope can inspire a child to feel safe, valued, and seen.

As CASA Volunteer, Marty Schonberger, explained, "As a small child, my mother passed away and my father raised three children while working a nightshift. My male role models were my neighbors who looked after us and particularly my Boy Scout Leaders who looked after me like I was their own child."

Volunteers and staff at Child Advocates of Fort Bend witness every day how these meaningful connections can change a child's life. Our Volunteers often become trusted sources of stability and encouragement for children navigating difficult situations

[-more](#)

“Volunteering has shown me that my actions do have a positive impact on both an individual and the community.”

-Jim Lockwood

Board Member

Jim Glaus, CASA Volunteer, explained the importance of positive male role models this way: “Boys need a male to show them how to treat girls with respect and dignity.”

Being a positive role model does not require perfection. It simply requires showing up, listening, and showing compassion. Small moments like playing a board game in our Children’s Advocacy Center, going to school events, or spending quality time together can all leave lifelong impressions.

Doug Earle, Children’s Advocacy Center Volunteer, explains this perfectly, “The essence of volunteering is to put the welfare of others before your own.”

Every child deserves someone who believes in them. When positive male Volunteers step forward, they help build stronger children, stronger families, and a stronger community for generations to come. Jim Lockwood, Board Member, feels strongly about this as well. He explained, “Volunteering has shown me that my actions do have a positive impact on both an individual and the community.”

Every child deserves to grow up surrounded by loving and supportive adults. CAFB is grateful to each who helps us do this every day.





monthly spotlights

updates from the programs and MORE!



Joslyn Brewer Court Advocacy Specialist

Hello.

My name is Joslyn Brewer and I am originally from Nebraska. I am the new Court Advocacy Specialist here at CAFB. I have a background in dealing with at risk and vulnerable youth in my previous position as a Juvenile Probation Officer. I also worked as a Foster Care Case Manager previously. I graduated from the prestigious Lincoln University of Missouri. I am also involved with youth as I am an Officiates for Boys AAU Basketball and a previous boys basketball coach. I love to do anything that involves sports, shopping, and eating! I am new to the area, and open to any food and activities suggestions!

STAFF UPDATES

Development Director Lisa Moore Graduates From Fort Bend Leadership Program

Congratulations to our Development Director, Lisa Moore for graduating with the Fort Bend Leadership Forum Class of 2026!

The Fort Bend Leadership Forum was created to meet Fort Bend County's growing need for informed, engaged volunteer leaders. Through dynamic learning experiences and collaborative dialogue, the program expands participants' understanding of the community, strengthens meaningful relationships and resources, and builds leadership skills that serve them personally, professionally, and as civic

stakeholders. Throughout the ten-month program, participants explored the issues, opportunities, and leadership challenges shaping the future of Fort Bend County. This

This year's class was the largest to date with 58 outstanding leaders completing the program. Interested in joining the next class of leaders? Applications for the Fort Bend Leadership Forum Class of 2027 are now open:

<https://fortbendregionalpartnership.com/about/fort-bend-leadership-forum/>





Statewide Care Coordinator Convening Meeting

Child Advocates of Fort Bend Chief Program Officer, Metoyer Martin, recently participated in the Statewide Care Coordinator Convening in Austin alongside Care Coordinators and child serving professionals from across Texas. The convening provided an opportunity for collaborative discussions focused on strengthening responses to child sex trafficking, enhancing multidisciplinary partnerships, and sharing best practices related to victim centered and trauma informed care coordination services. Participation in this statewide meeting supports Child Advocates of Fort Bend's ongoing efforts to strengthen Fort Bend County's coordinated response system and ensure children and families have access to comprehensive support services.

Did you know that you can donate cars, airplanes, boats, motorcycles or trucks and select Child Advocates of Fort Bend to receive the proceeds?

Visit [HERE](#) for questions or contact
Lisa at lmoore@cafb.org





CAFB BOARD AND STAFF LUAU

On May 20th the CAFB Board of Directors hosted a staff celebration Luau in appreciation of the dedication and hard work of all employees. We traded in the spreadsheets for shorelines and the coffee for coconuts. It was a “shellebration” that included a tropical feast, island beats, festive games, engaging conversation and was a well-deserved break.

Here at CAFB you won't find a staff member that doesn't think we have the BEST BOARD in the whole county. To all of them we say “Mahalo” from the bottom of our grass skirts.



DONOR SPOTLIGHTS



Located just down the road from CAFB is Needville Family Dentistry whose mission is to provide a friendly environment where every patient feels comfortable. Their commitment extends beyond the walls of their practice as they actively engage with the Needville and surrounding community. During April's Child Abuse Prevention Month, they selected CAFB as the beneficiary of all new client appointments and presented us with a generous donation.

Their kindness and support help us to continue OUR mission—thank you for giving back to the community!



Thank you to the Texas Bar Foundation for their generous financial support of justice initiatives for youth served by CAFB.

CAFB seeks building a trauma-informed community in Fort Bend by achieving a Trauma-Informed Organizational Certification (TIC) to support training the legal community and other professionals in Fort Bend County in best practices of trauma-informed care. The Texas Bar Foundation recognizes the importance of a trauma-informed approach to understanding the vulnerabilities of trauma survivors, to be more supportive and avoid re-traumatization, ensure safety of all, reduce recidivism and promote recovery. Through this partnership the trauma-informed certification will align with CAFB's "Advocacy For All" approach where we are implementing strategies that address the needs of every client.



*Lisa with one of our volunteers,
Maureen Lake (below)*



Tri-City Women's Club

CAFB was honored to receive a generous donation from the Tri-City Women's Club in support of helping the children we serve. This Club of 125 women promotes socialization and supports local charities. Maureen Lake is one of our treasured CAC volunteers. As a member of the Club, she nominated CAFB to be a recipient. Thank you Maureen and everyone at the Tri-City Women's Club for your generosity.

If you're interested in learning more about joining, please contact Maureen at maureenlake@gmail.com.



A Year of Prevention, Partnership and Purpose

By Sandra Glenn

As another school year comes to a close, the Community Engagement and Prevention Team at Child Advocates of Fort Bend is reflecting with gratitude on the many opportunities we had to educate, connect with, and serve our community. This year, our outreach efforts reached 25,892 individuals through presentations, trainings, community events, and partnerships focused on child safety, abuse prevention, and internet safety awareness.

Throughout the school year, our team presented prevention education programs at 26 campuses across the community, equipping students with age-appropriate tools to recognize unsafe situations, seeking help from

trusted adults, and staying safe- both in person and online. We also partnered with parents and caregivers at BakerRipley Pre-K and Reading Junior High, where conversations centered on internet safety, communication, and ways families can help protect children in today's digital world.

In addition to student and parent outreach, we had the privilege of training school staff and professionals who work directly with children every day. Presentations for educators and staff members at schools such as St. Theresa Catholic School and the Lamar CISD SPED Transition staff helped strengthen awareness

[-more](#)



around recognizing and responding to concerns involving child abuse, neglect, exploitation, and online dangers. Outreach is most effective when entire communities understand their role in keeping children safe.

This year also brought opportunities to engage with the broader community through booths and presentations at events throughout Fort Bend County and surrounding areas. From the Houston Children's Festival in Sugar Land to partnerships with churches, hospitals, nonprofit organizations, board members, and Exchange Clubs, every conversation helped expand awareness of the services and support available through Child Advocates of Fort Bend.

"Awareness is the first step toward prevention" is a message that guided much of this year's work. Outreach creates opportunities for children, parents, educators, and community members to ask questions, learn warning signs, and understand how to respond when concerns arise. A single presentation can empower a child to speak up, encourage a parent to start an important conversation at home, or equip an adult with the confidence to recognize and report abuse. Prevention education truly has a ripple effect throughout the community.



One of the culminating campus events of the school year was the 6th Grade Day of Service at Sartartia Middle School in Fort Bend ISD. The students assembled 391 Prevention Packs, donated blankets, and created inspirational snack bags for children and families served by CAFB. Beyond the donations themselves, the event gave students an opportunity to learn about advocacy, empathy, and the importance of helping vulnerable children in their own community.

Seeing young people become engaged in service reminds us why outreach matters. Education and awareness are not simply presentations or events. They are opportunities to build safer communities where children feel supported, valued, and protected.

As we look ahead to the next school year, the Community Engagement and Prevention Team remains committed to strengthening partnerships, expanding prevention education, and continuing the important work of raising awareness throughout Fort Bend County. Every presentation, every training, and every conversation helps move us closer to a community where all children can grow up safe, heard, and protected.



“Speaking of Children” Conference at Project Harmony Child Advocacy Center in Omaha

By Dana Petty

In late April, Dana Petty, Prevention and Outreach Manager, traveled to Omaha, Nebraska, to attend the Speaking of Children Conference, hosted by Project Harmony Child Advocacy Center. As Project Harmony’s signature event, the conference brings the community together to raise awareness, share knowledge, and strengthen efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect.

Conference Highlights

- A two-day conference and keynote luncheon
- Plenary presentations and breakout sessions designed for professionals across multiple disciplines
- Topics relevant to law enforcement, social work, medicine, advocacy, education, and mental health

After the conference, Dana visited Project Harmony. A national leader in child advocacy and abuse prevention, Project Harmony helped lead Omaha’s recognition as a “Trauma-Informed Community” through its Trauma Matters Omaha program. Staff shared best practices and valuable insights as Child Advocates of Fort Bend begins a similar certification process. Partnerships and collaboration—both locally and nationally—help ensure safer, brighter futures for children and families.



A collection of speaker and moderator cards for the conference. Each card features a circular portrait of the individual and their name and affiliation. The cards are arranged in two rows. The top row includes Shawne Johnson (Juvenile Assessment Center), Salvador Hernandez (Project Harmony Mental Health Services), Phillip Burrell (BRIDGE Family Resource Connector Network), Jen Kiolbasa (Project Harmony Multi Disciplinary Teams), and Nick Juliano (RADIUS). The bottom row features a moderator card for Dr. Suzi Yokley-Busby (Project Harmony Training Institute). To the left of the moderator card is a graphic with the text "FINDING HOPE IN THE FACE OF LARGE-SCALE CHALLENGES". The Project Harmony Child Advocacy Center logo is in the bottom right corner.



Fort Bend County Schools “Have the Power”

By Dana Petty

Each April, in honor of Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention month, the Exchange Club of Sugar Land hosts its Blue Ribbon contest to Fort Bend County schools. This year the club partnered with Child Advocates of Fort Bend and the Child Abuse Prevention Collaborative (CAP-C) using the CAP-C prevention campaign “You Have the Power” in their messaging.

This contest is a meaningful community initiative that brings awareness to child abuse prevention while celebrating creativity among local students. By inviting young participants to express what a safe, nurturing environment means through art and writing, the program not only amplifies youth voices but also educates families and the broader community about the importance of protecting children.

Its impact extends beyond the contest itself, sparking conversations, increasing visibility for prevention efforts, and strengthening partnerships between schools, families, and

civic organizations. Ultimately, the Blue Ribbon contest helps foster a culture of awareness, empathy, and advocacy in Fort Bend County, encouraging both children and adults to play an active role in creating safer environments for all.

Congratulations to the winning schools whose creativity and messaging were outstanding! And thank you to all the schools that participated in the contest this year - we look forward to seeing your creativity again next year!

1st place: E.A. Jones Elementary
2nd place: Juan Seguin Elementary
3rd Place: Settlers Way Elementary

**YOU HAVE THE
POWER**

EA Jones Elementary - 1st place



JUAN SEGUIN ELEMENTARY
2nd place



SETTLERS WAY
ELEMENTARY
3rd place



Your Charitable Giving Statement: A Roadmap to Action

It's not uncommon to create a list of goals at the various stages of our lives. We can set aspirational goals for our education, our work life, our families or our health. But have you ever considered providing direction and purpose for your charitable giving?

Many people give to charity with good intentions but without a clear plan or a clear set of goals. Donations may happen spontaneously after a natural disaster, a fundraising email, or a request from a friend. While generosity in any form can make a difference, a **personal charitable giving statement** helps transform occasional giving into purposeful philanthropy

Why create one?

1. It Clarifies Your Values

A giving statement forces you to think carefully about what matters most to you. By identifying your priorities, you avoid spreading your donations too thinly across unrelated causes.

2. It Helps You Give Intentionally

Without a plan, charitable giving can become reactive. A giving statement helps you evaluate requests more thoughtfully and direct resources toward causes that align with your personal mission.

This intentional approach often leads to greater satisfaction because you can see how your contributions support meaningful outcomes.

3. It Strengthens Family Conversations

For families, a charitable giving statement can become a shared vision. Parents may use it to teach children about generosity,

responsibility, and social impact. Couples can use it to align financial priorities and avoid disagreements about donations.

4. It Creates Long-Term Impact

Strategic giving can produce deeper and more sustainable results than sporadic donations. When you consistently support organizations aligned with your values, you build stronger partnerships and contribute to lasting change.

Once you have reflected on your values and goals, just begin writing!

A simple structure may include:

1. Your purpose for giving
2. The causes you support
3. Your guiding principles
4. The impact you hope to make

Sample Personal Charitable Giving Statement

(For someone focusing their giving on social services organizations like Child Advocates of Fort Bend)

"I believe that every child deserves to feel safe, valued, and supported. By investing in children's social services, I hope to help provide resources, guidance, protection, and opportunities that empower children to thrive emotionally, socially, and academically. Through my giving, I want to help create brighter futures and ensure that every child has the chance to reach their full potential."

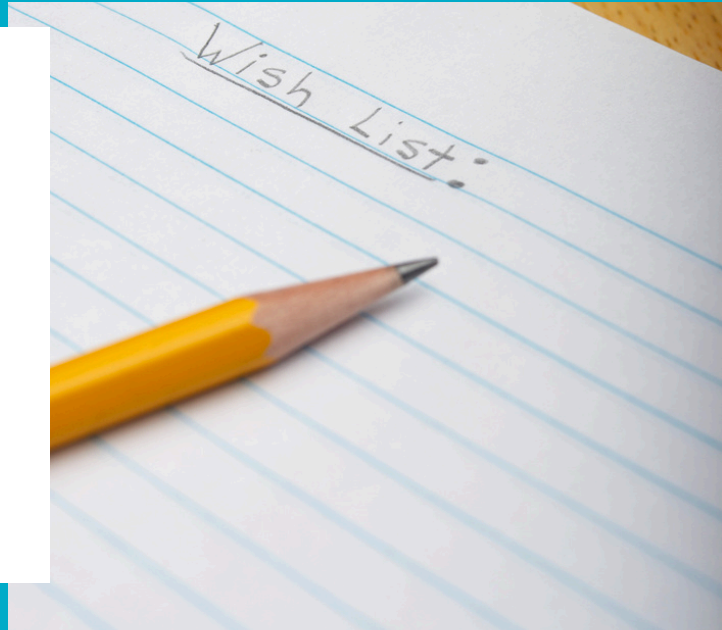
If you would like to learn more about ways to support the children we serve at CAFB or how to become a member of the "Forever Angels Legacy Society" please email plannedgiving@cafb.org

our needs

This month, we have immediate need for:

We've received formal dress donations and would like to store them for our next season. If you could help with dress bags, we'd be grateful. <https://a.co/d/0ejhmlS5>

View our general amazon program needs link [Amazon Wish List](#)

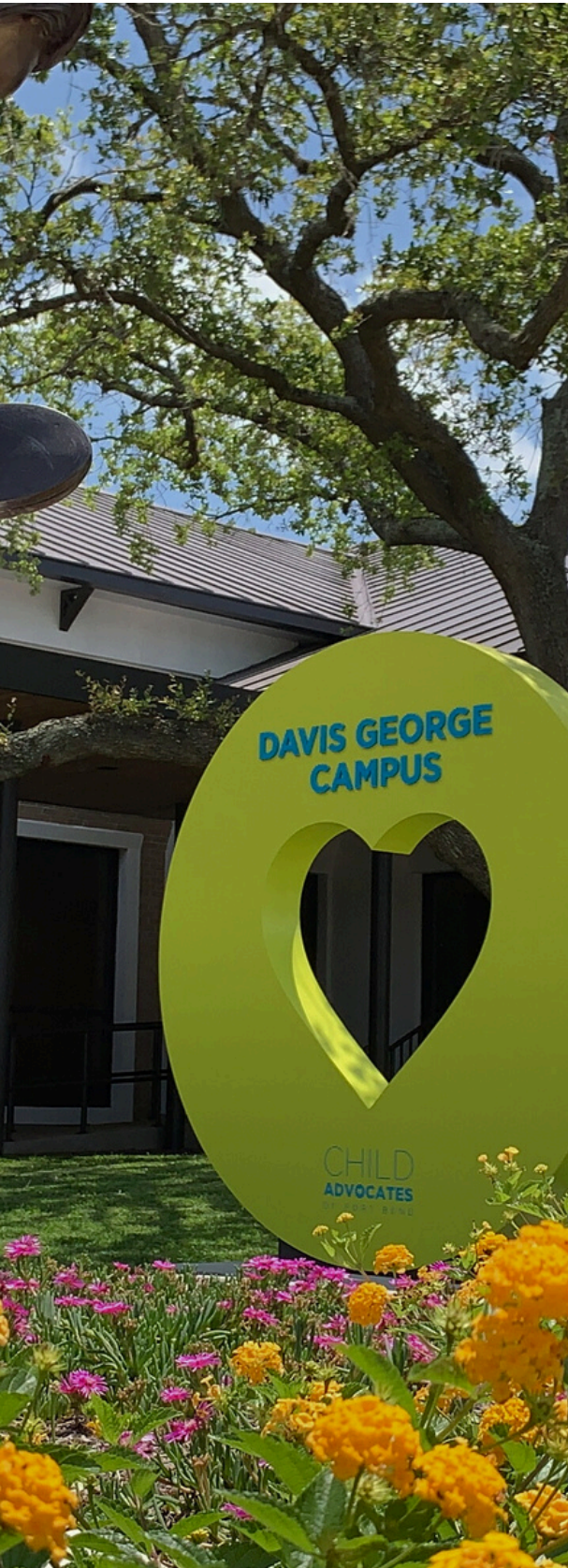


License to Help!

Did you know that Child Advocates of Fort Bend participates in the TX CASA Specialty License Plate Program? You can order a custom license plate with the phrase "Big Voices for Little Texans". Not only can you spread awareness and show your support for us but a portion of the cost of the plate goes to Texas CASA and the local programs to increase our statewide efforts to advocate for



every child in the foster care system. To order your plate go to <https://www.txdmv.gov/motorists/license-plates> and search for CASA under specialty plates OR visit your local tax assessor's office and ask for the Court Appointed Special Advocate license plate.



June 9-11

TBRI® Caregiver Training
10:00am - 4:00pm
CAFB Training Room
More info or reserve your spot [here](#)

June 23

Educational Advocacy Panel
11:00am - 2:00pm
More info or reserve [here](#)

June 24

Youth Aging Out Conference
1:00pm - 5:00pm
More info or reserve [here](#)

June 26

Sip & Stroll
12:00pm - 1:30pm
Contact [Lisa](#) at LMoore@cafb.org to reserve your spot

July 6-10

New Volunteer Training
(screening process prior to acceptance)

August 20

Darkness to Light Training
10:00am - 12:30pm
More info or RSVP [here](#)



June 26, 2026
12:00pm - 1:30pm



*"If children feel safe, they can take risks,
ask questions, make mistakes, learn to
trust, share their feelings, and grow."*

~ Alfie Kohn