**Stand Sunday Media Release Template**

UPDATE ALL HIGHLIGHTED AREAS. USE THE [DFPS DATA BOOK](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About_DFPS/Data_Book/) TO PULL STATEWIDE AND LOCAL STATISTICS AS NEEDED. COPY AND PASTE THE TEXT INTO THE BODY OF AN EMAIL TO YOUR LOCAL MEDIA. IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE WITH DATA OR IDENTIFYING YOUR LOCAL MEDIA, PLEASE CONTACT [THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM](mailto:communications@texascasa.org). PLEASE SEND A LINK OR PDF OF ANY COVERAGE YOU GET. GOOD LUCK!

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**For Immediate Release Contact:**Date First name, last name and title

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**[Your CASA Program Name] Joins Churches Across the Country in Stand Sunday**

[City], Texas – Since 2004, churches across the country have showed their commitment to supporting the most vulnerable populations in their communities through Stand Sunday—a globally recognized day of prayer for children and families involved in foster care. This year, [Your program name] is joining alongside them.

“It takes a community to care for children, and that’s what these places of worship are – a community,” said [ED’s first and last name], executive director of [your program name]. “Our hope is to inform all the diverse faith organizations in our area on ways they can make a difference for the children in foster care in [service area].”

There are [local # of children in DFPS care - [DFPS Data Book](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About_DFPS/Data_Book/)] children in the child welfare system here in our community. Children come into foster care when their families are in crisis, and are sometimes placed in foster homes far away from everyone and everything they know and love. Though they have done nothing to deserve it, they face the risk of negative outcomes like homelessness, substance use and incarceration.

Stand Sunday is sponsored by the Christian Alliance for Orphans (CAFO). This year, CAFO and the CASA network have worked with the Department of Family & Protective Services (DFPS) to get the first names of all 31,000 children currently in foster care in Texas.

“Putting names with the children as congregations pray together can be especially meaningful,” said [ED’s last name]. “Every one of these children, whatever their current circumstances, deserves every possible chance to succeed in life.”

In addition to praying for these children and their families on Stand Sunday, [ED’s last name] explained that faith organizations can make a difference by partnering with [program name] and encouraging members to become CASA volunteers.

CASA volunteers are everyday citizens from the community who are screened and trained, and appointed by a judge to advocate for these children’s best interests. Volunteers are designated to serve one child or sibling group and evaluate their well-being by getting to know them and speaking with any and all relevant contacts in their lives, including their parents, foster parents, family of origin, teachers, therapists and more. Their first priority is reunifying the child with their parents, whenever safe and possible. When this is not an option, they advocate for the child to live with other family members or a loving adoptive family. Whatever the case, they provide a consistent presence for the child throughout their time in foster care, and ensure they’re connected with a lifetime network of support that will help them succeed.

While Stand Sunday is sponsored by a Christian organization, [your CASA program] encourages all people and groups to get involved in supporting these children and families.

“Whether you’re religious or not, and whether you practice prayer or not, we hope you will think of children in foster care on Stand Sunday,” [ED’s last name] said. “We also hope you’ll consider ways you can support these children and their families, like becoming a CASA volunteer.”

For more information on Stand Sunday, visit <https://cafo.org/orphansunday/resources/foster-care-resources/>. To learn more about becoming a CASA volunteer, visit [your program website or [www.BecomeACASA.org](http://www.BecomeACASA.org)]. The next information session is [date/time/place].

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