UPDATE ALL HIGHLIGHTED AREAS. ONCE FINALIZED, COPY AND PASTE THE TEXT INTO THE BODY OF AN EMAIL TO YOUR LOCAL MEDIA. INCLUDE A PROFESSIONAL HEADSHOT OF THE ED IF POSSIBLE.

IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE WITH ANYTHING, INCLUDING IDENTIFYING YOUR LOCAL MEDIA, PLEASE CONTACT THE TEXAS CASA COMMUNICATIONS TEAM. 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

Phone (xxx) xxx-xxxx

Email xxxxxxx

**Speak Up for Kids in Foster Care from Your Own Home**

City, Texas – YOUR CASA PROGRAM is calling for community members to step up and advocate for children and families involved in the child welfare system in our local area.

“Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and physical distancing, many of us have been feeling increased stress, anxiety and isolation. Children involved in the foster care system are no exception,” said ED’s FIRST AND LAST NAME, Executive Director of YOUR CASA PROGRAM. “While we can’t physically be by their side right now, we still want the children who is in foster care right here in our community to know they have an advocate on their side. With so much uncertainty in the world, we want to help give these kids peace of mind, stability and connection. We want them to feel safety and comfort.”

Volunteers with YOUR CASA PROGRAM are known as CASA volunteers, or Court Appointed Special Advocates. These CASA volunteers advocate for a child or sibling group while they are in foster care. CASA volunteers advocate in the courtroom, school and other settings for the best interest of the child they are representing, help them stay connected with their families and communities, and work towards family reunification whenever safe and possible.

Now is a great time to get involved with CASA, ED’s LAST NAME said. With info sessions, pre-service volunteer training and swearing-in ceremonies currently conducted online, you can make a difference in the lives of children and families in the foster care system—right from your own home.

“COVID-19 has changed how we conduct our advocacy work, but it has not changed our drive and passion to serve the children and families of this community,” said ED’S LAST NAME. “We are taking precautions with how we conduct our trainings, visits with children and families, volunteer supervision and events to ensure the safety of all involved.”

As a part of their new operating procedures, YOUR CASA PROGRAM is FILL IN WITH WHAT PRACTICES YOUR PROGRAM IS DOING TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19, E.G. DIGITAL TRAINING AND ADVOCACY. In addition to this, precautions like FILL WITH WHAT YOU ARE DOING TO PREVENT COVID-19 SPREAD, E.G. DIGITAL VISITS ON ZOOM, ENSURING VOLUNTEERS WEAR MASKS AND MAINTAIN DISTANCE, ETC. are set in place to help prevent spread amongst the community.

“We are here to serve the children and families of COVERAGE AREA. We want to do that as safely as possible for the sake of those we serve, our staff, our volunteers and the greater public,” said ED’S LAST NAME. “We never want a child in foster care to go without a CASA volunteer, especially now. That’s why we need our community to stand up and join us in our advocacy.”

If you’ve been looking for a unique way to serve your community, join the CASA movement. What better time than now? If you’d like to find out more about becoming a CASA volunteer or other ways to get involved, visit BecomeACASA.org or LOCAL PROGRAM URL.

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