

CASA

Conversations

Summer - Fall 2009, Issue IV

A Note from the Director...

Greetings from Vigo County CASA! The glorious fall season had arrived, and so have the newest members of the CASA forces. I am pleased to welcome and introduce you to the newly sworn volunteers to the CASA family: Barb Alcock, Rachel Carl, Jerry Lou Jeffers, Carla Kinman, Frank Limas, Deborah Lindley, Catha McCarty, Teri Niebrugge, Teri Parsons, Karen Rothrock, Mary Lou Tenbrink, and Frank Young. Although each of them has jumped in and taken a case, our waiting list continues to hover around 40 children. We are in dire need of six current volunteers to step up and help us out with cases that have fact-finding hearings that are coming up in court!

I am also pleased to introduce Susie Thompson into the CASA staff family. Susie comes to us with much experience in the child welfare field, and I hope each and every one of you will take advantage of her expertise and vast knowledge. Bringing Susie on board was made possible by the awarding of the CASA Expansion Grant, written with the help and expertise of Monte Tosser.

I am also saddened by the departure of Molly Buerger. As you may know, Molly has resigned her position as Volunteer Coordinator to pursue a career that is more aligned with her newly chosen career path of accounting. Molly's expertise and knowledge will be greatly missed by all: staff, volunteers and service providers alike.

In closing, let me express the gratitude of everyone here in the CASA office for your continued support of the children for which we advocate and I commend you all on a job well done! Keep up the good work and please don't hesitate to call us if you need any help whatsoever!



Nikki Fuhrmeister, CASA Director



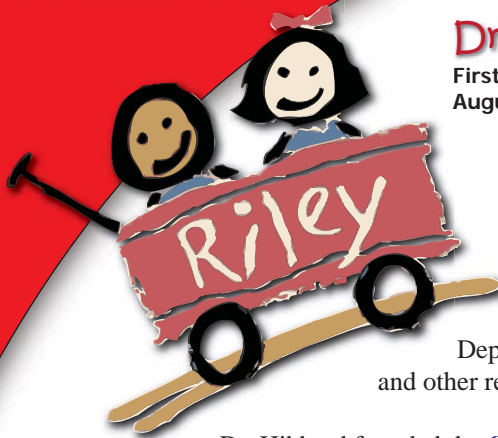
in this issue:

First Steps of West Central Indiana
Dr. Roberta Hibbard Training
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The Dangers of Social Networking
CASA Library
Indiana Fever / Indianapolis Colts
CASA Kids Corner



TRAINING & EVENTS

you may have missed...



Dr. Roberta A. Hibbard

First Financial Conference Center
August 25th, 2009

Riley Hospital's Director of Child Protection Programs Dr. Roberta Hibbard presented a training seminar titled *Recognizing Child Abuse* to the Vigo County CASA program, Vigo County Department of Child Services (DCS), and other regional CASA programs.

Dr. Hibbard founded the **Child Protection Program** at Riley in 1986. She has also developed a number of advocacy projects that are very successful, including the **Safe Sleep** program and the **Child Advocacy Committee**. She also is the chairperson of the **Marion County Child Fatality Review Team** and the director of the **Pediatric Center of Hope**. In the past, she has served on several Indiana state commissions, committees and task forces involving child maltreatment issues.

During the seminar, Dr. Hibbard explained how some signs of child abuse can go undetected for far too long. The training covered many of the various ways that a child's brain can be damaged, including **shaking, pulling, jerking** and **slamming**. She was also very thorough in covering marks and bruises that are **not** likely to be caused by abuse. Her presentation was very informative and it provided a great learning opportunity for all volunteers, staff, and caseworkers in attendance. If you would like more information about the topics covered during this training session, please contact the Vigo County CASA office. We have the PowerPoint® presentation and audio available upon request.

Vigo County CASA would like to thank everyone who made this training seminar possible: Tiffany Greiner (AmeriCorps) wrote a grant to supplement the cost of training, awarded by the Indiana Youth Institute, First Financial Corporation provided the conference center, coffee, cups, and napkins. CASA Kids provided funds for food and refreshments, while Cindy Chelton and the West Vigo Ambassadors' class (Dalton Joy, Rebecca Cameron and Kilee Akers) prepared and served refreshments during the seminar.



INDIANA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Special Thanks to:

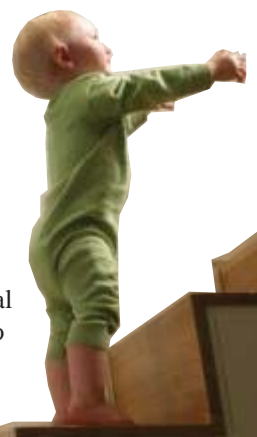


First Steps

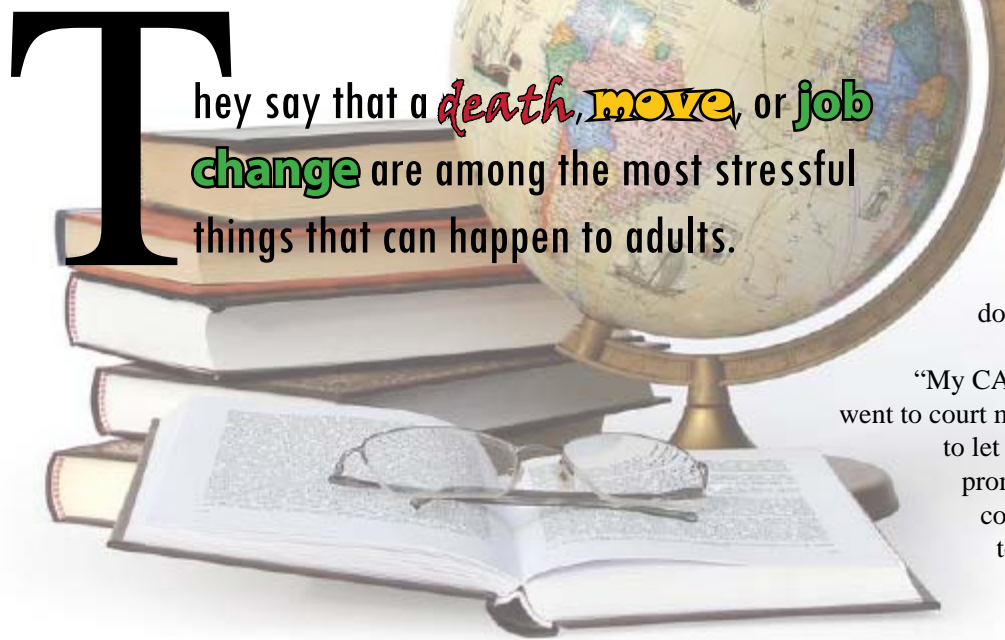
First Steps provides developmental services designed to assist infants and toddlers in meeting their milestones and in reducing the effects of disabilities, developmental delays and risk factors on the overall growth and development of an eligible child. Services are provided based on a medical diagnosis or a multi-disciplinary developmental assessment and an individual family service plan created with each child's multi-disciplinary team, including the child's parent. Services are most often provided by community-based therapists in a child's natural environment, built around everyday routines and activities.

First Steps of West Central Indiana provides a wide variety of services to children ages 0 to 3. The goal of First Steps is to help families make sure their infants and toddlers receive services now to help them in the future, coordinating families and a local network of professionals from education, health, and social services.

There is no cost for evaluation, assessment or service coordination. Ongoing services are provided on a sliding fee, with no cost to families living at or below 250% of the defined poverty level. It is a voluntary program and referrals can be made by anyone, not only CASA volunteers or other service providers. An appropriate referral would be any infant or toddler who presents with a disability that has been diagnosed, developmental delay(s), prenatal exposure to drugs or alcohol, exposure to drugs, alcohol or violence in the home, mental health or medical issues significant enough to interfere with healthy development.



Referrals can be made by calling the First Steps System Point of Entry (SPOE) office at 812-231-8337 or toll free at 877-860-0413. They provide intake and continuing service coordination for Clay, Daviess, Greene, Knox, Martin, Owen, Parke, Putnam, Sullivan, Vermillion & Vigo Counties.



They say that a **death, move, or job change** are among the most stressful things that can happen to adults.

Judy dropped out of school when she was 14 years old and didn't go back until she entered foster care three years later. "My mother has been on welfare her whole life. I didn't want that for me or my son. And I knew if I was going to get a job, I needed a diploma," she explained.

Judy had chosen the road most traveled, but not often completed. When she finally re-entered high school at 17, she was three years behind and her time left as a ward of the state was growing short. She also had a young son to care for: social workers doubted she could do it.

"My CASA and foster parent supported me. We went to court more than 13 times in eight months, fighting to let me stay in care until I graduated." Judy promised a February graduation date to the court, and Child Welfare Services agreed to let her remain a dependant while she attended a continuation high school. At 19 years old, Judy became the first person in her family to earn a high school diploma. She now works full-time and supports herself and her son.

EDUCATIONAL ADVOCACY

in the best interest of your **CASA** child

care a few steps behind in academics, often with undetected learning or other disabilities. Also present are the physical & emotional scars of the abuse and neglect that brought them into the system.

Studies show that for many children, challenges in care continue. One study of youth exiting care revealed:

- 66% of 18 year olds had not completed high school or obtained a GED
- 61% had no job experience
- 38% had been diagnosed as emotionally disturbed
- 17% of the females were pregnant

The study also revealed that two to four years after leaving foster care, only half had completed high school and less than 50% had jobs.

And they're supposed to **keep learning**:
most adults couldn't handle this.

help or encouragement to attend or stay in school. After entering dependency, distractions such as sadness over separation from family members, concern for parents & siblings, worries about the future, and difficulty adjusting to a new placement & school often interfere with their learning.

Many kids continue to miss school because of difficulties with school record transfer, medical appointments and mandated court appearances. Molly Herzog, director of the organization Project People, observed that 35% of foster youth have experienced four or more school changes: studies show that each school move results in a 4 to 6 month loss of educational progress. The lingering effects of abuse and neglect often lead to behavioral problems such as aggression & withdrawal, which can further interfere with the

*These children often lose their **family, move** to a **stranger's home**, and **enter a new school**...all at the same time.*

Falling through the Cracks of the Education System

Many children lack the adult guidance and support that plays a crucial role in their academic success. Some, like Judy (who moved every three months to stay with family members) had little stability,

child's ability to learn. Many children surveyed in a study by the Vera Institute of Justice also found that their social interaction was limited with peers in order to hide their foster status and avoid the social stigma that permeates the culture of the American educational system. Low expectations from educators can also affect the quality of education received while in care.

CASA Programs Tackle the Issue

Public awareness about the educational challenges for foster youth is growing, and many organizations are working to increase their chances for educational and life success. The National CASA Organization wants to expand how it addresses educational issues for children in care. "As an organization we are interested in educational outcomes for children in foster care and would like to provide more training for our advocates," stated Tracy Flynn, Training Director for National CASA. Flynn said that National CASA is in the process of developing continuing education training curricula that addresses education as a critical component of a child's life. "This training will be recommended as a topic of continuing education designed to improve the outcomes for children in foster care." Flynn also notes that "Because state laws vary, the curriculum will offer general direction that can be adapted to address individual program policies, legal constraints and philosophies."

Vigo County CASA has partnered with other community organizations as part of the College Success Coalition. We are working to ensure all the children we serve receive a world-class education, graduate from high school, continue their education and earn a degree. We have a wealth of materials available in the office to help students prepare and plan for college.

Post-Secondary Education is Possible

Many organizations support foster youth who pursue post-secondary education. For example, the Orphan Foundation for America helps make the dream of higher education a reality for a number foster youth.

Former foster youth Zack Kidwell started using drugs and alcohol when he was twelve years old and dropped out of school in the eighth grade. He eventually obtained his GED and was encouraged by his "surrogate mom" to consider enrolling in college. With financial aid and help from scholarships specifically for former foster youth from the Orphan Foundation of America (OFA), Zack is now attending the University of Kansas. "We are looking to support young adults without a family," Tina Raheem, OFA Scholarship Director explained. The organization serves about 320 students a year and maintains regular contact with scholarship recipients to stay updated on their progress in addition to offering support and encouragement.

In a recent e-mail to Tina, Zack wrote, "More good news! Since I am a first generation college student, I will be getting a free tutor for my history class. I finally found a free place to print my papers and I found out about grants for summer school, so it looks like I will not have to pay the \$1,400 to stay in school!! Life is good!" In addition to private scholarships, many financial aid options are also available to foster youth.

With the help and support from advocates, service providers and support organizations, more foster youth can hopefully share Zack Kidwell's good fortune.

Foster Youth and Education-A Snapshot of Former Foster Youth

Foster youth without intervention experience greater frequency of homelessness, addiction, early pregnancy, incarceration, and future involvement with the Department of Child Services (DCS) than the general population. In the United States, three out of ten of the nation's adult homeless population are former foster youth.

Higher Education Funding Opportunities for Foster Youth

Foster youth are eligible for many types of financial aid. There are state financial aid programs, federal financial aid programs, college and university financial aid programs & scholarships from numerous sources. **Foster youth may also be eligible for:**

Federal Pell Grants Federal grants of money for low-income students that do not need to be paid back.

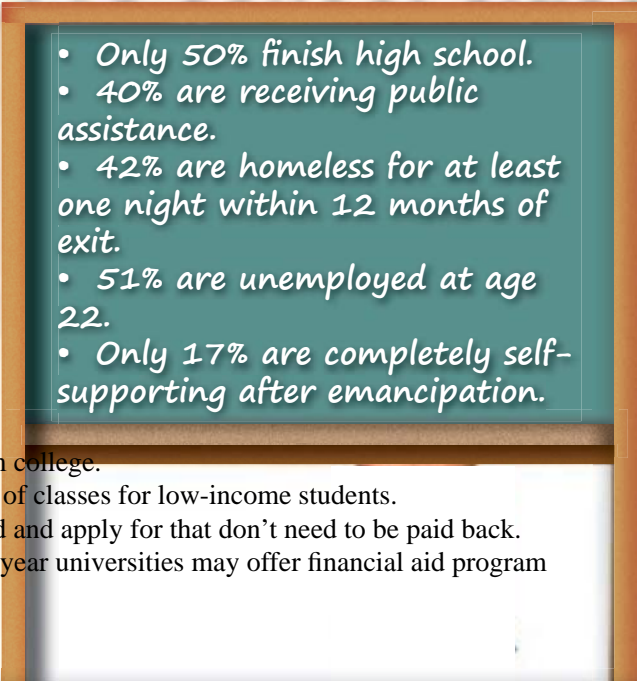
Federal Loans Money that must be paid back after students graduate from college.

Fee Waivers Community College may offer programs that waive the cost of classes for low-income students.

Scholarships Grants of money from different sources that youth must find and apply for that don't need to be paid back.

Institution Specific Monies Some community colleges and public four year universities may offer financial aid program that provide grants and stipends that do not need to be paid back.

US Department of Education Federal Aid

- 
- Only 50% finish high school.
 - 40% are receiving public assistance.
 - 42% are homeless for at least one night within 12 months of exit.
 - 51% are unemployed at age 22.
 - Only 17% are completely self-supporting after emancipation.

The Student Guide, offered by the U.S. Department of Education, provides information on student financial aid programs. Financial aid includes primarily grants, loans, and work-study opportunities. *The Student Guide* is available electronically (English and Spanish) at www.studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/student_guide/index.html. Contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).

To apply for most federal and state student aid programs, students must complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The application is available electronically (English and Spanish) at www.fafsa.ed.gov or by calling the Federal Student Aid Information Center 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243).

Chafee Foster Care Independence Program

The John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program funds state programs that provide independent living services to youth who have been or are in out-of-home care. Chafee Program funding may be applied to a wide variety of educational services. For high school students, these services may include tutoring, help with GED completion, computer classes and help with postsecondary planning. For students in postsecondary education and training, services may include tuition assistance, books & fees (or other ancillary needs) and room and board expenses, as well as personal services needed to remain in a postsecondary program. Education and training vouchers (which provide funding of up to \$5,000 for postsecondary education to youth who have aged out of care) are also administered under the Chafee Program. Youth who are currently in out-of-home care access Chafee program services through their social workers. Youth who have emancipated from care should contact their state Independent Living / Chafee program coordinator to find & access funds and vouchers. For a list of state Independent Living Coordinators and comprehensive information on Chafee programs, visit www.nrcys.ou.edu/NRCYD/state_home.htm or call (918) 660-3700.

Orphan Foundation of America

The Orphan Foundation of America (OFA) offers college and vocational scholarships. Recipients must have been in foster care for at least one year at the time of their 18th birthday or emancipation from foster care. Children that remain unadopted are also eligible. Scholarships are renewable and range from \$1,000 to \$7,000 per year. On the web, OFA also provides resources & information on other scholarship opportunities at www.orphan.org.

National Foster Parent Association (NFPA)

The National Foster Parent Association also offers scholarships for college or university studies, vocational / job training and correspondence courses, including the GED. You can visit www.nfpainc.org/awards/youthScholarships.cfm?page=6 for more information.

- Many colleges offer tuition waivers for former foster youth.
- Many states offer scholarships specifically for former foster youth.

Social workers, high school guidance counselor or a financial aid counselor at applicable community colleges or universities will likely have information on other funding opportunities.

How Care Can Help or Hurt an Education

The Vera Institute of Justice (www.vera.org) recently released *What Keeps Children in Foster Care From Succeeding in School?: Views of Early Adolescents and the Adults in Their Lives*, examining how children in foster care struggle academically. Researchers interviewed 25 foster children and 54 of the adults in their lives to better understand how being in foster care affects a child's education, and how adults can help them succeed in school. Foster children faced unique roadblocks, among them concerns about their biological parents and siblings that often cause distraction from school, and court appearances and doctors' appointments require that they be frequently absent. Behavioral issues tend to take attention off of academics, and many foster children avoided friendships in fear that their foster status would be discovered. Foster parents, case workers, and school staff each lacked a complete snapshot of the children's needs. Making one adult responsible for children's educational progress is often useful and efficient. Giving case workers access to children's academic records and giving school staff information about a child's foster situation can also help. Finally, school staff could receive training on the demands the foster care system stamps on children in care. Please visit www.vera.org to download a publication based on the findings of this study and other resources.

Helping Children in Care to Succeed in School

Tips for Advocates:

- Inform the court when there is a need for an educational advocate; this may be the child's biological parents, foster parents, social or case worker, CASA volunteer or another involved individual.
- Include concerns about the child's education or development in written court reports.
- Make sure the child is attending school on a regular basis. Make sure transportation and other basic needs are being addressed.
- Communicate with teachers (when necessary) to help facilitate the opportunity to make up missed schoolwork due to court appearances, medical or other service provider appointments.
- Observe the child, document concerns, and discuss them with the child's teachers, social workers and service providers when

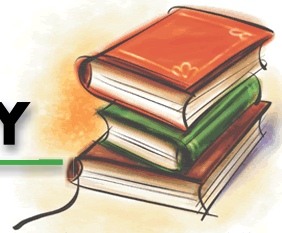
appropriate.

- Recommend tutoring or other academic help when needed.
- If it becomes an issue, help facilitate timely transfers between schools.
- Identify the child's strengths and recommend activities that support those strengths.

Vigo County CASA was selected by the Youth Law T.E.A.M. of Indiana in collaboration with the State Office of CASA/GAL to host a training session detailing educational advocacy. A four-hour training session, offered to our volunteers, DCS caseworkers, and other CASA programs around west-central Indiana, was held at the Vigo County Annex on September 9, 2009. The training ran from 12:30 - 4:30 PM and had an attendance of around 40 CASA volunteers, staff, and DCS employees. We would like to thank Michelle Tennell, Amy Karozos and Laurie Elliott for passing on some their knowledge to our volunteers & others in the community, reminding us that taking note of school-related issues, knowing the laws, and advocating the need for school-based services goes a long way to help pave the road to a brighter future for our most precious resource - our children.



CASA LIBRARY

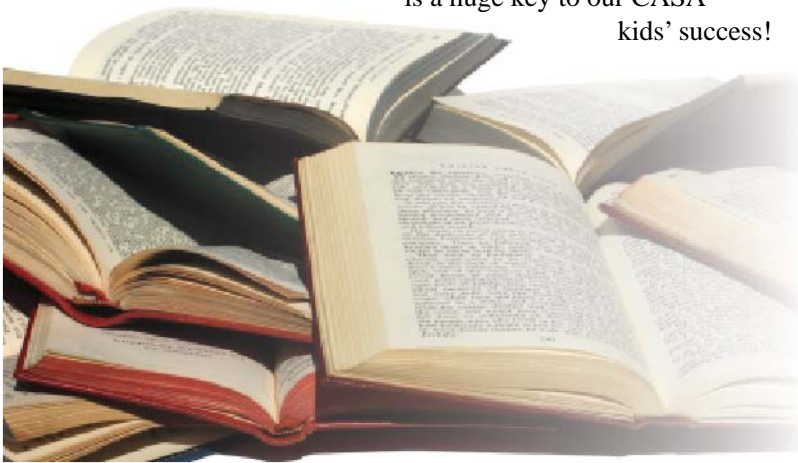


Volunteer Dale Luchsinger has been appointed as our local educational advocate, and is available to all CASA volunteers should you need assistance with your CASA children.

Thanks to the generous donations of the Vigo County Public Library and CASA volunteers Shawn Depasse, Julie Beshaw & Laura McKee, Vigo County CASA now has our very own library open to all CASA volunteers. A wide variety of books are available, including many children's books that may be checked out for visits with our CASA kids. As most parents, teachers, and service providers would acknowledge, reading is an excellent way to reach out and bond with children. Perhaps you may find many resources and textbooks available on topics including mental disorders, family dynamics, and adoption for example.

We also have several DVD's available that may be checked out at your convenience, including several from the Dave Thomas Foundation, National CASA, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Each DVD you watch will be credited toward the 12-hour yearly training requirement for exsisting volunteers.

In the CASA Library, you will also find pertinent magazines and brochures. We also have applications for the Vigo County Library. There are several resources for helping your CASA child(ren) go to college. We have college prep materials for grades pre-K – 12: planning starts at day one. Education is a huge key to our CASA kids' success!



If you would like to donate any books or other reading material, the library we has plenty of shelf space available. Please stop by the CASA office in the Vigo County Annex during regular office hours (Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM) to browse through the books, videos, and resources we have available.



The Dangers of

SOCIAL
NETWORKS



COMMUNICATION IN THE INFORMATION AGE:

Understanding what, why, and how to keep tabs on your CASA Kids' digital lifestyle...



Personal computers. Notebooks. Netbooks. Cell phones. Wireless broadband internet access. With the overwhelming role that these wonder devices play, we are living in a world where the pace of technology increases by leaps and bounds on a regular basis. Not only has the internet and similar technologies provided the civilized world with instant communication, data transfer, and lightning-fast multimedia messaging between the technological platforms mentioned above (and many others), but it's also changing the way that we do business and keep contact with friends around the globe: enter social networking.



Social networking, defined by Dictionary.com as “the use of a website to connect with people who share personal or professional interests, place of origin, education at a particular school, etc.”

Over the past few years, people of all ages have stormed onto the internet to create their own online identity on sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, and a host of others in which users create a personal profile detailing their interests, whereabouts, and random thoughts. People can then make contact with old friends or socialize with those across the world that share the same or differing personality traits or opinions. Other networking sites, such as LinkedIn, provide job-seekers with a career profile to share with friends and potential employers.

While these tools make excellent use of the power of the global grid of networks to provide instant contact, communication, and on-demand services to all ages & demographic groups, there are also dangers intertwined within the fabric of the emerging online world. The boundaries of conventional friendship have all but eroded within the last decade, making it possible to have “friends” that you may never met, never *talked* to, and most likely will never have personal (face-to-face) contact with.

Social networking effectively creates a cyber-playground where a broad range of concerns can be brought to the table by parents, school officials, therapists, social service workers, attorneys, and medical professionals. A list of every concern made by responsible adults would drag on for miles, but we can trim most issues the children we face as care providers down to three categories: privacy, cyber-bullying, & child exploitation (“sexting”).

The Issues:

Privacy

Privacy has become an issue of monumental importance as new forms of communication have made the transfer & sharing of personal information over digital networks commonplace in today’s world in the interest of efficiency (“saving time”). In modern-day America, most of us feel that there are too few hours in the day in which to get everything done, and we boldly move to support & accept any technology that makes the burden of civilized life easier to carry.

Online financial management, transaction histories, and services like PayPal and other methods of remote money transfer are now available at the touch of our fingertips, often accessed from our mobile phones & other devices. We never have to touch a filthy dollar bill again if we so choose. Likewise, many of us also are happy to share our personal information, pictures, videos & opinions freely through blogs, social networking sites, and posting status updates and comments. Here’s the kicker: your kids are doing it too. And they’re doing it ALL THE TIME.

Of course, most younger kids do not yet comprehend online financial management tools and most people would consider it a disaster if they did. However, kids do use Facebook, “tweet” on micro-blogging sites like Twitter, and exchange text (SMS) messages instantly & constantly throughout the day. Rarely do you see an adolescent child’s face in public, as it is always glued to a mobile phone with many of these services available in the palms of their hands.

And it follows them wherever they go.
FOREVER.



Cyber-Bullying

Ever get picked on as a kid by the emotionally insecure kid who thought they could attain happiness by putting others down? Many of us have, and as a child, there’s almost nothing worse. In the 21st century, the art of bullying has gotten nastier and graduated from the playground...to the Internet.

One-third of all high school kids have reported that they are the target of online actions such as intimidating messages, private e-mails, messages, or photos forwarded without their consent, or rumors spread about them over social networking sites and groups. Realistically, it can be argued that many of these reports would not be considered bullying if face-to-face contact were involved, but as social networking integrates itself into the fabric of our adolescents’ lives, it also brings with it the increased risk of the instant spread of personal, embarrassing, or even fictitious information.

Middle & high school students that use social networking sites are far more prone to cyber-bullying: it doesn’t take the brightest crayon in the box to figure that out. Students have shifted their preferred form of casual communication to text messaging and status updates, leaving their exact comments to be copied, pasted or forwarded between others with the push of a button! As you can imagine, students that conduct more & more of their communication with others over the internet have an increased risk of getting their feelings hurt by statements & devious actions made by others using these forms of contact.

Cyber-bullying often correlates to the victim’s words or images posted, sent or uploaded over the

internet or mobile phone networks. Students who use these technologies and conduct most of their social life over the airwaves are naturally more prone to be offended by the comments or actions of cyber-bullies.

It is extremely important to recognize the fact that we are still dealing with kids, and they make honest mistakes. How trivial an exchange on Facebook can seem to us, but to 21st century kids, it's often a carbon copy of their real lives. Social networking is here to stay, and if used responsibly and cautiously, it is a fantastic way to keep in contact with friends. Just remember that as soon as it hits the internet, it's out there for good.

"Sexting"

Sex seems to show its 'dirty' face everywhere at every turn, leaving us scrambling to catch up with everything our kids are up to. The glorification of sexual desires by mass-media companies has created a cut-throat environment in which skin sells, and if you don't include it, you may as well jump off the boat before it barrels into the heart of America's values system. Your children know this too; they've been seeing representations of sex in magazines & television within months of leaving the womb! As these children aged, it became apparent that teenagers no longer had to look through a stack of magazines buried in the garage...it's much easier: turn on a television or type just about any word in Google. In fact, it's getting easier every day to bump into lewd content anywhere, especially on today's most popular media platform of influence: the Internet, by way of social networks & mobile phones.

As you've probably experienced if you've lived on Earth for long, you've noticed that the manner in which new media is delivered is now right in your child's pocket. Many of you may be reading this article right now on your Blackberries or iPhones. These and many other similar cell phones are becoming relatively inexpensive and widely advertised: what kind of parent would deny their child a phone with text-messaging and mobile internet access? None of us can say for sure, but when your kids hassle you enough about that awesome phone all of

He Loves Me....

*He Loves Me **NOT***



their friends have, you're going to give in. And that's ok, but you should also aware and knowledgeable of the risks your children face, so we'll get down to it.

Regardless of your current age, we have *all* been considered "rotten" children or naive adolescents at one point or another; we're only human. Whether you took Rhonda Sue to the top of Lookout Point in your 1962 Mustang with bench seats or got caught by your dad on the front porch swing getting a little too cozy with the starting quarterback, most of us have had these types of experiences. Did it seem unfair that you were "just a kid" at the time? Probably. Was it wrong of you? It's possible, depending on your values system. Did you think you were in love? Probably. The same is true in today's world, only the rules & the playing field have changed a little bit.

We could safely estimate



for such an asshole. I
drunk enough we'll see si
ur my only option right now

that just about every kid you know has a cell phone, and with roughly 4 billion of these things in existence, it's likely that every one else you know does too.

It also means that everyone you don't know has one has as well, and if they don't, they will within a few short years. Virtually anyone is only ten numbers away from anyone else, and can more than likely exchange racy messages, pictures, audio, and video from anywhere in the world. Nearly one in five young people who send messages with explicit conduct to people they only know online, but a greater danger lies with those that also are acquainted in 'real' life, particularly within their own school.



Studies have found that close to one-fifth of all teens (ages 13-19) have posted nude or semi-nude pictures of themselves. It seems they don't stop there, as one-third of all young adults (ages 20-26) have done it at one point or another, showing an increasing use of this technology as they get older. Most (71% for teens, and 83% for young adults) young people that are involved in these activities say that they sent or posted naughty messages, pictures, or videos to their significant other (boyfriend or girlfriend) only. Over a third of all teens and slightly less than half of all young adults consider it common for these pictures and messages to be spread among people who were never intended to see them.

As the national media has made us aware, instances of private messages intended for a small number of individuals have gotten a lot of attention in recent months, due to the fact that these messages or pictures are often shared with friends and provide great ammunition for school-wide rumors. Imagine how painful it would be to send some pictures to your significant other or discover that you've been snapped, tagged & featured on Facebook photos and everyone at school had seen them before you even knew they were there. It happens, and as figures have shown, it's happening everywhere.

VOLUNTEER BIRTHDAYS

September
Ernestene Crawford
Dale Luchsinger
Karen Rothrock
Monte Tosser

October
Kay Cahill
Joyce Ellinger
Angela Gray
Jennifer Nelson
Sarah Strobel
Pat Sullivan
Rhonda Walker

November
Rita Barton
Virginia Bedford
Robin Burden
Michelle Collett
Kelly DiCenso
Mary Fazekas
Susan Keller
Raye Rauckman
Betty Reece

December
Tammy Boland
Richard Conley
Cheryl Emmerke
William Jenkins
Carla Kinman
Sharon Russell
Frank Young

CASA KIDS HALLOWEEN PARTY
October 28, 2009



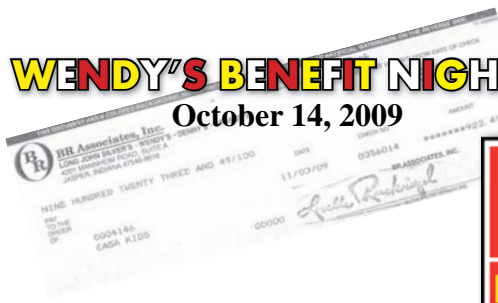
CASA™



CASA KIDS BINGO NIGHT
Rescheduled for February 2010




WENDY'S BENEFIT NIGHT
October 14, 2009



**CASA KIDS BOARD
FOCUS SESSION**
November 14, 2009





Vigo School Corp. presents CASA with \$1K

The Vigo County School Corp. donated \$1000 to the Vigo County CASA program in a presentation on October 16 in honor of Jim Shorter, regional district manager of Wendy's for his never-ending commitment to children.

Shorter sponsors the school corporation's cook out each year by donating hamburgers and providing Frostys. The profits from this event are donated to the American Red Cross and to various charitable organization. Wendy was also present at the event.

Dan Tanoos, Vigo Schools superintendent, presented Shorter with a plaque thanking him for his commitment and dedication to children, and a check to Nikki Fuhrmeister, director of the Vigo County CASA program. Shorter is a member of the CASA Kids Advisory Committee, an umbrella agency of Friends of Families, Inc. The CASA Kids program was created to support the Vigo County CASA program in its efforts to enrich the lives of abused and neglected children.

CASA stands for Court Appointed Special Advocates. Volunteers are local citizens who are specially trained to speak up for abused and neglected children. They are appointed by a judge to serve children, entering into the welfare system and they advocate for what is in that child's best interest throughout the juvenile court proceedings. The volunteer's focus is on one child or a set of siblings.

For more information on becoming a CASA volunteer, call (812)231-5658 or visit www.vigocounty.in.gov/CASA.

INDIANA PACERS FOUNDATION

from Tribune Star, November 10th, 2009

donates 30 tickets to CASA \ CASA Kids' for Indiana Fever game

The Indiana Pacers Foundation generously donated 30 tickets to the Fever game held on July 17, 2009 at Conseco Fieldhouse. The tickets were made available to volunteers and family and/or CASA kids. The Fever was on a winning streak and that night was no exception. They beat the Atlanta Dream for an 11-0 game record. It was an exciting game, and we greatly appreciate the Pacers Foundation awarding the Vigo County CASA program the chance to go. There is a good possibility that we may be able receive more tickets in the future, providing an excellent entertainment opportunity to our CASA children, foster & biological families, and last but not least, our CASA volunteers.



INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

donate 10 tickets to Vigo County CASA for Colts-Vikings game

Robert Mathis and the Indianapolis Colts awarded Vigo County CASA with 10 tickets to a pre-season game against the Minnesota Vikings on August 17, 2009. The tickets were donated for volunteer appreciation and arrived on very short notice, but all of them were distributed quickly and used! The

volunteers were able to go out onto the football field for photographs prior to the game. The attendees also received t-shirts and a \$10 food voucher. Much thanks to Robert Mathis and the Indianapolis Colts for their generous donation and awesome opportunity!

