



Sharing News with You - Spring 2020



THANK YOU FOR KEEPING KIDS SAFE



Dear Friends of Family Law CASA,  
I hope that you are all staying well and safe at home right now.

I've been on-board as Executive Director about 11 weeks here at Family Law CASA and the world has changed a lot during that time! Despite the new worries, challenges and concerns that the Corona pandemic has created for all of us, **at Family Law CASA the team continues to focus on the safety of the children involved in our cases.**

Our team is working remotely from home and still communicating regularly with our volunteer advocates and supporting them to continue working on their reports and check-in with families. The courts are closed for in-person hearings and trials, but our legal team is still receiving appointments, submitting reports and responding to the courts via phone and email.

We are hard at work switching our traditional Annual Breakfast from an in-person event to an inspiring virtual event. **Mark your calendars for May 6<sup>th</sup> and RSVP to [development@familylawcasa.org](mailto:development@familylawcasa.org) to receive a special link to our pre-recorded program that will go live that morning.** We hope we can count you in!

In my short time here, I've observed that we have an incredible team of staff, board and over 200 volunteers who are passionate about keeping children safe and who give countless hours, time and love to this organization. We also have **YOU, our amazingly generous and loyal donors, who have given so much over the years to ensure our unique program continues serving 275+ children each year.**

**It's very clear to me just how critical a role Family Law CASA plays, when appointed to the case, in ensuring the best outcomes for the kids caught up in volatile custody issues.** In my first month here, I attended a trial with our dedicated program attorney, Ann-Marie, and one of our advocates.

If we hadn't been present that day in the courtroom, to expertly share the key details in the CASA report and have our advocate testify about our recommendations, two boys, ages 9 and 13, would not have been placed with their mother and protected from their abusive father. The mother wiped tears from her eyes as the judge ruled in favor of her bid to have full custody with only limited supervised visitation with

the father. **She was very grateful to the CASA team and said she felt so relieved and grateful that her boys could move forward and heal from their past trauma.**

Thank you for making this outcome possible and for your continued support as we weather this health crisis in our world and continue to do the important work of protecting kids. I look forward to meeting each of you at some point in the coming year once we are able to do so again. Please take good care of yourself and your families and stay connected with us.

With Gratitude,



Executive Director  
Deidre McCormack Martin

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**Give a Child Hope**

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**Melissa is safe and happy because of you.**



**Melissa is ten years old. After her parents separated she began living with her mom full-time. Melissa had special educational needs and as a result of her learning disability she had trouble focusing in class and was two grade levels behind. And, at the same time, her mother was dealing with untreated mental health struggles and substance abuse issues. It became clear that Melissa was not in a safe home environment. Finally, after Melissa's mom was criminally charged for hitting her, it was time for the courts to step in and make changes.**

**Your donations made an impact on Melissa's life. A CASA, a court appointed special advocate, was assigned to her case. That volunteer spent hours and hours interviewing everyone involved with Melissa's life including family, friends, school teachers, counselors and more - 22 people in all! On Melissa's behalf the advocate also reviewed volumes of documents from Child Protective Services; police reports; school records; and reports from treatment providers.**

During the trial, and due to the invaluable information the advocate had compiled for a report to the court, the advocate was able to highlight the reasons why Melissa should live with her father and have supervised visits with her mother. As a direct result of the advocate's dedicated work on behalf of Melissa, her mom was ordered to seek out mental health counseling, individual therapy and parenting classes.

Thanks to you Melissa's voice was heard and she is safe now. Her father is more informed about what Melissa needs in the classroom and she is able to learn alongside her peers. She is now filled with hope for a much better future.

Stay in. Tune in.  
Make a difference.

Our CASA kids need you now, more than ever.

*virtual breakfast*

Join us May 6th. Virtually.

Visit the breakfast events page to find out more.

Yes! You can stay home, grab a cup of coffee and go virtual.

We are turning our traditional Annual Breakfast into a virtual event. So stay in, tune in and help make a difference for our CASA kids.

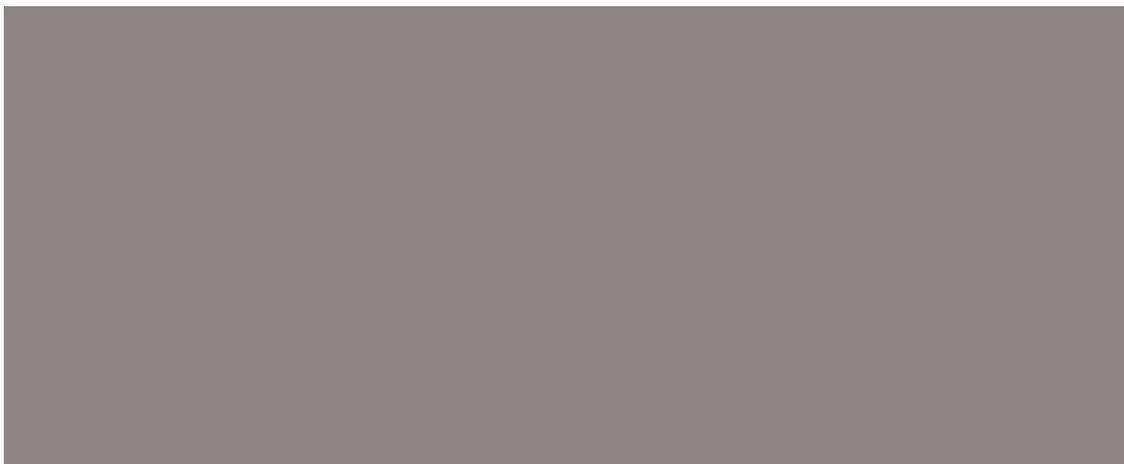
To register for the May 6<sup>th</sup> virtual experience please email

[development@familylawcasa.org](mailto:development@familylawcasa.org). We will send you reminders about the upcoming event and give you a special link which will go live on May 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 AM. We hope we can count you in!

We are very thankful to our sponsors that continue to support this change in venue. On top of that we have a special matching gift fund. Thanks to our matching fund donors we are able to match (up to \$25,000) any gift given at the \$300 level 1:1 and for the \$1,000 level we will match your generous gift 2:1! You can donate right now!

The Annual Breakfast is our largest fundraiser generating a quarter of our operating income each year. Please join us on May 6<sup>th</sup> to show your support for our CASA children who still need a voice in court. Visit our breakfast events page on our website at [www.familylawcasa.org](http://www.familylawcasa.org) to find out more. Don't forget to share this with friends and family.

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Because of you Mateo can continue to grow and learn without feeling scared at home.

Four-year-old Mateo grew up in a violent household. His father had a criminal history including domestic violence. During one argument between Mateo's parents, his mom was injured so badly she was rushed to the hospital. **Mateo felt so scared and alone watching his mother leave in an ambulance.**

**But you helped Mateo. A CASA was appointed to the case.** The volunteer advocate spent 6 months gathering information for a report to the court. Family members, the father's former and current partner, Mateo's pediatrician, and Mateo's Head Start teacher among others were interviewed by the volunteer.

It became evident to the advocate that Mateo had witnessed verbal and physical abuse in his home for some time – making it a very unsafe place.

The advocate wrote an excellent comprehensive 30-page report and during trial the judge recommended the father attend domestic violence treatment and have supervised visits until that treatment was complete.

Mateo continues to attend his Head Start program and is receiving supportive services in his classroom as well as additional

resources in his mother's home. **Thank you, for helping Mateo feel safe and happy.**

**Help Now**

## Be a Voice for a Child in Court

Our next training takes place on  
June 19th & 20th



My favorite part about being an advocate is knowing the work we do is having a real impact on the life of children," Charlene, Court Appointed Special Advocate.

Visit [www.familylawcasa.org](http://www.familylawcasa.org) to learn how you can help a child today.

Show us some love on social media and please share with your networks!



**Here are Four Easy Ways to Give a Gift to Keep CASA Kids Safe:**

- **Donate your gift online**
- **Mail your gift** to Family Law CASA, 810 Third Avenue, Suite 700 Seattle, WA 98104
- **Advise your charitable fund** to make a gift to FL CASA
- **Make a gift of stock** - Contact Lisa Johnston at 206-748-9700 for transfer instructions.
- **FIND OUT MORE** about Family Law CASA

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