Resilience does not come from rare and special qualities, but from the everyday magic of ordinary, normative human resources in the minds, brains, and bodies of children, in their families and relationships, and in their communities. --- Ann Masten, SAMHSA

The transition to trauma-informed practices and principles is already helping build resilience in our CASA kids. As it extends deeper into our community, in particular into the child welfare system, can it also bring greater resilience to their families?

As a lawyer who has worked in and with the child welfare system for many years, I have seen the pendulum swing back and forth between safety, which means remove first and ask questions later, and family preservation, which means introducing lots of resources in an attempt to keep families intact and kids at home.

These strategies have resulted in well-intentioned federal laws, state laws, department regulations, and local mandates and practices. Unfortunately, laws tend to manage problems rather than solve them. This is not surprising considering that family situations are often deeply personal, complicated, and messy. Applying one rule to 443,000 children in foster care across the nation, or even the 5,000 Virginia kids in care, isn’t going to work well for everyone.

For example, when the pendulum is on safety, children come into care and stay longer. To reduce the odds of boys and girls languishing indefinitely in foster care, the federal government imposed timelines, which have grown tighter and tighter. Today even our most complicated families are supposed to have resolved all their problems within 12 months. It took a lot more than one year for mom and dad to arrive at such precarious circumstances, so all too often the clock simply runs out.

The unintended consequence is that nationally only 51% of foster kids return to their parents. In Virginia that number drops to 39%. In the Piedmont CASA service area, the number drops again to 33%.
CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW VOLUNTEERS

Left to right: Taylor Stanley, Meredith Gillet, Brittany Ayers, JoAlma Hall, (Judge David M. Barredo), Clare Aukofer, Savannah Moix-Rogers, Haley Hall, and Janet Whitmore Parker. (Not shown: Kristina Parker.) Their Induction Ceremony took place on November 13, 2018.

Fall Volunteer Induction
November 13, 2018

Photo by Larry Bouterie

CASA Volunteers Paul Giaramita and Diana Burruss advocating for Piedmont CASA on CBS19. The spots and air time were generously donated by W. E. Brown.

Nancy Markos and CASA Volunteer Diane Brownlee delivered an $8,100 check from 100 Women Who Care to Alicia Lenahan (center). The funds were generously donated to our Bridges to Success for Older Youth in Foster Care program.

Big thanks to our Bracket Breakfast sponsors!

Anonymous
Tracy and Josh Arbaugh
Charles Axten
Bankers Insurance
Bank of the James
Barnett Financial Group
Castle Development Partners
Tarpley and Scott Gillespie
Great Eastern Management Company
Renee and John Grisham
Hampton & Everett, P.C.
Natalie and R. Peter Kilburn
Laura and Keven Lindemann
Miller Financial Group
Lisa M. Plaxco
Red Dirt Development
Roy Wheeler Realty Co.
Signature Family Wealth Advisors
Marty and Bob Sayler
Signature Family Wealth Advisors
Jane-Ashley and Peter Skinner
Virginia National Bank
WorldStrides

With Special Thanks
Boar’s Head Resort | Brasserie Saison | Crutchfield
Gearharts Fine Chocolates | The Inn at Court Square | Draft Taproom
Hamilton’s at First & Main | Keswick Hall & Golf Club | NBC 29
Sprint Pavilion | Marty and Bob Sayler | UVA Athletics Department
Steve Rappaport | Reserve Charlottesville | Rivanna River Co.
T&N Printing

BRACKET BREAKFAST COMMITTEE
Jim Miller, Chair | Jess Achenbach | Josh Arbaugh
R. Peter Kilburn | Steve Rappaport | Bob Sayler | Marty Sayler
Spring Volunteer Induction
May 14, 2019

Left to right: Blair Hubbard, Kisha Lewis, Carlos Marrone, Helen Wanner, Adriana Benjamin, Patricia Castelli, Chris Shultis, Ellen Liebman, Merrily D’Arpino, Cathy Jolly, Mary Buford Hitz, Chelsea Kirk, Viki Norton, and Helen Russell. Judge David M. Barredo presiding.

23 NEW ADVOCATES IN FISCAL YEAR 2019

Monday, March 18, 2019: Panelists at the 6th Annual Jimmy Miller’s Bracket Breakfast were author John Grisham, UVA President Jim Ryan, Cavalier Legend Barry Parkhill, and uber statistician Macon “The Squid” Gunter. Former Cavalier Devon Hall joined in via satellite. Special guests included former UVA Women’s Coach Debbie Ryan and WINA Sports Director Jay James. Rachel Ryan and Dave Koehn emceed. Along with basketball fans, luminaries, and generous sponsors, they helped raised more than $60,000 for abused and neglected children in our community!
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

TOP ROW Fleming Redd presented President Alicia Lenahan a generous check from Kappa Alpha Theta’s annual fundraiser, Waffle CASA (5/15/19) The Greater Charlottesville Trauma-Informed Community Network (TICN) screened Resilience at the Albemarle County Office Building (11/8/18) UVA and VCU presented “Childhood Adversity: Working Together to Foster Resilience” with panelists Alicia Lenahan, Dr. Renee Boynton-Jarrett (Boston University), Charlene Green (Charlottesville Office of Human Rights), Ingrid Ramos (The Women’s Initiative), and Sara Robinson (Region Ten). CASA Volunteer Dr. Greg Hayden facilitated (4/17/19) Jim Sporleder, principal of the high school featured in the film Resilience, spoke at the Charlottesville Schools Convocation (8/15/18)

SECOND ROW Preparing for the Bluebird Parade for Foster Children (5/3/19) Two middle photos: Junior League made sure the Fall Appeal went out in perfect order (10/24/18) Program Director Randy Nolt led the first training in the newly expanded conference room (9/29/18)

THIRD ROW CASA Supervisor Annie Izard sorted backpacks donated to CASA kids by GE Digital, CFA Institute, and Blue Ridge Mountains Rotary Club (8/16/18) Alicia Lenahan at the Women United in Philanthropy panel discussion on “Discovering Resilience: How Trauma Impacts Children and Adults” (3/19/19) Edgewood Gardeners cleaned up the PCASA yard to plant bulbs and other beauties (5/8/18) GE Digital helped make the holidays bright for CASA kids (12/17/18).

BOTTOM ROW TICN brought in Rick Griffin of the Community Resilience Initiative (CRI) to teach a series of master classes for CRI Trainers (3/28/18) Alicia Lenahan facilitated a panel discussion following a screening of Resilience (11/8/18) Ingrid Ramos and Elizabeth Irvin of The Women’s Initiative led a TICN meeting on treating secondary traumatic stress (5/20/19) Judge Barredo spoke to CASA Volunteers (11/13/18)
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Fore Kids Golf Tournament: Friday, October 19, 2018 was a beautiful day to be on the golf course! Big thanks to Will Merritt, Justin Deel, and all the guys at VDOT Culpeper for hosting the Fore Kids Golf Tournament - which netted $11,308 for Piedmont CASA. At the 11:00 shotgun start, 19 teams took off, fanning out across the Old Trail Golf Club in Crozet, Virginia. At the end of the day, Roudabush, Gale & Associates won first place, Concrete Stormwater won second, and A. Morton Thomas and Associates won third. Congratulations!

Bluebird Parade: The Bluebird Parade for Foster Children joined the First Friday ArtWalk in May for the third year. Families, schools, and groups again created bluebirds in recognition of our children in foster care. After the Bluebird Parade, “The Bluebird Project”, a seven-minute documentary about the event, made its debut. Produced by Light House Studio, it includes interviews with bluebird artists, foster parents, and local businesses who support the event, like MarieBette and Gearharts Fine Chocolates. Guest speaker Jay James of WINA News Radio brought the evening to a close with touching stories about his own foster and adopted siblings.

Poverty Simulation: On Saturday, February 9, 2019, about 100 men and women participated in a “Poverty Simulation” hosted by the UVA Curry School of Education and Piedmont CASA. The goal was simple: keep a roof over your head and pay your bills. But there is nothing simple about it if you’re one of the working poor. The “Poverty Simulation” broadens awareness of the challenges faced by 86% of the children we serve, whose families are surviving at or below the federal poverty line.
As far as nine-month-old Seth was concerned, his great aunt and uncle were his parents. Seth had entered the foster care system as a substance-exposed newborn, and was immediately placed with his great aunt and uncle. When other relatives came forward seeking custody, Seth’s CASA volunteer researched attachment theory and spoke with an attachment specialist. He wanted to better understand the bond between a child of such a tender age and his primary caregiver. After determining that it would be traumatic to move Seth, he advocated that the great aunt and uncle, who absolutely doted on the boy, have custody. The parents’ attorneys and others working on the case asked that custody be transferred to another family member, whom the child barely knew. They asked for more time so Seth could transition to this new family with “the least amount of harm.” His CASA stated that granting permanent custody to the great aunt and uncle would cause “no harm.” Because our CASA Volunteer kept his focus on the best outcomes for the child, did the research, and effectively advocated for him in court, Seth gets to stay at home with the only parents he has ever known, his great aunt and uncle.

**Could more kids return to their families if we expanded trauma-informed care?**

*cont’d from cover*

### The impact of generational trauma

Every single child we serve has experienced terrible trauma and prolonged doses of toxic stress, but most if not all of their parents have untreated trauma injuries of their own. In many cases, these unaddressed issues are the stumbling block in the reunification of families.

### The role of poverty

86% of CASA children come from families who live at or below the federal poverty line. Too often parents are penalized for their economic situations. When minimum-wage salaries preclude adequate housing, transportation, or child care, foster care may not be the healthiest, most effective response for the child, or for any of us.

### When parents run out of time

We know that kids do better when we can return them to their families safely, so our first and primary goal is always reunification. But that means working our way through an enormous tangle of laws to solve deeply entrenched problems, all while steering toward a fast-looming deadline. It’s a bit like a bungee jump where everything must be perfectly calculated so that you can come to a perfect stop with inches to spare.

### The result: kids are doing time in the system

It will come as no surprise that when young adults “age out” of foster care the outcomes are grim.

- 90% of youth who experience five or more placements will become involved in the juvenile justice system.
- 70% of youth in juvenile detention centers have spent time in the child welfare system.

According to a longitudinal study done by Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago:

- Nearly 25% had no H.S diploma or GED
- 24% reported having been homeless

### Kids of color in foster care

As you can see in this table, kids of color have longer stays in foster care and more frequent placement changes, often to increasingly restrictive settings. They are also less likely to return home to their families. These disparities in family stability become even more pronounced as kids get older.

### What does the future look like?

In an ideal world, we will put ourselves out of business. Our best chance of achieving that is the universal implementation of trauma-informed care.

If the child welfare system only implemented the first step of trauma-informed care and changed the question from “what’s wrong with you?” to “what’s happened to you?” we could begin to alter the entire landscape.

To that end, we are developing a project that will inject trauma-informed principles into the first circle of protection and power around the child: the courts, the departments of social services, and Piedmont CASA. With this shared foundation, we can do even more to support, heal, and strengthen the lifelong connections that are crucial to the stability and resilience of our families. And by building systems that strengthen families – we help ensure that more children will go home to their parents.

---

**Piedmont CASA Facts as of May 15, 2019**

- 254 children from 139 families have been served so far this year
- 17 children are on our wait list
- 108 Volunteers are active
- Cases involving 95 children have been closed
- Piedmont CASA turned 24 years old this year

---

*SAMSHA: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
This newsletter only captures a small portion of the difference your support makes to the abused and neglected children in our community.

On October 23, 2018, Board Member Jack Bocock hosted an appreciation event at Royal Orchard for Piedmont CASA Donors and Volunteers, who have been so generous with their time, talent, and support. Our special guest speaker was Dom Vining, a young adult who talked about what it’s like be in foster care, and how his CASA Volunteer and Bridges Coach are inspiring him to open doors to a future far better than he had thought possible. Other speakers were Board Chair Tarpley Gillespie, President Alicia Lenahan, and Chloe Edwards from Voices of Virginia. CASA Supervisor Alison Taravella announced the Ruth Stone Child Advocate of the Year, Ann Marie Farrar.

Top row: Board Member Mark Sackson in the center. Second row: CASA youth Dom Vining shares stories while his Bridges Coach Gwen Jones and Great Expectations Advisor La’Tisha Jackson look on; Board Vice Chair Rachel Lloyd Miller; “Ruth Stone Advocate of the Year” Ann Marie Farrar. Bottom row: Board Chair Tarpley Gillespie; Board Member Jack Bocock and Scott Gillespie; Board Members R. Peter Kilburn and Jack Bocock with Natalie Kilburn.
When we set up our Kids4Kids studio at events around the community, we ask children to draw what makes them happy. They draw blue skies, flowers, rainbows, but mostly what makes them happy. They draw their families and their homes, which many donate to our Kids4Kids gallery. If you'd like us to set up the studio at one of your events, call us at 434.971.7515, or email kids4kids@pcasa.org.