

The Advocate

Educational Challenges for Children in the Child Welfare System



Most children have parents who monitor their academic progress, attend generally ensure they receive a high-quality education. When these children do not receive appropriate educational opportunities, their parents speak up on their behalf. Foster youth frequently lack such educational advocates. As a consequence, they often fail to receive the educational opportunities they need to succeed in school and, as a result, fall behind their peers academically. As a CASA/GAL volunteer, you can help advocate for a child's educational needs.

Teachers who see the child every day have a wealth of knowledge about the child's behavior, attitude, likes and dislikes, and about the best ways to communicate with that child. As you inquire about a child's progress in school, you may discover that the child has special educational needs and should be

referred for an evaluation. In some areas, an abundance of resources may be available for special-needs children; in other areas, you may have to advocate for the creation of needed resources.

Cultural Considerations: Children from racial, ethnic or cultural backgrounds, different from the majority culture, may also have special needs based on discriminatory practices in the educational system. For instance, children may face racist or homophobic taunts, teachers who believe they can't learn, and testing that is racially or culturally biased. Many studies have found that children from minority racial or ethnic groups are overrepresented in the special education population and underrepresented in gifted and talented programs. Additionally, according to the National Education Association report *Truth in Labeling*, students of color experience "excessive incidence, duration, and types of disciplinary actions, including suspensions and expulsions."

It is important to realistically assess the school difficulties of a child and determine how the educational system, as well as the child's particular school setting, may be creating or sustaining those problems.



It's just our way of saying, "Thank You for all YOU DO!"

Thanks to the Allen County CASA Coalition

You've probably heard me "say" this phrase a lot lately and it's all true, we truly appreciate the work you do for abused and neglected children in Allen County. But do you know how we fund our thank yous and tokens of appreciation? Let me introduce you to the Allen County CASA Coalition.

Established in 1987, the Coalition is a registered 501 c(3) whose sole purpose is support Allen County CASA in the recruitment, training, and support of our volunteers. And that's YOU!

Have you had fees for a training paid for? Do

you have a CASA notebook, tumbler or portfolio? Are you coming "out to the ball park" on the 20th this month? All this is paid for with funds the Coalition has worked to raise in our behalf.

We are so blessed to have the Coalition to serve as the fundraising arm of Allen County CASA! They know the work you do, they appreciate the work you do, and they want to support the work you do—so let's all say a great big thanks for all they do, so you can do, all you do.

Thank you, Allen County Coalition for support.

It is appreciated!

POVERTY, BY AMERICA

#1 NEW YORK TIMES
BESTSELLER

MATTHEW DESMOND
PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING AUTHOR OF *EVICTED*

Poverty, By America

By Matthew Desmond

The Pulitzer Prize-winning, bestselling author of *Evicted* reimagines the debate on poverty, making a new and bracing argument about why it persists in America: because the rest of us benefit from it.

ONE OF THE MOST ANTICIPATED BOOKS OF 2023: The Washington Post, Time, Esquire, Newsweek, Minneapolis Star Tribune, Elle, Salon, Lit Hub, Kirkus Reviews

The United States, the richest country on earth, has more poverty than any other advanced democracy. Why? Why does this land of plenty allow one in every eight of its children to go without basic necessities, permit scores of its citizens to live and die on the streets, and authorize its corporations to pay poverty wages?

In this landmark book, acclaimed sociologist Matthew Desmond draws on history, research, and original reporting to show how affluent Americans knowingly and unknowingly keep poor people poor. Those of us who are financially secure exploit the poor, driving down their wages while forcing them to overpay for housing and access to cash and credit. We prioritize the subsidization of our wealth over the alleviation of poverty, designing a welfare state that gives the most to those who need the least. And we stockpile opportunity in exclusive communities, creating zones of concentrated riches alongside those of concentrated despair. Some lives are made small so that others may grow.

Elegantly written and fiercely argued, this compassionate book gives us new ways of thinking about a morally urgent problem. It also helps us imagine solutions. Desmond builds a startlingly original and ambitious case for ending poverty. He calls on us all to become poverty abolitionists, engaged in a politics of collective belonging to usher in a new age of shared prosperity and, at last, true freedom.

Have a title you want to share? Send me an email with the title and author & I'll include in future columns.

In this column each month, I will share a book that has been recommended by professionals to help us better understand some of the issues that surround child abuse and neglect. Reviews are provided by Goodreads.com.

Introducing Allen County CASA Book Club

Save the Date & Coming Soon
CASA Book Club
September 12th at 5:30
Poverty, by America
By Matthew Desmond

<http://www.allencountycasa.org/forms/casa-bookclub>

POVERTY, BY AMERICA

#1 NEW YORK TIMES
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MATTHEW DESMOND
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Celebrate August Advocate Anniversaries!

Congratulations to our August Advocates with Service Anniversaries! Please join me in congratulating and thanking them for their service.

Kelly Shank - 2

Arlena Vanhoy- 2

Mary Bradshaw - 4

Harriet Follis - 2

Jessica Keathley - 2

Christine Sutter - 15

Friendly Reminder

Please remember, regular monthly visits with each child is essential for best interest advocacy. If you are having issues that are keeping you from visiting your CASA child (ren), please feel free to reach out to me so that we can find an appropriate solution.

Children First!

Save the Dates!

Optima Monthly Computer Lab!



Starting Aug. 25th from 10 am—12 pm, we will have open computer lab hours in the office to assist volunteers who may need help with Optima. Just one more way we want to support you in the work you do!

Save the Date For



Drug Trends: What CASAs Need to Know

September 26th– 6 pm—7:30 pm

Captain Kevin Hunter,

Fort Wayne Police Department

SOCIAL WELLNESS

Positive social habits can help you build support systems and stay healthier mentally and physically. Here are some tips for connecting with others:

MAKE CONNECTIONS

Social connections might help protect health and lengthen life. Scientists are finding that our links to others can have powerful effects on our health. Whether with family, friends, neighbors, romantic partners, or others, social connections can influence our biology and well-being. Look for ways to get involved with others.

To find new social connections:

- Join a group focused on a favorite hobby.
- Take a class to try something new.
- Try yoga, tai chi, or another new physical activity.
- Join a choral group, theater troupe, band, or orchestra.
- Help at a community garden or park.
- Volunteer at a school, library, or hospital.
- Participate in neighborhood events.
- Join a local community group.



To Mustard Seed Furniture Bank

The Mustard Seed Furniture Bank of Fort Wayne provides household furnishings to families and individuals as they rebuild their lives after suffering disaster, personal tragedy, or other misfortunes.

With a referral from one of 130 referring agencies, clients come to the Mustard Seed to choose their items. Depending on the referral and warehouse stock, this may include large items (sofa, bed, living room chairs, etc.) as well as bed and kitchen linens and kitchenware. Since the Mustard Seed's assistance is limited to once in a lifetime, clients understand that if they move, they must move the items with them.

Through their **Beds4Kids** program has touched the lives of over 11,172 children, ages 2-17, who need beds. With this program, they can get everything they need to sleep in their own clean and comfortable beds that very night, including a new mattress, platform bed frame, pillow, and gently used or new blanket and sheets.

Join us on Tuesday, August 15, 2023 @ 5:30 pm

For a Tour and to Learn More!

<http://www.allencountycasa.org/forms/mustard-seed-furniture-bank-field-trip>



August Training Opportunities



Stop the Trauma: A Call to Action on Trauma Informed Care for Youth— IYI.org

AUGUST 16, 2023, 12:00 PM - 01:00 PM ET

Webinar

[Register HERE](#)

Communicating with Schools: Collaborative Strategies for Positive Outcomes - INSOURCE

Wednesday, August 16, 2023 - 12:30 pm - 1:45 pm

Allen Co Public Library - Meeting Room C – No Registration Required

School Discipline for Students with Disabilities - INSOURCE

Wednesday, August 16, 2023 - 6:30 pm - 7:45 pm

Allen Co Public Library - Meeting Room C – No Registration Required

August CASA Training Academy: Back to School: Educational Advocacy

Wednesday, August 23, 2023, from 1:30-3:00 PM



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What is Child Trauma and Child Traumatic Stress?

Child traumatic stress occurs when children and adolescents are exposed to traumatic events and this exposure overwhelms their ability to cope with what they have experienced. Prior to age 16, two-thirds of children in the U.S. are exposed to a traumatic event, such as:

- Physical, sexual, or psychological abuse and neglect (including family violence)
- Natural and technological disasters
- Community violence, trafficking, or terrorism
- Sudden or violent loss of a loved one
- Substance use disorder (personal or familial)
- Refugee and war experiences (including torture)
- Serious accidents or life-threatening illness

Children who are exposed to traumatic events may experience a wide variety of consequences that can include intense and ongoing emotional distress and behavioral problems, difficulties with attention, academic failure, problems with sleep, or illness. For some children, these reactions interfere with daily life and their ability to function and interact with others. These reactions sometimes develop into serious mental illnesses or serious emotional disturbance, including posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression. Exposure to traumatic experiences can also worsen preexisting mental health problems and disrupt children's ability to form positive relationships and handle emotions and behavior.

Learn more at www.nctsn.org

Five Ways to Protect Your Heart From Stress

From Parkview Health's
Dashboard Blog

This post was written by **Ashika Thanju, NP, PPG – Cardiology.**

Everyone experiences stress—it's a part of life. And some short bursts of stress that send us into a "fight or flight" mode can even be helpful for our survival. But chronic stress can not only make us feel overwhelmed, it can also lead to serious health outcomes, especially for the heart.

Stress and our hearts

When we are feeling stress, our bodies release the stress hormone cortisol. Small amounts of this hormone are useful to our survival, but chronic cortisol production from stress can lead to high blood pressure, high blood sugar, fatigue and inflammation in the arteries. In addition, stress can also make it hard to make healthy food choices and lead to poor sleep.

These lifestyle changes caused by stress and the high levels of cortisol in your body can add up to adversely affect your heart and place you at greater risk for heart attack, atrial fibrillation, stroke and hypertension, among other conditions.

How to protect your heart from stress

While stress is bound to arise in our lives, there are lifestyle changes we can make to help minimize the effect stress has on our health. Here are a few heart-healthy suggestions to cope with your stress and reduce its effects on your body.

Connect with others.

Undue stress can cause us to turn toward social isolation, but managing stress alone is overwhelming. Try connecting with a trusted friend or family member, or engaging with community or faith-based organizations to unburden some of your stress.

Manage your time.

Create routines and try to find ways to make time for things you want and enjoy doing, as well as those tasks that you need to do. There are so many great apps and calendars on the market to help with task and time management. Make it a point to prioritize what's most important and minimize habits like social media scrolling, which burn up time better spent doing other things.

Get enough sleep.

Try to get at least seven to eight hours of sleep per night and work on establishing good sleep hygiene to help you get better rest. Create an environment and a routine that set you up for restorative, rejuvenating nights.

Take breaks from social media and the news.

Social media and the 24-hour news cycle can perpetuate stress. Limiting hours spent online can help reduce your stress and anxiety. Set limits around your exposure to these platforms and

learn to tune into what your body is trying to tell you in response to consuming this content.

Move more.

Physical activity releases hormones that have a positive effect on your mood. Set a goal to exercise a total of 150 minutes per week at moderate intensity. If you find working out to be a chore, this is a great article about reframing your view of fitness. Find a way to move your body that feels good and boosts your spirits.

It's important to remember that while stressful circumstances are often out of our control, how we respond is not. Next time you feel stressed, try some of the tips listed above or experiment with your own ways to destress, like playing an instrument, taking a warm bath, reading a book or doing yoga. Whatever helps you bring that cortisol down is the right approach to keeping your heart healthy!

To sign up for the **Parkview Dashboard Blog Weekly**

eNewsletter, go to: <https://content.parkview-health.com/?gBzB6IHtWwkb3pa3vpf-NixPqBbjO8Yfpg>



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