

"The News"

WORDS FROM THE DIRECTOR

Autumn in West CenLA: Embracing School Safety and Community at CASA

As the vibrant hues of autumn paint the landscape of CASA of West CenLA, the community embraces this season of change with a focus on both school safety and nurturing the well-being of its young residents. The crisp, cool air of fall brings a new rhythm to daily life, especially for families as children return to their school routines. At CASA of West CenLA, a local organization dedicated to fostering the safety and development of children, autumn represents a crucial time to reinforce both educational and protective measures.



WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE:

- Words from the Director
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- Training, Training, Training
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- Upcoming Events
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Autumn in West CenLA is a season marked by a collective effort to enhance school safety and create a nurturing environment for children. Casa of West CenLA plays a pivotal role in this endeavor, working tirelessly to ensure that safety protocols are in place and that families have access to resources that support their children's well-being. As the leaves change and the days grow shorter, the community's commitment to these goals ensures that children can thrive both academically and emotionally in a safe and supportive setting.

~Tommy

Supervisor Tips

CASA Information Gathering Checklist Part 3

Interaction with school or daycare staff

- Have the child's previous school records been transferred to his/her current school? Have records of any special education plans transferred to the current school?
- Is the child performing at grade level? On-track to progress to next grade? If not, what are the top issues to address?
- Child's grades? Resources available to help?
- Child's school schedule, transportation, extracurricular activities
- Child's behavior, appearance, strengths & challenges, socialization, friendships, likes & dislikes, changes noted
- School attendance – is it regular? How many absences? Were they excused?
- Any visits to school nurse, social worker, or other support personnel?
- Does the child need or receive tutoring?
- If this is a residential (group) placement, confirm whether an Educational Surrogate has been appointed by Illinois Board of Ed to advocate for, and consent to, educational services for the child
- Have any concerns been identified that would warrant a request for a (special education) evaluation – e.g. vision, hearing, health, and/or behavior?
- Does this child have a current IEP or 504 plan?
 - What types of services or accommodations are involved?
 - When is the next evaluation or meeting? Request to be notified so you can attend.
 - Obtain a copy of the plan documents if you can.
- Does the child currently participate in extracurricular activities? Have a desire to participate? What are barriers/options re: transportation, fees, equipment, and other necessities?
- If applicable: the child's access to & involvement in resources for post-HS education or vocational opportunities.
- Upcoming school projects, deadlines, tests, papers, standardized testing dates? Resources available to help?
- What is caretaker's involvement with the school? Any school staff observations regarding the caregiver, child's demeanor toward them.

Supervisor Tips

CASA Information Gathering Checklist Part 3, continued

Interaction with therapist or other mental health provider

- Has child regularly attended therapy? If sessions were missed were reasons given?
- Frequency of therapy – is it adequate for effective treatment? If not, what's recommended?
- What sort of assessment was done before beginning therapy? What were the recommendations of the assessment?
- Are further assessments needed?
- Does the child have a diagnosis?
- What are the treatment goals and do they address the issues that brought the child into foster care?
- Is the child participating in therapy? Are there circumstances that make it difficult for the child to participate?
- Is the child prescribed medication? What is it and what does it treat? How long has the child been taking it? Is the child in compliance with the dosage & frequency? When should there be follow-up and what follow-up would that be?
- Any concerns about parent visits?
- Any concerns about the child's placement?
- Any other concerns that should be brought to the court's attention?



Click icons to go to links

Upcoming CASA Events

Birthday Buddies - Monthly

Birthday Buddies

What is the Birthday Buddies program?

Birthday Buddies is a volunteer program created to ensure that children in foster care provided with a CASA are never forgotten on their birthday. With the support of community volunteers, Birthday Buddies provides a birthday gift for abused or neglected children on their birthday.

What can the community do to help?

You can help by providing gifts for a birthday child. You can also provide gift cards—they may not seem important but they allow us to better meet the specific needs of the children we serve. You can also donate to the Birthday Buddy program so the children will be able to receive gifts for their birthday.

Where can I go to help?

You can contact CASA of West CenLA, Inc. for more information about being a Birthday Buddy.

DeRidder 337-462-4667 or Leesville 337-239-1970



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA OF WEST CENLA

Speaking Engagements

Do you belong to a club, group, or an organization and would like to learn more about CASA and what we are all about, or how you can help the children in our communities? We would love to come and present to you! Please contact us and schedule a date and time.

DeRidder
337.462.4667

Leesville
337.239.1970

www.casawestcenla.org

www.facebook.com/CASAWestCenLA

2024 CASA CHRISTMAS PROJECT



CASA of West CenLA is working to provide Christmas gifts to the foster children of Beauregard and Vernon Parishes.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?



- Decide to sponsor a child then come to one of our CASA offices to pick up a wish list.
- Or call one of our CASA offices at the numbers below to get a wish list emailed or faxed to you.

NEXT STEP?



- Buy what is on the wish list and return the unwrapped items to the CASA office at one of our addresses below.
- Deadline to return gifts is **December 6, 2024** to ensure the children get their gifts by Christmas.



**Make a Difference
In a Child's Life!**



DeRidder CASA Office
420 McMahon Street
DeRidder, LA 70634
337-462-4667

Leesville CASA Office
113 S. 3rd Street
Leesville, LA 71446
337-239-1970

Christmas Project - lists available 10/1/2024

Training - Training - Training



CASA of West CenLA Pre-Service Training Schedule:

9/3/2024 - Orientation

9/10/2024 - Session 1

9/17/2024 - Session 2

9/24/2024 - Session 3

10/1/2024 - Session 4

10/8/2024 - Session 5



CASA of West CenLA Pre-Service Training Months:

January

March

May

September

For more information about becoming an advocate please contact us:

**420 McMahon Street
DeRidder, LA 70634
337.462.4667**

**113 S. 3rd Street
Leesville, LA 71446
337.239.1970**



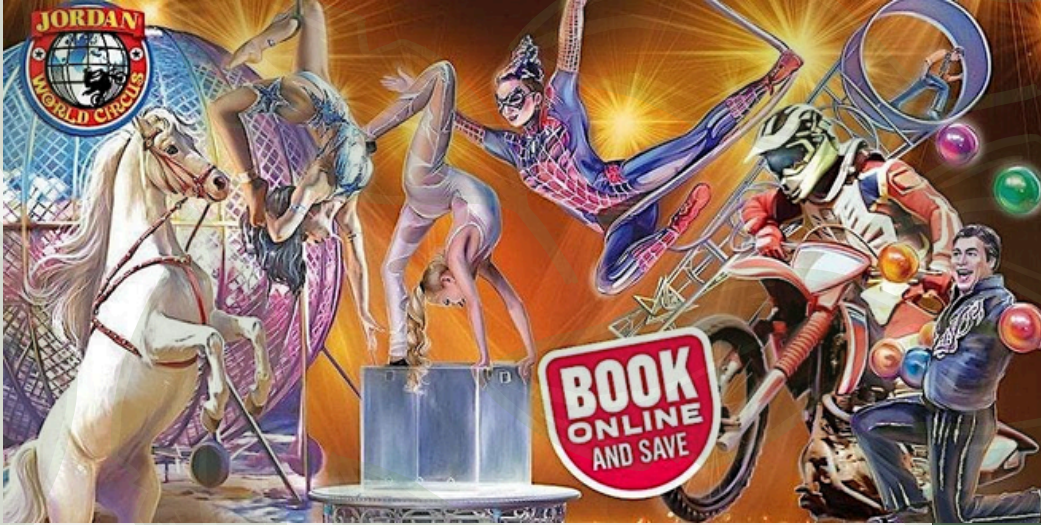
Fun Facts for September

- Better Breakfast Month
- Classical Music Month
- International Update Your Resume Month
- Library Card Sign-Up Month
- National Courtesy Month
- National Fruit & Veggies Month
- National Italian Cheese Month
- National Little League Month
- National Piano Month
- National Potato Month
- National Rice Month
- National Sewing Month
- National Square Dance Month
- Save Your Photos Month
- Whole Grains Month

Important September Facts

- Baby Safety Month
 - Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
 - National Childhood Cancer Awareness Month
 - National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month
 - National Preparedness Month
 - National Self-Care Awareness Month
 - National Sickle Cell Awareness Month
 - National Suicide Prevention Month
 - Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome Awareness Month
 - Pulmonary Fibrosis Awareness Month
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Upcoming Events



JORDAN WORLD CIRCUS

September 6th
6:30pm-8pm
Lion's Rodeo Arena
Leesville

FABULOUS FALL BARREL RACE

September 20 - 21
1:00 pm - 10pm
Beauregard Parish Civic
Center - Covered Arena
DeRidder



Click pictures to go to links

www.casawestcenla.org



Vernon Parish

Angie

Advocate Spotlight



Beauregard Parish

LaSandra