



MAY IS NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH



CASA CHRONICLE

May 2026



CASA Coordinators Reach Milestone Anniversaries in 2026



Mariah Lantz, Program Coordinator 5 Years with CASA of Gila County

Serving as a CASA Coordinator in Gila County has been an incredible journey. I've gained invaluable insights from our dedicated Volunteers. While we face challenging days, the knowledge that compassionate Volunteers are supporting children during their most difficult moments makes all the difference. Witnessing community members invest their time and energy into these kids reinforces my belief in the importance of this program for our community. **I am profoundly grateful to our volunteers for their unwavering commitment and service!**



Emily Nader, CASA Coordinator 10 Years with CASA of Gila County

Over the past 10 years, I have learned so much from the CASA Program but my favorite lesson learned is the true value of community volunteers who are willing to serve our community's most vulnerable population, purely out of the goodness of their hearts.

To each of our volunteers, THANK YOU!



It was a beautiful day thanks to you!



Saturday, April 18th, CASA of Gila County was out and about throughout the county. A special **thank you** to Karrol, Lana, Kimberly, Tracy, and Debbra for helping table at our April events!



Our CASA Team in Action

CASA Advocacy Competency: Communication

CASA Tammie promptly set out to build trust and rapport with everyone involved in her case. While addressing the needs of a new case, she made sure that the caregivers understood her purpose. She aimed to identify the child's needs and arranged to meet the family in a location that was convenient for the caregiver.

CASA Advocacy Competency: Foundations of Knowledge

CASA Joanne went above and beyond in researching current law and policy to ensure that she had a firm understanding before attending an important team meeting to discuss potential options for the child. Joanne's concern led her to contact her coordinator to identify the best plan of action when advocating for her CASA child and overcoming potential delays in the child reaching permanency.

CASA Advocacy Competency: Communication

CASA Catherine made a great connection with the foster parents and children in her new cases. After only being appointed to the case for a month, the child remembered her CASA and asked for her to come over and see her when she was having a bad day.

Thank you, Cris, Darla, Gail, Karrol, and Tracie for participating as a CASA Interview for the Globe-Miami Times.



Thank you, Karrol, Kimberly, and Lana, for participating as a CASA Panel for an applicant's final CASA training module.



CINCO DE MAYO

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



MONIKA AND MARIA



VOLUNTEER ANNIVERSARIES

Monika
8 Years

Allison
6 Years

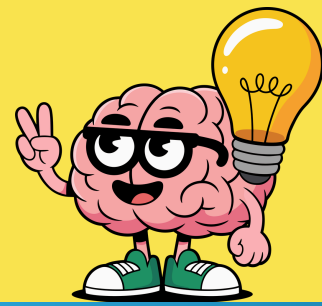
Darla
3 Years



MAY AWARENESS

MENTAL HEALTH Awareness MONTH

MAY 2026



About the Children's Mental Health Matters Campaign

Children's Mental Health Awareness Week, May. 3-9, 2026
This Resource Directory is a rich library full of curated toolkits, activity sheets, information to support children across the lifespan, covering a variety of topics related to children's mental health. Browse the Resource Directory to learn about mental health, find tools to support your CASA child.

Activities - Pre-K & Elementary Ages , Activities - Middle & High School Ages, ADHD, Adoption and Foster Care, Autism, Back to School, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous & People of Color), Eating Disorders, LGBTQIA+ Youth, Mental Health (General)/ Mental Well-Being, Trauma, Substance Use, Suicide, Video Gaming Disorders, and so much more!

Learn More Here:

[Children's Mental Health Matters Campaign](#)

Youth Mental Health and the CASA Role

Many of the children CASA volunteers serve have behavioral health needs. When our CASA children struggle with mental health, it can be hard to remember what our CASA role is in those moments.

CASA Volunteers cannot:

1. Diagnose the child or their parents
2. Provide counseling or therapy
3. Intervene in a crisis situation
4. Decide if a child is moved to a more/ less restrictive placement.

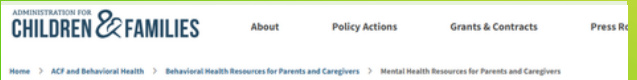
CASA Volunteers can:

1. Advocate for screenings
2. Advocate for adjustments
3. Voice concerns you have observed
4. Report changes in behaviors that you notice
5. Follow up on pending referrals to help minimize delays
6. Advocate for a placement better suited for their needs
7. Be a consistent support the child can count on.

Remember, the CFT (Child and Family Team) meeting is an important meeting that a CASA can attend to advocate for needed services and to gather information. If you do not know when your next CFT is, contact your CASA Coordinator today!

Examples of our local CASAs in Action

- CASA Karrol reached out to the professional who completed her CASA child's evaluation to seek clarification on the recommendations being made. When changes were being made to the child's services, CASA Karrol was able to advocate for the recommended format of care, as stated by the behavioral health professional.
- CASA Allison observed that her CASA child was not having their behavioral health needs met. CASA Allison continued to advocate for additional assessments and services in the child's service meetings and hearings until the child's needs were being seen, heard, and addressed.



Mental Health Resources for Parents and Caregivers

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Administration for Children & Families provides a website of mental health Resources for Parents and Caregivers. Articles include information on helping children and teens who are struggling with mental health related issues:

“Caring for Children”

- Childhood Mental Health Basics
- Resilience and Prevention
- Warning Signs and Early Action
- Treatment Options and Locators
- Recovery and Support Resources

“Caring for Teens and Young Adults”

- Teen Mental Health Basics
- Resilience, Prevention, and Early Action
- Help and Treatment
- Support and Recovery

Learn more here:

[ACF Resources for Parents and Caregivers](#)



If you or someone you know is struggling...

- If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. **Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org.**
- To learn how to get support for mental health, drug, and alcohol issues, visit [FindSupport.gov](https://www.findsupport.gov).
- To locate treatment facilities or providers, visit [FindTreatment.gov](https://www.findtreatment.gov) or call SAMHSA's National Helpline at 800-662-HELP (4357).

CASA EVENTS



CASA in the Community

All CASA of Gila County Volunteers are invited and encouraged to join us at these community events in May.



CASA SPECIAL DATES

These special dates are for CASA Volunteers in Gila County. Please contact your coordinator for more information.

Special CASA Presentation

May 01, 2026 12:00PM-3:00PM

New CASA Oath of Service (Globe)

May 04, 2026 11:45AM

CASA Appreciation Event (Payson)

May 11, 2026 11:30AM

CASA Appreciation Event (Globe)

May 16, 2026 11:00AM

CASA SUPPORT GROUPS

CASA support groups are held three times a month, and all meetings are open to every Gila County CASA Volunteer. We encourage you to participate in the session that best accommodates your schedule.

League of Extraordinary CASAs

May 27 (Weds) 3:00-5:00PM

In- Person: Payson CASA Office Conference Room

Zoom Link Available- Request from Mariah

Lead: Mariah mlantz@courts.az.gov

CASA Empowerment Allies

May 15 (Fri) 12:00PM-1:00PM

Microsoft Teams Only- Contact Emily for link

Lead: Emily enader@courts.az.gov



CONTACT US

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MEMORIAL DAY



REMEMBER AND HONOR

Offices Closed

CASA of Gila County Offices will be closed on Monday May 25, 2026