



Change a Child's Story

Yavapai County CASA Program Newsletter

November 2025

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Well, maybe not yet in the Verde...

October was a busy month for CASA including Academy, CODY, and the Fall Appreciation Event at Out of Africa!

Congratulations to the following recipients of our Yavapai County CASA Awards:

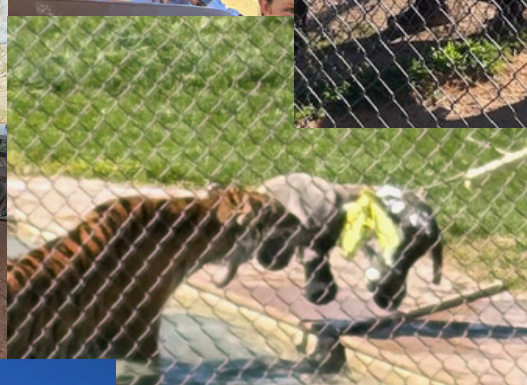
Jan Lisboa - CASA of the Year

Daniella Ferrari - Dependency Attorney of the Year

Kelly Baker - Prescott DCS Worker of the Year

Susan Balensky - Verde DCS worker of the Year
(CASAs were nominated by dependency attorneys and DCS workers. Dependency attorneys and DCS workers were nominated by CASA volunteers).

So, cozy up and peruse this newsletter for these events and pick up some training and activity information along the way!



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2025





Coordinators Corner



**JUST
ARRIVED!**

**THE 2026 CASA
CALENDARS ARE
HERE! STOP BY
THE OFFICE AND
PICK UP YOUR
COPY TODAY**

Way to go

**Congratulations to Connie B, Duncan M, Eileen R, Bob R, and
Selin S for completing CASA Academy this month!**



**HERITAGE PARK
ZOOLOGICAL
SANCTUARY**



Please take advantage of our memberships and free passes to these awesome establishments. Click on each icon to be directed to each of their websites to see how many awesome things they have going on!

Child and Family Team Meetings

To receive information about an upcoming CFT with:

CFSS: please email: dawnr@cfssinc.com

Polar Health: please email: whenthecft@polarhealth.com

Spectrum: please email: susans@spectrumhg.org

Please give the clinics 48 hours to reply to your email

Prescott 2025

NOVEMBER

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

3

4

Hearings
FTC 2:00

5

9:00
Court
Report
Writing

6

7

10

11



12

9:00
CASA
Connecting

13

FCRB

14

FCRB

17

DCS/CASA
Meet &
Greet

18

FTC 2:00

19

20

Tele-CASA
9:00

21

24

25

Hearings

26

27



28



Prescott 2025

December

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

1

2

FTC 2:00

3

4

5

Hearings

8

9

10

11



FCRB

12

FCRB

15

16

FTC 2:00

17

18

19

Hearings

22

23

24

25

CLOSED

26

29

30

31

Verde 2025

November

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

3

4

5

6

7

Hearings

FTC 2:00

10

11

**VETERANS
DAY
closed**

12

13

**CASA
Connecting
9:15am Cottonwood
Library Dede Ewald
FCRB**

14

17

18

FTC 2:00

19

20

**Tele-CASA
9:00**

21

24

25

26

**HAPPY
THANKS
GIVING
OFFICES**

28

closed

Happy Anniversary

Jo Zutell
13 years

Nancy Taylor
5 Years

Jill Reinstadler
2 Years

Georgi Walczyk
2 years

Ken Reinstadler
2 Years

Bev Medlyn
2 Years

Rita Dennis
1 Year



Happy
Birthday



CASA Kudos

KUDOS TO SHELLY MIALI FOR PICKING UP HER CASA CHILD IN FLAGSTAFF AND DRIVING HER TO THE CODY PROGRAM, THEN TURNING AROUND AND DRIVING HER BACK. I'M TIRED JUST THINKING ABOUT IT!

KUDOS TO ANGELA PATRIARCA FOR ALSO GETTING HER CASA CHILD TO THE CODY PROGRAM AND SUPPORTING HER DURING HER TRANSITION HOME FROM A GROUP HOME PLACEMENT.

KUDOS TO DON O'NEIL FOR SEEING BOTH OF HIS CASES THRU TO COMPLETION, ONE GUARDIANSHIP AND ONE AGED OUT. WE WILL MISS YOU SO MUCH DON!! THANKS FOR ALL YOU DID AS A CASA!

KUDOS TO ROBERTA AND STEVE HATCH AND GREG BYRUM FOR SEEING THEIR CASES THROUGH TO REUNIFICATION!

KUDOS TO RAY LEE FOR SEEING HIS CASE THROUGH TO ADOPTION!

KUDOS TO LESLIE GOLICH FOR SUPPORTING HER CASA CHILD THROUGH A CROSSROADS AND FOR TAKING A NEW CASE.

KUDOS TO CAROL HINRICHS FOR TAKING A NEW CASE.

KUDOS TO LAURA P. FOR HELPING OUT AT NATIONAL NIGHT OUT IN COTTONWOOD.

KUDOS TO JENI O. AND PAT S. FOR THEIR CONSISTENT EFFORTS TO ENSURE THEIR CASA CHILD'S BEHAVIORAL NEEDS ARE BEING MET.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO JANICE LISBOA, DONNA TANZI, KATHY MCLAUGHLIN AND JANICE MAUZ WHO HELPED WITH OUR TABLE AT THE YAVAPAI CASA FOR KIDS FOUNDATION COSTUMES FOR KIDS AND 5K FUN RUN. THEY WERE EXCELLENT AT HELPING THE KIDS THAT STOPPED BY TO ENGAGE WITH OUR CARNIVAL ACTIVITY, THE AXE THROWING GAME WHICH DOUBLED AS A DART GAME!



CODY



On the evening of October 23, 2025, Court Orientation for Dependent Youth (CODY) was held at the Juvenile Justice Center in Prescott. This event brought together professionals, volunteers, and youth for an inspiring program centered on education, empowerment, and connection. A total of 25 attendees participated, including six youth ages 13 to 17 who are currently involved in the dependency process.

CODY offers participants an inside look at the courtroom through a realistic mock hearing designed to help youth better understand the judicial process. Following the hearing, Judge Anna Young spent time answering questions, sharing insights, and leading a special behind-the-scenes tour of the courtroom.

The program also featured a guest speaker who recently transitioned from foster care into adulthood. She shared her personal journey through the dependency system, emphasizing the value of advocacy, the importance of supportive services, and how programs such as Extended Foster Care help youth build independence and confidence for the future.

Each youth participant received a gift bag containing an Advocating for Myself handbook with information about their rights and the court process, along with case-specific details such as contact information for their attorney, GAL, DCS Case Manager, and CASA when applicable. The gift bag also included an Amazon gift card, CASA-themed items, and an assortment of snacks and sweets as a token of support and appreciation. All youth in attendance were entered into a drawing for a brand-new pair of Beats headphones; both the gift cards and headphones were generously funded by the Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation.

The evening concluded with a delicious dinner from Olive Garden, also made possible through the Foundation's continued support. During dinner, CODY participants and professionals had the opportunity to connect, reflect, and continue meaningful conversations together.

CODY

CONTINUED

The impact of the event was best captured in the words of the youth themselves. One participant shared, “This event helps us understand everything going on in our lives,” while another reflected, “This helps us understand the opportunities we all could have.”

These powerful voices remind us why events like CODY are so vital. They give youth a chance to be heard, foster understanding, and inspire confidence for the future.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated professionals who volunteered their time to bring the mock hearing to life, including Judge Young, two Assistant Attorney Generals, several attorneys representing the mother, father, and youth, a Department of Child Safety Case Manager, a Behavioral Health Professional, the Clerk of the Court, and a CASA. Their combined expertise and generosity made the evening both educational and empowering for the youth in attendance.



Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation Costumes for Kids and 5K Fun Run



Please see the
following two pages
for information on
the annual Toy Drive
and Distribution





CHRISTMAS TOY DRIVE

This holiday season the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors has partnered with **Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation** to collect unwrapped toys for approximately 250 children who are under the care of the Yavapai County Juvenile Court due to abuse and/or neglect. These children come from families throughout Yavapai County and are in licensed foster and relative placements.

If you would like to donate look for the collection box in the lobby of the JJC in Prescott.

**Toy Donations will be accepted through
December 8, 2025.**

All gifts collected will be taken to a distribution site where foster parents, relatives, Court Appointed Special Advocates and Department of Child Safety workers will come and select special gifts for the children they work with.





Yavapai CASA for Kids

Christmas Holiday Toy Drive

Gift Distribution for Current & Former Foster Youth

Yavapai CASA for Kids Foundation wants to make the holiday season bright for all current and former foster youth in the county. The Christmas Holiday Toy Drive is for all youth in foster care who are dependents of the Yavapai County Juvenile Court System and/or youth placed in care in Yavapai County, youth in in-home dependencies, and those who have aged out of the foster care system and are enrolled in Keys to Success (KTS) or the Young Adult Program (YAP) with DCS. This program allows families and those closest to these youth to “shop” for holiday gifts for the youth in their care or caseload.

Those eligible to collect gifts are as follows: Foster and Kinship placements; biological parents with an in-home dependency or who are in good standing with Family Treatment Court, regardless of placement; attorneys; CASAs; DCS Case managers; and KTS/IL/YAP workers.

Requirements to collect gifts:

Your name

DCS Case manager name

Initials, gender, and age of youth(s)

Distribution Dates and Locations

Shop Dates

December 12: 10 AM - 7 PM

December 13: 10Am 7PM

3298 Bob Drive

Prescott Valley, AZ 86314

Shop Dates

December 12: 10 AM - 7 PM

December 13: 10 Am - 7Pm

703 S. Main St. #11

Cottonwood AZ 86336



Nature Niños



2025-2026

10:00am - 12:00pm

One Saturday a month



Park Rangers and community partners lead child-centered play events at a different family friendly park each month. At every Nature Niños event there are take-home items, a healthy snack, creative nature activities, story time, all encouraging us to Leave No Trace and make Healthy Choices. Nature Niños events are led by Park Rangers and community partners with a strong understanding of child development and experience leading child-centered outdoor programs.

August 2nd

West Granite Creek

Splash Pad

350 W. Main Street
Prescott, AZ 86305

September 6th

TEVA Community

Prescott National Forest

2900 N. Granite Basin Rd.
Prescott, AZ 86305

October 4th

Stricklin Park

1751 Sherwood Dr. Prescott,
AZ 86303

November 1st

Pioneer Park

Kayla's Hands

1200 Commerce Drive
Prescott, AZ 86305

December

No event

Go explore with our
Junior Ranger Guidebook

January 3rd

Vista Park

1701 Sarafina Drive
Prescott, AZ 86301

February 7th

Community

Nature Center

1980 Williamson Valley Rd
Prescott, AZ 86305

March 7th

Watson Lake

Upper Ramada

3101 Watson Lake Drive
Prescott, AZ 86301

April 18th

Prescott Earth Day

Downtown Courthouse

120 S. Cortez Street
Prescott, AZ 86301

May 2nd

Goldwater Lake

Upper

2900 S. Goldwater Lake Road
Prescott, AZ 86303

June 6th

Granite Creek Park

554 6th Street
Prescott, AZ 86301

July 11th

Antelope Park

6933 N. Cattletrack Road
Prescott Valley, AZ 86314



COURT REPORT WRITING

*Wednesday, November 5th · 9:00pm-11:00am
JJC Hearing Room*

This is a comprehensive Court Report Writing class for all CASA advocates.

All new advocates are highly encouraged to attend this training to learn the requirements for Court Report Writing for Yavapai County. We will also address your concerns and issues with using the dashboard system for writing reports.



Veteran advocates are encouraged to attend this training as a refresher course and to offer your experience to the discussion.

You are welcome to bring your own lunch or snacks. Coffee and water will be provided.

(training credit given to all CASAs)



HAPPY HOLIDAYS! OR BAH-HUMBUG!? Workshop

The holiday season brings school breaks, decorating, gift wrapping, cooking, cleaning, family visits, packed schedules, financial pressures—and the expectation to stay cheerful through it all. In this workshop, participants will learn how to set realistic expectations for themselves and their children, helping to increase the joyful moments and reduce the stress and overwhelm.

**Saturday, November 8th, 2025
9-11AM**

6901 E Panther Path ~ Prescott Valley

Call or Email to register

Lisa 928-759-5104

lisa.krietenstein@humboldtunified.com



ERASE THE STIGMA ATTENTION

Medical Professionals, Educators, First Responders,
Community Members

A Community Awareness and Educational Day
on Behavioral Health and Addictions

Saturday November 8th, 2025

9:00am - 2:00pm

Connection Room

637 N Main St Ste 2B

Cottonwood Az, 86326

Speakers - Food & Drinks - Information Booths

Speakers

Dr. Joanne Cacciatore Professor SSW - Good Grief, Support Done Right

Dr. Steven Korp - Medications and Long Term effects

Shawna Bowen MA- Finding hope with the addict in your life

James Tobin MPA - Building Resiliency / the 5 Keys

Sponsorship opportunities available



MEET & GREET

PRESCOTT DCS & CASA

Supporting
relationships
between
DCS & CASA to
create the best
outcome for our
youth

**NOVEMBER 17, 2025
12:00PM - 2:00PM**

**PRECOTT JUVENILE JUSTICE CENTER
HEARING ROOM**

**RSVP AND SUBMIT ANY DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS TO AMBER MARTIN AT
928-771-3165 OR
AMARTIN@ COURTS.AZ.GOV**

**LUNCH PROVIDED BY YAVAPAI
CASA FOR KIDS FOUNDATION**



**ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT
of CHILD SAFETY**



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN



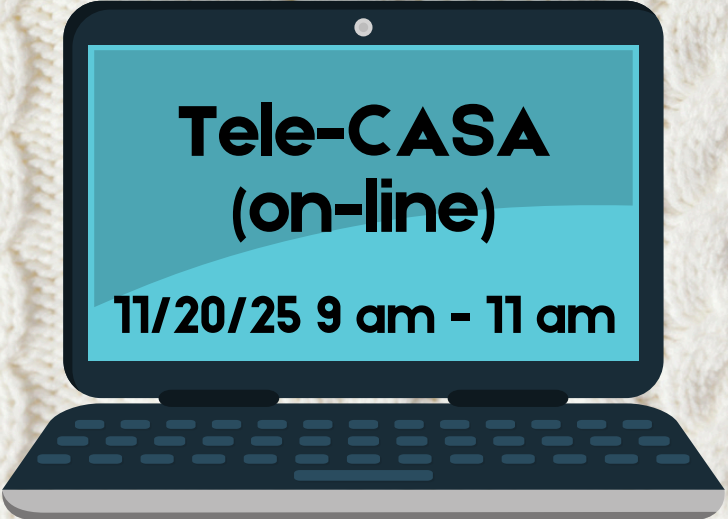
CASAs

Connecting

CASAs Connecting

in person at the JJC

11/12/25 9 am to 11 am



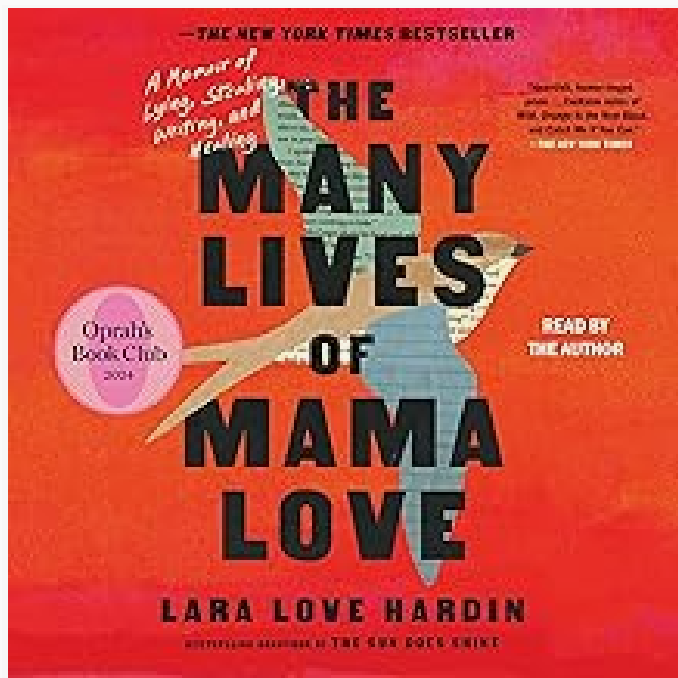
**Tele-CASA
(on-line)**

11/20/25 9 am - 11 am

**The link for Tele-CASA will be
sent via email the Tuesday
before the meeting.**

**Attend CASAs Connecting
Peer Support Group to
help you be successful on
your case. Because the
work of a CASA is
confidential, it is
important to have a safe
place to talk about your
case. ALL CASAs are highly
encouraged to attend a
CASA support group. This
support group provides
lively and informative
discussions. The
attendees include a mix
of veteran and new
CASAs and CASA staff.
These discussions can
help you understand
system issues,
procedures, identify
needs and solve
unanswered questions.**

Book Club



No one expects the police to knock on the door of the million-dollar two-story home of the perfect cul-de-sac housewife. But soccer mom Lara Love Hardin has been hiding a shady secret: she is funding her heroin addiction by stealing her neighbors' credit cards.

Lara is convicted of thirty-two felonies and becomes inmate S32179. She finds that jail is a class system with a power structure that is somewhere between an adolescent sleepover party and Lord of the Flies. Furniture is made from tampon boxes, and Snickers bars are currency. But Lara quickly learns the rules and brings love and healing to her fellow inmates as she climbs the social ladder and acquires the nickname "Mama Love," showing that jailhouse politics aren't that different from the PTA meetings she used to attend.

When she's released, she reinvents herself as a ghostwriter. Now, she's legally co-opting other people's identities and getting to meet Oprah, meditate with the Dalai Lama, and have dinner with Archbishop Desmond Tutu. But the shadow of her past follows her. Shame is a poison worse than heroin—there is no way to detox. Lara must learn how to forgive herself and others, navigate life as a felon on probation, and prove to herself that she is more good than bad, among other essential lessons.

The Many Lives of Mama Love is a heartbreaking and tender journey from shame to redemption, despite a system that makes it almost impossible for us to move beyond the worst thing we have ever done.

Books
Available
IN THE CASA OFFICE



MEETING

December 11, 2025
9:30am



Come Have Fun!

with our Grand-Hearts for Grand-Kids

Free monthly event for foster kids, underserved and at-risk kids in a safe, nurturing environment at 8944 East Sommer Drive, Prescott Valley, AZ Registration is required and can be done at the door.



*3rd Saturday EVERY Month
9 a.m. to 12 p.m.*

**free for kids
ages 4-10**

Call - 928-899-8372

www.grandparentchamps.org



CASA OF YAVAPAI COUNTY



**LIKE US!
FOLLOW US!**



facebook

October in Yavapai County

5

New Cases filed

9

**Children taken
into DCS custody**

206

**Total number of
children in DCS Care**

75

Number of CASAs

109

**Children with
a CASA**

**Kids who still
need a CASA**

97



Contact Information

www.casaofyavapaicounty.org

Prescott Office

(928) 771-3165

Amber Martin, Dependency Court Manager

email: amartin@courts.az.gov

Jessica Hines, Program Coordinator II

email: jhines@courts.az.gov

Amy Fillingim, Program Coordinator II

email: afillingim@courts.az.gov

Kathy McCormick, Mediator

email: kmccormi@courts.az.gov

Evelyn Hurtado, Admin Assistant I

email: ehurtado@courts.az.gov

Robin Fernandez Ames, Support Staff

email: rfernanzesames@courts.az.gov

Kristi Newman (928) 771-3398

Family Treatment Court Coordinator

email: knewman@courts.az.gov

Camp Verde Office

(928) 554-8900

Jen Bahr

Dependency Program Manager II

email: jbahr@courts.az.gov

Laura Gray

Program Coordinator I

email: lagray@courts.az.gov

www.YavapaiCASAforKids.org

P.O. Box 28070

Prescott Valley, AZ 86312

(928)445-0800

Board Members:

Lisa Watts, President

Greg Byrum, Vice

President/Secretary

Luke Lewis, Treasurer

Cheryl Micholofki

Eileen Bond, Emeritus Member

Jayne Schwantes

Marlene Joy

**Yvonne Bartlett, Executive Director and
Interim contact for Grants for Kids Program
Mona Stephens, Development**

Questions about YC4KF?

email: info@yavapaicasaforkids.org

