



NEWS RELEASE

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LOUISIANA COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES
BRING FOSTER CARE ISSUES TO LIFE
THROUGH THE FORGOTTEN CHILDREN CAMPAIGN
***Dramatic Display** Recognizes the Growing Number
of Foster Children in **Louisiana** in Need of a Voice*

BATON ROUGE, LA — Every year, more than 3,500 children enter the Louisiana foster care system due to suspected abuse or neglect. Local CASA programs throughout the state train community volunteers to speak for the best interests of these abused and neglected children in court. To raise awareness and support for these vulnerable children, the Louisiana CASA Association today announced it will host a **Forgotten Children Event** at the Louisiana State Capitol. National sponsors of the Forgotten Children Campaign are: the Dr. Phil Foundation, the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation and Jewelers for Children. Their support of this event will help the national effort to bring communities together for foster children throughout the month of May, National Foster Care Month. Governor Bobby Jindal has also declared May to be Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Month in Louisiana.

The event will be held on May 27, 2010 at the Capitol Rotunda and will feature life size stand-up displays depicting foster children and actual messages from them. A press conference will be held at 11 a.m. on the Capitol steps.

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In the words of one youth: “If you want the foster care system to get better, if you have compassion in your heart, don’t stop doing whatever you can to make it better — even if it’s just by providing an ear. Be someone we can talk to. *You* are the one that can create the change.”

On average, foster children spend more than two years in the child welfare system, and can be moved as often as 15 times, negatively impacting their education, friendships and sense of belonging. **CASA** volunteers help to alleviate the constant upheaval faced by foster children. Research shows that:

- Children with a **CASA** volunteer are substantially less likely to spend time in long-term foster care, defined as three years or longer.
- A child is less likely to move from home to home when a **CASA** volunteer is involved.
- A child with a **CASA** volunteer is 95 percent less likely to re-enter the foster care system.

For more information on the Forgotten Children Event or how you can become a **CASA** supporter or volunteer, contact **LACASA** at (225)930-0305 or visit www.louisianacasa.org.