

# FIRST NEWS NOW

First Judicial District CASA Association

MAY 2021



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# Happy Birthday!

5.11 Glenn D.

5.14 Rachel C.

5.14 David B.

5.17 Ted D

## In This Issue

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THANKS

# CASA KUDOS

Shoutout to **Jeff D.** for painting the CAC hallway!

Thank you to **Karma Cakes** for the \$600 donation from the cupcake fundraiser for the month of April!

Thank you to **Leavenworth County EMT** for their donation of 350 bottles of hand sanitizer!

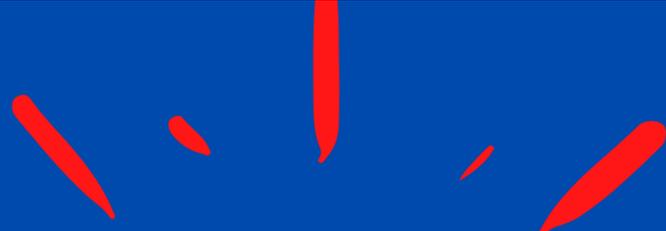
Kudos to **Saint Paul Lutheran** for providing a space for CASA to facilitate Parenting Classes.

Shoutout to **Buffalo Wild Wings** and **O'Reilly Auto Parts** for sponsoring CASAs Car Wash!

Thank you to **Leavenworth Lansing Chamber of Commerce** for inviting us to participate in the Wine and Nine golf tournament.

Shoutout to **Stephanie C.** for her hard work with customizing CASA items!

“This grant project is supported by subgrant number 19-VOCA-31 awarded through the Federal Office for Victims of Crime as administered by the Kansas Governor’s Grants Program. The opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication, program, or exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Office of the Kansas Governor or the U.S. Department of Justice.”

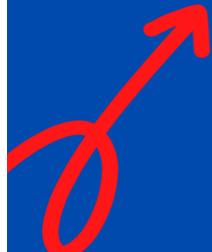


WELCOME

**MASKS NOT REQUIRED**

- WE MAY ASK YOU TO WEAR ONE
- YOU MAY ASK US TO WEAR ONE
- WE SUPPORT YOUR DECISION

THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE CHILD VISITATION  
CENTER OR CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER.



THANK YOU



Masks are now optional in the CASA Admin office and Training Center. CEVC and CAC offices may have different requirements—for families in the CEVC masks may be removed but volunteers must continue to wear them during the visits. For questions please contact the CASA office.

MAY IS SUPERVISED VISITATION  
AWARENESS MONTH

**CHILDREN  
ARE SAFE  
BECAUSE OF YOU**



*Thank you,  
to all  
who provide  
Supervised  
Visits!*



# Transition to Adulthood Conference



[Transition to Adulthood Conference | Children's Mercy Kansas City \(childrensmercy.org\)](https://www.childrensmercy.org)

**Saturday, June 12, 2021**

**9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

**Virtual event**

**8 a.m. to 8:50 a.m. Exhibitors**

The [Transition to Adulthood Program](#) at Children's Mercy is offering a free virtual conference to help teens, young adults and their parents/caregivers prepare for adulthood with different learning tracks for both. This educational conference will focus on developing life skills, managing your health care, transitions to college and more.

**This year's event will be offered virtually!** Not only will you be able to join from anywhere, but can attend our lunch networking session to learn how other young adults and families planned for challenges. A list of community service agencies will be available for you to connect with either during the conference or at another time at your convenience.

# Car Wash



**JOIN US FOR  
A CAR WASH**

**FRIDAY JUNE 11TH FROM 11AM-4PM  
5041 S FOURTH ST IN LEAVENWORTH**

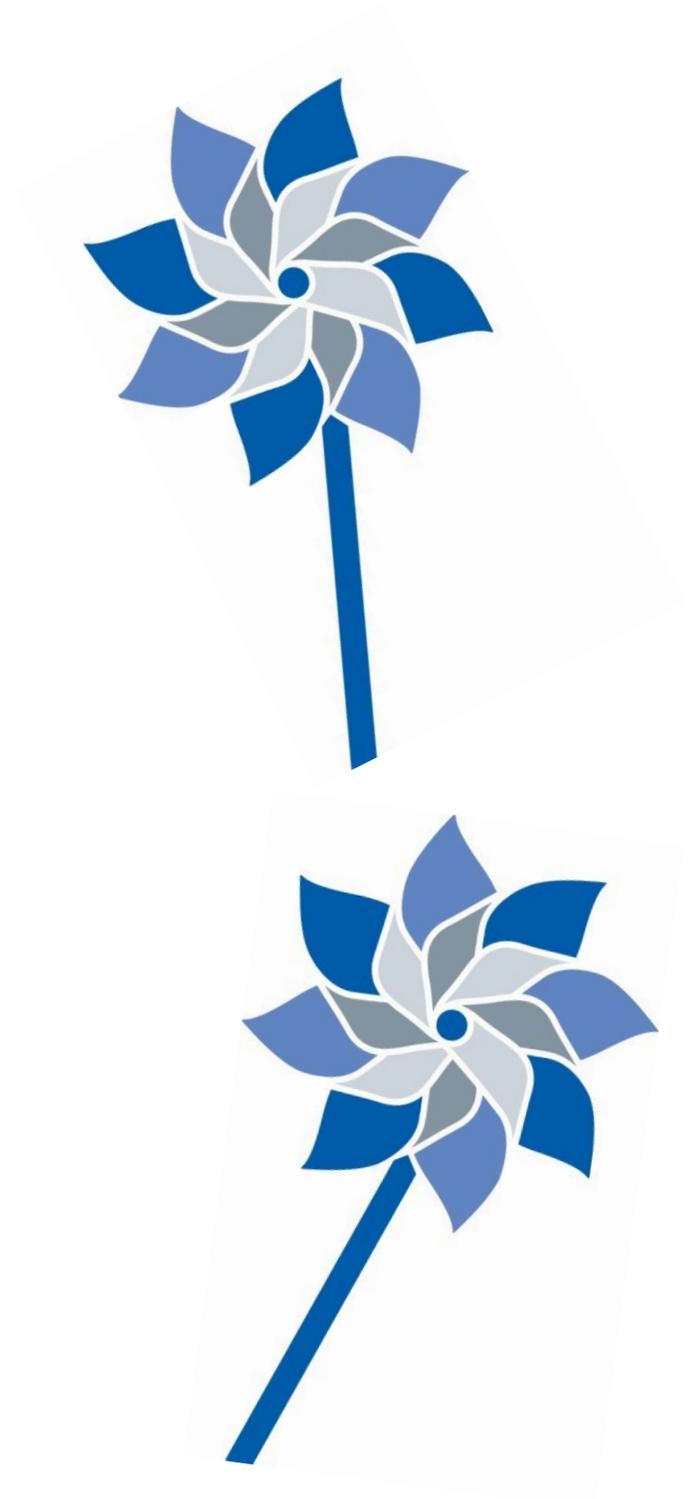
*Sponsored by  
Buffalo Wild Wings &  
O'Reilly Auto Parts*

The graphic features a dark blue background with white text and icons. At the top left is a white silhouette of a car. To its right is a white icon of a person with arms raised and a heart above their head. Further right is a white icon of a car wash nozzle with a coiled hose. Below the main text is a white arrow pointing from the text to a photograph of a Buffalo Wild Wings restaurant at night. To the right of the arrow is a photograph of an O'Reilly Auto Parts store with a red sign.

CASA will be hosting a Free Car Wash sponsored by Buffalo Wild Wings and O'Reilly Auto Parts! On Friday, June 11th from 11am-5pm CASA members will be washing cars at Buffalo Wild Wings. Donations are welcome. Individuals who attend will receive a \$5 off coupon to use at Buffalo Wild Wings

# Yard Signs

We had a few individuals who reached out this month and let us place signs in their yard to raise awareness of our programs and our volunteer need. We would love to deliver a sign to your yard! If you are interested, please reach out to Jeré and we will set one up in your yard!



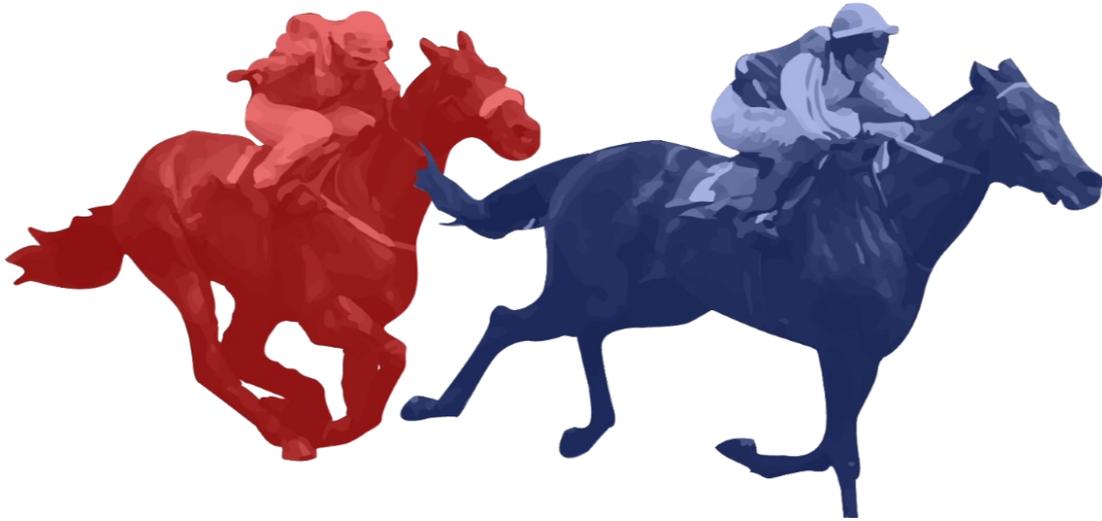
# Superhero Run



Superhero will be held  
Saturday, **August 28th**

CASA Superhero Run will be held Saturday, August 28th. If you are interested in volunteering to help at the event, please contact Jeré Deyo at [Jere@casalvks.org](mailto:Jere@casalvks.org). For information on sponsoring or to sign up to run the race information can be found on our website at [www.casalvks.org/shr](http://www.casalvks.org/shr).

# Nite at the Races



Nite at the Races will be held  
Friday, **September 17th.**

Nite at the Races will be held Friday, September 17th at Riverfront Community Center. If you are interested in helping on a fundraising committee, please contact Kelly Meyer at [Casa@casalvks.org](mailto:Casa@casalvks.org). If you know anyone interested in sponsoring all information can be found on our website at [www.casalvks.org/NATRsponsor](http://www.casalvks.org/NATRsponsor).

# See's Candy



ROUND! SEES CANDY ALL YEAR ROUND!

**WE ARE EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE THAT WE WILL HAVE AN ONGOING SEES CANDY STOREFRONT**

**This is a great opportunity to grab a sweet treat, and support your local CASA**

[HTTPS://WWW.YUMRAISING.COM/SECURE/FIRSTJDC\\_FIRST\\_JUDICIAL\\_DISTRICT\\_CASA78/](https://www.yumraising.com/secure/firstjdc_first_judicial_district_casa78/)

[https://www.yumraising.com/secure/firstjdc first judicial district casa78/](https://www.yumraising.com/secure/firstjdc_first_judicial_district_casa78/)

CASAs See's candy storefront remains open. Consider purchasing See's candy and a portion of the proceeds will be donated back to CASA!

The mission of First Judicial District CASA Association is to "protect children today for stronger families tomorrow by providing trained, court appointed volunteers to advocate for the best interests of children and

# PRESENTATIONS



Are you involved in another group or organization? CASA is seeking new groups to speak to and share our mission and volunteer opportunities. Please contact Jere at the office if you have a group in mind that we may be able to speak to.



Did you know you can donate back to CASA when you shop through Amazon? When you designate First Judicial District CASA Association as your charity organization, Amazon will donate .5% of your eligible purchases to our agency. Check out the link below for more information.

[About AmazonSmile: Program details and FAQ](#)

# Venmo

CASA is constantly moving up in the world of technology! We now have a Venmo account. Check us out here

<https://venmo.com/u/CASALVATKS>



Scan the QR code to open Venmo and pay

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# Is childhood shrinking? Parents are torn over how much freedom to give kids

By Lois M. Collins.—May 21, 2021

*COVID-19 threw a new twist into the debate over how childhood should look*

When they were a little younger, Jamie Moffitt's kids made up a game of bus stop. Lucie, now 10, and Lydia, 14, would stand in designated spots in the yard and wait for their older brother Logan to pick them up in his four-wheeler. They'd pay a fake fare and head off on important imaginary journeys.

The girls still go for walks together or ride bikes with friends. In their small community of Grantsville, about 40 miles west of Salt Lake City, kids often head out alone or in twos and threes to shop at Sweet Hearts, chore money hot in their hands as they ponder scooped ice cream and a selection of treats.

Her first instinct has always been "Do we let them go?" Moffitt said. But that's followed quickly by wanting her kids to have a childhood and that means she can't keep them close all the time. They need to be able to entertain and protect themselves, to take responsibility for making smart choices and to be capable as challenges arise.

She was that kind of mom when they lived in a much-larger town, too. She knows if she lived in a really big city or a more crime-ridden neighborhood, she might make different choices. She hopes they wouldn't be too different. Before the pandemic, parents like Moffitt grappled with balancing the developmental needs of their children to explore, master ever-trickier tasks and socialize with others against the natural instinct to hold children close to keep them safe. Childhood was already shrinking, the footprint of tasks that children were allowed to do was growing smaller along with the boundaries of the area many have been allowed to roam. Many tasks are now done for children, rather than by children. Then COVID-19 landed hard on childhood and play and socialization were largely put on hold.

Experts say the toll on social-emotional development could be hard to overcome completely. And they were already worried.

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## What kids can lose

Children learn from play and it helps them hone skills, says New York neuropsychologist Sanam Hafeez of Columbia University. Little kids benefit from activities like climbing, running, dancing and gymnastics that improve coordination and fine motor skills. As they get older, play teaches sharing, respecting others' interests and how to win or lose with grace. Play can teach patience and tolerance, problem-solving and sharing the spotlight.

Hafeez sees a generational difference in how childhood normally plays out. She said that Generation Xers, born between 1965 and 1980 and raised without cell phones and other digital entertainment, spent many hours outside playing. Parents today are more likely to hover, either physically or using apps to track a child's activities.

"Parents do need to keep physical tabs on their children, (but) much of children's creative energy has been eliminated as well due to electronics, social media and a more dangerous national environment," she told the Deseret News. While Moffitt agrees the world has changed, she's worried about how much children have lost. "I don't want to hover." She believes having some freedom teaches kids responsibility and communication skills. Her own kids are "super-creative" and seldom bored because they play.

How much freedom children should have often depends on who's watching. Parents, policymakers and children themselves contend with finding the right balance between safety and adventure. They have to deal with each other's notions, too. When Susan Groner was 10 or 12, she and a friend made greeting cards, then sold them door to door in their Stamford, Connecticut, neighborhood. They walked everywhere together and she vividly remembers walking through nearby woods and getting lost. At age 14, she was allowed to wander in New York City alone in the late '70s. She lives there now. She would not have let her kids do either, Groner, author of "Parenting with Sanity and Joy" and founder of The Parenting Mentor, told the Deseret News.

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She's not sure how much more dangerous the world really is, but she's definitely aware bad things can happen. Modern communication, including social media, spread news of terrible events that can befall kids, from natural disasters to accidents and intentional harm. She understands the urge to keep one's children close.

Christopher A. Kearney, professor and chairman of the psychology department at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, says the physical boundaries of childhood have definitely shrunk. But he thinks childhood's boundaries are a societal, not just a neighborhood issue. Years ago, nearly all the parents on a street knew each other and children used to visit each other's houses. That's often no longer true and parents feel nervous about where their kids go, what they're doing and who is supervising, Kearney said.

The greatest loss for kids is social skill development, including the ability to manage conflict in social situations, he said. Children are less skilled speaking to each other, reading others' expressions and processing their own emotions. COVID-19 and masks have made that even harder. He believes high rates of depression and anxiety among young people arise in part from fewer social interactions and consequently less practice managing one's social states. "I think there's more rescuing than there used to be," he said. "Parents jump in, concerned if their children experience any type of distress."

If a kid feels anxious at a birthday party, mom rushes to rescue him, Kearney said, though if the child stays despite anxiety, he learns to manage that emotion. "It's important to have mild to moderate levels and learn to control and manage it." Some kids would rather use technology to socialize, settling for virtual and often-surface relationships and opening the door to cyberbullying and negative comparisons. Groner believes kids have more opportunities in some ways. But she, too, thinks part of childhood has been lost.

She wonders if kids know how to daydream, now that their lives are crammed full of stimulating distractions. "Do your best" is more apt to be a parent's advice than "just relax," as parents try to share their child's future in a competitive world. She thinks kids shouldn't have to always do their best. "At school, yes. But if there's an activity you just enjoy, then go out and enjoy it. Always striving makes living a chore."

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She loved playing piano as a child; her daughter didn't love taking piano lessons. They found other things that brought her joy. Groner said kids need life skills a lot more than they need parents making sure all their moments are accounted for. Then again, perhaps they don't, if parents never intend to let them out of their sight, she noted wryly. When parents micromanage activities, kids don't learn to climb out of emotions like being frustrated or bored or disappointed or just plain sad, she said.

"We tell our kids not to feel that way. We send the message those are not good feelings, though they are so normal," said Groner. "I think we want to allow our kids to explore and learn and get dirty and scrape their knees and make sure they can get into a little trouble."

### **Why things changed**

Parenting has typically gone in cycles. Early in the last century, children went to work young to help support their families, depending on circumstance and where they lived. Those who grew up in the 1950s, '60s and '70s often recount leaving home in the morning to ride bikes with friends and amusing themselves until dinner. Certified life transformational coach Natalie Maximets believes childhood borders started shrinking, kids allowed to do less on their own and only very close to home, around the time pictures of missing children were first placed on milk cartons in the early 1980s, fanning "stranger danger" fears.

A decade later, access to the internet made children more knowledgeable, but also emotionally more vulnerable, she said. And officials also began demonstrating a willingness to clamp down on parents who didn't supervise their children to evolving standards, creating a different kind of fear. Maximets said children crave self-expression and independence, but "as much as parents would like to do free-range parenting, people's busy lifestyles make it difficult for parents to build a community that protects each other."

The pendulum arc has been wide: Early this century, many parents clamped down hard. So-called "free-range parents" were criticized—and sometimes reported to police or child protective services—for letting kids go places alone or even play outside.

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Some, like Alexander and Danielle Meitiv of Silver Springs, Maryland, were investigated for neglect. They let their young children walk home together from a local park without adult supervision after they'd practiced the route a couple of times. Eventually the Meitivs were cleared, but not until after their children were temporarily removed from their home.

That and other high-profile cases helped the pendulum swing the other way. In 2014, Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah, got a pro-free-range amendment included in the Every Child Succeeds Act. It said nothing in the act would "prohibit a child from traveling to and from school on foot or by car, bus or bike when the parents of the child have given permission; or expose parents to civil or criminal charges for allowing their child to responsibly and safely travel to and from school by a means the parents believe is age-appropriate." In 2018, the Utah Legislature passed the first state law saying parents are not neglectful for allowing "a child, whose basic needs are met and who is of sufficient age and maturity to avoid harm or unreasonable risk of harm, to engage in independent activities."

## **Seeking Balance**

Parents make very different decisions while trying to do what's right for their children. Knowing one's child is key—and it's something not family-targeted policy will always get right for individuals. Hafeez said girls typically mature faster than boys, but all mature at their own rate. "The amount of freedom you give a child must depend on their level of motivation, confidence and emotional maturity," she said. Some children need monitoring so they don't spend all their time on screens, they might need to be enrolled in after-school and weekend activities. Children too involved in extracurricular activities may need help whittling their list to something that won't overwhelm them, she said.

Parents can err on either side of the boundaries they set, Hafeez warns. Those who are too strict and overly involved may prevent their kids from learning discipline or how to take responsibility, since choices are made for them. Children could rebel. They may reach adulthood without mastering their emotions or behaviors. She said too-lenient parents don't meet children's needs, either. "Kids need some structure set for them and reasonable boundaries and rules so they learn right from wrong. Oddly enough, when children have virtually no rules, they can feel as if their parents are neglecting them because they don't care enough about what the child is doing." Parents figure it out largely on their own. And they may not agree.

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Michelle Meredith lives on a cul-de-sac in Louisville, Kentucky, so she lets her kids, who are 6 and 4, play in the yard, but she opens a window so she can hear them. “If we lived on an open street or had a terribly large front yard, I’d probably restrict them to the (fenced in) backyard when we aren’t outside with them.” She’s not comfortable letting her daughter ride her bike alone to a friend’s although Meredith ordered her own bike over 12-block radius when she was 7, just a year older than her girl. She figures when her daughter has a cellphone, she’ll be a bit more free to roam.

Los Angeles dad Daniel Carter, an electric ride enthusiast who founded ZippyElectrics, gives his sons, now teens, more freedom than he was allowed. “That is the only way I can make them understand why they need to decide carefully and solve their problems confidently. I let them manage their time and resources,” he said. “I want my sons to feel secure that even if I am not around, they can protect themselves using their skills.”

Some parents say concern for safety is matched only by desire to raise exceptional children—academic or athletic stars. They pack kids’ schedules with extracurriculars, which can cut into childhood, too. Some hover like helicopters. Others are snowplows, barreling through whatever’s in a child’s path. Experts say to be a submarine: out of sight but close enough to surface in real crisis.

[Helicopter v. free-range: When parenting, how much freedom is right? - Deseret News](#)

## In-Service Questions

To receive one hour of in-service credit, please send your answers to all of the following questions to Jeré at: [jere@casalvks.org](mailto:jere@casalvks.org).

1. Please share your thoughts regarding the shrinking childhood article.
2. Are you interested in helping with the Nite at the Races, Superhero Run, or the possibility of a new fundraiser?
3. Do you have any plans for this summer?

