



Monthly Newsletter

February, 2026

CASA of Bastrop, Fayette & Lee Counties

Thank you to the Elgin community for attending our recent CASA Be a Bridge of Hope Breakfast



Be a Bridge of Hope Breakfast in Elgin was a beautiful reminder of what happens when a community comes together for children in need.

We are incredibly grateful to Frontier Bank of Elgin for sponsoring this event, to Firewild on Main for generously donating their space and providing such wonderful catering, and to our very own board member, Jeanette Shelby, for the heart and hard work she put into helping us plan every detail.

Thanks to the support of our monthly donors, CASA Bridge Builders, more children will have a dedicated advocate and a brighter path forward. We appreciate those who attended from the Elgin community for taking the time to listen to our presentation on the mission of our non-profit and how to become a CASA Bridge Builder. If you would like to support @casabfl as a CASA Bridge Builder and help us plan ahead, please visit: <https://casabfl.org/give/casa-bridge-builder/>



Upcoming Events for February '26

BASTROP COUNTY SENIOR EXPO
CELEBRATING SENIORS IN BASTROP COUNTY
TUESDAY FEBRUARY 24 / 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
1408 B CHESTNUT ST. BASTROP CONVENTION CENTER

Join Us for

- Local Services
- Senior Agencies
- Learning Opportunities
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Musical Entertainment
- Free Food & Drinks

CARTS

CARTS will offer FREE Shuttles to and from:

<p>Pickup Smithville/Rec Center 9:00am / 12:30pm</p> <p>Elgin/Rec Center 8:40am / 12:30pm</p> <p>Bastrop Senior Center 10:00am / 12:30pm</p>	<p>Pickup Bastrop Convention Center 12:00pm / 2:00 pm</p> <p>Bastrop Convention Center 12:00pm / 2:00 pm</p> <p>Bastrop Convention Center 12:00pm / 2:00 pm</p>
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For more information on CARTS shuttles call 512-478/7433

CASA of Bastrop, Fayette & Lee Counties will have a booth at this year's Bastrop County Senior Expo - stop by and say "Hi"!

- Tuesday, February 24, 2026
- 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
- Bastrop Convention Center

After a reschedule due to bad weather, we can't wait for this opportunity to come together for a great day of resources, connections, and community. Save the date — we'll see you there!

A New Home for CASA - and for the Children We Serve.

CASA of Bastrop, Fayette & Lee Counties is getting a new building at 507 Water St.



FROM THIS
TO THIS!

FOLLOW ALONG WITH THE
PROGRESS AND HEAR
ABOUT HOW OUR CAPITAL
CAMPAIGN IS GOING ON
OUR WEBSITE AND SOCIAL
MEDIA PAGES IN 2026!



For years, CASA of Bastrop, Fayette & Lee Counties has stood beside children who have experienced abuse or neglect -providing advocacy, stability, and a consistent voice when they need it most. Thanks to your support, that mission has grown stronger each year.

Now, we are taking an important next step.

We are proud to announce the launch of our **Capital Campaign to finance a new CASA office building**, a space designed to support the growing needs of the children, families, and volunteers we serve across all three counties.

Our current facility has served us well, but it is an old home beyond repair and no longer meets the demands of our expanding program. The new building will provide:

- Professional, functional office space for staff and volunteers.
- A larger, dedicated training room to prepare more CASA Volunteers.
- Improved accessibility and a true parking area.
- A welcoming environment that reflects the dignity and care every child deserves.

Demolition of the existing building is now complete, making way for a future built on hope, stability, and advocacy. As one of our valued supporters, we invite you to be a part of this transformational effort. Your investment in this capital campaign is an investment in safer futures and brighter outcomes for children in foster care. More details on how to support and spread awareness for the campaign will be shared soon. In the meantime, thank you for believing in CASA - and for helping us build a foundation that will serve children for generations to come.

PARTNER WITH CASA OF BASTROP, FAYETTE & LEE COUNTIES TO BE A MONTHLY DONOR



Be a Bridge of HOPE

Established 2025

HELP US PLAN AHEAD!

SIGN UP AS A STRATEGIC DONOR
VISIT THE QR CODE ON THIS CARD TO BECOME A CASA BRIDGE BUILDER

casabfl.org

BECOME A CASA BRIDGE BUILDER



SPONSOR LEVELS

- GOLD SPONSOR- DONOR'S CHOICE
- SILVER SPONSOR- \$250 MONTHLY
- BRONZE SPONSOR- \$100 MONTHLY
- COPPER SPONSOR- \$25 MONTHLY



THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO BRINGING HOPE TO THE CHILDREN OF BASTROP, FAYETTE & LEE COUNTIES WHO ARE FACING A CHALLENGING TIME IN THEIR FAMILIES LIVES. TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A BIG IMPACT

Look for these **Be a Bridge of Hope** rack cards at businesses in your area to sign up as a **CASA Bridge Builder Monthly Donor** for our program.

Visit the Monthly Donor Tab at casabfl.org to see how becoming a Bridge Builder helps our CASA Program provide the best advocacy possible for children and youth who have been removed from their homes for allegations of neglect and abuse in Bastrop, Fayette & Lee Counties.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



CASA volunteers advocate for the best interest of the children they serve.

becomeacasa.org

Next Volunteer Session begins in March '26

CASA of Bastrop, Fayette & Lee Counties endeavors to provide trained volunteer advocates in all abuse and neglect foster care cases assigned by the courts. CASA Volunteers are screened and highly trained, and then appointed by judges to represent and advocate for a child's best interest in the child protection system. To learn more about becoming a CASA Volunteer, please call 512.409.0771 or visit becomeacasa.org

You can also contact our recruiter/trainer, Rita Coduto at: casabfl.org/volunteer/
rita.coduto@casabfl.org
office: (512) 303-2272



Addressing Disproportionality in Texas' Foster Care System

The start of February marks the beginning of Black History Month, a time to honor and recognize the accomplishments and history of Black Americans. As we continue into this month and consider history, we must ask ourselves how all of us can contribute to racial equality and work to address disproportionalities and disparities that negatively impact Black communities.

CASA volunteers advocate within the Texas foster care system, and we recognize that the system itself reflects inequities in our society. Two current problems within the Texas foster care system are racial disproportionality and disparity. Disproportionality means a particular race or cultural group is over-represented in a system, and disparity refers to the differences in outcomes and conditions for some groups of people compared to other groups because of unequal treatment or services.

While Black children account for around 12% of the Texas child population, they currently make up around 24% [EL] of the Texas foster care population. CPS is more likely to receive reports of abuse and/or neglect regarding Black families than Anglo families and is more likely to remove Black children from their homes. After a removal has occurred, disparities within the system begin to emerge. After removal, a Black child is less likely to be reunified with their family of origin. If reunification has been ruled out and a Black child is available for adoption, they are less likely to be adopted within 12 months.

"There is a clear difference in how many kids are entering the system when you look at the numbers by racial group, and it is not because there is more abuse in one community than in another," said Kristi Bauer, executive director of CASA of Bastrop, Fayette & Lee Counties. "If we want to improve outcomes and reduce unnecessary removals of children from their homes, we need to do everything we can to address the issue—not just as CASA volunteers, but as neighbors and community members."

CASA of Bastrop, Fayette & Lee Counties provides training covering disproportionality in order to equip CASA volunteers with the knowledge to spot and combat occurrences and patterns that contribute to inequity. They work to promote diversity and inclusiveness in their volunteer recruitment so the children they serve have a volunteer who understands them completely—not just emotionally, but culturally. They actively seek more volunteers from communities of color who will reflect the demographics of the populations they serve.

The state of Texas, CASA, and other child welfare stakeholders must come together and work diligently to make our foster care system work fairly for all.

"We are committed to growing and advancing as an organization," said Bauer. "Our volunteers continue to receive training on disproportionality and cultural competency, and our organization is always looking for ways to improve how we serve the most vulnerable children and families in our community."

We do not limit celebrations of Black history to February, or limit our concern and action about issues like disproportionality and disparity to one month. Black history is an essential part of American history and issues facing the Black community are issues facing us, and our neighbors, friends and family every day.

To learn more, visit www.BecomeACASA.org or casabfl.org. The next training session with open spots for our CASA Program will be in March 2026.