

JANUARY 2021

FOSTER PARENTS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR FOSTER PARENTS
INVOLVED WITH CASA - VOICES FOR CHILDREN



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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We are ringing in 2021 with a newsletter full of fun activities and things to do with your kiddo(s) this January! Read on for exciting events, educational trainings, creative crafts, delicious snacks, and more! Have a wonderful new year, and please know that your dedication to helping foster children in need never goes unnoticed!



CASA AND COVID-19:

UPDATES FOR FOSTER FAMILIES

Dear Foster Families,

CASA - Voices for Children is continuing to implement precautionary measures for the protection of those we serve. Above all, we are committed to the health and wellness of our children, foster/bio families, advocates, volunteers, staff and community. Please see below for the safety policies we will be putting into place at this time:

- Benton County is currently in [Oregon's "Extreme Risk" category](#), and new restrictions have been put into place.
- The CASA-VFC office will be officially closed during this period, and staff will be working from home. We will be available during our normal office hours (8:30 AM to 5:00 PM) by phone and email. Phones will be automatically forwarded to a staff member or you may contact staff directly through their cell phones. Please contact us if you need their number.
- We will be suspending all home visits during this time, and are required to have appropriate documentation for home visit exceptions. We are strongly encouraging all CASAs to still reach out by phone, Skype/FaceTime, or however they and the families they serve feel most comfortable. This [Advocacy from a Distance](#) post by Passaic County CASA contains some excellent suggestions for staying connected.
- To the best of our knowledge, Court Hearings and DHS meetings will still be held remotely. The last update we received from the Judge indicated that Court Hearings will still be heard by phone until further notice. We will continue to keep you informed as we receive new updates.
- In-person tutoring will also be suspended while Benton County is in the "Extreme Risk" category. Please contact us for information on setting up virtual tutoring sessions.

Your family's health, and the health of our advocates, staff, and community, is of the utmost importance. As the State continues to reopen, we will monitor this plan and will keep you informed of our next steps.

We appreciate your patience as we navigate these new and unfamiliar times together. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Kari Pinard

Executive Director, CASA - Voices for Children

REMINDERS

Bill of Rights: Please make sure that your kiddo(s), along with their siblings, are not only aware of their rights, but that they also understand them. If you would like a copy of the State of Oregon's Bill of Rights, let us know!



Donations to CASA: Have extra clothing or shoes lying around the house? Please call or email CASA to arrange for your donation! We are currently in need of boys and girls shoes, all kinds and sizes.



Car Seat Clinic: Due to COVID-19 concerns, the planned monthly car seat inspections at the Corvallis Fire Department have been put on hold until further notice. For tips on safe car seat installation, click [HERE](#). If you would like assistance installing a car seat, please contact Alyssa Mahr, CPST (Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician) by calling the CASA-VFC office or emailing service.coordinator@casa-vfc.org



Website Update: CASA has been working diligently to bring you a newly updated website! We are continuing to update our lists of community and educational resources to help our families cope with the challenges of COVID-19. Please read on for additional details, and visit us at [www.casa-vfc.org!](http://www.casa-vfc.org)



School Success: CASA-VFC is here for you with resources and tips for a successful school year! We are now offering Trauma-Informed Tutoring (see page 4 for details) and will be keeping you posted on the latest resources and activities for your kiddo(s) in our area and online. Find more information inside this newsletter!



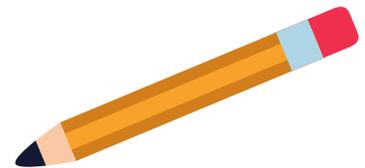
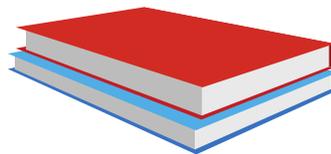
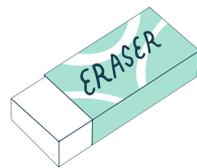
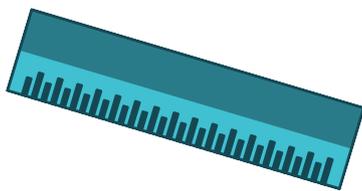
TRAUMA-INFORMED TUTORING



CASA is now offering Trauma-Informed Tutoring!

Our specially-trained academic tutors can work with your children to help them reach their educational goals, and help them learn strategies for successfully coping with the challenges of online learning and changing routines.

To learn more about the Trauma-Informed Tutoring program, or to enroll your child for tutoring services with CASA, please contact Katie Gregory at program.supervisor@casa-vfc.org.



Online Trauma Informed Tutoring is now available!

While Benton County is in the "Extreme Risk" Category, tutoring appointments will be held virtually - please contact us for more information!



Trauma Informed Tutors can assist your child with:

- Core Curriculum
- Special Topics
- Research Tools
- Study Tactics & Tips
- Class Link & Canvas
- Zoom Training and more!

HERE AT CASA



NOW TAKING ORDERS

OPERATION SCHOOL BELL

PLEASE CONTACT CASA-VFC
FOR YOUR ORDER FORM

SHOES - TSHIRTS - COATS - JEANS
LEGGINGS - HOODIES - GYM SHORTS
SPORTS PANTS - SOCKS
UNDERGARMENTS - HYGIENE KITS



The items available for order include:
Shoes, Jeans, or Sports Pants/Leggings,
T-shirt, Coat or Hoodie, Gym Shorts,
Socks, Underwear, & a Sports Bra (girls).

Please send the following info with your
order request to CASA:

- Elementary, Middle, or High School student?
- Child's first and last initials
- Child's height & weight (an estimate is fine)
- Child's waist & hips measurements in inches (an estimate is fine)
- Child's outside leg seam measurement in inches (an estimate is fine)
- Child's shoe size
- Child's pant size
- Child's t-shirt size
- A list of the needed items

IN ADDITION, CASA HAS JACKETS,
WINTER ITEMS, AND OTHER NEEDED
CLOTHING FOR YOUR CHILD(REN).
PLEASE INCLUDE ANY OTHER ITEMS
NEEDED FOR THE CHILD AND WE
WILL TRY OUR BEST TO FIND THEM
ON-HAND.

LOCAL EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

This winter may look a little different than usual, but there are still lots of fun events and activities (both virtual, and in-person with distancing precautions) for your kiddo(s) to enjoy!

Explore the websites below for real-time updates on some of the many exciting opportunities available this season!



CBCPL VIRTUAL EVENTS

The Corvallis-Benton County Public Library is offering a wide array of virtual events for all ages! Check out their site to learn about fun online activities for kids, tweens and teens!



CORVALLIS PARKS & REC

While Parks & Rec's indoor facilities are closed during "Extreme Risk" periods, you can visit their website to explore their many options for outdoor and online activities!



WHAT'S OPEN, WHAT'S CLOSED?

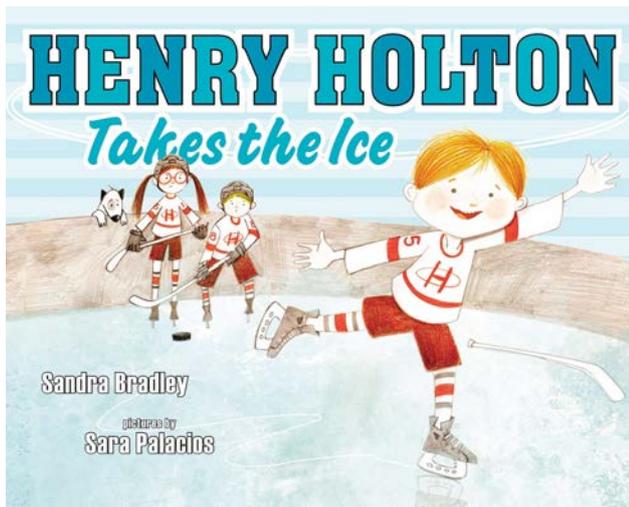
Stay up-to-date on the latest reopenings within the City of Corvallis! Information on parks, library, public services, transportation, and more!



CASA-VFC: ACTIVITY IDEAS

CASA-VFC list of local places to visit, things to do, and events to attend this winter! Our "Activities & Entertainment" webpage will be updated as our area continues to reopen!

STORIES WITH THE STARS



HENRY HOLTON TAKES THE ICE

By: Sandra Bradley

Henry Holton's whole family is hockey mad. Everyone, that is, except Henry.

It's not until he sees his first ice dancing performance that Henry realizes there's something he can do on the ice that doesn't involve boarding and body-checking. Henry is ready to hang up his gear and try on some figure skates, but first he has to convince his hockey-obsessed family to let him follow his own path.



Storyline Online

[Watch Ray Romano read this wonderful winter tale with your kiddo\(s\) online!](#)



R.E.A.D. DOGS ONLINE!

Your kiddo(s) can read online with a trained, friendly [Reading Education Assistance Dog!](#)

The Reading Education Assistance Dog program (R.E.A.D.) gives beginning readers an opportunity to practice their reading skills in a non-threatening environment. While the library is closed, READ Dog sessions will be online through GoToMeeting, a video call service that can be used on a computer, tablet, or smartphone. You can even dial in via phone!

Registration is required; for upcoming dates and registration information click [HERE!](#)



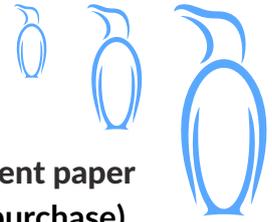
FUN WINTER SNACK

FROZEN BANANA PENGUINS



Ingredients Needed:

- Bananas
- Chocolate (1 cup)
- Coconut oil (1 tbsp.)
- Tray and wax/parchment paper
- Candy eyes (make or purchase)
- Orange M&M's or Skittles or small pieces of carrot or dried apricot (for beak/feet)



Directions:

Peel bananas and cut each one in half.

Melt 1 cup chocolate (microwave or stovetop) & stir in 1 tbsp. coconut oil.



Dip each banana into the chocolate, starting with the back and then tilting up to coat the top of the banana, forming a "head" for the penguin.

Set chocolate-covered bananas onto a baking sheet lined with wax paper.

Press candy eyes and orange beak accent of your choice (M&M, apricot, carrot...) into chocolate to form the face. Dab more melted chocolate at the base, then lightly press in two "feet".

Freeze for 20 minutes, then enjoy!



ACTIVITY OF THE MONTH

SALT-PAINTED WATERCOLOR SNOWFLAKES

Supplies Needed:

- Thick cardstock or construction paper
- Watercolor paints
- Paintbrush
- Pen or pencil
- School Glue
- Salt



Directions:



Draw a few snowflakes (lightly) on your cardstock. (Start with three or four lines criss-crossing each other. Then add little arrow-like lines along each line.)

Trace over your snowflakes with school glue.

Now is the first fun part – sprinkle on your salt! Pour salt over each snowflake, coating every piece of it. Shake the excess salt off, and store it for future crafts. Set the snowflakes aside and allow the glue to dry fully.



Load a brush with a small amount of watercolor paint, and gently tap each salted snowflake with the paintbrush – it will soak up the watercolor and spread like magic!

Allow your painting to dry, and enjoy your sparkling, colorful snowflakes!



[CLICK HERE TO WATCH A VIDEO TUTORIAL!](#)



COLORING CORNER



Print it out for an afternoon of coloring fun!

COLORING CORNER

ICE OR
SNOW,



★ I'M
READY
TO GO

Print it out for an afternoon of coloring fun!



WINTER FUN FOR YOU AND YOUR KIDDO(S)

New experiences are a great way to engage with your kiddo(s) and make lasting memories this holiday season.. Below are some of our favorite ideas for fun and inexpensive ways to enjoy the changing seasons with the whole family!

COLLECT
DIFFERENT TYPES
OF PINECONES



WATCH
"FROZEN WORLDS"
ONLINE



LOOK FOR
ANIMALS IN THE
WINTER LANDSCAPE



MAKE A
SIMPLE BIRD FEEDER
TOGETHER



PLAY FRISBEE
OR DISC GOLF
AT THE PARK



MAKE
"DIY SNOW"
FOR SENSORY PLAY



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- **The Oregon Zoo** offers discounted admission for foster children and their families. Check out their at-home activities [HERE](#) and follow their social media channels to keep up with their animals' adventures!
- **Oregon Parks and Recreation Department** offers free camping and day-use parking to Oregon foster parents, guardians and parents who have adopted Oregon foster children. Some campgrounds and day use areas are beginning to reopen! For more information visit oregonstateparks.org or call OPRD at 1-800-551-6949.
- **The Corvallis Fire Department** normally offers monthly car seat inspections, but due to COVID-19 concerns, they have been put on hold until further notice. For tips on safe car seat installation, click [HERE](#). If you would like assistance installing a car seat, please contact Alyssa Mahr, CPST (Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician) by calling the CASA-VFC office or emailing service.coordinator@casa-vfc.org.
- **Corvallis Parks and Recreation** has launched the "[Stay Well Corvallis](#)" website to provide residents with new and updated ideas and activities to do while maintaining appropriate social distance. Includes "Technical Tuesdays" from Osborn Aquatic Center, streaming performances from The Majestic Theatre, and free yoga classes and wellness tips from the Corvallis Community Center. Avery Park is also providing weekly nature themes, a social media challenge, and an all-ages backyard activity guide!
- **The Boys & Girls Club** is providing school-day childcare. Pre-registration and eligibility verification required; call (541) 757-1909 for details. The Club works closely with CASA-Voices for Children, and you can get a reduced-cost membership by contacting the CASA office.
- **The Corvallis-Benton County Public Library** is offering free "[Stay at Home Storytime](#)" sessions for kids while the library is closed! The Reading Education Assistance Dogs (R.E.A.D. Dogs) program has also gone virtual - kids can sign up [HERE](#) to practice their reading with these friendly pups! See page 7 of this newsletter for more details!

Is there something you liked or didn't like about this month's newsletter? Or maybe there's something you would like to see in next month's issue? Whatever it is, we would love to hear from you!

Please contact Alyssa Mahr with any questions, concerns or suggestions.
service.coordinator@casa-vfc.org

UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

ABC House



Bystanders Protecting Children from Boundary Violations & Sexual Abuse

[ONLINE TRAINING WITH ABC HOUSE VIA ZOOM](#)

DATE: Tuesday, January 12th

TIME: 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

COST: FREE!

This is a training module from Darkness to Light®.

During the training, you will hear compelling stories from experts & survivors about being an active bystander. You will also:

- Learn what it means to be an active bystander.
- Learn what actions you can take as an active bystander
- Receive examples of boundary violations and red flag behaviors.
- Learn how to make spontaneous and planned interventions.

[CLICK HERE to register for this free training today!](#)



[View more details on ABC House's Facebook Events page](#)



UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Darkness to Light



Protecting Children During a Crisis

ONLINE TRAINING

DATE/TIME: (Streaming online, watch anytime)

LENGTH: 30 minutes

COST: FREE!

We need to be prepared to continue protecting kids to the best of our ability under any circumstances. The Protecting Children During a Crisis online training is designed to help you navigate through the unusual circumstances you might face during times of crisis. In these times, you may need to modify the steps you take to protect children because of a situation that is out of your control. This training will help you consider your current strategies, help you identify the new situation, and help you change your strategy. In this training, we will:

- Determine potential changes that could disrupt daily life, resulting in situations that will pose new challenges in abuse prevention.
- Identify which prevention strategies in the 5 Steps to Protecting Children™ will likely change or could be heightened based on an existing or potential crisis.
- Develop personalized strategies to use when potential crisis situations become a reality.

[CLICK HERE to complete this free training today!](#)

FOSTER FAMILY RESOURCES

[CASA Online Learning Center \(by Texas CASA\)](#) - Texas CASA has an excellent library of trainings and informational videos for advocates. Registration for their "CASA College" learning portal is required, but it is free and open to CASAs in all states.

[VISIT PAGE](#)

[National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#) - NCTSN offers a wide array of webinars and e-learning courses on best practices for helping children who have experienced trauma. Visit the link below to create an account for free access to training materials.

[VISIT PAGE](#)

[Focus on Foster Families App](#) - This app is designed to support foster children, youth, and their caregivers & advocates. Through video interviews and online tools, FOCUS on Foster Families helps users improve their skills related to communication, emotional regulation, problem-solving and goal setting.

[VISIT PAGE](#)

[Oregon Family Support Network](#) - OFSN is a statewide non-profit organization that supports families who are raising a child with significant mental health challenges. They provide education, support and advocacy for individual families and support systems.

[VISIT PAGE](#)

[Oregon Post Adoption Resource Center](#) - The OPARC provides services for Oregon DHS adoptive and assisted guardianship families. Services include information, assistance, referral, in-depth consultation, advocacy and support, and education and training for families and advocates.

[VISIT PAGE](#)

[iFoster](#) - Using iFoster's programs and services decreases family needs, improves child and caregiver well-being, improves life-satisfaction, improves grades, and can help youth successfully transition to independence. iFoster provides 100s of resources through partnerships with hundreds of companies, government agencies and non-profits nationwide. Free and deeply-discounted products and services are available to meet your biggest needs.

[VISIT PAGE](#)

"IF YOU CAN HELP A CHILD, YOU DON'T HAVE TO SPEND YEARS REPAIRING AN ADULT."

- JOYCE MEYER

TECH TALK:

THE #1 THING KIDS WANT YOU TO KNOW

Trustworthiness and Technology

Adapted from "Tech Talk Tuesdays" by Delaney Ruston, MD

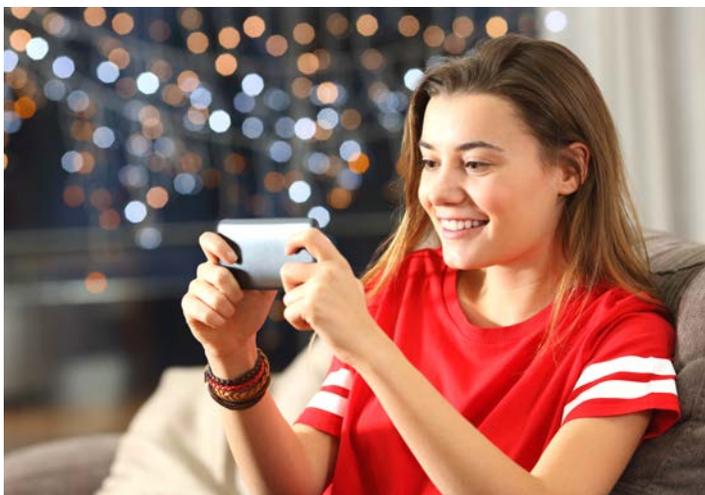
For the last decade, I've asked this one question to hundreds of kids and teens all over the country: "When it comes to screen time issues, what is the one thing you would want your parents to know?" And I almost always got the same response:

"I want them to know that they can trust me"



There was such sincerity in their eyes and voices as they told me this. And then, later, many of them would share with me various ways they have snuck screen time at home! What became clear to me as we spoke further was when they talked about trust, they were actually talking about their need to feel trusted, and that was way bigger than any screen time issue. These kids would express how important it was to them that they felt like their parents had true confidence in their abilities – trust in their ability to succeed in life.

Youth want and need confidence from their care providers, even when they act as if they don't. You might be saying, "Wait, maybe they just meant they want their parents to trust them and stop bothering them about screen time rules." Sure, that



might be true, but plenty of kids and tweens, and yes, even teens have told me that they need help not letting screen time take over — and that they appreciate having limits in their homes.

We know that fibbing, withholding key data, telling white lies, and telling big lies occur with our kids and teens (and adults). Yet we still feel strong emotions when we

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TECH TALK:

THE #1 THING KIDS WANT YOU TO KNOW

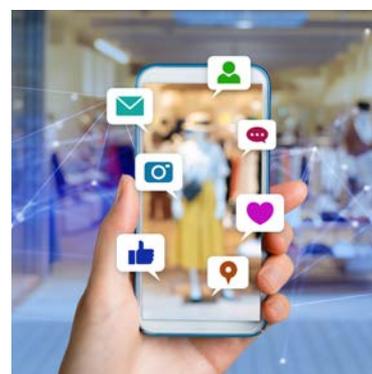
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learn our child has lied or withheld the truth. We take it personally and worry about our kids. I firmly believe that to build solid relationships, there needs to be a foundation of trust – and that is why calm conversations about this topic are important.

During COVID, there is a lot to discuss regarding who we trust on social media and the media at large. Talking about groups with long-standing existence such as the ACLU as a place to get information – or the CDC or WHO as reliable sources. They have many people overseeing and double-checking information before it goes out into the world. There is plenty of clickbait and dubious posts that should not be trusted.

This is a time of reflection about our relationships, and the mutual trust we've developed over time. I always tell my students that the most meaningful things in life may also be challenging at times – and this can certainly apply to our closest friends, particularly ones from childhood. There is a good chance that with your oldest friends, there were issues around trust or other subjects, and it is because you worked things out during those hard times that you feel particularly close now.

Talking about trust can be a great way to strengthen your relationship with your child or teen - here are some prompts to get the conversation started!



IDEAS FOR CONVERSATION STARTERS:

Here are some additional questions for talking with kids & teens about trust:

- *Who are people you really trust in your life these days?*
- *Do you feel that I have full confidence in you? (And let them know you do.)*
- *What do you trust online and why?*
- *Are there people from your past that you might want to reach out to?*

[. \(Read the full article HERE at ScreenagersMovie.com\)](https://www.screenagersmovie.com)

CASA COMMUNITY PARTNER

SPOTLIGHT



Assistance League of Corvallis has been meeting the needs of Benton County for more than 50 years!

Assistance League volunteers transform the lives of children and adults through community programs. AL Chapter of Corvallis has no paid personnel and programs and fundraising activities are staffed by over 200 members. Annually, Assistance League Corvallis member volunteers:

- Contribute in excess of 19,000 volunteer service hours to Benton County
- Clothe over 1000 children with new outfits and shoes to give them adequate clothing for school through Operation School Bell®
- Provide classroom books to new teachers in Benton County
- Provide household and personal supplies for families in need in Corvallis, Monroe, Alsea and Philomath schools
- Instruct approximately 975 sixth graders on dental hygiene with our award-winning classroom presentation and video, "The Power of Healthy Teeth"
- Provide classes twice a year for 115 high school students to help them prepare for the SAT
- Supply teddy bears for distribution by more than nine agencies, including the Oregon State Police and CASA - Voices for Children.

Assistance League has been a committed community partner for many years, ensuring that each child in foster care has new school supplies, new clothing and shoes, Christmas gifts, teddy bears and so much more!

Donate

The History of Assistance League Corvallis

In February, 1967, Doris Caldwell, Cathy Lewis, Jane Mc Henry, Jean Reynolds, and Charlotte Thompson met with five women from the Salem chapter of Assistance League to discuss forming a chapter in Corvallis. Later that spring Dorothea Barratt, Colleen Gilbert, Jean Hogensen, Shirley Wirth, and Midge Woods joined the original five and helped create a list of women to invite to join this new venture. Ninety-six women accepted invitations to membership.

At the first meeting in February, 1968, held in the Consumers Power meeting room at 9th Street and Garfield Avenue, the group elected officers and selected Operation School Bell® as their first philanthropic program. Clothing was received and displayed in Hal Whiteside's old real estate office on Witham Hill. In early 1970, Operation School Bell moved to the second floor of Anderson's Sporting Goods — where it was cold in the winter but rent free. On May 15, 1969, National Assistance League granted us Guild status. On May 12, 1970, the Corvallis Guild became the 49th chartered chapter of National Assistance League.

Most board and committee meetings were held in members' homes until 1972 when we purchased a house at 534 NW 4th Street to be our headquarters for Operation School Bell and other activities.

**Assistance League Corvallis
547 NW 9th Street
Corvallis, OR 97330
info@alcorvallis.org**



EASY WAYS TO SUPPORT CASA-VFC THIS WINTER



A fun, new way to help raise money for CASA-VFC!
Download the FlipGive App and shop your favorite brands and online stores. Each company will then donate a certain percentage of your purchase to CASA-VFC. This is a convenient, fast and easy way to support our organization. Don't forget to share with your friends and family!

[LEARN MORE HERE](#)



Did you know that you can raise money for CASA-VFC by simply shopping on Amazon?
If you have an Amazon account you can shop from the Amazon Smile website and they will donate 0.5% of your purchase to CASA-VFC. It's exactly like shopping on Amazon: Same items, check-out and pricing. Another great way to support CASA while you shop online!

[LEARN MORE HERE](#)





RESOURCES

Don't forget! We have tons of great resources for you and your kiddo(s). Please call or email if you are in need of any of the following items, and our staff will happily help locate them and gather them for pick-up!

Jackets
Clothing
Duffel Bags/Backpacks

Shoes
Birthday Gifts
Occasion/Holiday Gifts

Books
Quilts
Sports Equipment

If we don't have the item you are looking for, please let us know and we will try our best to find it for you!

TUTORING

We are excited to announce that CASA is now providing [Trauma Informed Educational Tutoring!](#) Please contact the CASA office for more information or to enroll your kiddo(s).

BIRTHDAYS

Help your kiddo(s) get ready for that special day! [We have gifts and cards available at the office.](#) Please contact our Service Coordinator, Alyssa, for more information.

**REPORT
CHILD
ABUSE** !

To report child abuse, please call these child abuse hotlines:

Local: 541-757-5019

Toll Free: 866-303-4643



Happy New Year **FOSTER PARENTS!**

Thank you

for the vital role you play
in providing for our
most vulnerable
population.

- CASA-VFC STAFF

CASA-VFC STAFF

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Katie Gregory
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WE ARE HERE FOR YOU!

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Corvallis, Oregon 97330

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541-753-5838

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www.casa-vfc.org

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/casavfc

Instagram:
[@casavfc_corvallis](https://www.instagram.com/casavfc_corvallis)

AUTZEN
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Juan Young
TRUST



Circle Church of Christ



SPIRIT MOUNTAIN
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Fred Meyer

amazon smile

**Pacific Power
Foundation**



Kiwanis
CLUB OF CORVALLIS SUNRISERS



The
**Bill Healy
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A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

**TRUST
MANAGEMENT
SERVICES
LLC**

**BENTON
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**