

Monthly news & updates



October, 2020 | Issue #6



Message from Nkia Richardson, Executive Director:

We are nearing Election Day and, no matter what your position is on a specific candidate or ballot measure, the vote(s) you place provide a precious opportunity to shape our future and give each of us a voice. I took on the role as CASA's Executive Director because I believe in an equitable future for all children, one that embraces the possibility in every child and gives a voice to our most vulnerable young people.

Continue reading Nkia's message [here](#).

Please join us at Connect to Protect, a Virtual Benefit

Join us in this inaugural fundraiser where we will share impactful stories, offer virtual sessions with incredible "specialists" and (virtually) gather together to transform the lives of vulnerable children in our community.

Register for the free event now, and sign up for one of our unique virtual experiences: from interactive book club discussions led by the author, to mixology classes for creating that perfect holiday cocktail, you will find lots of *great* reasons to want to be in another video call. For more details, visit us at [Connect to Protect](#)



CASA Impact Story: Denise and Julia

CASA Denise is working with Julia, a busy college student who is also working full-time. Denise wants to make sure of Julia's well-being so she drops off a coffee to her youth with the requirement she must FaceTime while drinking the coffee. Virtual coffee with Julia is a quick way to keep in touch, build on their relationship and stay connected each week. This short but meaningful way to continue weekly visits is a perfect fit for a busy young adult.

CASA Advocate Spotlight

We have a very special spotlight this month, featuring CASA Dana Starling, who is the cover story for October's Mountain Home magazine.

Our Community In Action

Read her story for the impact she has had on her CASA youth and why she is so passionate about CASA's mission and her role as an advocate.

[Read Dana's story here](#)



Over the past several

years, elementary school-aged students at The Charles Armstrong School in Belmont have thoughtfully gifted our younger CASA foster youth with a specially-selected Build-A-Bear, including a personally written story to accompany their new companion. This year, despite the challenges of COVID-19 and social distancing, the students and staff were adamant to continue this tradition.

This week, the project gets kicked off to ensure a timely delivery of the well-dressed stuffed animals for the holiday giving season.

In Invitation to Join CASA's Auxiliary

The auxiliary to CASA of San Mateo County is proud of the role we play in helping to support CASA's program and its volunteers to give a voice to the most vulnerable youth in our county. As we complete our 13th year, we are inviting anyone in our community to join our group to share our passion for CASA's mission and support CASA by organizing and hosting their largest fundraiser, The Garden Party, held each August. If you would like to learn more about membership, please contact Kathy Strem, Membership Chairperson for more information via email: mkstrem@gmail.com or phone: 650 867-4662

We are a group of hard working, fun, dedicated supporters and we hope you will decide to join us!

Linda Hoffman, President
Auxiliary for CASA of San Mateo

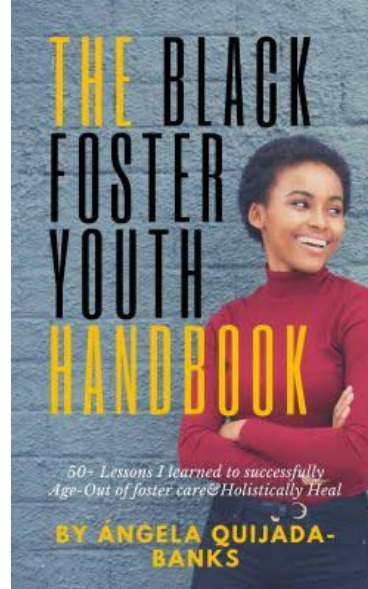
In The News...



How some California school districts deal with absent students:

Deep into the pandemic, some districts are finding an alarming percentage of students are missing from the virtual classroom — with the worst absentee rates occurring among homeless students, foster youth, English learners, Black students and high school seniors. Experts point to a host of reasons for increased student absentee rates during distance learning, including a lack of access to technology, no adult supervision or safe places to work at home, as well as language barriers and other hardships.

[Read here for the full story.](#)



She Wrote the Book on Surviving Foster Care as a Black Kid

Angela Quijada-Banks turned her experiences in foster care into a book that provides more than 50 lessons for youth and their adult supporters, alternating personal stories with poetry and self-discovery exercises.

[Read Angela's interview](#) on why she is most worried about the pandemic, necessary advice for foster parents and how Black foster youth can protect their mental health in a time when images of police brutality against Black people are featured across social media.

[Click here to read our previous newsletter, September 2020!](#)

[CASA of San Mateo County](#)

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