



Care Beyond the Curriculum: The Power of Health Science Educators in Foster Care Advocacy

Willis & Spencer

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Who we are...



*Sara Lynn
Willis*

**CASA &
Health Science Teacher**

Career: 20 yrs as an Ophthalmic Technician & 8 yrs as Health Science teacher

Favorite summer vacation spot: beach, but not Texas

Cannot live without: Diet Dr. Pepper



*CJ
Spencer*

**Recruitment &
Training Coordinator**

Career: 20+ yrs as a health and safety provider/trainer (corporate and nonprofit) in Missouri & 3+ years with Voices for Children

Favorite summer spots: Valencia, Spain & Sarasota, Florida

Cannot live without: coffee, any brand, any time

CASA & THOA: Partners in Advocacy



Shared Mission: THOA and CASA prioritize professional development, equipping health science educators and CASAs with skills to excel.

Science for Care: THOA's health science focus aligns with CASA's trauma-informed advocacy for foster children's medical, educational, and emotional needs.

High Standards: Both uphold integrity, compassion, and excellence, preparing educators to meet CASA's rigorous advocacy standards.

Community Impact: Educators inspire healthy communities; CASAs advocate for foster children's safety and stability.

Use your health science expertise to transform lives as a CASA

volunteer

Health Science TEKS to CASA Impact

Communication: Your classroom skills in connecting with diverse students translate to advocating for foster children in court.

Leadership: Leading classroom discussions equips you to guide conversations with social workers and judges.

Rights & Choices: Your focus on autonomy and cultural sensitivity aligns with advocating for a child's medical and emotional needs.

Be the voice for a foster child's safe, permanent home



From Teaching to Transforming Lives

Relationships: Your ability to build trust and resolve conflicts in the classroom helps navigate foster children's complex dynamics.

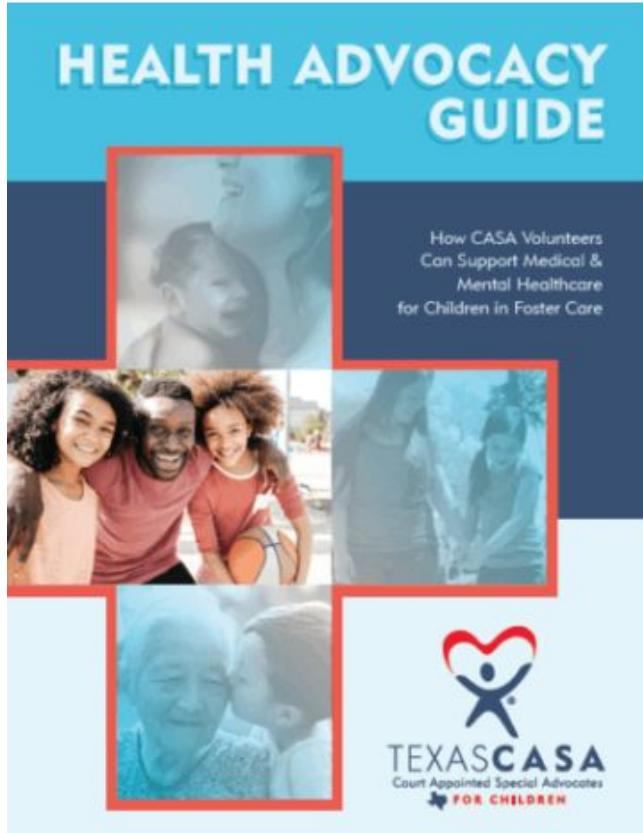
Reporting: Reporting health data in class mirrors a CASA's role in sharing critical information with courts and caregivers.

Problem-Solving: Your systematic approach equips you to assess and recommend solutions for a child's stability.

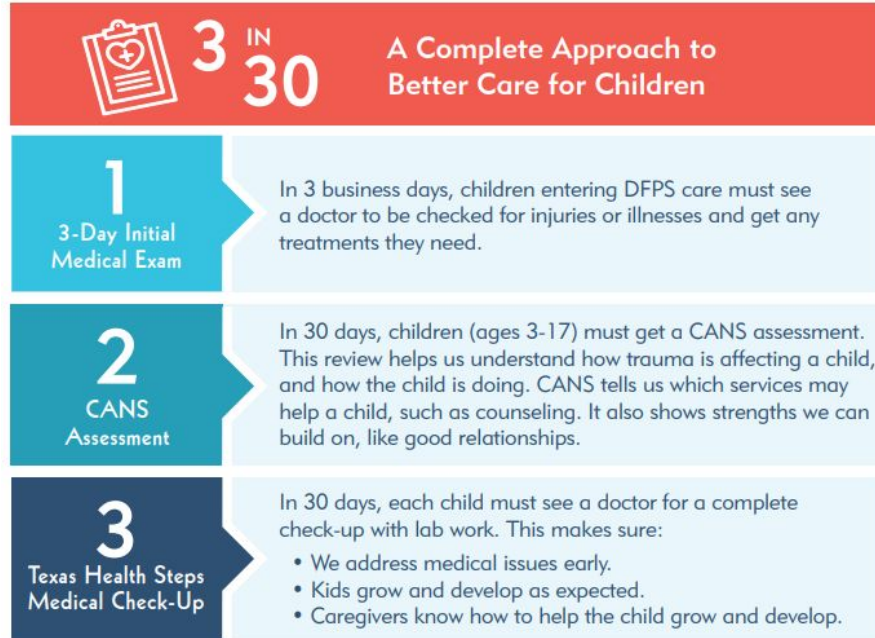


Apply your health science expertise to change a foster child's life—become a CASA today!

CASA's Lens for Health Advocacy



Sara Lynn: Will replace with something that's more in line with the curriculum.



CASA's Role in Health Advocacy

Voices for Children, CASA of Brazos Valley is part of the the Brazos Valley Health Coalition. Here's why:

- **Foundation:** Texas CASA's Health Advocacy Guide
- **Community Collaborations (examples):**
 - Texas Health Occupations Association Conference (2022 and 2025)
 - Get MOM for Children in Foster Care training, held at the Brazos Valley Health District, presented by Voices for Children, Maximus, and the HHSC Community Partnership

Questions?



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The CASA Effect



The CASA Effect_30sec_Eng

Unlisted

 **Texas CASA**
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CASA's Role in Health Advocacy

CASA volunteers should apply the four key action steps of the CASA role to health advocacy:

- + Investigate
- + Facilitate
- + Advocate
- + Monitor

Think of this process in four stages, each of which may recur, need to be revisited or require ongoing tending in order to ensure that each child is getting the full spectrum of care that they need.



Our Mission



Voices for Children works to improve the lives of children in foster care through powerful volunteer advocacy, until each child is placed in a safe and permanent home.



Our History



1977

The first CASA program is established in Seattle, Washington by Judge Soukup, a superior court judge.



1989

The CASA movement came to Texas. Texas CASA is founded. There are currently 73 CASA programs in the state of Texas.



2000

Voices for Children is founded.



2001

Voices for Children trains its first class of advocates.



2022

Voices for Children is currently serving 5 counties in the Brazos Valley region- Brazos, Burleson, Grimes, Madison and Leon.

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

Regional Boundaries



Health Advocacy & Year-Round Prevention Year Round!

**APRIL IS NATIONAL CHILD
ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH**

Give a child a chance at

BecomeACASA.org



Volunteer Opportunities

VFCBRAZOS.ORG/VOLUNTEER



ROAR

RECRUITMENT OUTREACH & ADVOCACY REPRESENTATIVES

- Open to ALL ages!
- Flexible commitment
- Ideal for anyone wanting to support children & families in their community
- ROAR 21+ can also serve as a CASA!

***Get Involved. Spread the Word.
Make an Impact.***

CASA

COURT-APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES

- Must be 21+ with a completed background check
- Complete comprehensive training
- Provide direct support to children and families, amplifying their voices in court and beyond

Advocate. Empower. Change Lives.

Short & Long-Term High-Impact Projects

Questions?



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Thank you