



NOVEMBER 2020

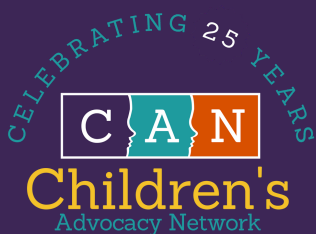
# CANtastic NEWS



## GRIT & GRATITUDE

### THE LATEST IN THE CAN COMMUNITY

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Championing Children's Needs since 1995

When we look back on this year and the multitude of crises we have experienced, we are overwhelmed with gratitude towards our collective accomplishments and perseverance. Sure, our outlook could be consumed by the daily deluge of the crises of Covid 19, hurricanes, economy, etc., but we have found through all the hardships, a silver lining exists! And that is **each of you!**

From the start, we knew 2020 was going to be a big year for our agency. Little did we know what was in store! Your drive and dedication to helping children in our community allowed us to further our mission. We opened our Catahoula and Concordia CASA Office, and progressed the child trafficking response with the addition of a second mobile unit.

#WeNeedYouNow resonated throughout every parish during Child Abuse Awareness month in April. Your efforts and determination made this year's campaign

our most successful one yet. Your generosity ensured our 25th Anniversary & Gala a huge success. An increase in CASA volunteering and effective advocacy throughout the region made it possible for our programs to provide support and healing for over 1,000 children. Your passion to find safe homes for children ensured our continued vision to eradicate abuse.

**Grit and gratitude** have made our agency, our communities, our families, and most importantly, our children, successful throughout 2020.

While much remains to be accomplished, we encourage all to take some time to reflect on your successes! Collectively, we have accomplished so much! I pray this newsletter finds you safe, well, and ready for 2021!

Forever Grateful,  
*Wade Bond, ED*



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## YOUR SUPPORT HEALS CHILDREN

*Because of you*

**130**

**children placed in safe  
& permanent homes!**

**463**

**children received life  
changing services**

over **1000**

**children along with  
their families were  
given hope and  
empowerment**



## YOUR INVOLVEMENT HELPS US GROW

This year we reflected on those individuals who came together to address the needs of abused and neglected children. From humble beginnings in 1995, our vision took root through the collaboration of local professionals and the common vision to eradicate child abuse. The initiative spread across the region helping heal and champion abused and neglected children throughout Central Louisiana. As services expanded, we became the Children's Advocacy Network and continued improving responses to the child welfare system in order to ensure safe and successful futures for the children of our communities. Helping over 1,000 children each year, throughout our region, our vision is rooted in the vision and passion of many. Our collective efforts have made a lasting impact and we are continuously grateful.



**Rapides Children's  
Advocacy Center: BEFORE  
the Renovation Project Began**

**MAY 31, 1996**

Community and stakeholder support along with dedicated staff have enabled over 12,000 children to receive healing services over the course of 25 years. Because of the support shown from our community, our team not only survived the obstacles of 2020, but persevered and became more resilient giving us confidence that together we can help heal children of CenLa, even through the most difficult times.



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# HEALING CHILDREN SUPPORTING FAMILIES EMPOWERING FUTURES

CHILDREN IN  
CATAHOULA &  
CONCORDIA  
PARISHES  
NOW HAVE  
CHAMPIONS!



The opening of our 7th JDC office makes it possible to advocate for children in 7 parishes within our region. Pictured are our first volunteers to serve Catahoula and Concordia parishes, sworn in on June 11, 2020. Left to Right: Jeremy Wood (volunteer), Jade Wilson (Volunteer Coordinator), Honorable Kathy Johnson, Lacy Robertson (volunteer), Lindsey Russell (volunteer), Hannah Waters (Team Lead), Wade Bond (Executive Director).



Community support has allowed CAN to add another mobile unit! This opens more opportunities to reach more children. The units accommodate our Trafficking Response, Forensic Interviews, SANE exams, family advocacy and other services that are crucial to helping children we serve.

Mobile Unit tours for our community are in the works!



Central Louisiana Community Foundation awarded CAN the 2020 Community Impact Award! This contribution enables us to serve more children through our Mobile Unit. We are grateful as the contribution helps expand our services which will create opportunity to help more children and families, as well as grow the Central Louisiana Child Trafficking Response.

"OUR CHILDREN ARE THE ROCK  
ON WHICH OUR FUTURE WILL  
BE BUILT, OUR GREATEST  
ASSET AS A NATION..."

-NELSON MANDELA



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## CHILD ABUSE AWARENESS MONTH 2020



**#WeNeedYouNow** resonated with the community. With an enhanced sense of urgency as children no longer had access to safety nets during the shutdown, together we were able to succeed in our mission even through the uncertainty brought on by COVID-19.

Our community found ways to stay connected with our community to spread awareness, as well as find creative yet effective ways to continue to ensure the children of Cenla were getting the help they needed.

Champions for children responded to the call for advocates and made the choice to join our mission to be a voice for all children! 25 new advocates completed our virtual training during the Spring! A virtual curriculum & volunteer training method was implemented during the shutdown to enable our new volunteers to prepare for their journey as a child's voice while keeping health and safety top priority. Staff and Volunteers found new ways to virtually stay connected and let our community know that our efforts to advocate for children and families did not stop!



## Celebrating 25 Years

### Healing and Championing Children of Central Louisiana

This year our annual Gala looked a bit different. The pandemic hindered gathering but that didn't stop our community from supporting children! We were able to celebrate our community efforts of championing 1000 children annually for over 25 years. We shared testimonials of founding members, board members, & a CASA family. We also collaborated with individuals and businesses digitally to help share our message, engage with our community through social media efforts and succeed in reaching our fundraising goal by hosting our first ever virtual auction and fundraising gala!

### Celebrate with Us



September 1 - 30  
WWW.CHILDRENSADVOCACY.NET  
#WeNeedYouNow



over

# \$100,000

given

Your contributions ensure  
children will receive healing  
services in 2021 including:

**CASA Volunteers who give children a voice**

**healing through therapy sessions**

**access to a safe place to share their story  
and receive help needed to heal**



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# NEXT MONTH

Save the Date! We invite you to join us on Tuesday December 1st, 2020 as we participate in #GivingTuesday, the online global generosity movement. It is a day of giving in any way that you can to help support the Children's Advocacy Network and our fight to eradicate the cycle of child abuse. Go to [www.childrensadvocacy.net](http://www.childrensadvocacy.net), and follow us on social media to find more info on all the ways you can get involved!

## #GIVINGTUESDAY

Community Giving



CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY NETWORK'S

## TOY DRIVE

Help us give the children in our community a

### HOLLY JOLLY CHRISTMAS!

PLEASE:  
NO stuffed animals  
NO violent toys  
**NEW Toys only**  
Age Birth to 18 years of age  
Gift Cards Acceptable

[www.childrensadvocacy.net](http://www.childrensadvocacy.net)  
318.445.5678

 **CASA**  
Court Appointed Special Advocate  
FOR CHILDREN

 **CAN**  
Children's  
Advocacy Network  
Celebrating 25 Years

Spread Christmas cheer to the children of Cenla by participating in our Toy Drive! Deadline for donations is December 8th. Please drop off at 1751 Jackson Street between 8 - 4:30, Monday through Friday. If you are outside of Rapides Parish, contact your local CASA office for information.



## HOLIDAY SOCIALS & GIFT PICKUP

Children's Advocacy Network Gumbo Open House: Dec. 9th  
LaSalle, Catahoula, Concordia Parishes: Dec. 15th  
Grant Parish: Dec. 14th  
Winn Parish: Dec. 16th  
Avoyelles Parish - Dec. 17th

# LOVE146

## #HEARME

CAN is organizing a community based training for professionals to provide child trafficking prevention in 2021! Sadly, each year our agency sees more children fall victim to trafficking. Throughout the pandemic a group of dedicated colleagues have been developing a community response that works to build a network of first responders. We are excited to join hands with many agencies to begin intervening.

Training : December 15th - 17th

## BE THE FIRST TO KNOW

Stay involved by  
subscribing to our  
**CANtastic email**  
list by going to  
our website!!



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# 56 new volunteers in 2020!

Volunteer training for 2021 begins in January!



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## Testimonials



**"CASA really has been an important part of our lives, and we feel like we wouldn't have our kids if it weren't for them. Words cannot express. It's just like family. How can you express family? Just *love*."**

- RENEE GILLAM FORMER FOSTER PARENT,  
NOW ADOPTIVE PARENT

**"It's amazing today to see how that agency has grown over the past 25 years. It's still a foundation in Rapides Parish and Alexandria, and still serving children across Louisiana."**

- APD CAPTAIN LILLIE EVANS  
ALEXANDRIA POLICE DEPARTMENT DETECTIVE  
AT THE TIME RCAC WAS FOUNDED

**"It really is everyone pulling together that has allowed the Children's Advocacy Network to grow and serve so many children throughout our region."**

- LEISA LAWSON  
CAN BOARD PRESIDENT

**"Thousands of children have come through here, have been effected by the agency, and have been helped. But more than that, their families have as well."**

- MARK VILAR  
CAN BOARD MEMBER

Visit our website to watch our testimonials.



[www.childrensadvocacy.net](http://www.childrensadvocacy.net)





# THANK YOU

for your continuous support  



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS  
**CAN**  
Children's  
Advocacy Network

Championing Children's Needs since 1995



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