**Speak Up Toolkit: Send Out and Share**

**Sample Email Signature Lines**

* I speak up for foster children. Learn how you can give a foster child a voice. Visit [www.speakupnow.org](http://www.speakupnow.org).
* April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month; May is National Foster Care Month. Help create a brighter future for a foster child. Visit [www.speakupnow.org](http://www.speakupnow.org) to learn more.
* With only 10-15 hours a month, you can help transform a foster child’s life. Learn how you can help at [www.speakupnow.org](http://www.speakupnow.org).
* Give a foster child a brighter future. Become a Voices for Children volunteer: [www.speakupnow.org](http://www.speakupnow.org).
* Join me in speaking up for foster youth. Visit [www.speakupnow.org](http://www.speakupnow.org) to learn more.

**Sample Email Template**

*Subject:* Join me in speaking up for foster children

Dear Friends and Family,

Each person can make a difference in the life of a foster child. That’s why I [volunteer with, support] Voices for Children and why I’m asking you to consider becoming a volunteer Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA).

Voices for Children is a nonprofit organization right here in our community dedicated to helping make a difference in the lives of foster children by providing them with a CASA. More than 5,000 children live in foster care in San Diego County each year. These children have been abused, abandoned, and neglected, and many of them feel very much alone…until they meet their CASA. There is no experience necessary to be a CASA volunteer; Voices for Children provides all the training you will need and a VFC staff member, who will work with you on your case.

By becoming an advocate for foster youth, you will help provide a voice to children in the courtroom, classroom, and community to ensure that their needs are met. Ninety percent of foster children with a CASA do not re-enter the child welfare system, and they tend to receive needed services sooner and more consistently. CASAs are often the only consistent adult presence in a child’s life and they provide critical stability and support that can transform a child’s future. Don’t miss the opportunity to be that person for a foster child.

Please join me in speaking up for foster children! You can visit the Voices for Children website at [www.speakupnow.org](http://www.speakupnow.org) to learn more or to register for a volunteer information session.

**Sample Bulletin Announcements**

* Volunteer with Voices for Children to help abused, neglected, and abandoned children in San Diego County foster care. To learn more or to get involved call (858) 598-2230 or visit [www.speakupnow.org](http://www.speakupnow.org).
* With just 10-15 hours a month, you can help transform a foster child’s life. Become an advocate for foster youth and make a difference in the life of a child. Voices for Children provides more than one-third of San Diego’s foster children with the caring support of a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA). But, there are still many more children who need CASAs to speak on their behalf. Get involved! Call (858) 598-2230 or visit [www.speakupnow.org](http://www.speakupnow.org) to learn more and sign up for an Information Session.
* Volunteers Wanted! Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) speak up for foster children in the courtroom, classroom, and community. Guided by Voices for Children staff, CASAs get to know their case child, facilitate communication with the case child’s team, and make recommendations to the Court to ensure that the child’s needs are met. Consider becoming a CASA and be a voice for a foster child who needs one. Visit [www.speakupnow.org](http://www.speakupnow.org) or call (858) 598-2230 to learn more.

**Sample Newsletter Article**

*Title:* Every Child Needs a Voice

More than 5,000 children pass through the San Diego County foster care system annually. These children have been removed from their homes due to abuse, abandonment, and neglect. For a foster child, a volunteer Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) can be the essential difference between a happy, peaceful childhood and one of fear, confusion, or even additional abuse and neglect. CASAs provide the stability, caring, and advocacy needed for these children to thrive. They often help their case children do better in school, live healthier lives, and learn how to trust adults again, and they ultimately help place them in stable, loving homes.

Voices for Children, a nonprofit organization primarily funded by private sources, is the only agency designated by the San Diego Superior Court to recruit, train, and supervise CASA volunteers for our community. CASAs are empowered by the Juvenile Court to become experts about their case children. Much more than mentors, CASAs have broad access to legal, medical, educational, and other records and professionals. CASAs make recommendations to the Court to ensure that the judge is informed about their case children’s unique needs and desires.

But more importantly, CASAs are a source of caring focus and stability. Take the case of Henry, who just turned eight. He has lived in foster care since he was removed from his home at the age of two because of his parents’ domestic violence, use of drugs, and physical abuse. Jody has been his CASA since Henry was six.

***Henry:*** “Jody, I think of you as my sidekick—is that okay?”

***CASA Jody:*** “Well Henry, I’m not sure what a sidekick is…”

***Henry:*** “All superheroes have sidekicks. They are the people who take care of the superhero when his super powers are about to fail. They make sure he is okay when he can’t take care of himself. That’s what you do isn’t it? You take care of me when my super powers are low. So that makes you my sidekick!”

CASAs are ordinary citizens, who do extraordinary things. They *listen* closely to their case children and then *speak up* when it matters most—in the courtroom, in the classroom and community. And in the process, a child’s life is changed forever. With just 10-15 hours a month as a CASA, you can create a brighter future for a foster child. No prior experience is necessary—Voices for Children will provide all the training you need. Visit [www.speakupnow.org](http://www.speakupnow.org) or call (858) 598-2230 to learn more and sign up for a volunteer information session.



Thank you for sharing this information and speaking up for foster children! [www.speakupnow.org](http://www.speakupnow.org)