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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 30, 2008

Texas Bar Foundation supports local abused and neglected children with grant to child advocacy program

The Texas Bar Association approved a \$10,000 grant this month toward Court Appointed Special Advocates, or CASA, with the hopes of recruiting and training more volunteers.

CASA of Central Texas advocates for abused and neglected children in the court system by recruiting, training, and supporting community volunteers. Advocating for children in this area for almost 22 years, CASA acts as the eyes and ears of the Child Protection Court Judge.

CASA of Central Texas Executive Director Norma Blackwell said the grant demonstrates the Texas Bar Foundation's dedication to the welfare of children in the state.

"We are so blessed because by the support (the foundation) has shown to us," Blackwell said. "I am so happy that, with these funds, we will be able to serve more children in our community."

CASA volunteers receive an initial 40 hours of training and are then provided with continued training throughout their service time. They also receive guidance from their casework supervisor. Blackwell said the funds provided by the foundation will allow not only more trainings to be held, but also better support for volunteers while they are serving on a case.

In 2007, CASA of Central Texas served 228 children in Caldwell, Comal, Guadalupe and Hays Counties but there were an estimated 560 or more ADDITIONAL children who did not have the voice of a CASA.

Volunteers are only assigned to one case at a time; therefore, CASA can only serve as many children as there are volunteers. If you would like to become a volunteer or learn about additional ways to support CASA, please visit www.casacentex.org, or call (512) 392- 3578 or (830) 626-2272.
