



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Supreme Court Justice and former foster child issue call for CASA Volunteers

**AUSTIN, TEXAS** (October 13, 2008) - The "Raise Me Up" campaign was launched today at a press conference at the State Capitol. Sponsored by Casey Family Programs, the nation's largest operating foundation dedicated to improving foster care, and in close collaboration with Texas Child Protective Services, "Raise Me Up" will provide opportunities for people to make a difference in the lives of children in foster care. Today's press conference included calls to action from Justice Harriet Os'Neill of the Texas Supreme Court, Chad Sapenter, a local entrepreneur and former foster care child, and Texas Senator Steve Ogden.

CASA of Travis County is partnering with Casey Family Programs to help launch the "Raise Me Up" campaign aimed at sparking community involvement and raising awareness to help Texas' 17,400 children in foster care. The more people know about the facts of foster care, the more we can do to improve the lives of children who experience it.

The campaign Web site [RaiseMeUp.org](http://RaiseMeUp.org) will connect people with organizations like CASA of Travis County and events in the Austin area that provide an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of children in foster care.

Research shows that young people in foster care are more likely than their peers in the general population to experience homelessness, poverty, poor health, unemployment, prison and other adversities after they leave the foster care system. But it doesn't have to be that way. When communities get involved, a world of better possibilities opens for children. Raise Me Up aims to strengthen families and motivate caring adults to guide vulnerable children to a brighter future.

Together, we can inspire action and engagement to strengthen families and improve the lives of foster of children. You don't have to raise a child to raise them up. You just have to raise your hand and say you'll help.

#### **About CASA of Travis County**

CASA of Travis County is the only organization in Travis County appointed by judges to be *guardians ad litem* in child protective services cases. CASA provides advocates to speak up in court for the best interest of children who have been removed from their home due to abuse or neglect. CASA recruits, trains, screens, and supervises these community volunteers so that they may properly advocate for the best interest of the child. Volunteers drive the success of CASA and do so by being the voice so many children are left without. CASA volunteers not only spend time with the child entrusted to them but also meet with the child's school, doctor, and care-giver in order to better assess recommendations they make to the court. CASA of Travis County was established in 1985 and continues to grow with over 400 trained volunteers serving more than 1,200 children each year.

For further information visit [www.casatavis.org](http://www.casatavis.org) or [www.raisemeup.org](http://www.raisemeup.org).

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