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## ***Austin hi-tech exec making dream of superheroes ending child abuse a reality!***

**AUSTIN, TEXAS** (August 31, 2011) – Three years ago Matt Curtin awoke from a dream with a big goal: End child abuse. His dream came complete with a tagline, “Every child needs a hero, but abused children need superheroes!” Matt realized child abuse prevention as a cause had a marketing problem. Unlike cancer which many can identify with, child abuse is usually a well-kept secret. The fact is that with an estimated 763,000 children victims of maltreatment in our country in 2009, child abuse affects us all—whether we are aware of it or not

With a big goal and a great tagline, Matt Curtin, VP of Sales at Bazaarvoice, started The Superhero Foundation. Working with other child abuse prevention organizations, he created the idea of a Superhero Run to raise awareness while also raising funds to help victims of child abuse in their recovery. Little did he know how this superhero movement would catch fire! After 2 years of successful events in Austin and Pittsburgh, The Superhero Foundation decided to partner exclusively with CASA organizations believing that CASA volunteers are true superheroes for children who’ve been abused or neglected. Their first CASA partnership with CASA of Henrico County in Richmond, Virginia garnered major sponsors like Nike, Dominion, The Martin Agency, and Whole Foods.

The local partnership with CASA of Travis County led to the biggest race yet – 1,100 people in September 2010. Since then, CASA programs across the country have been joining the movement. There are now Superhero Runs either happening or in the planning stages in Austin, Atlanta, Detroit, Indianapolis, Mobile, Pittsburgh, Richmond, and across our state as Texas CASA has signed on the Superhero Run theme for their series of races in 21 counties.

Matt is seeing his vision come to life. “This isn’t just an exciting fundraiser with great costumes. It is a message that really hits home for people in helping them understand the child abuse epidemic,” says Matt, himself the father of two girls. At CASA of Travis County’s 2010 race even the children were getting the message. One woman said, “We had a BLAST on Sunday. My son remarked to me before the event that, ‘If abused kids see that other kids are superheroes, then they’ll know that they can be superheroes too.’ I love that you have an event that can engage kids to think about these issues compassionately.”

Matt attends every Superhero Run he can get to around the country. Running the 5K in his Superman muscle shirt and cape, Matt says for him it’s much more than a 3 mile run – it’s his own personal race to end child abuse.

*CASA of Travis County will host its second Superhero Run on September 25<sup>th</sup> at 7 am at The Domain. Matt Curtin, as well as CASA volunteers, staff and other Superhero Foundation members, will be available for interviews in advance of and on race day. The race will feature over 1,000 runners and many youth and adults in full superhero costumes.*



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

CASA of Travis County believes every child who's been abused or neglected deserves to have a dedicated advocate speaking up for their best interest in court, at school and in our community. To accomplish this, CASA educates and empowers diverse community volunteers who ensure each child's needs remain a priority in an over-burdened child welfare system. When the state steps in to protect a child's safety because the people responsible for protecting them have not, a judge appoints a trained CASA volunteer to make independent and informed recommendations and help the judge decide what's best for the child. After 33 hours of intensive training, background checks and being sworn-in by a judge, volunteers are appointed to a child or family of children and spend an average of 20 hours a month advocating for these children for at least a year. Created in 1985, CASA of Travis County is now one of the top ten CASA programs in the nation, supporting 500 volunteers who advocate for approximately 1,300 children a year.

Learn more about CASA of Travis County at [www.casatravis.org](http://www.casatravis.org) or 512.459.2272.

### **About The Superhero Foundation:**

The Superhero Foundation's mission is to put a stop child abuse. The Foundation's focus is to drive awareness for National Child Abuse Prevention Month in April through social media campaigns and family fun-runs around the country. Participants in the runs dress up as superheroes for a day of fun, but also as a means to get attention for the awareness campaign. Throughout these events, the Foundation raises funds for local non-profits that work with abused and neglected children, such as CASA. The guiding principle of The Superhero Foundation is that "Every child needs a hero, but abused children need superheroes."

For more information on The Superhero Foundation, visit [www.superherorun.com](http://www.superherorun.com).



*Matt Curtin (Superman) with fellow Superhero Foundation Member Mark Piening (Green Lantern) running in the 2010 CASA Superhero Run in Austin, Texas.*