

News Release

CASA Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health

For distribution: Monday, November 29, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

Help CASA *level up* for kids' mental health and double the number of children and youth served in your community

CASA Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health is launching a charitable fundraising campaign on Giving Tuesday called *Level Up for kids' mental health*. The campaign is seeking community support so CASA can level up its mental health services for children, youth and families in Edmonton and northern Alberta, with the intention of doubling the number of kids it serves over the next few years.

"We know that more children, youth and their families face mental health challenges now more than ever, and that's why CASA's *Level Up* campaign is so timely and critical," says CASA CEO Bonnie Blakley. "All families have been affected in some way by the pandemic – our neighbours, our coworkers, our friends and even within our own homes. To support this growing need for mental health services, CASA is looking for support to level up, or double, our capacity to reach more kids, youth and families."

CASA serves between 2,800 and 4,000 kids and their families each year, with programs ranging from infant and preschool services, to school-aged mental health services and day programming, and even a specialized in-patient program for teens. This residential setting called CASA House supports teens with significant mental health challenges who require greater clinical support to reach their goals.

Community generosity is integral to CASA's work in the community. CASA receives core funding from the provincial health system and uses charitable donations to run therapy support groups, expand programs and wrap services around the entire family, going beyond treatment for only the child in need.

"CASA saved our family by helping us build a relationship with our child," says Karen, a parent who participated in several programs to address her foster son's mental illness. "CASA taught us what his trauma was doing to his brain; they taught us about who he was."

"Most of what we tried before we found CASA felt transactional," adds Karen. "What we loved about CASA was that it builds relationships. The Trauma and Attachment Group, for instance, is a group of six or seven kids, so they do not feel alone. Now that we know more thanks to CASA, we can do better."

CASA's *Level Up* campaign runs until the end of 2021. Visit levelupforkids.ca to be part of a new era of mental health care for Alberta kids and families this season and beyond.

Watch CASA's campaign video here: <https://youtu.be/LIDW40bf1CY>.

For more information, please contact:

Darby Semeniuk, Director, Communications, CASA
780-619-5332 (cell) or dsemeniuk@casaservices.org

Media Availability:

CASA CEO Bonnie Blakley will be available on Zoom from 11-11:30 a.m. on Monday, November 29, 2021
Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/99007795813?pwd=ZnhoSExQTDB0L2dzdVlNbnZ2Z3JYQT09>
Meeting ID: 990 0779 5813; Passcode: 285021

