



Who can imagine the horror a child feels when they are removed from their home due to abuse or neglect? Who can put themselves in the place of a child who has to leave everything behind, including the people and the things they love? Who knows how hard it is to make new friends, to trust adults, or to ever feel like smiling again?

Every day in our country, 800 children enter the foster care system and experience these feelings and more. They wonder who will help them. They wonder who they can trust. And they wonder if their lives will ever be normal again.

CASA volunteers know these children and they witness their struggles and their pain. But more importantly, CASA volunteers bring hope to these hurting children. When home is no longer safe and a child must enter the foster care system, a judge may appoint a committed and caring volunteer called a CASA or court appointed special advocate. These volunteers make it their mission to get to know these children, and by doing so, help the court guide them toward a safe, permanent home.

What better way is there of getting to know a child, or making a child feel safe and comfortable than reading a story to them? Books donated by the Texas PTA SMART program will be used by CASA volunteers all across Texas in the 68 CASA programs serving over 20,000 children. It might seem small, but the gift of a book may represent the first thing a child calls their own since having to leave home, and more importantly, can create the first bond between the child and a caring adult.

Do you have the compassion and commitment it takes to become a CASA volunteer in your community? To learn more about CASA and hear from current volunteers about their experiences, as well as find your local CASA program, please visit www.becomeacasa.org or call their toll-free number, 877-894-2272.