



Anthony with his mother, Angela,  
and sister, Elizabeth

# Advocate News

HOUSTON'S LEADING VOICE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CHILD ABUSE

CHILD ADVOCATES, INC.

SUMMER 2012

## Together Again

The abuse towards Anthony began in 2006. His step-father was known to beat and step on Anthony for less than perfect reports from school. Anthony was also not allowed to play with his new half-sister, Elizabeth, and his step-father would give him forceful reminders if he should forget.

In 2010, Anthony, age 7, and Elizabeth, age 1, were removed from their home due to his step-father's repeated abusive behavior.

This was not the life their mother, Angela, had pictured. Sadly, she did not have the resources or ability to provide a safe, stable home for her children. Fortunately, when the judge ordered that the children be removed from their home, he also assigned court appointed advocate, Adele Countryman, to the case.

"Before CPS came into the picture, I thought I had lost everything. I had lost my job, my car, and I was in jail. I knew things were getting bad," said Angela, the mother of two. "Then my children were taken from me and then I realized, I had really lost everything and I knew I had hit rock bottom. I knew I needed to get out of this marriage but I didn't think I could. I didn't think it would happen like this. This was not what I wanted for my family."

The children were in foster care for a short time before being placed with their maternal grandmother. Anthony began receiving treatment for his ADHD and school behavior problems and was even enrolled in soccer to help him socialize and use his energy.

"When I heard that they were assigning me an advocate, I first thought 'Great... Someone to make me feel like a bad mother,'" said Angela, even though she knew that they were assigned to help her children.

"I could tell Angela loved her children and that they loved her, but she had some work to do on herself before she could take care of them," said court appointed advocate, Adele Countryman.



(continued on next page)

**“She helped me see I was worth more. My kids deserved more.”**

*In Harris County alone, over 5,000 children languish in foster care because of life-threatening abuse and neglect. With our current resources, Child Advocates can provide a volunteer to less than half of them. If you would like to help us provide critical advocacy services for more children, please consider becoming a volunteer or making a financial donation online at [www.childadvocates.org](http://www.childadvocates.org).*

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## Together Again **CONTINUED**

And work she did.

Angela was given a list of things to do from the court. She did them all and more. With encouragement from Adele, she attended a financial planning class, career improvement classes, individual counseling and her domestic abuse support group – all while working a full-time job.



**Anthony and his court appointed advocate, Adele.**

“She worked her tail off,” said Adele, “and, she finally got it. This is what she needed to do get her life back on track and to be the mom she wanted to be.”

Anthony's step-father was in jail for most of the case and refused to do to any of the services that the court outlined. Angela removed

herself from the relationship and continued to show the court that she could be a stable mother. When the case closed, the judge awarded joint permanent management conservatorship to Angela and the children's maternal grandmother, just to make sure that Anthony and Elizabeth would never have to go back to foster care should something else happen.

"If it weren't for the support of Adele, who knows what my life would have looked like. She was there for Anthony and Elizabeth when I couldn't be. She helped me see I was worth more. My kids deserved more."

Anthony isn't afraid to play with his sister anymore. In fact, according to Angela, they act more like typical brother and sister now than they ever did before. Anthony is enjoying playing soccer while his grades and behavior continue to improve.



**A thankful mom and her children.**

Since the closing of the case, Angela has taken legal aid classes and filed for divorce on her own. Anthony and Elizabeth are living with her, together, as the happy family she knew she could have.

**To read more stories about the children we serve, visit:**  
**[www.childadvocates.org/about-us/the-children](http://www.childadvocates.org/about-us/the-children)**

# Pull For Kids Classic

**THE BAYOU CITY EVENT CENTER BECAME A GLIMMERING EMERALD CITY AS WE HONORED APACHE CORPORATION AT THE 20TH ANNUAL PULL FOR KIDS CLASSIC.**



A record-setting crowd of 820-plus helped us raise more than \$720,000 – enough to provide court appointed advocates for more than 350 children for a year!

Twelve-year-old Deandre Wolford captivated attendees as he explained the difference a court appointed advocate made in his life.

Deandre and his brother and sisters had experienced years of abuse at the hands of their father by the time they entered foster care. The boys were placed in separate residential treatment centers (RTCs) where they could receive specialized therapy and supervision, while their sisters lived in a foster home.

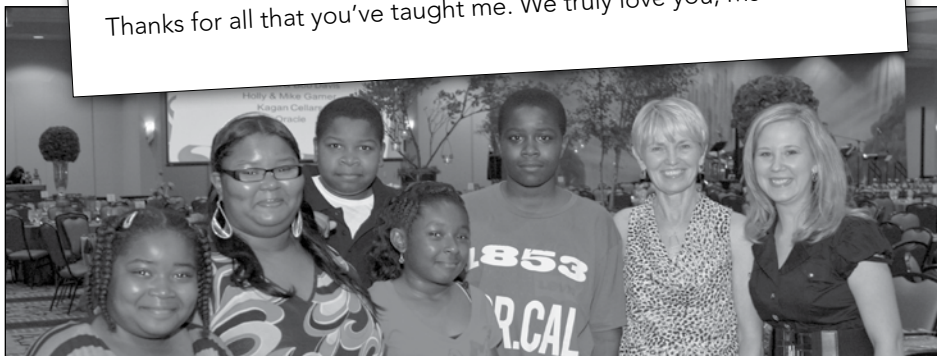
Barbara made sure the children received extensive counseling to help them recover from the psychological trauma they had endured. She also provided support and encouragement for their mother, Shae, as she worked to provide the children with a safe and stable home.

The following is an excerpt from a letter Shae wrote sharing her gratitude for Barbara's help:

It's very rare to meet the angels God grants you while on this earth, but I have the extreme honor of saying I met an entire group.

The mission of Child Advocates is one that has the highest measure of value. It's all about the kids who are going through this life dealing with the most horrific things. Because children are the future of the world, Child Advocates are the guardian angels. Please continue the great job that you are doing.

Thanks for all that you've taught me. We truly love you, Ms. Barbara.



## From the CEO

It is hard to believe summer is nearly halfway over.

On May 12, we transformed the Bayou City Event Center into 'The Emerald City' for our 20<sup>th</sup> annual Pull for Kids Classic honoring Apache, thank to all of our sponsors, donors, patrons and volunteers for making the Pull such a great success. It was an unforgettable evening. You can read more about the event in this issue.

In just a few short weeks, 600 of our kids will get ready to go back to school at the Cameron Childspree, our annual back-to-school shopping event. Thank you to all the volunteers who will wake up before sunrise to be personal shoppers for our kids. This event is always so fun and every year it seems to get bigger and bigger. We couldn't do it without our sponsors: Cameron, Atwood Oceanics, Spark Energy, the Junior League of Houston and Target.

Recently, one of the children we serve, Amber, shared a poem titled 'Stay Strong.' We were so moved by her thoughts that we wanted to share her poem with you. It is a great reminder of the feelings that our children endure. Thankfully she has a court appointed advocate and is receiving the support she needs to stay strong during this trying time. With your support we can continue to help children like Amber. You can read this in our *Thrive* section located on the back cover.

Over the years, we have heard many of you request a daytime Advocacy University. We are happy to bring this option to you in this year's September session. I am also pleased to say that we added an August session to the schedule as well. If you or someone you know has been thinking about becoming a court appointed advocate, now is a great time. Visit our website to view the entire Advocacy University schedule.

Thank you for everything you do!

*Angie Galvan*



# Focus on Friends

FRIENDS OF CHILD ADVOCATES

## 2012 ANGELS OF HOPE LUNCHEON HONOREES



On December 11, the Friends of Child Advocates will honor Kimberly C. David and Dolly Dawson Thomas at our annual Angels of Hope Luncheon and Fashion Presentation by Neiman Marcus. We are especially thrilled to recognize these remarkable volunteers because both of them began their service on the Board of Directors as president of the Friends of Child Advocates.

Kim is a past Board Chair and currently chairs the Finance Committee. She has also chaired the Development and Endowment committees. She and her husband, Scott, chaired the Pull for Kids Classic in 2010 and 2011. Kim is the Senior Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer of Baylor College of Medicine.

Dolly has also held many leadership roles at the organization, including chairing the Development Committee and the 2006 and 2007 Pull for Kids with her husband, Jeff. Most recently, she co-chaired the Wine Pull for the 2011 and 2012 Pull for Kids and is currently serving on the Nominating and Development Committee. Dolly is a Principal at DDi Executive Recruiting, which she co-founded in 1998.

We hope you will join chairs Rosemary Schatzman and Phyllis Williams at the Westin Galleria Hotel Grand Ballroom for a spectacular luncheon honoring Kim and Dolly's exemplary service.

## FRIENDS PRESIDENT, CAROLINE FINKELSTEIN, SHARES WHY SHE DEDICATES HER TIME

There is nothing quite like meeting a child that Child Advocates serves. Your heart just opens to them. You want to help, but you aren't sure how.

While I hope to someday be a trained advocate, for now, I dedicate my time volunteering at events that the Friends of Child Advocates hosts. These events not only focus on fundraising but also include events specifically for the children, like Ginger's Spa at the Holiday Party. The conversation flows with the girls while you are painting their nails and it becomes clear that they appreciate a little pampering.

The Easter Egg Hunt is another event where I can be a part of a positive memory for a child who needs someone in their corner. It's a day filled with laughter and smiles while they hunt for eggs and delight in their finds.

I cannot underestimate the value of fundraising so that we can support and train our advocates. I am so proud of the Angels of Hope luncheon that the Friends hosts every December. While the fashion show is always amazing, there is always a speaker who brings it back to our purpose – giving a voice to an abused child.

For information on Friends membership, contact Marla at 713.529.1396 x234 or [marla.endieveri@childadvocates.org](mailto:marla.endieveri@childadvocates.org).



## Snapshots



Graduates from June's Advocacy University.



Lyn and Les Schmaltz making a donation to the 2012 Wine Pull at the Nouveau Art Bar happy hour.



Winners from the shoot at 2012 Pull for Kids Classic.



Roping lesson for the little ones at the Houston Children's Festival.

# Voices

**RECENTLY, WE ASKED SEVERAL OF YOU, "WHAT MAKES A GOOD COURT APPOINTED ADVOCATE?" HERE IS WHAT A FEW HAD TO SAY.**

*"Effective Child Advocates all start with an eagerness to help and defend children who have been failed by the adults in their life. Child Advocates, with training and support, speak up for the children through influence in the Court and CPS. Perseverance, dedication, and passion are hallmarks of Child Advocates who change lives and better the futures for the most vulnerable of our society."*

*– John Krebs, Court Appointed Advocate Since 1998*

*"When I think of Child Advocates and what it takes to be an advocate, I immediately think of people giving back to the community unselfishly by helping children who might otherwise have no one else. It takes a dedicated individual who is not afraid to stand up and do the right thing on an innocent child's behalf."*

*– Dorene Strangler, Court Appointed Advocate Since 2009*

*"An advocate understands the system is not perfect, but works patiently and diligently for improvement. An advocate understands there is more than meets the eye and strives to withhold judgment. An advocate is results oriented; supporting the process of reunification when possible. A good advocate understands their own limitations."*

*– Katherine Mitchum, Court Appointed Advocate Since 2009*

*"I think that a few of the qualities that are needed to be an advocate are: patience, persistence, and optimism. An advocate needs patience to allow the family plan to work, to allow the children time to acclimate into their new and better environment. Persistence to make this all happen. And, remain optimistic that the children will come out of this ordeal better."*

*– Mark Heeg, Court Appointed Advocate Since 2001*

# Donor Spotlight

## THE NEWFIELD FOUNDATION

The Newfield Foundation has been a valued partner with Child Advocates for nearly a decade. As the charitable giving arm of Newfield Exploration Company, the foundation has made a tremendous impact on the Houston community. Its donations to Child Advocates have provided lifesaving advocacy for nearly 30 abused and neglected children since 2003. We are so grateful for the foundation's continuing support in 2012 and hope to continue this relationship for many years to come.

## MACONDA BROWN O'CONNOR & THE BROWN FOUNDATION, INC.

It is difficult to overstate the impact that The Brown Foundation's generosity has had on Child Advocates over the past 25 years. The foundation has contributed more than \$1 million to our fight against child abuse since 1987, allowing us to grow and serve more children every year.



Among our most ardent champions at The Brown Foundation was Maconda Brown O'Connor, daughter of the iconic Houston businessman, George R. Brown. Dr. O'Connor died this May at the age of 82, but her legacy lives

on at Child Advocates and the many other children's charities that benefitted from her support.

Dr. O'Connor's father became one of America's most successful businessmen by co-founding the construction company Brown and Root. But he never forgot his impoverished childhood in rural Texas. He instilled a spirit of generosity for the less fortunate in his children, and they in turn became some of Houston's leading philanthropists.

Dr. O'Connor returned to school at the age of 51 and went on to earn a doctorate in social work. She counseled young offenders in one of Houston's toughest juvenile detention centers and helped found both the Houston A+ Challenge and Collaborative for Children.

We truly appreciate Dr. O'Connor's belief in our mission and the foundation's transformational support. We extend our deepest sympathies to her family at the loss of such an incredible woman.

# Thanks Donors

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 Zeta Mu Chapter  
 Ms. Jane Zimbaldi  
 Ms. Rebecca Zimdars

# Doing Something

## JERSEY MIKE'S

Jersey Mike's knows about giving back and we are thrilled they continue to choose Child Advocates to partner with in Houston. In February, they kicked things off with their Eldridge store's grand opening event benefitting Child Advocates. Patrons could visit the store and know a percentage of the day's sales would go directly back to Child Advocates.



Angie Sherrell with gs Marketing team members enjoying lunch at Jersey Mike's

During their national 'Giving Back' campaign in March, they once again supported our mission with wonderful opportunities throughout the month. The campaign culminated on March 28 with "Make a Difference Day." On that day, customers could donate a minimum of \$2 and receive a free sub. All four area stores participated in this event.

Throughout the past few months, several of the area locations have been remodeled. Jersey Mike's continues to outdo themselves by hosting grand re-opening events that benefit Child Advocates. Thanks to their generosity, they have donated over \$3,000.

## KIDS ZOO DAYS



When we kicked off the 2011 Heroes Society Campaign, we knew we wanted to reward our top court appointed advocate fundraisers (and the children they serve) with something memorable. What could fulfill that more than seeing a child's face light up as they feed a giraffe or pet a rhino? If you ask the Houston Zoo, not much – they treated our winners to a behind-the-scenes experience and lunch. This unique and generous gift provided a wonderful adventure for three

court appointed advocates and the seven children they are serving.



The zoo also donated 200 tickets to our children for a scavenger hunt put on by our YPC group. Thank you to the Houston Zoo for your continuous support of our mission and for putting smiles on our children's faces.

## TENARIS

As YPC started to plan their summer Water Day, they had one goal in mind – to make it bigger and better than the year before. Thanks to the generosity of Tenaris, we are sure that goal will be met. In a matter of days, over 150 of our kids are planning on splashing away the day with laser tag, dunking booths and jumbo slip-n-slides. In addition to contributing funds to help underwrite this event, 20 of Tenaris' summer interns will be jumping on board to volunteer. What an amazing partnership and wonderful way to keep our kids cool during these hot summer months!

## EXXONMOBIL 2012 VOLUNTEER SPIRIT AWARD WINNER

### BERNIE POWELL



Bernie Powell received the 2012 Volunteer Spirit Award from ExxonMobil for her 20 years service as a court appointed advocate. During this time, she has served 173 children in the Houston foster care system and continues to speak up for abused children all over the Houston area.

*Congratulations Bernie, we are so proud of you and the work you do!*

## SAVE THE DATE!

### 2012 ANGELS OF HOPE LUNCHEON & FASHION PRESENTATION

*will be held on*

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11**

*at the*

**WESTIN GALLERIA  
GRAND BALLROOM**

*Email [marla.endieveri@childadvocates.org](mailto:marla.endieveri@childadvocates.org)  
for more information.*



# Spotlight On ...

## CAMERON CHILDSPREE

About 600 of the abused and neglected children we serve will head back to school in style thanks to the generous donors and volunteers behind the 2012 Cameron Childspree.

This year's Childspree will be held on August 11 at eight Target stores throughout the Houston area. Each child will be paired with a volunteer who will help them pick out \$100 worth of clothing and shoes to start the school year off right. Each child also will receive a backpack filled with all the supplies they will need to succeed.

When children are removed from their homes due to severe abuse or neglect they frequently do not have the chance to bring many of their personal belongings with them. Having very little to call your own can escalate an already frightening situation. For many children, the Childspree allows them to start the school year with new clothes and supplies for the very first time.

We would like to thank Cameron, Atwood Oceanics, Spark Energy and the Junior League of Houston for sponsoring this incredible event. And thanks also to the many volunteers who will wake up before dawn to shop with our children. We couldn't do it without you!



*Photos from the  
2011 Cameron Childspree*

## HEROES SOCIETY



creating a personalized fundraising web page to share with your friends and family.

Your participation in this campaign means so much to us, no matter how much you choose to give. Your support will provide lifesaving advocacy for children who might otherwise fall through the cracks in the child welfare system. Every gift makes a tremendous difference.

Please visit [heroes.childadvocates.org](http://heroes.childadvocates.org) to make your donation. You'll also find step-by-step instructions on how to build a page and share it through e-mail, Facebook or other social media tools. Once again this year, our top volunteer fundraisers will win a great prize for the children on their case. Stay tuned for details in the weeks to come.

The 2012 Heroes Society campaign is right around the corner! We hope you will participate by making a donation or

# Goal Review

1,643

**CHILDREN SERVED (GOAL 2,220)**

*as of 06/30/2012*

140

**VOLUNTEERS TRAINED (GOAL 225)**

*as of 06/30/2012*

\$1,522,863

**DOLLARS RAISED (GOAL \$3,779,460)**

*as of 5/31/2012*

# Board of Directors

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Suzanne Thomas

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Sonya Galvan

# Board Voice

## ROBERT KRENZELOK, BOARD MEMBER

### IN MY PROFESSIONAL LIFE...

I am the Director of Finance for EAN Holdings, LLC. We run the operations of Enterprise Rent-A-Car, National Car Rental and Alamo Rent-A-Car for the greater Houston area.

### MY CHILD ADVOCATES BOARD ROLES ARE...

I currently serve on the Board of Directors, as well as the Finance Committee.



**I AM INVOLVED WITH CHILD ADVOCATES, INC. BECAUSE...** In 2007, I was introduced to Child Advocates by Rick Burnett. Soon thereafter, I realized that the passion that the people involved with Child Advocates had was similar to the passion that I had for children. As a father of three little girls, I truly could not imagine them being hurt and not having someone on their side to stand up for them. Rick shared a very personal story with me and it truly changed my life.

**WHEN I AM NOT VOLUNTEERING FOR CHILD ADVOCATES...** My life seems to revolve around my family. I am married to an awesome woman (Brooke) and I have three girls, Taylor (11), Payton (8) and Jordan (6). We love to have family days together where we swim, watch movies or just hang out. In my personal free time, I enjoy running and biking and just recently finished my first half-marathon. My passion for hunting was renewed this past year when I went on the hunting trip that I won at the 2011 Pull for Kids. I was able to fly a childhood friend in and we went on an amazing hunt where we took home two trophy red stags.

# Special Thanks

**CAR PROS FOR KIDS** - Thank you to gsMarketing for the event collaterals and marketing materials.

**PULL FOR KIDS CLASSIC** - Thanks to ABC Home & Commercial Services for providing gun cleaning for over 400 participants; Alliance Graphics for printing all the underwriter letters, invitations and programs; AJ's Landscaping for the trees; Briley Manufacturing for supplying Gun "Goo"; Rhonda Brown for the flowers; Lenox BBQ and Catering for the 150 lbs. of meat; Randalls Food Markets, Inc. for the volunteer drinks; Rice Epicurean for the volunteer drinks; Royal Purple for supplying gun oil for 350 shooters; Whataburger for breakfast at the shoot; Whole Foods Market for volunteer meals.

We would also like to extend a special thank you to Summer Abunaja, Sylvester Bowden, William R. Livesay and Jan S. Mendenhall. Your special gifts provided brighter days for our children.

# YPC Update

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS FOR CHILDREN

## WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO...

Summer time was very busy for members of YPC. We recently hosted over 200 kids for a fun-filled day at the Houston Zoo. Children participated in a scavenger hunt and enjoyed the exhibits. It was quite an adventure! A special thanks to the Houston Zoo for making this event possible by generously donating 200 tickets.

In June, YPC members and their friends mixed and mingled at a social at Kung Fu Saloon. It was an entertaining evening filled with karaoke, games and drink specials. Thank you to Kung Fu Saloon for hosting us and for the extended happy hour. YPC Socials are a great opportunity to network and meet other members and are open to all. We encourage everyone to join in the fun.



## LOOKING AHEAD...



As fall sneaks up on us, make sure you save the date for November 10 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Cook-off for Kids. Join us as top restaurants from around the area battle it out for best chili bragging rights. Thank you to Hughes Hangar for hosting us again and to our Cook-off committee for your hard work. We are still securing sponsors and restaurants to make this year's event even better than the last, so if you or a company that you know of would like to participate, please email Stacy

Senko at [stacy.senko@childadvocates.org](mailto:stacy.senko@childadvocates.org). Our goal is to raise \$17,000 and with your support, we are well on our way. Stay tuned to our website and Facebook page for ticket information.

## GET INVOLVED WITH YPC!

Know of a company, organization or group that may be interested in hearing about YPC? Let us know by emailing [stacy.senko@childadvocates.org](mailto:stacy.senko@childadvocates.org). We'd love to get your friends involved!

Interested in getting in on the fun? Sign up on our website at [www.childadvocates.org/ypc](http://www.childadvocates.org/ypc) and 'Like' us on our Facebook fan page: [www.facebook.com/caiypc](http://www.facebook.com/caiypc)

# Happenings

## AUGUST

- 11 **Cameron Childspree** – Thank you to those who have signed up for this year's Childspree. We are heading back to Target to help over 600 children get ready to go back to school.
- 18 **Advocacy University Begins** – Sign up now for an orientation session to see how you can be the difference in the life of an abused child: [www.childadvocates.org](http://www.childadvocates.org).
- 30 **Flavorful FUNdraising Event with California Pizza Kitchen** – Click, print and eat at the California Pizza Kitchen near the Galleria area and 20% of your check will be donated to Child Advocates. Print out the Child Advocates flyer found on the calendar section online and present it to your server.

## SEPTEMBER

- 11 **Advocacy University Begins** – Sign up now for an orientation session to see how you can be the difference in the life of an abused child: [www.childadvocates.org](http://www.childadvocates.org). This special session of Advocacy University will be held during the day.
- 12 **Tory Burch Shopping Event** – Bring your friends to a special shopping experience at the Tory Burch boutique in the Galleria. Shop knowing 20% of the evenings sales will go directly back to Child Advocates.
- 29 **Deacons of Deadwood Annual Charity Gala** – Child Advocates is pleased to be a beneficiary of this year's gala. The evening of fun includes great food, live music at a concert venue, silent auction and pre- and after-parties! You can support us by purchasing a VIP table. For more information, email [kelly.goff@childadvocates.org](mailto:kelly.goff@childadvocates.org).

## OCTOBER

- 11 **YPC Children's Halloween Party** – It's sure to be a 'spooktacular' time for our kids at this special Halloween party. Kids of all ages will be making treats and have the opportunity to pick out a costume to take home with them. For more information, email [ypc@childadvocates.org](mailto:ypc@childadvocates.org).

## NOVEMBER

- 10 **Cook-off for Kids** – Join us at Hughes Hangar on Washington Avenue for the 2nd annual YPC Cook-off for Kids. For sponsorship or event information, please contact [stacy.senko@childadvocates.org](mailto:stacy.senko@childadvocates.org).

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**FOR DETAILS ON THE DATES LISTED HERE AND  
FOR ALL THE LATEST CALENDAR UPDATES, VISIT  
[WWW.CHILDADVOCATES.ORG/CALENDAR](http://WWW.CHILDADVOCATES.ORG/CALENDAR)**

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childadvocates®

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HOUSTON, TEXAS 77098  
713-529-1396  
www.childadvocates.org

## OUR MISSION

*Child Advocates, Inc. mobilizes court appointed volunteers to break the vicious cycle of child abuse. We speak up for abused children who are lost in the system and guide them into safe environments where they can thrive.*

# Thrive

## STAY STRONG, A POEM FROM 16-YEAR OLD AMBER

*Amber is currently being served by a court appointed advocate and has been in foster care since 2009. When she wrote this poem she was living in an emergency shelter. Since then, she has moved into a pre-adoptive placement and is awaiting formal adoption.*

I pour down like rain while I cry in pain. My Momma does her thing and ain't worried about nobody but her drug game. My brothers and sister also feel the pain. She tells us lies after lies and feels she ain't doing no wrong.

I'm just trying to make another day while I watch them see new bull that they shouldn't learn. But, that's how we have to survive in our life's journey. Momma says it will get better, but she's really only thinking about herself.

I wonder and wonder why she does what she does, and wonder 'why me' and why I have to go through this bull, too.

My brothers and sister don't need this. All they need is an education, attention, love, more days in the park and lots more smiles.

I pray when I can and know God can help me, I know that he can. What I'm going through is probably just for my own good. But, I'm tired of being strong.

Every day I feel like I'm breaking, but I have to stay strong to survive. Gotta keep my head up and believe.

I'm ready to move on, but my past won't leave me alone and my heart screams out – help!

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Ashley Brockette, Editor*

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