

Summer activities kicked off in May, with Independent Living's annual Graduation Celebration! This event honors our graduates from every county in Alabama's foster care. The celebration was hosted in the heart of Montgomery, at the beautiful Capital City Club. Attendees were treated to an outstanding inspirational speaker, a delicious meal, special awards, and



this fantastic gift of encouragement, made possible by your generous donations gifted through our [Grad Bag Campaign](#).

Next, CAS hosted THREE outstanding camps! Independent Living holds a camp for youth in foster care ages 14 - 16, and another for youth ages 17 - 21. The camps are informative and fun! This year, both CAMP LIFE experiences took place on the campus of Troy University.

Our Independent Living team shares a standout memory from Camp Life 2023;

SAM WHITLEY



During our second camp, we had a camper that made a lasting impact on everyone! He was very charismatic. We always have a fun dance the final night of camp. At the dance, he sang karaoke, danced and had a great time getting everyone hyped up. CAMP LIFE also synced up with his birthday this year. Our DREAM Ambassadors and a few other campers wanted to do something special for him. We positioned him in front of everyone to sing one last karaoke song, and then everyone at camp sang "Happy Birthday" to him. He was completely surprised! He cried and told everyone, "This is the best day of my life."

Then, CAMP APAC closed out our summer camp season. CAMP APAC hosts adoptees ages 12 to 18, along with their siblings (birth and foster siblings living in the same household). Camp Chandler was this year's campsite and it was incredible!



A message from one of our all-star CAMP APAC staffers, who also happens to be a camp alum;

ANDREA MONTGOMERY

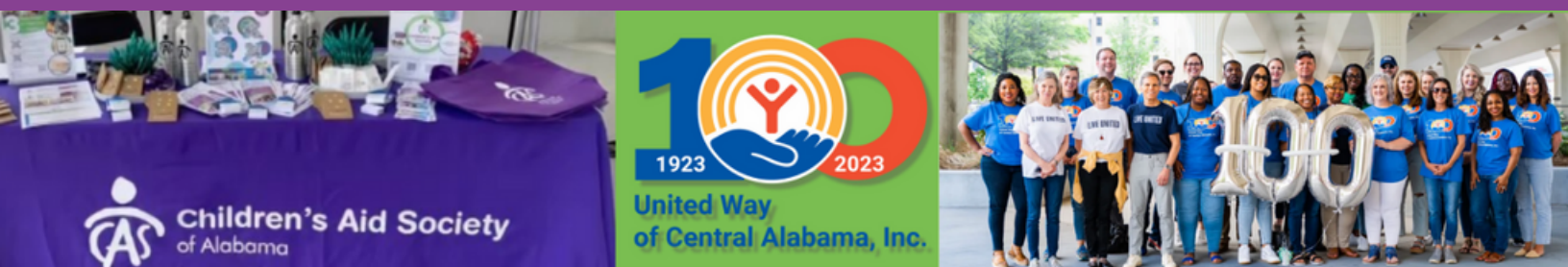
My older brother and I were removed from our birth mother's care when I was a month old. We were placed in foster care, where we remained for 15 years. We lived in a total of 19 different foster and group homes in two different states, Alabama and New York. In 2007 my brother and I were separated. The separation from my brother caused me to suffer from depression and anxiety. My assigned social worker from The Department of Human Resources noticed I needed some sort of counseling or mentoring. She reached out to my foster mother to let her know she would be requesting services from Children's Aid Society. Children's Aid Society/APAC assigned a counselor to me. She suggested I attend camp APAC. She told me it would be something of a mini vacation for me and would enjoy it. Once I arrived at camp, I discovered it was for children just like me. It was more than just having fun at camp. I was able to attend each year after that first experience.

Not to sound cliché, but Camp APAC and the entire Children's Aid Society helped me through one of the toughest times in my life. Before attending camp, I felt no one could possibly understand what I was going through. Camp APAC helped lift my spirits. I was a student in middle school during my first camp, and I met a girl who was having some of the same experiences as me. It was one of the first times I understood that there were others facing some of the same challenges. I remember being so happy during my first camp and so upset when it ended. When I aged out of being a camper, I promised I would come back as much as I could. Every January I look for my staffer invite and make sure to turn it back in immediately! It brings me great joy watching these kids enjoy themselves. I always say attending Camp APAC is one of my greatest pleasures in life. When I reminisce about my childhood, I always remember camp fondly.

APAC has always been there for me. I'm truly grateful to have everyone at Children's Aid Society in my life. Camp was so life-changing to me as a child. Seeing children become so excited about a few days makes it all worth it. Every year I get to meet some of the most amazing children. Camp APAC really does make a difference in the lives of so many people.



2023 Camp APAC Summer Staff and APAC Team Members



CAS in the Community

We were happy to join in the United Way of Central Alabama's centennial celebration as a founding partner, we're honored to be a part of this great legacy! We've participated in numerous events and conferences across the state to spread the word about CAS programs and services, as well as to recruit families for Alabama's waiting children. We're pleased to report that APAC helped 20 children match with 16 families and 25 children have had their adoptions finalized with 20 families by the close of June. With over 200 waiting children in our state, we need your help to create even more forever families. Please tell your friends and family to contact apac@childrensaid.org for more information.

Our Child Trafficking Solutions Project team has been busy hosting trainings to inform and prepare organizations and communities to help counter child trafficking and support survivors. If you would like to bring their training to your organization, contact ctspjan@childrensaid.org.

If your group or business is hosting an event that CAS should be aware of, please let us know! Contact cas@childrensaid.org to share details with us.

You're Invited to Attend APAC's Trained Therapist Network, (TTN) Training Event, with the Acclaimed Jules Alvarado

Alabama Pre/Post Adoption Connections Presents:

From **CHAOS** to **Calm**:

Finding Our Anchors During Turbulent Times

with Jules Alvarado

Montgomery: 8/22

Birmingham: 8/24

Virtual: 8/24

TTN

Trained
Therapist
Network



www.childreinsaid.org/ttn

IN-PERSON (MONTGOMERY)

8/22/24

IN-PERSON (BIRMINGHAM)

8/24/24

ONLINE (LIVE VIRTUAL)

8/24/24



United Way
of Central Alabama, Inc.

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Thank You for Supporting CAS!