

# THE POWER OF HOPE:

YOUR IMPACT GUIDE

2025-2026



Child Advocates of Montgomery County stands at the intersection of compassion and circumstance to provide hope for the most vulnerable children and families in our community. We provide support, knowledge, and guidance 1) for prevention through community education, and 2) through volunteer advocacy, for every child we serve.

## OUR MISSION

Child Advocates of Montgomery County empowers vulnerable children through volunteer advocacy and strengthens their family and community with education, so they can flourish in a safe, nurturing environment.

## OUR VISION

Our vision is a connected community where children and families thrive, and together we work to eliminate childhood trauma, abuse, and neglect.

## OUR IMPACT

**10,600+**

Children served since our program began in Montgomery County in 1992

IN 2024

**215** volunteer Advocates served **380** children

**100%**

Percentage of children in foster care in our county provided with an Advocate

**177,137**

Miles driven in service to children

**15,868**

Volunteer hours given

**4,520**

Community members trained in TBRI® (including 2,879 teachers in 9 Montgomery County schools)





# UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN AT RISK

Children at risk of needing services are often referred to as “children from hard places” or those who have experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). These children have faced difficult circumstances early in life, such as abuse, neglect, or household dysfunction, which significantly impact their development and well-being.

Every child we serve in the child welfare system is a child from a “hard place,” facing complex challenges that require comprehensive support. As our volunteer advocacy efforts have expanded to include children and youth involved in the juvenile justice and truancy systems, we have observed that they encounter many of the same struggles and circumstances. These children and families share common social challenges, unmet needs, and a lack of resources, which compound their difficulties and create seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

While the child welfare system provides some scaffolding of support for parents, foster families, and kinship placements, the youth and families involved in the juvenile justice and truancy systems often lack such support. They face higher instances of food insecurity and poverty, leaving them isolated and unaware of available help. Families are often lost and unsure of how to find and access the resources they need. It is crucial to identify who can help and where these families can find someone to lend a hand and lift them up, ensuring that all children, regardless of their circumstances, receive the support they need to thrive.

The overlap between children involved in the child welfare system, those struggling with truancy and school participation, and youth in the juvenile justice system is significant and deeply concerning. Research shows that children in the child welfare system are at a heightened risk of becoming involved in the juvenile justice system, often referred to as “crossover youth.” Studies indicate that up to 50% of youth in the juvenile justice system have a history of involvement with child welfare services. As mentioned, these children frequently face adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), such as abuse, neglect, and household instability, which contribute to behavioral challenges and disengagement from school. Truancy and poor school participation often serve as early warning signs of deeper systemic issues, creating a pathway that can lead to justice system involvement.

Additionally, frequent placement disruptions and instability within the foster care system exacerbate these challenges. Youth who experience multiple foster care placements are more likely to struggle academically and socially, increasing their likelihood of truancy and eventual justice system involvement. For example, children in foster care are twice as likely to be suspended or expelled from school compared to their peers. This cycle highlights the urgent need for coordinated efforts between child welfare, education, and juvenile justice systems to address shared risk factors and provide comprehensive support. By breaking down silos and fostering collaboration, we can better serve these vulnerable youth populations.





“Societal compassion is reserved for the youngest and most grievously injured children. No one holds the battered infant accountable.

“But by the time those same children reach the public school system and begin gobbling up limited special education money, compassion starts to wear thin.

“And when the big problems of neglected and abused children emerge, and the mental health and criminal justice system get involved, even the illusion of caring for these children is gone.

“They transform from innocent victim to offender status as soon as they hit puberty.”

- Kathy Harrison, *Another Place at the Table*





## CHILDREN AT RISK

**Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% or more of school days due to any reason.** Therefore, chronic absenteeism rates include both excused and unexcused absences. Chronic absenteeism limits academic potential and ultimately life outcomes for many students.

Missing just  
**10%**

of school days in an academic year is associated with reading difficulties in the third grade, leading to lower levels of academic achievement.

As early as  
**6th grade**

chronic absenteeism becomes an indicator for high school dropout, which can perpetuate limited life opportunities for students.

**\$819**

Financial cost per student missing 10% of the school year. Cumulative financial loss to school districts serving Montgomery County exceeds \$14,840.

A student arrested in school is

**2X**

as likely not to graduate.

Students arrested in the 9th and 10th grades were

**6-8X**

more likely than non-arrested students to drop out of high school, and **3.5 times** more likely to drop out in grades 9 and 10.

Youth without a high school diploma or GED are

**4.5X**

more likely to experience homelessness than those with at least a high school diploma or GED.

High school dropouts are

**3.5X**

more likely to be arrested in their lifetime and

**63%**

more likely to be incarcerated than their peers with four-year college degrees.

**75%**

Re-arrest rates of youth within three years after confinement within a juvenile justice facility.

Young adults who experienced any suspension and who **DID NOT** complete a high school education reported logged odds of incarceration that were

**164% greater**

than those ever-suspended young adults **WITH** a high school education.

Our Educational Advocacy Program aims to keep students from entering the juvenile justice system and is an important step in curbing the flow of the school-to-prison pipeline and making sure they can get their lives back on track.





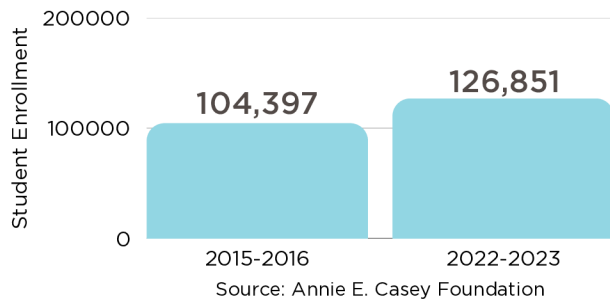
# CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM AND STUDENTS AT RISK

## DEFINING STUDENTS AT RISK:

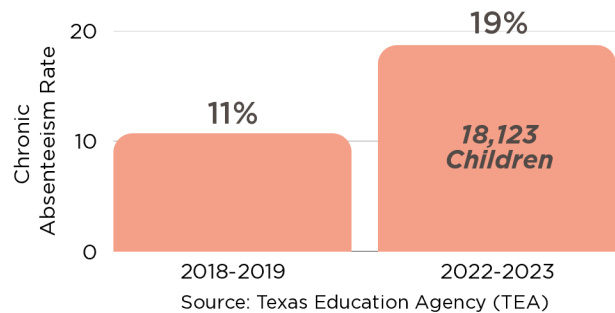
At-risk students are students who have been identified as being in danger of academic failure in terms of dropping out of school. The at-risk designation includes:

- those who did not perform satisfactorily in kindergarten through 3rd grade,
- did not maintain 70% in grades 7-12 in two or more subjects,
- were not allowed to advance a grade one or more years,
- are pregnant,
- are placed in alternative education program,
- are involved in the juvenile justice system,
- are in the custody of the Department of Family and Protective Services,
- are homeless, and/or residing in an alternative placement facility for the current or previous year.

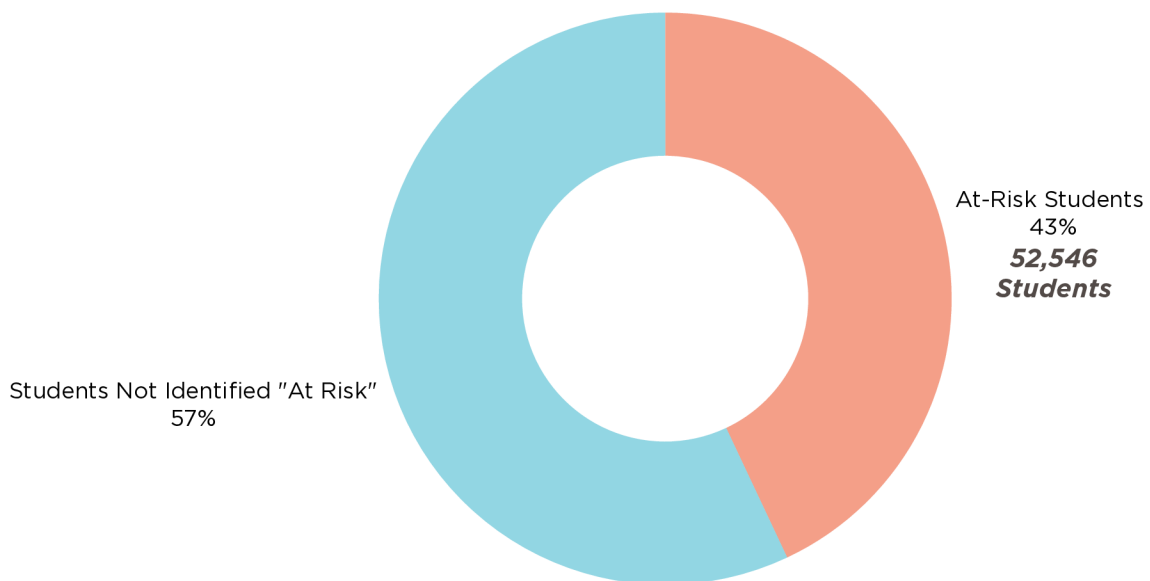
## Enrollment Growth in Montgomery County, Texas Schools



## Average Chronic Absenteeism Rates in Montgomery County, Texas Schools



## Percentage of Students At Risk\* in Montgomery County, Texas School Districts

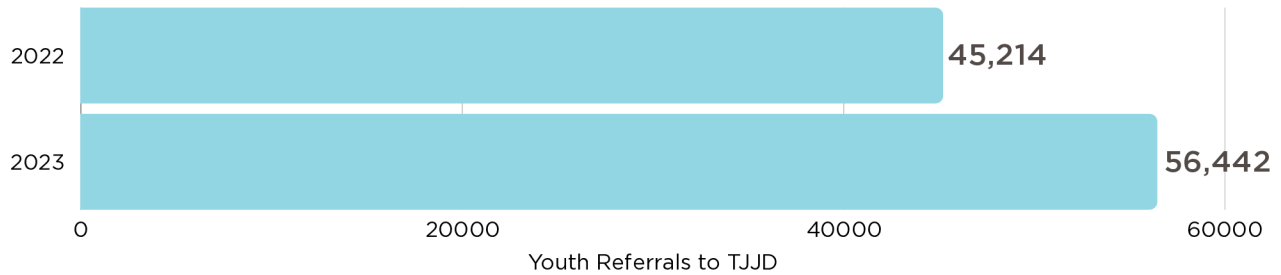


\*Growth rate of 20.5% since 2019-20



# JUVENILE JUSTICE-RELATED CHALLENGES

## Texas Juvenile Justice Department Youth Referrals

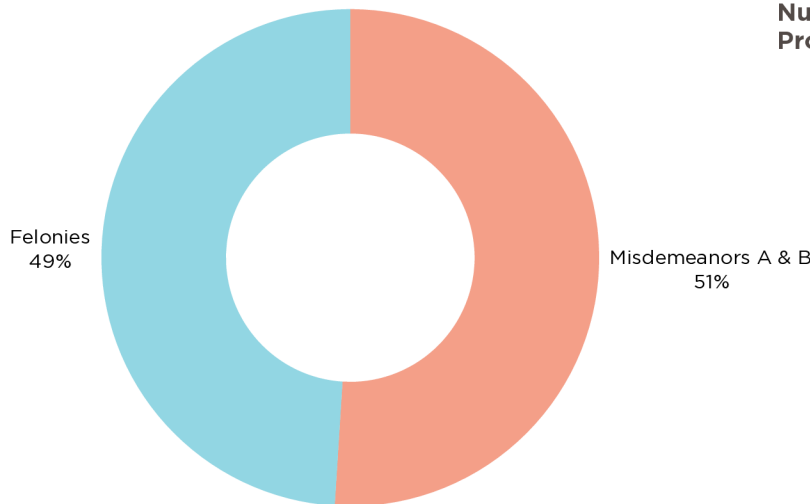


Source: Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD)  
33% increase in referrals from the 2021 calendar year

## 2024 Referrals to Juvenile Justice in Montgomery County, Texas

**Total Referrals: 1,216**

**Number Adjudicated (Sentenced) to Probation: 159**

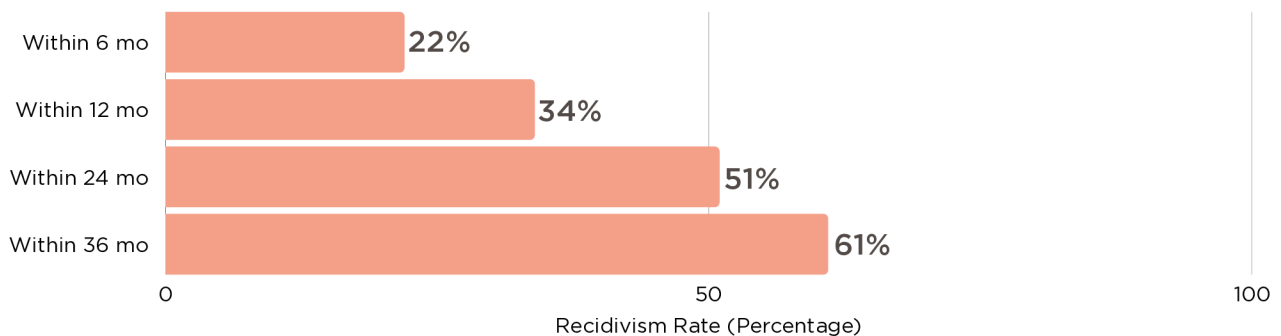


Source: Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD)

### ADJUDICATED TO PROBATION:

- A juvenile who has been found to have engaged in delinquent conduct is formally placed on probation under the supervision of the juvenile court for a specified period.
- The juvenile has been adjudicated and placed on probation in the child's own home or in the custody of a relative or other fit person.
- The juvenile may be required to participate in a variety of appropriate programmatic services (e.g., counseling, community services) and may also be subject to other reasonable court-ordered restrictions or conditions.

## Recidivism Rates for Justice-Involved Youth (not served by an Advocate)



Source: Department of Juvenile Justice, Virginia



## OUR PROGRAMS

### Volunteer Advocacy for Children

100% of the children served by volunteer Advocates are children and youth from “hard places.” Advocates provide valuable information and assistance to help ensure a child’s best interests are met.

#### **CHILD WELFARE ADVOCACY:**

Court Appointed Special Advocates® (CASA) supporting children in foster care whose families are involved in the child welfare system

#### **JUSTICE-INVOLVED YOUTH ADVOCACY:**

Court Appointed Special Advocates® (CASA) supporting youth involved in the juvenile justice system

#### **EDUCATIONAL ADVOCACY (Truancy Prevention):**

Volunteer Advocates supporting youth struggling with school attendance or participation

Advocates stay by a child’s side and remain a consistent presence throughout each case.

### Prevention Services

#### **COMMUNITY EDUCATION:**

Child Advocates of Montgomery County’s TBRI® & Community Education Division focuses on prevention services by providing training, coaching, and resources to various groups, including parents, caregivers, schools, government agencies, businesses, and nonprofit organizations. Both community training and individualized coaching cover crucial topics such as “Understanding Children from Hard Places and Trust-Based Relational Intervention® (TBRI®)” and “Child Trafficking and Exploitation Prevention.” These programs aim to equip community members with the knowledge and tools needed to support vulnerable children.

#### **EDUCATIONAL ADVOCACY:**

The Educational Advocacy Division offers prevention services through the efforts of Student Success Advocates (SSAs). SSAs are designated by schools or requested by parents to assist youth who are facing challenges with school attendance or participation. By providing targeted support, SSAs help students overcome barriers to their education, ensuring they have the opportunity to succeed academically and personally. This division plays a vital role in addressing the educational needs of at-risk youth and fostering a supportive environment for their growth and development.



# OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE HOPE

## The Research-Verified Impact of Volunteer Advocates\*

- Children served by Advocates reported significantly higher levels of hope. A child's hope has been linked to numerous positive outcomes such as academic success, overall well-being, increases in self-control, positive social relationships, and optimism.
- Children served by Advocates are more likely to have better outcomes: children tended to perform better academically and behaviorally in school as measured by whether they passed all of their courses, whether or not they were expelled, and their conduct performance.
- Advocates are a proven asset in juvenile justice settings.
- Advocates reduce (re)offending occurrences.
- Advocates build academic confidence.
- Advocates connect youth with positive adult support.
- Courts and counties should invest in Court Appointed Special Advocates expansion to enhance rehabilitative outcomes for youth on probation.

### Implications:

- Child Advocates volunteers offer cost-effective, scalable support to schools and probation departments.
- Child Advocates volunteers enhance youth engagement, academic focus, and compliance.
- Potential to transform probation from surveillance to support.
- Judges can play a critical role in integration by appointing Advocates early in a case.

### Children with an Advocate showed statistically significant improvements in:

- Academic self-efficacy.
- Recidivism Reduction (both new charges and probation violations).

\*Ryan, J. P. (2025). From advocacy to outcomes: A randomized controlled trial of CASA in juvenile justice. *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*, 00, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jfcj.70004>

## Programs Positioned for Growth

Child Advocates of Montgomery County is making strides to positively influence the lives of children in need, but **the success of our mission relies heavily on the ability to expand our programs**—particularly the justice-involved youth advocacy and educational advocacy programs.

Despite our current, stable funding, we are only able to support a limited percentage of post-adjudicated youth, serving approximately 40 out of 200 cases in 2024 with volunteer Advocates. Each Advocacy Specialist can oversee around 20 cases with the help of volunteer Advocates, and the organization currently has two Specialists dedicated to JIY cases.

A similar situation exists within our educational advocacy program, where two Advocacy Specialists managed a significant number of cases last year. **The potential of the Educational Advocacy Program is especially vast, given its reach beyond court-involved cases**, with increasing demand from parents across six Montgomery County school districts. To address more cases and extend our impactful services, Child Advocates of Montgomery County needs additional staff, requiring greater funding to support and sustain the growth of these vital programs.



# OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE HOPE

## A Path Forward



### CHALLENGES

- Only nonprofit serving children in the juvenile justice and education systems with volunteer Advocates.
- Would like to serve 100% of post-adjudicated children in Montgomery County. We currently serve only 20%.
- Future goal to serve pre-adjudicated children with life skills classes and TBRI® training for children and families.
- Schools are increasing their requests for support in both Educational Advocacy and TBRI® training.
- Much of the community does not recognize childhood trauma or its impact.
- Advocacy program models have historically been response-focused.



### SOLUTIONS

- Provide funding to transition our Justice-Involved Youth and Educational Advocacy initiatives from pilot programs to permanent, sustainable efforts.
- Provide funding to allow our TBRI® & Community Education division to effectively accommodate growing training requests and ensure the delivery of high-quality educational programs.
- Enhance volunteer outreach to increase the number of Advocates supporting growing populations.
- Offer TBRI® coaching to all families.
- Expand Collaborative Family Engagement practices to Justice-Involved Youth and Educational Advocacy cases.
- Enhance support to schools through Educational Advocacy.
- Expand community trauma education for prevention and early intervention, becoming recognized as a local and national thought leader.



### IMPACT

- 100% of children and families served by a volunteer Advocate (in child welfare, juvenile justice, or educational advocacy capacities) in Montgomery County will be offered TBRI® coaching services by Child Advocates.
- Increased services and support provided to children and families affected by trauma, resulting in better long-term outcomes.
- Increased life skills and system navigation support for teens and parents, resulting in greater confidence, independence, and access to essential resources.
- A truly "Resilience-Focused" Montgomery County, Texas, where the needs of traumatized children are recognized and addressed proactively.
- Transition program models to proactive, prevention-focused approach.

## Campaign Objectives



A county able to effectively care for and support children and families who are at risk of system involvement and impacted by trauma.



Intervention through advocacy and community education to disrupt the path to involvement with the juvenile justice or criminal justice systems, dropping out of high school, homelessness, etc.



Increased access to trauma-informed education and support services for children, families, educators, and community stakeholders.



## GIVING LEVELS & NAMING RIGHTS

Generous recognition benefits and naming rights associated with the programs provided by Child Advocates of Montgomery County are available at various levels of giving. All levels include recognition on the Child Advocates website and annual impact report. Please review our list of giving levels and naming rights below. Naming rights for critical programs are available in one-year, two-year, or three-year terms.

### **\$1 MILLION**

Name one of the following programs for three (3) years:

- Justice-Involved Youth Advocacy Program
- Educational Advocacy Program
- TBRI® & Community Education Program

### **\$500,000**

Name one of the following programs for two (2) years:

- Child Welfare Advocacy Program
- TBRI® & Community Education Program

### **\$250,000**

Name the following initiative for one (1) year:

- TBRI® Individualized Coaching Initiative for families and caregivers

### **\$100,000**

Name the following initiative for one (1) year:

- Child Trafficking & Exploitation Prevention Training Initiative

### **\$50,000**

Name the following initiative for one (1) year:

- Restorative Justice Pilot Initiative (*beginning in 2026*)
- Life Skills Training Program for Youth and Families (*beginning in 2026*)

### **\$25,000**

Name the following initiative for one (1) year:

- Food Pantry to meet critical, immediate needs for families (*next available for 2026-2027*)
- Children's Library (*next available for 2026-2027*)
- School Supply Event





# GIVING LEVELS & NAMING RIGHTS

## **\$50,000**

Name one of the following areas:  
Garden Pavilion  
Front Veranda

## **\$30,000**

Name one of the following areas:  
Carriage House Veranda  
Large Garden Statue (*2 available*)

## **\$25,000**

Name one of the following areas:  
Magnolia Tree and Jasmine Garden  
Grand Entry featuring Karyn Purvis Murals  
Angel Statue (*1 available*)

## **\$20,000**

Name one of the following areas:  
Building Welcome Center (*front office*)  
Sunset Porch/Reading Nook  
Medium Garden Statue (*3 available*)

## **\$15,000**

Name one of the following areas:  
Community Kitchen  
Small Garden Statue (*2 available*)

## **\$10,000**

Name one of the following areas for three (3) years:  
Program Office Space (*5 available*)  
Bench Swing under Garden Pergola

## **\$5,000**

Name one of the following for three (3) years:  
Front Porch Rocking Chair (*4 available*)

## **\$1,000-\$4,999**

Friend of Child Advocates:  
Name on Plaque displayed at Child Advocates of Montgomery County





# PLEDGE FORM

## Statement of Intent

I am / We are pleased to state my / our intention to make a pledge of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to Child Advocates of Montgomery County.

I/we wish my/our gift to go toward \_\_\_\_\_ *(choose naming rights opportunity)* or to the next highest and best interest of Child Advocates of Montgomery County as determined by the Board.

**I / We acknowledge that my / our gift is considered “unrestricted” and may be applied to Child Advocates’ general operating expenses.**

## Contact Information

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## Donor Listing

I / We prefer to be included in donor lists as follows:

\_\_\_\_\_

I / We wish to remain completely anonymous.

I / We wish to remain anonymous within our giving level.

## Pledge Payment Schedule

I / We elect to pay committed pledge over \_\_\_ One year \_\_\_ Two years (if applicable)  
\_\_\_ Three years (if applicable)

Please find a payment of \$\_\_\_\_\_ enclosed.

I / We prefer to make payments: \_\_\_ Quarterly \_\_\_ Semi-annually \_\_\_ Annually

Pledge payment each period: \$\_\_\_\_\_ Starting: Month\_\_\_\_\_ Year\_\_\_\_\_

This gift will be made in the form of (cash, securities, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

This gift will be matched by: \_\_\_\_\_

This pledge is / is not binding on my / our estate.

*Pledge Form continued on next page...*



## *Pledge Form Continued*

### **Signatures**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Donor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### **Please return to:**

Child Advocates of Montgomery County  
ATTN: Ann Marie Ronsman, President & CEO  
505 N. Main Street  
Conroe, Texas 77301

### **Accepted on behalf of Child Advocates of Montgomery County**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*For more information, please contact:  
Ann Marie Ronsman, President & CEO  
936-441-5437  
AnnMarie@ChildAdvocatesTexas.org.*



**CHILD  
ADVOCATES**  
OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

## **Our Mission**

To empower vulnerable children through volunteer advocacy and strengthen their family and community with education, so they can flourish in a safe, nurturing environment.

505 N. MAIN STREET | CONROE, TEXAS 77301  
TEL 936.441.5437 | [CHILDADVOCATESTEXAS.ORG](http://CHILDADVOCATESTEXAS.ORG)