



CASA Key Messages

10-Second Elevator Speech

CASA stands for Court Appointed Special Advocates. We are a national organization of volunteers that judges appoint to speak for the safety and well-being of abused and neglected children.

10-Seconds More

By being independent investigators and advocates, our volunteers can make all the difference in these children's lives. One example: research shows children with a CASA volunteer are much less likely to languish in long term foster care.

Key Facts About Our Cause

1. CASA is unique, the only program where everyday citizens are appointed by judges to speak up for a child's safety and well-being.
2. Children assigned to CASA volunteers are victims of abuse and neglect.
3. CASA is a national cause with 68,000 volunteers in over 970 locations across the country. Last year, we served about a quarter million children, about one-third of the over 780,000 children in foster care.
4. CASA volunteers come from all walks of life. You do not have to be a lawyer or social worker to volunteer. We welcome volunteers from all cultures, professions, ethnic and educational backgrounds. Roughly half of our volunteers work full time.
5. CASA volunteers are well trained, with no less than 30 hours training prior to being assigned to a case. Volunteers are well supported by local CASA program staff with professional backgrounds in the legal and child welfare fields.
6. Judges, attorneys, child welfare workers and parents overwhelmingly report that volunteers make a difference with the children they serve.

Key Benefits of CASA Advocacy

1. Children with a CASA volunteer are half as likely to spend time in long-term foster care, defined as more than three years in care.
2. Cases involving a CASA volunteer are more likely to be permanently closed. Fewer than 10% of children with a CASA volunteer re-enter the foster care system.
3. CASA volunteers spend most of their volunteer time in contact with a child. They generally handle just one or two cases at a time so that they can give each child's case the *sustained, personal* attention he or she deserves. To a child, that means a consistent and caring adult presence in his or her life.
4. CASA advocacy saves taxpayer dollars. If the median length of stay were shortened for children in foster care by just *one month*, it would realize a national savings to taxpayers of approximately \$2.75 billion.