

# THE POWERFUL VOICE!

News for champions of CASA children

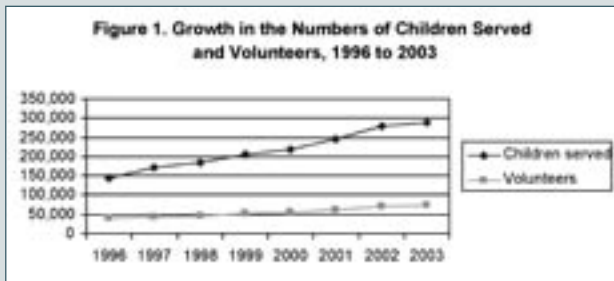
VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2 — FALL 2004

## By the Numbers—2003

### CASA Network Services

Following are service levels provided by the 932 local and state CASA programs around the country in 2003:

- Volunteers recruited, trained, supervised and supported by CASA programs ..... 73,860
- Abused and neglected children served... 288,460
- Volunteer hours contributed by advocates ..... 9,921,360



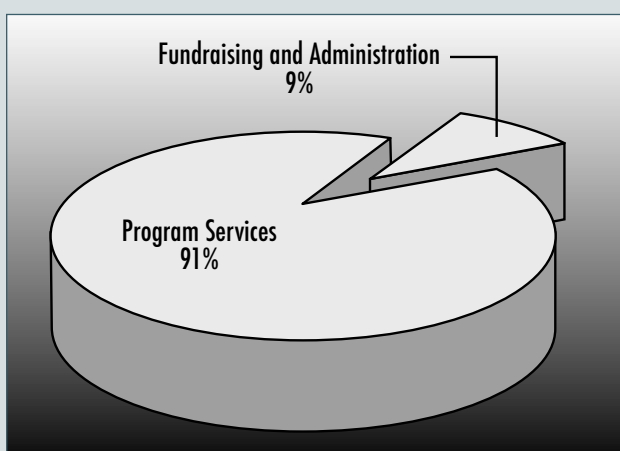
### National CASA Services

The following numbers help to quantify the services provided by National CASA to our member programs nationwide in 2003:

- Local programs' requests for technical assistance completed by phone/e-mail .... 27,275
- Technical assistance publications/documents distributed..... 36,871
- Number of visitor sessions on CASAnet.org and nationalcasa.org ..... 883,599
- Number of grants awarded to local and state CASA programs ..... 219
- Dollar amount of grants awarded to local and state CASA programs..... \$7,042,080
- Training sessions sponsored or presented ..... 149
- Persons trained ..... 3,436
- In-person technical assistance visits (in addition to trainings) ..... 97

### Use of Funding

91 cents of every dollar contributed goes directly to program services benefiting abused and neglected children nationwide.



## Report Affirms CASA's Impact on Children



— Michael S. Piraino  
National CASA CEO

The Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care was established to improve outcomes for abused and neglected children—particularly to expedite placement into safe, permanent, nurturing families and to prevent unnecessary placements in foster care. On May 18th, the Commission released its report “Fostering the Future: Safety, Permanence and Well-Being for Children in Foster Care” (available online at [pewfostercare.org](http://pewfostercare.org)).

One of the report's specific recommendations is for Congress to appropriate additional funding to expand volunteer advocacy into communities where there are high unmet needs of children.

The Pew Commission was launched in May 2003 with support from the Pew Charitable Trusts provided to the Georgetown University Public Policy Institute. The Commission is chaired by former Congressman Bill Frenzel, with former Congressman William H. Gray, III as Vice Chairman. The prestigious, bipartisan nature of the committee ensures that Congress will seriously consider its recommendations.

The report contains many recommendations for reforming the financing of child welfare services and court oversight of child welfare cases. It also provides a powerful endorsement of the CASA mission and our volunteers' advocacy for children:

“Neither judges nor attorneys will always have the time and resources to provide the in-depth information courts need to make fully informed decisions about children's well-being. **Therefore, we recommend an expansion of the Court Appointed Special Advocate Program (CASA).** This community-based program recruits, trains, and supervises volunteers to conduct investigations and make recommendations to the court that focus on meeting the best interests of the child. These volunteers have the time, training, and commitment to listen carefully to children and to the adults who care for them, and to report their findings and recommendations to judges.”

CASA is the only program singled out in the report as already improving the court system, let alone for additional funding. Once again, we can take pride in our mission and the work of our advocates—and in our supporters, who make it all possible. ■



## Board Member Profile - Patty Maribona

Patty Maribona has been a National CASA board member since 2002, but the rights and safety of America's youth have been a passion for her since her high school days. Patty first volunteered in Miami at the Children's Home Society and then moved on to volunteer with the local CASA/GAL program when she was still in college. She says that during this time, she saw first-hand how significantly “a volunteer can change a child's life.” Patty sees the role of the CASA volunteer as being one of helping to navigate the child welfare system; as the child's advocate, the CASA volunteer “sees issues and thoroughly explores available resources” to benefit that child.

An attorney by training, Patty worked with a large law firm in New York before moving on to executive positions with a large media company and her current employer, a Wall Street financial services firm. While she does not mind the long hours she puts in at her job, she has long sought to balance that with work on behalf of children; the National CASA board has been an excellent fit for her in that respect. “I wanted to work at the national level because of the opportunity to effect change for an even larger number of youth. A larger CASA network, meaning more communities getting involved, is vital. This is what we do at National CASA. We're a good investment.”

Patty has been inspired by the commitment and energy of her fellow board members. According to her, “my board colleagues at CASA have a passion for their work. We do not sit around patting each other's backs. We work and we work hard!” And Patty feels that there is much work left to do. “We see plenty of success stories, and they are great. But for me the stories of kids in communities where there isn't a CASA program are even more potent. These children need CASA volunteers too. There is always another kid needing a safe home.”

As for the issue of whether to support a national organization or the local and state affiliates, Patty believes that support on any level will help to accomplish the same long-term goal—to serve every child in need of a CASA volunteer and provide a better outcome for that child as a result. “So many people care. And we all—local, state and national—work toward one goal: safe homes for children. Everybody needs to be thinking about individuals, companies and foundations that can support this work. In this way, every day YOU can be an advocate for CASA!” ■



I am often asked if it breaks my heart...it fills it.  
I am often asked if I think I made a difference...I know that I do.  
I am often asked if I have any regrets...only that I didn't begin sooner.  
Some say that this little girl is lucky to have me in her life.  
The truth is...the blessing is mine.

— RoAnne Hubbard, CASA Volunteer  
CASA of New Hampshire



## National Light of Hope Event Celebrated in New York

National CASA's Light of Hope event was held on April 1, 2004, kicking off a series of companion events at local CASA programs across the country. The national event was sponsored by Jewelers for Children and took place in New York City's Bryant Park. The primary goal of the Light of Hope events is to promote greater awareness of child abuse issues and of the CASA concept, ultimately resulting in more children served through the recruitment of significant numbers of new volunteers and program supporters throughout the CASA network.

Event spokespersons Marlee Matlin and Judge Glenda Hatchett aided our efforts to obtain coverage on network and cable television news shows, radio networks, and a variety of other media, with a total media reach of over 30 million impressions.



—Enjoying the Light of Hope reception were (left to right): Pattie Light, Jewelers for Children; Michael Piraino, National CASA CEO; Actress Marlee Matlin; National CASA Spokesperson Judge Glenda Hatchett; and Michael D. Pollack, CBS.

The centerpiece of the event was a display of 8,775 candles, symbolizing the average number of abuse and neglect reports made each day in the United States. Several children's musical groups performed throughout the day.

The daytime event was preceded by an evening reception on March 31 for CASA supporters. National CASA honored CBS and Jewelers for Children for their outstanding support of CASA during the past year. CBS has generously provided airtime valued at millions of dollars for a CASA public service announcement featuring *The Guardian* star Simon Baker. Jewelers for Children is partnering with National CASA on an initiative to provide the tools and support to local CASA programs to recruit and retain enough volunteers to serve an additional 25,000 children. ■



**JEWELERS FOR CHILDREN**  
A GIFT OF LOVE FOR CHILDREN IN NEED

## Someone There for Me



“To give a child a CASA is to give them a voice. To give them a voice is to give them hope, and to give them hope is to give them the world.”

—Pamela Butler in National CASA's new book, *Someone There for Me: Everyday Heroes Through the Eyes of Teens in Foster Care*

Learn first-hand how having a caring advocate in their lives helped these youth triumph over adversity. Their moving stories are compiled in this inspiring book available from National CASA. The book is our gift to all donors making a donation of \$100 or more to National CASA through the end of 2004, and it may also be purchased at [shopcasa.org](http://shopcasa.org). ■



For more information about this book and other CASA merchandise, you can visit [ShopCASA.org](http://ShopCASA.org).



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The process is simple: ask if your company has a matching gift program. If so, obtain a matching gift form from your personnel office or matching gift coordinator, fill it out completely and send it along with your contribution to the National CASA Association.

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We speak for the best interests of abused and neglected children who are involved in the juvenile courts. The National Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Association works with state and local CASA and volunteer guardian ad litem programs to promote and support quality volunteer advocacy to help assure each child a safe, permanent, nurturing home.

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