

THE POWERFUL VOICE!

News for champions of CASA children



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By the Numbers—2005

CASA Network Services

The primary measure of the work of local and state CASA/GAL programs around the country in 2005 is the **226,204** abused and neglected children who received advocacy services from CASA volunteers (an increase of 20% from 2004). These services were provided by **53,847** volunteers recruited, trained, supervised and supported by staff in **948** local and state CASA program offices.

National CASA Services

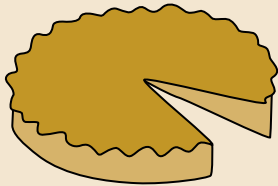
The following numbers help to quantify some of the services provided by National CASA to our member programs nationwide in 2005:

Local programs' requests for consultation or assistance completed by phone/email . . .	43,783
Program assistance publications/documents distributed	36,987
In-person program assistance visits (in addition to trainings)	78
Number of grants awarded to local and state CASA programs	276
Dollar amount of grants disbursed to local and state CASA programs	\$8,702,280
Training sessions sponsored or presented . .	106
Persons trained	6,905
Visitor sessions on casanet.org & nationalcasa.org websites	1,322,362

The Value of Your Investment

Our low administrative and fundraising costs enabled us to once again direct over 90% of our funding to program services in 2005.

National CASA is highly cost-effective in its work on behalf of abused and neglected children.



I don't know what I would have done without my CASA volunteer, Ms. Jane. When I was having troubles or feeling sad, she would comfort me and tell

me to think about happier times. That was very important. But, most of all, Ms. Jane helped me get a nice new home.

Children like me need CASA volunteers, 'cause they help children who are having trouble with their old homes. They help make things better.

—Kiaya, 11

Read more of Kiaya's story in National CASA's 2005 annual report. You can see it online at nationalcasa.org, or call 800-628-3233 to request your copy by mail.

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Thinking "One Child at a Time" While Growing to Serve All Abused Children

—Mimi Feller
National CASA President and Retired
Senior Vice President of Public Affairs and
Government Relations, Gannett Company

When I was in my late 20s, my life revolved around working for US Senator John Chafee and getting a law degree at night. I hoped that someday I could start a children's legal assistance clinic, through which abused and displaced youth could have a say in their futures.

Imagine my surprise when sometime around 1990 a grant request came in to the Gannett Foundation from a local CASA program. I still remember the photograph that came with the request: taken from behind, the picture showed a CASA volunteer with her arm around a very young child, both of them facing the judge. How tiny and afraid that little boy would have felt without his friend by his side. I was hooked.

Sometimes the horror stories of child abuse can be overwhelming. As we search for solutions, the refrain "one child at a time" can sometimes bring clarity to our pursuit. This is what you make possible as CASA supporters, enabling our 50,000-plus advocates to look into each child's heart with a depth and consistency often previously unknown to that child.

Last year, the National CASA board went through a rigorous strategic planning process. Not surprisingly, we decided our long-term objective is that in the US every child involved in a court action as a result of

abuse or neglect has an effective Court Appointed Special Advocate. Flowing from that, our goals are growth in the number of children served and needs met; diversity in volunteers and program organization; quality of programs; and increased capacity (more support from more sources).

So we have our objective and specific goals. Zeroing in on succinct strategies to accomplish these goals is where the hard work ensued. We decided, as National CASA, to concentrate for the next year on African-American volunteer recruitment and retention efforts; targeted marketing efforts to attract volunteers in key cities; improved, expanded fundraising; a new system for volunteers to communicate with each other; and a hard look at National CASA's operations and its board to see if changes are needed.

Serving more children, retaining volunteers, understanding the needs of advocates and expanding CASA programs' base of support—these are the challenges I want to tackle during my term as president. Success will depend on your continued partnership with National CASA in our efforts to change the lives of more children who are in great need of help. ■

Why Casey Family Programs Works With National CASA to Support Vulnerable Children



—Susan A. Weiss
Senior Manager, Systems Improvement
Casey Family Programs
Seattle, Washington

With 40 years of experience working with children and youth in foster care, Casey Family Programs understands the important role that courts play in the lives of children who come into care. We know that child welfare system employees do not always have the benefit of time to gather the breadth of information required to fully inform judges' decisions about each child.

This is where trained Court Appointed Special Advocates become so important in the court process. CASA volunteers are critical in providing one-on-one attention to a young person and to their specific circumstances. Gathering important information about what that child needs and seeking out opportunities to meet those needs are activities that serve as a resource for both the child and for the court. The child welfare system is large, daunting and complex, especially for a child. Without CASA volunteers, these children could be without a voice at a critical time when decisions affecting their future are in the hands of others.

Casey Family Programs and National CASA are leveraging their respective commitment, expertise, resources and proximity (as national organizations both headquartered in Seattle) to tackle two critical issues for the children who come into care: addressing

disproportionality as well as strengthening educational advocacy and achievement.

Given the fact that children of color are disproportionately represented in the nation's child welfare system, Casey Family Programs is working with National CASA to help fulfill its commitment to increase cultural competency and to expand the recruitment and retention of CASA volunteers of color. The Casey-CASA partnership is focused on working together by sharing training on cultural competency to ensure that decisions are informed by culturally relevant recommendations and that the diversity of volunteers continues to grow.

Casey Family Programs is also deeply committed to increasing educational achievement of young people in the foster care system and is delighted to have a strong ally in its partnership with National CASA. CASA volunteers can and do play a significant role in helping the court and others in child welfare address the educational challenges facing children in care.

It is gratifying to see the evolution of our partnership through national-level efforts such as National Foster Care Month and the National Working Group on Foster Care and Education. Casey Family Programs is looking forward to an ongoing relationship with National CASA and the CASA network so that we can together realize the goal of strengthening communities and families—and ensure the best outcomes for our most vulnerable children and youth. ■

Casey Family Programs is the largest national operating foundation whose sole mission is to provide and improve—and ultimately prevent the need for—foster care. The Seattle-based foundation was established in 1966 by United Parcel Service (UPS) founder Jim Casey. Susan A. Weiss manages Casey Family Programs' national child welfare partnerships.





Beautiful Bouquets Support Foster Children



Organic Bouquet is National CASA's source for sustainable and fairly traded floral arrangements. Through this new partnership, proceeds from the sale of each designated National CASA bouquet support our nationwide recruitment and training of community volunteers who advocate for foster children. To ensure that your purchase of any of their products benefits National CASA, be sure to use the link "organicbouquet.com/nationalcasa." To order by phone, call 877-899-2468 and mention that you want National CASA to benefit from your purchase. Send someone a beautiful organic bouquet today and support safe homes and better futures for children. ■

Join the Legacy Circle to Support Future Abused Children

Our Legacy Circle includes friends and supporters who have expressed their intention to include National CASA in their estate plans. By remembering the National CASA Association, you will leave a lasting legacy for future generations of children in need. We hope you will consider becoming a member of this very special group.

For more information about joining National CASA's Legacy Circle, or to request our new planned giving brochure, please contact D'Nika Jackson, donor relations manager, at 800-628-3233, ext. 263 or dnika@nationalcasa.org. ■



"There are many ways that CASA volunteers work to help protect children and parents caught up in the child welfare system. This is the most rewarding volunteer work we have ever done."

—Sharon and Rod DePue
Volunteers
Milwaukee CASA, Wisconsin

National CASA Announces Revamped Website

Go to nationalcasa.org to see our new look.

Features include:

- Fresh content, including stories of children served by volunteers
- Regular updates on issues affecting the CASA network and the children we serve
- Easier navigation



CASA Pendant Now Available

Longtime CASA supporter Fred Meyer/Littman Jewelers has made available this "Wings of Love" cameo pendant, with \$15 from each sale coming to National CASA for activities benefiting abused children throughout the US. You may purchase the Wings of Love pendant for \$159 on line at fredmeyerjewelers.com or amazon.com as well as at a Fred Meyer/Littman Jewelers store near you. By doing so, you will help National CASA reach its goal of serving 100,000 more children annually by 2008. ■



Jewelers Continue Partnership, Awarding \$1,000,000 to CASA Network

We are pleased to announce that the *Champions for Abused Children* initiative will be funded again this year through a \$1 million award to National CASA from Jewelers for Children (JFC). National CASA is one of four charity partners of JFC. Ninety-five percent of the 2006-07 award will be passed through to local CASA/GAL programs to fund volunteer advocacy services and recruitment of volunteers in select areas of the country. JFC is an organization created by leading manufacturers and retailers in the jewelry industry with a mission to raise funds for national charities that benefit children. Many thanks to the "Industry with a Heart"! ■

The National CASA Association, together with its state and local members, supports and promotes court appointed volunteer advocacy for abused and neglected children so that they can thrive in safe, permanent homes.

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National Court Appointed
Special Advocate Association
100 W Harrison, North Tower, #500
Seattle, WA 98119

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