



## Court Appointed Special Advocates of New York State

**Vision:** *A safe and permanent home for every child.*

**Mission:** *To broadly support and develop local volunteer advocacy on behalf of the best interests of abused and neglected children.*

**Values:** *Integrity, Transparency, Inclusion, Trust, Respect, Teamwork, Dedication, Continuous Learning and Improvement, Leadership: Providing leadership service, support and resources to New York State CASA programs.*

**Court Appointed Special Advocates of New York State (CASANYS)** is a non-profit organization that provides support, training, technical assistance, and pass through funding to its statewide member CASA programs. CASA staff and volunteers are assigned by Court Order to children who are the subjects of abuse or neglect, and under the supervision of the Family Court. CASA works directly with service providers, attorneys, educators, and the family to understand the unique needs of every child served, identifying any unmet needs, and providing the Court with information to support what is in the child's best interests with a goal of safe, healthy, permanent homes for every child.

### ***Did you know...***

#### **In 2018 CASA:**

- Fifteen Local Programs serve 28 Counties in New York State
- 670 volunteers advocated for 2,500 children statewide
- Volunteers contributed 68,000 hours or the equivalent of \$1.7 million in service dollars
- 68% of children served by CASA in New York State were returned to their parents as opposed to the national average of just 49%

#### **In the first quarter of 2020 (January - March), CASA programs outside of New York City:**

- Served 1029 individual children
- Attended 1469 court hearings
- Offered 4,756 points of advocacy

**A 2006 audit of the National CASA Association, conducted by the US Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General, found that children with a CASA volunteer involved:**

- are substantially less likely to spend time in long-term foster care as defined by three years or more: 13.3% for CASA cases versus 27% of all children in foster care
- are more likely to have their cases “permanently closed,” meaning these children are less likely to reenter the child welfare system than cases where a CASA volunteer is not involved: only 1-9% of CASA children reenter the system vs. 16% of children who are not assigned a CASA
- both children and their parents received more services. The audit concluded that this indicated that “CASA is effective in identifying the needs of children and parents”

**Creative Uses of CASA:**

- CASAs make great *visiting resources* for older youth or children with few safe, supportive adults, such as those placed in residential treatment or group homes
- CASA can focus on the *unique needs* of each child because they are generally assigned to one child or family at time; CASA is generally assigned to cases with multiple children, in multiple placements, or with complex needs
- CASA can help connect young children to developmental supports early in life, leading to *better outcomes*
- CASA can be an *extra set of hands* at the point of Return to Parent or Trial Discharge to support families as they transition
- As more children are in out-of-home *placement with kin*, CASA can help families as they access support services for children and navigate the child welfare and court systems

**In Response to COVID-19:**

- In Nassau County, Suffolk County and the Southern Tier, CASA secured computers for children to complete schoolwork at home.
- CASA of Chautauqua County identified and advocated for children to be placed with relatives instead of a foster home for an emergency removal.
- In Monroe and Genesee Counties, CASAs conducted porch drops of supplies like food and diapers, as well as activity baskets of arts and games to keep children engaged.
- CASAs in the Capital Region used FaceTime to teach children how to make clay pottery and finger knitting during virtual visits.
- In New York City, CASA secured groceries for people who lost their jobs, provided phones or internet access so parents could visit remotely with their children placed in foster care, and they located shelter for displaced youth.