

# CASA volunteers



A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) is a trained community volunteer who is appointed by a judge to advocate for the best interest of an abused, neglected, or abandoned child in juvenile court proceedings.

The CASA volunteer gathers information about the child's situation, attends court hearings on the child's behalf, makes recommendations to the judge regarding decisions about the child's future, and attempts to find "forever families" for each child. The CASA volunteer advocates for the safety, permanence, and well-being of each child.

## QUALIFICATIONS

- ◆ Sincere care for the well-being of children
- ◆ At least 21 years old
- ◆ Pass a criminal background check
- ◆ Good verbal and written communication skills
- ◆ Ability to be objective and non-judgmental
- ◆ Availability to attend court hearings
- ◆ Commitment to CASA for at least one year

## HOW TO BECOME A CASA

- ◆ Complete an application including 4 personal/professional references
- ◆ Undergo a criminal background check
- ◆ Be interviewed by CASA staff
- ◆ Complete 40 hours of training
- ◆ Be sworn-in by a judge

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CASA VOLUNTEER

- ◆ Visit the child
- ◆ Explain the role of the CASA volunteer
- ◆ Keep the child informed about all the aspects of the court proceedings
- ◆ Gather independent information about the child in order to make recommendations to the judge in regards to the child's best interest
- ◆ Seek cooperative solutions with other participants in the child's case
- ◆ Interview the parents, guardians, or case-workers, social workers, teachers, and people who are important in the life of the child.
- ◆ Review records related to the family.
- ◆ Attend & participate in court hearings and other related meetings.
- ◆ Identify potential resources within the family and the community to meet the child's needs
- ◆ Keep all information confidential
- ◆ Monitor provision of service plans and court orders
- ◆ Ensure the child's wishes are known to the court
- ◆ Advocate for the child in the community
- ◆ Consult with local CASA program staff for support and guidance
- ◆ Maintain focus on the child until permanency is achieved.

## BENEFITS OF BEING A CASA

As a CASA volunteer, you will ultimately help to brighten the a child's future. You will be working to end the cycle of abuse and neglect, while having an opportunity to learn more about the Juvenile Court system and become more actively involved in your community.



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**"Because every child's voice deserves to be heard"**

