



CASA is central to fulfilling society's most fundamental obligation by making sure a qualified, compassionate adult will fight for and protect a child's right to be safe, to be treated with dignity and respect, and to learn and grow in the security of a loving family.

We see news stories every day about children taken from an abusive home, or because of the tragic loss of a parent – to illness or violence or incarceration. We assume there must be a program or system that will take care of these children and make sure they are treated with dignity, and given a safe place to live so they can recover from their hardship and be a child again.

But there is a story behind the story that few people speak about. It is the story of overburdened foster care and child welfare systems that – though full of well-intentioned and deeply committed people – cannot begin to meet the needs of the more than 700,000 children in foster care in the United States.

It is the story of a six-year-old girl who has been moved to six group homes and three schools over the past two years. The story of a toddler separated from her brothers and sisters during the most vulnerable time in her life. The story of a young man being handed all of his belongings in a plastic bag at the age of 18, because he has “aged out” of the system.

It is a story that occurs over and over again in America's foster care and child welfare system.

But these stories can have better endings, because there is a group of trained volunteers appointed by judges to advocate for these children. People who fight for these abused and neglected children, to make sure their basic rights and essential needs don't get overlooked or ignored by the system. These stories can have better endings because of people like you.

We are Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for Children, a volunteer-powered network of committed people – from all walks of life – who believe society has a fundamental obligation to these children. We are people just like you who believe that every child has the right to be treated with dignity, to be safe, and to thrive in the embrace of a loving family.

Today approximately 62% of the children in the system have no access to a CASA volunteer. That's almost 450,000 children without the hope a CASA volunteer can bring.

We are committed to serving every child. You can help!

#### **Donate.**

We have a proven approach; our only challenge is to scale it. Your financial contribution is a sound investment. All donations are tax-deductible and help us expand programs and recruit and train volunteers.

#### **Volunteer.**

This is one cause where the actions of a single person mean everything. One volunteer, trained and empowered to ensure that every child can thrive in the safe embrace of a loving home.

#### **Get Involved.**

Don't have the time to volunteer? You can still be a key part of the solution. Connect with us. We'll keep you informed on our progress and share the various ways you can help ensure abused and neglected children have their rights protected, and their future is bright.

With a CASA volunteer, a child is half as likely to languish in the foster care and child welfare system, and that much more likely to find a safe, permanent home.

5<sup>th</sup> Circuit CASA 411 Jules Street, B-3 St. Joseph, MO 64501 (816)901-1708

[casa@5thcircuitcasa.com](mailto:casa@5thcircuitcasa.com)

[www.5thcircuitcasa.com](http://www.5thcircuitcasa.com)