

BELONGING

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

COLORADO





2023-2025 Colorado CASA* Strategic Framework

OUR VISION: Every child in Colorado has a voice and a hopeful future

OUR MISSION: To strengthen local CASA programs

CULTIVATE GROWTH

- Increase Public Awareness
- Secure sustainable funding
- Support expansion to unserved Judicial Districts

LEAD DATA AND EVALUATION

- Assure Data Quality
- Support data informed decision making
- Tell the Story

ENHANCE PARTNERSHIPS

- Local: Engage with local programs and the network
- State: Grow state partnerships
- National: Provide CASA leadership at the national level

IMPACT PUBLIC POLICY

- Improve the status of children in child welfare
- Advance Legislative relationships and funding
- Outreach to all branches of state government

Adopted by Board of Directors on August 2023
* State Organization of National CASA Association

DEAR FRIENDS OF CASA

On behalf of Colorado CASA, we thank you for your generous support of our mission. Because of you—our dedicated donors, partners, and friends—the CASA network in Colorado was able to serve 3,791 children and youth who needed a caring adult by their side in 2023.

Nearly 2,000 CASA volunteers in Colorado became a critical lifeline for these children and families. CASA supports family preservation and we aim to strengthen families to “Change a Child’s Story.” We are proud to share our 2023 Annual Report, “Belonging,” which demonstrates the tremendous work of CASA staff and volunteers in our Colorado network. Together, we can create a sense of belonging for every youth in the system and help strengthen families for better outcomes.

The CASA network in Colorado was able to serve 3,791 children and youth who needed a caring adult by their side in 2023.

For over 35 years, the Colorado CASA network has advocated for a child’s right to a safe and permanent home. We are so very grateful to you for your steadfast, enduring commitment, and selfless investment.

Our focus in 2023 was on providing our statewide CASA network with the necessary resources to support

their work and advance our collective mission. This included data collection and analysis, training resources, an annual conference and monthly continuing education opportunities, building out fund development efforts, and expanding CASA’s presence statewide through government relations and policy initiatives.

We are exceedingly grateful for your support, and your continued commitment to our mission. On behalf of children and youth who look to us with hope for a bright future, thank you.

Sincerely,

JENNY BENDER
Executive Director, Colorado CASA





COLORADO CASA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2022/2023

KATHY WATTERS
Board Chair

CHRISTINNE JOHNSON

LEAH VARNELL
Executive Director,
CASA of Jefferson
and Gilpin Counties

JOSHUA WHITE
Treasurer

ROB KUCK

MICHELE VION

ALAN HALLMAN
Executive Director,
Northwest Rocky
Mountain CASA

RAQUEL DOMINGUEZ

ANGELA ROSE
Executive Director,
CASA of the Pikes
Peak Region

STACY GARMON

DEBI GREBENIK

FINANCIALS 2023

INCOME

| Source | Amount | FYE2023 Percentage |
|-----------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| CO State Funding | 1,746,578 | 90% |
| Other Government | 57,737 | 3% |
| Individuals & Corporations | 79,279 | 4% |
| Conference fees | 9,132 | 0% |
| Foundations & Organizations | 9,900 | 1% |
| Membership and dues, other | 29,338 | 2% |
| TOTAL | 1,931,964 | |

EXPENSES

| Source | Amount | FYE2023 Percentage |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Program | 1,801,100 | 92% |
| General & Administration | 157,401 | 7% |
| Fundraising | 13,685 | 1% |
| TOTAL | 1,972,186 | |

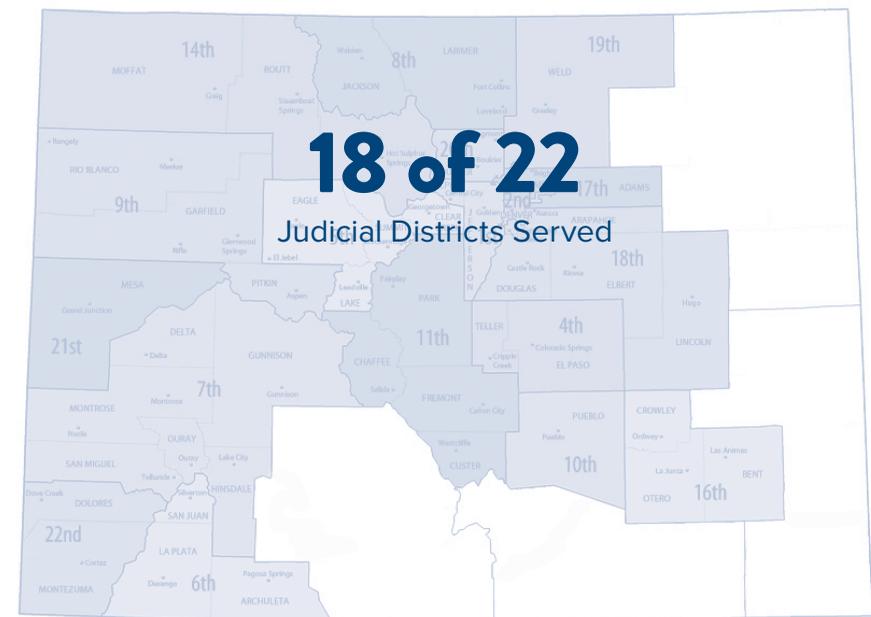
2023 BELONGING



3,791 children
2,190 cases served



by
1,985
CASA Volunteers





COLORADO CASA STRENGTHENS LOCAL PROGRAMS

Public Awareness

- Served on multitudes of statewide committees and task forces, to strengthen connections with child welfare partners, stakeholders and bring the collective CASA voice to the table
- Colorado CASA staff presented at the Strengthening Colorado Families and Communities Conference, Public Health in the Rockies, Kempe International Virtual Conference, and Colorado Court Improvement Program Virtual Conference.

Data Driven

- Released the second annual evaluation report in January 2023.
- Collected approximately 850 case opening assessments, 1,000 case closing assessments, and 4,000 ongoing wellbeing assessments during three survey periods (October 2022, February 2023, and June 2023).

Learning

- Coordinated six Lunch n Learn presentations for volunteers and staff across the state: Client-Directed Counsel, Connect Our Kids, Engaging with Parents, The Opioid Crisis: What CASA Volunteers Need to Know, Supporting Gender Expansive Youth, and Human Trafficking Prevention for CASAs 101 and 201.
- Facilitated the first statewide book club. The group read and discussed the book, Invisible Child.
- Coordinated the first session of a DEIAB learning series for local program staff.
- Hosted the annual CASA conference virtually for 203 attendees

Government Relations

- Impacted Public Policy by taking positions on legislation impacting children, youth, and families and the child welfare system.
- Conducted a CASA Day at the Capitol where hundreds gathered to show support of CASA and lobby CASA's mission to state legislators.

CASAS SUPPORT FAMILIES

In a majority of cases, the children remain or return to their parents or are placed with kinship at case closing.

By case closing:

- Nearly 9 in 10 of children included in the evaluation were placed with parents or kin (88%).
- Of that the cases that closed between 2020 and 2023, 78% of children were placed with parents or kinship at case closing.*

CHILD WELLBEING

A large body of research demonstrates having a consistent and caring adult and concrete supports during times of need are protective factors that prevent or mitigate the effects of adverse childhood experiences, and increase children's resilience, educational success, health, and overall wellbeing.

CASA volunteers are consistent and caring adults to their assigned children, advocating in- and outside of the court to increase opportunities and support for children. CASA volunteers make a difference in children's lives by showing up and increasing support during challenging times.

In addition to permanency and safety, CASA programs in Colorado monitor and advocate for children's health, development, education, involvement in prosocial opportunities, and transition to adulthood. The CASA in Colorado data strategy aims to measure children's needs and volunteer advocacy efforts in these key domains.

CASAs are consistent adults for their assigned children

- Nearly two in three children (65%) had a CASA volunteer visit at least every 2 weeks during their case.**
- Three in four children (75%) had a volunteer who reported contacting them at least every two weeks in addition to visits.**

CASA volunteers are informed about and advocate for children's needs

Our evaluation results found that volunteers are informed about the majority of children's needs in the key domains. The commonly reported advocacy actions are: made court recommendation(s), worked with caregivers, and communicated with others.**

Preliminary results show at the end of the case children are more likely to be doing better in the key domains. For example:

- Half of children younger than 1st grade who needed developmental support at case opening were meeting developmental milestones at case closing, as reported by the volunteer.***
- Four in ten children who needed educational support at case opening were meeting academic expectations at case closing as reported by the volunteer.***

As more assessment results are collected, we will be able to better examine child outcomes in key domains from start to end of case.

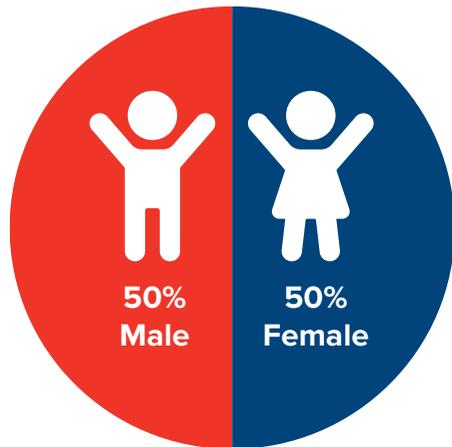
* Excludes cases where the placement information was missing or incorrectly entered.

** These data represents children whose volunteer completed a case closing assessment, which may not be representative of all children assigned a CASA.

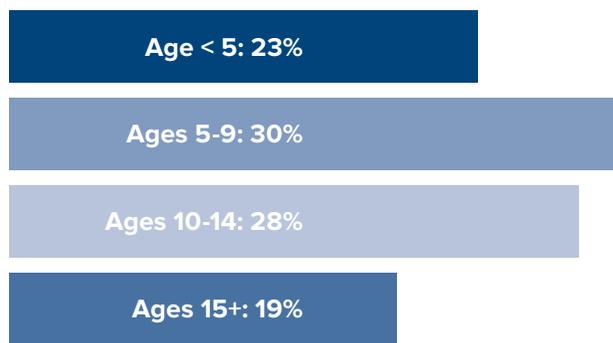
*** These data represents children whose volunteer completed a case opening and closing assessment, which may not be representative of all children assigned a CASA.

WHO DOES CASA SERVE?

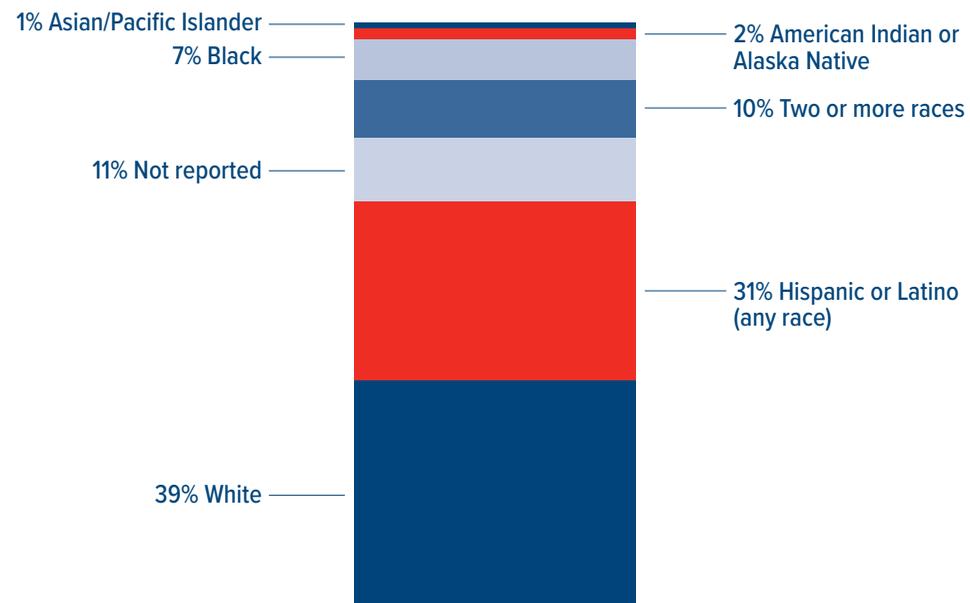
Sex



Age



Race/Ethnicity



In my role as a CASA, I have developed a truer and more meaningful relationship with the family I support than I have experienced in any previous volunteering role. I know that the work I am doing and the support I provide to the child on my case is creating an additional consistent presence in her life during this difficult time, and it absolutely keeps me going during the challenging elements of this work.”

~ Volunteer to 12 year old girl

COLORADO CASA CHILDREN'S CIRCLES OF SUPPORT FY 2022-2023



When I was a teenager my life was torn apart and I became involved in the foster system. Being a CASA gives me the ability to be the person I wish I had to guide, support, and inspire me to push on and help me keep a strong mindset. You can be that person for someone else and even though it can be hard it is so rewarding when you see how much you have helped.”

~ Volunteer to 6 year old boy

Children's Circle of Champions (\$1,500,000+)

State of Colorado General Fund

Children's Circle of Vision (\$10,000+)

Blue Whale Charitable Fund

Saundra Johnson

Long Island Community Foundation

Children's Circle of Leadership (\$2,500 - \$9,999)

Adrienne Green

The Benevity Community Impact Fund

Children's Circle of Promise (\$1,000-\$2,499)

AmazonSmile

Matthew Brenn

FirstBank Employee Giving Campaign

Debi Grebenik

Stephen Jenks

Kohl Kinning

Sandra Siems-fraser

Sasha Vanderhoof

Greg and Erica Zamensky

Anonymous Donors

Children's Circle of Hope (\$5-\$999)

Lisa Aldrich

Julia Almond

Jean Arnold

Michelle Barnes

Sarah Boulden

Kendall Boyd

Debra Brown

Charlene C. Busch

Hope Campanella

Brian Carlini

Charities Aid Foundation of America

Karen Churnside

Sandra Clark

Larry Cohn

Community Shares

Andrew Conneen

Melody Connett

Charles Cooper

Costco Workplace Giving Program

Kathleen Curtis

Drew Cutright

Chantel Dahl

James Dale

Kelly DiNatale

Leah Dirks

Carrie and Tom Dixon

Steven and Debra Fendrich

John Finn

Robert Fitzpatrick

Linda Flinkman

Kristin Gallagher

Gerilyn Grange

Justin Guerra

Alan Hallman

Donna Harris

Laura Herlands

Therese Herzog

Mary Holtrop

Michael Inzana

Janene Johnson

Beth Kinsky

Mark Knudson

Aaron Kovisto

Deborah L.

Ellie Landry

Shari Leach

Marjorie Long

Devon MacLeod

Teresa Manago

Ana and Manuel Martin

Wendy Marty

Michael McDaniel

Matt McKinney

David McMillen

Sherlenia Mitchell

Davis Moore

Heather Moore

Peter Musso

Tara Lynn Neal

Network for Good

Kathy Nicholson

Sylvia Owens

Heidi Parish

Cynthia Paulson

Diana Payne

John Pirkopf

Presbyterian Foundation

Andy Prodanovic

Courtney Ricci

Margaret Riggs

Gary Robinson

Gayle Rodgers

Rudy and Alice Ramsey Foundation

David Ryan

Ena Sajovich

Ken Singer

Janet Slate

Zach Smith

Kent Stannard

Marilyn Stinton

Greg Stults

TJR Giving Fund

Rick Taylor

The Colorado Trust

Nathan Thompson

Tim Vacca

Jeff Valdez

Brian VanKeuren

Michele Vion

Martin Walsh

Michael Weaver

Charles Weinstein

Joshua White

Kathy Wolyn

Justin Seth Wood

YourCause, LLC

Craig Zimmerman

Anonymous Donors



Thank you to all of the donors and funders who make our progress possible. **Together, we are a powerful voice for vulnerable children and youth.**

LIST OF LOCAL PROGRAM EDS

1st Judicial District

CASA of Jefferson and Gilpin Counties
Leah Varnell

2nd Judicial District

Child Advocates – Denver CASA
Karen Silverman

4th Judicial District

CASA of the Pikes Peak Region
Angela Rose

5th Judicial District

CASA of the Continental Divide
Janine Mariani, Co-ED of Programs
Cathy Hyde, Co-ED of Operations

6th Judicial District

4 The Children – CASA of the Southwest
Bryn Joyner, Co-ED of CASA Programs

7th Judicial District

CASA of the 7th Judicial District
Carlton Mason

8th Judicial District

CASA of Larimer County
Jen Ryan

9th Judicial District

CASA of the Ninth
Traci Gurley-Tomashosky

10th Judicial District

CASA of Pueblo
Zane Grant

11th Judicial District

Heart of Colorado CASA
Zane Grant

14th Judicial District

Northwest Rocky Mountain
Colorado CASA
Alan Hallman

16th Judicial District

Arkansas Valley CASA
Zane Grant

17th Judicial District

CASA of Adams and
Broomfield Counties
Lindsay Salas

18th Judicial District

Advocates for Children CASA
Josefina Milliner

19th Judicial District

Life Stories - Weld County CASA
Gwen Schooley

20th Judicial District

Boulder Voices for Children
Margaret Bachrach

21st Judicial District

CASA of Mesa County
Joy Thompson

22nd Judicial District

4 The Children – CASA of the Southwest
Bryn Joyner, Co-ED of CASA Programs



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

COLORADO