



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Quarterly Report

JANUARY - MARCH 2021



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CASAHANCOCKCOUNTY.ORG

CASA of Hancock County Profile

STAFF, MISSION, AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Staff

Cynthia Chauvin
Executive Director

Lauren Saucier
Lead Advocate Supervisor

Tanisha Lamb
Advocate Supervisor

Naomi Strawhorn
Victim Services Coordinator

Anne McCauley
Fiscal / Program Manager

Remi
Courthouse Facility Dog

Board of Directors

Glenn Hood
President

David Buckley
Vice President

Jason Chiniche
Myron Labat, Sr.
Erin Lee
Andy Orzalli
Whitney Webb

OUR MISSION

To provide abused and neglected children with quality advocacy in the court system and to secure a safe, permanent, and nurturing home for them by recruiting, training and supporting a diverse network of Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteers.

OUR VISION

All children will thrive in a nurturing and loving family that provides them with a safe and permanent home. We will do so through high-quality advocacy and evidence-based programming supported by sustainable funding as a model non-profit for best practice in service, leadership, and operations.



Program Overview

The CASA of Hancock County Program is appointed to Youth Court cases by judicial order. Children who reside in Hancock County, are victims of abuse and neglect, and have involvement with Youth Court and Child Protective Services are eligible for CASA advocacy.

107

Children appointed to the CASA program

Case Assignments

During this quarter,

- 107 children appointed to the CASA program
- 29 new children appointed
- 98 children assigned an advocate
- 9 children waiting for an advocate

Advocate Training

During this quarter:

- Current advocates completed 169 hours of training
- Prospective advocates completed 160 hours of training, including orientation

329

Total hours of Training

12

Initial contacts from prospective advocates

Recruitment Efforts

During this quarter:

- CASA gave 3 presentations to groups
- 5 newsprint appearances
- 1 television appearance

10

Prospective advocates completed orientation

5

Prospective advocates completed training

5

Advocates sworn in

5

New advocates assigned a case

Child Wellbeing Projects



COURTHOUSE FACILITY DOG

Remi, Mississippi's only Courthouse Facility Dog, received extensive training from Canine Companions for Independence®, an assistance dog organization. These dogs are selected for their ability to calmly interact with people in a high stress environment. She and her handler Naomi Strawhorn received intensive training and complete ongoing assessments with Canine Companions®. The pair work as a team in providing services to child victims.

Remi goes to work daily at CASA of Hancock County. She primarily attends Youth Court with child victims and may accompany children to forensic interviews to enhance the fact-finding process. Off hours, Remi goes home with her handler and is a normal pet.

"She is the best part about coming to court."

Child Victim

17

Number of child victims served by Remi

19

Hours of direct service to child victims

Child Wellbeing Projects



STEWARDS OF CHILDREN®

The Stewards of Children® training empowers adults to prevent, recognize, and react responsibly to child sexual abuse through awareness, education, and stigma reduction. For every person trained in this curriculum, ten children are protected from becoming victims of child sexual abuse.

CASA of Hancock County's Executive Director Cynthia Chauvin & Lead Advocate Supervisor Lauren Saucier are trained facilitators of this curriculum and provide the Stewards of Children training to organizations within the community to prevent child sexual abuse.



TRUST-BASED RELATIONAL INTERVENTION®

Trust-Based Relational Intervention®, or TBRI®, is a trauma-informed intervention designed to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children. CASA of Hancock County's Victim Services Coordinator Naomi Strawhorn offers TBRI Caregiver training for foster parents to help them understand, address, and respond to the challenging behaviors of the children placed in their homes.

In addition to these classes, CASA offers ongoing support and parent coaching to prevent placement disruption for our children in custody.

16

Community members trained in Stewards of Children curriculum

9

Foster parents trained in TBRI Caregiver class

54

Hours of TBRI Certificates issued for foster parents

Our Advocates

Adam, Margaret
Altsman, Diane
Bailey, Sarah
Bankston, Tracy
Baughman, Jackie
Bloom, Cheryl
Bounds, Susan
Brooks, Shari
Cannon, Julie
Clark, Nancy
Coatney, Barbara
Coleman, Joan
Craig, Mary
Critchfield, Lisa
Cuevas, Janine
Demarest, Judy
Dollar, Beverly
Dudenhefer, Carol
Farrar, Lee
Farrior, Patricia
Favre, Vanessa
Foreman, Chloe
Fortmayer, Brittany
Fulwiler, Madeleine
Fulwiler, John
Gamble, Rhonda
Gamboa, Laura
Genna, Johnny
Genna, Katie
Gibbons, Barbara
Grapusa, Christine
Gray, Sandra
Haberman, Victoria
Herring, Rhonda
Hess, Allison
Hudspeth, Lorelei
Joyce, Susan
Kearney, William "Bill"

Labat, Myron
Ladner, Christine
Lawler, Robinette
Lemoine, Tina
Lynch, Felicia
Marks, Allison
Maronge, Charlotte
McKenzie, Nancy
Melby-Codling, Mary Christine
Montjoy, Elizabeth
Mumme, Susan
Murray, Joseph
Necaise, Angela
Newman, Denise
Nichols, Lylie
Plouffe, Denise
Reilly, Kim
Richardson, Joy
Riviere, George
Riviere, Robin
Salaun, Linda
Samayoa, Nicole
Sanders, Bonnie
Savage, Lauren
Searles, Judith
Shiyou, Carol
Smith, Beverly
Taylor, Marilene
Trant, Leslie
Van Stelle, Christy
Vogel, Michael
Warran, Alisha
Washington, Cassandra
Whavers, Barbara
Williams, Pamela
Winchester, Tara
Woods, Tammy

Volunteer Demographics

75 Total Advocates

Race / Ethnicity

Caucasian 88%
African American 9%
Hispanic/Latino 3%

Gender

Female 91%
Male 9%

Employment Status

32 Advocates Employed
41% of these individuals
work full time while
advocating for children



Volunteers Retained

66

Reports written by
CASA volunteers

851

Hours of activity put in
by CASA volunteers

53

Assigned volunteers, 5 of
whom were newly assigned

ADVOCATES OF THE QUARTER

Each month CASA of Hancock County recognizes one advocate to highlight the hard work, dedication and commitment CASA volunteers put forth for the children of Hancock County. The work can be challenging, but our advocates do not waver in the face of adversity when it comes to looking out for the best interest of abused and neglected children.



Lorelei Hudspeth

Lorelei became an advocate in January 2019. Over the last two years Lorelei has advocated on two cases for two children; one who was reunified with his mother and she is currently still advocating on behalf of her first case for the child's adoption to be finalized! Lorelei is always there to help not only in advocacy but helping at events to promote the organization. You can also find Lorelei at all the CASA events helping to support the organization with her friends and family. During the last two years Lorelei has helped connect CASA to her employer who has very generously fulfilled many CASA children's wishlist during the holidays!



Carol Dudenhefer

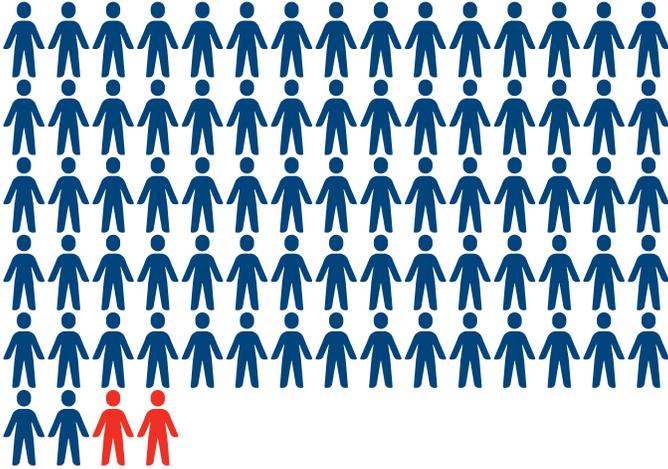
Carol became an advocate in October 2017. Since that time she has actively advocated for 7 children. She is never afraid to take on a challenge and always makes sure the needs of her CASA children are met and their voices are heard. She is currently advocating for a sibling group in their final stages of the adoption process. Mrs. Carol participates in monthly inservice and is always quick to volunteer to help the program in different ways.



Marilene Taylor

Marilene became an advocate in October 2019. Since that time she has co-advocated on 4 cases for 14 children! Her most recent case, a sibling group of 3, closed for a successful reunification at the end of February. Marilene is a go getter and her background and education has made her a resource of knowledge for the families and children she speaks up for on her cases.

Our Children



CHILDREN WITH ASSIGNED ADVOCATES

107 children were appointed to CASA during the quarter

79 children were maintained in foster care
77 of these children were assigned an advocate

Additionally, CASA served **21 children** in alternate custody or in-home cases

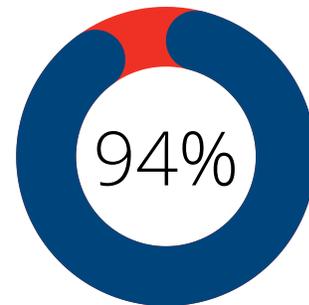
PERMANENCY

15 children's cases closed. 80% of these children achieved permanent homes:

- 3 Reunification
- 7 Adoption
- 2 Durable Legal Custody

3 children aged out of foster care.

COURT REPORTS



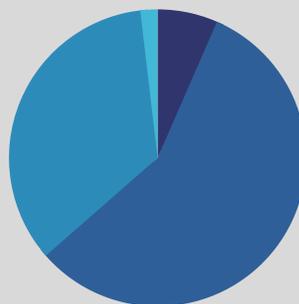
Of the **247 recommendations** made by CASA, **94%** became **Orders of the Court**

CHILD DEMOGRAPHICS

55 MALE

52 FEMALE

13-18 year old
34.6%



Under age of 1
6.5%

1-12 year old
57%

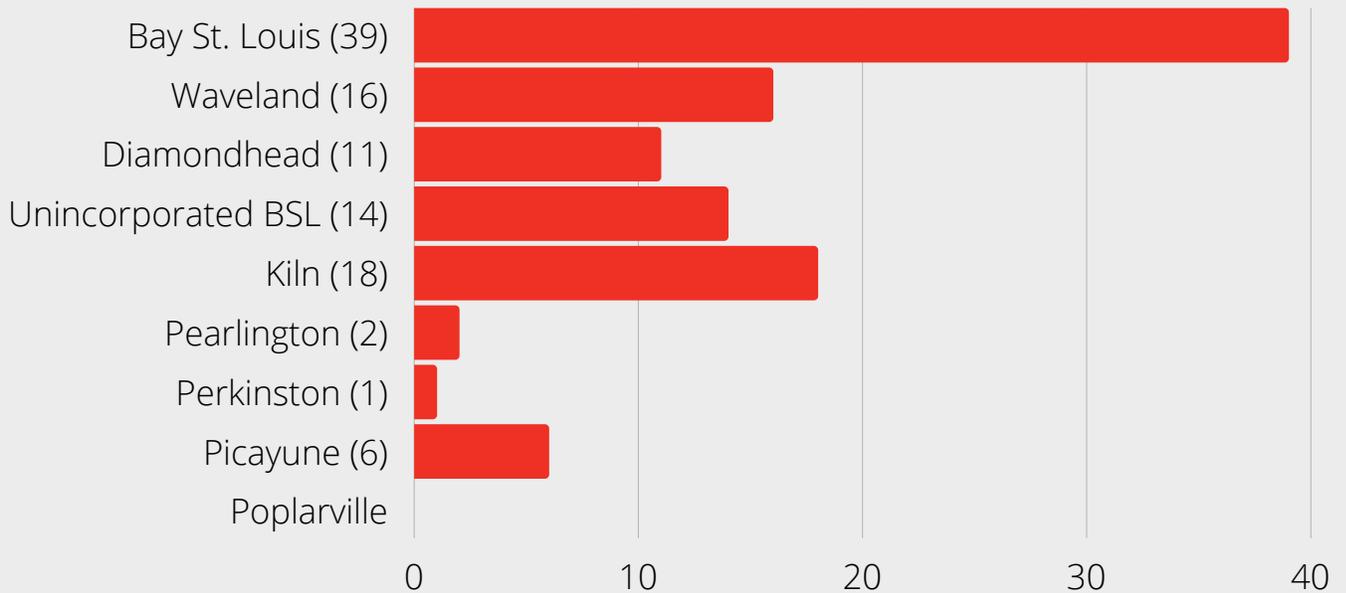
CAUCASIAN 84%
AFRICAN AMERICAN 7%
BI-RACIAL 6%
HISPANIC/LATINO 3%

Current Statistics

ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT IN HANCOCK COUNTY



Location of Abuse & Neglect



2021 Goals

Annual Goal

1

10

new volunteers will be trained & sworn in as advocates

2

90%

of children in foster care assigned an advocate

3

85%

of volunteer recommendations become orders of the Court

4

90%

of CASA children will achieve a permanent placement upon case closure

5

25

individuals trained in TBRI curriculum

6

100

trained in Stewards of Children curriculum

7

30

child victims supported by Courthouse Facility Dog

Year to Date

5

new volunteers were trained and sworn in

97%

of children served by an advocate

94%

of recommendations became orders of the court

80%

of children achieved a permanent placement

9

individuals trained in TBRI

16

trained in Stewards of Children curriculum

17

child victims supported by Courthouse Facility Dog

What You Can Do

GET INVOLVED AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE

GET INFORMED ON CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION

CASA of Hancock County offers Darkness to Light training, a child sexual abuse prevention curriculum.

Schedule a training session for your workplace, church, or other organization by emailing cynthia@casahancockcounty.org

VOLUNTEER

Interested in becoming a CASA Advocate? Join an informational session and learn more about becoming an advocate.

The CASA Volunteer Pre-Service training curriculum is facilitated throughout the year. The curriculum consists of (30) thirty hours of training, court observation, and background screening.

SATISFACTION SURVEYS

In February 2021, CASA sent out satisfaction surveys to advocates, stakeholders, and children:

ADVOCATE SURVEYS



Training

83% of advocates “Strongly Agree” that they have received adequate training. 13% indicated “Agree.”



Support

96% of advocates “Strongly Agree” that their supervisor is helpful & keeps them updated on case information.



Retention

96% of advocates “Strongly Agree” that they will continue being a CASA. The rest marked “Agree.”

STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS

Judge, CPS, & Attorneys



Collaboration

When asked if CASAs share information and seek collaboration at appropriate times, 89% marked Strongly Agree or Agree.



Influence

When asked if CASAs provide information that affects the way they see the case, 100% marked Strongly Agree or Agree.



Respect

When asked if CASAs are respected by the Judge, 100% marked Strongly Agree or Agree.



One child's depiction of herself & her advocates

CHILD SURVEYS

CASA children wrote about their advocates: “She helps me cope with stress and reassures me,” “they really care about me,” and “I enjoy her because she shows all of her love for our family and puts so much for in for us.”

How You Can Help

DONATE AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE



CASA

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FOR CHILDREN

CASA OF HANCOCK COUNTY

DONATE

CASA is a 501c3 charitable organization and relies on community support. Your gift is tax deductible and makes a big difference in the life of an abused or neglect child.

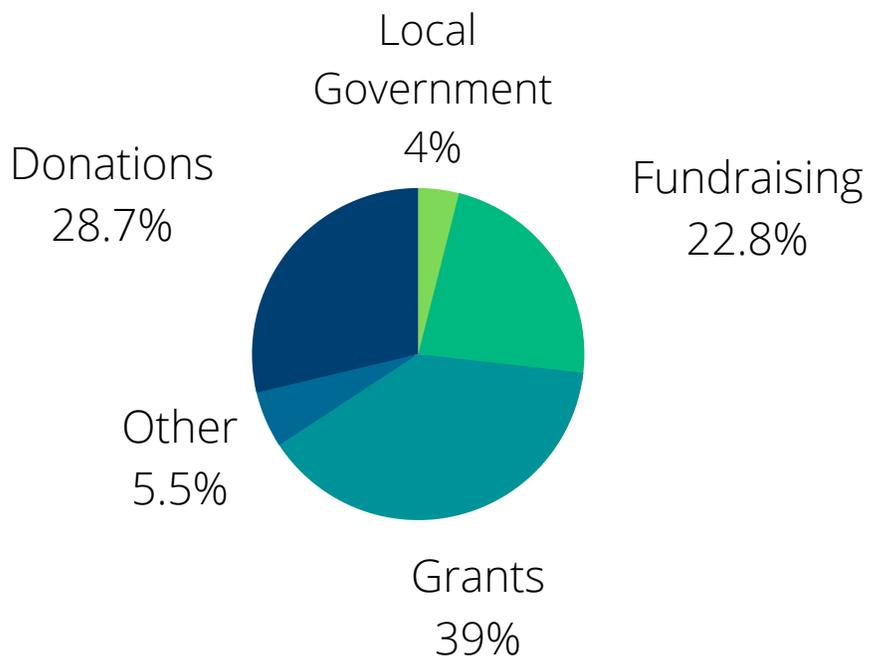
Donations can be made by check, or online through our website, PayPal, or Venmo.

www.casahancockcounty.org
paypal.me/CASAHancockCountyMS
venmo.com/u/CASAHancockCounty

29%

Roughly one-third of
CASA's budget comes
from donations from the
community.

HOW WE ARE FUNDED



**SPONSORSHIP
OPPORTUNITY**

Poker Run | July 2021

Contact Cynthia Chauvin
for more information
cynthia@casahancockcounty.org

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