



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Quarterly Report

JULY - SEPTEMBER 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
Haley Rowell
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.

120

Children appointed
to the CASA
program

Case Assignments

During this quarter,

- 120 children appointed to the CASA program
- 30 new children appointed
- 110 children assigned an advocate
- 14 children waiting for an advocate

Advocate Training

During this quarter:

- Current advocates completed 166 hours of in-service training
- Prospective advocates completed 52 hours of training, including orientation

218

Hours
of Training

8

Initial contacts
from prospective
advocates

Recruitment Efforts

During this quarter:

- CASA gave 5 presentations to groups
- 2 newsprint/digital print appearance
- 1 television appearance

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

This project is supported by the Jack A. & Gertrude W. Wilson Animal Welfare Fund, a Fund of the Gulf Coast Community Foundation.

17

Number of child victims served by Remi this quarter

16.5

Hours of direct service to child victims this quarter

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.

10

Foster parents trained in TBRI
Caregiver class this quarter

23

Hours of TBRI coaching
sessions this quarter

Our Advocates

Adam, Margaret
Altsman, Diane
Bailey, Sarah
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
Favre, Vanessa
Foreman, Chloe
Fortmayer, Brittany
Fulwiler, Madeleine
Fulwiler, John
Gamble, Rhonda
Gamboa, Laura
Gibbons, Barbara
Grapusa, Christine
Gray, Sandra
Haberman, Victoria
Herring, Rhonda
Hess, Allison
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
Murphy, Candy
Murray, Joseph
Necaise, Angela
Newman, Denise
Nichols, Lylie
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
Whavers, Barbara
Williams, Pamela
Winchester, Tara
Woods, Tammy

Volunteer Demographics

69 Total Advocates

Race / Ethnicity

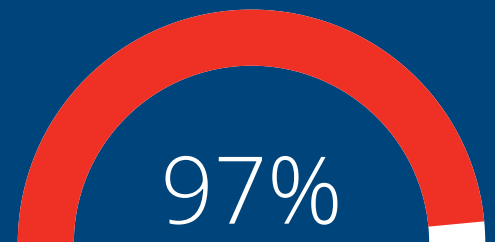
Caucasian 90%
African American 7%
Hispanic/Latino 3%

Gender

Female 91%
Male 9%

Employment Status

34 Advocates Employed
44% of these individuals
work full time while
advocating for children



Volunteers Retained

86

Reports written by
CASA volunteers

815

Hours of activity put in
by CASA volunteers

59

Assigned volunteers

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.



Christine Grapusa

Christine was sworn in as an advocate in May of 2017, when she was recruited by her co-advocate partner Julie Cannon. Christine and Julie have co-advocate on five cases (10 children) since 2017. Christine supports the CASA program through her advocacy as well as always being a part of our fundraiser and advocate events. She is quick to lend a hand or take on a new case with her co-advocate when needed. She always bring her joyous spirit and positive attitude to the table on her cases and is a strong voice for children in and out of the courtroom.



Brittany Fortmayer

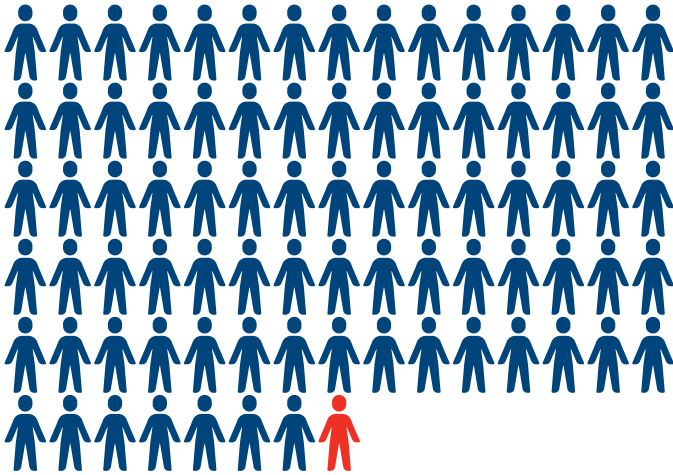
Brittany was sworn in as an advocate in January of 2019 and since that time has been actively advocating for a sibling group of three since February 2019. Brittany is a tough advocate who does not let difficult situations in her case distract her from continuing to push all agencies to do what is in the best interest of these children. Brittany is a CASA advocate on the side while being a mom and full time business owner. Brittany has been a powerful voice in her advocacy as well as being a constant supporter and sponsor in CASA fundraisers and events.



Linda Salaun

Linda was sworn in as a CASA Advocate in October 2019. Since that time she has co-advocated for a sibling group of 4 and is now advocating for a sibling group of 3. Linda not only is a strong advocate for her CASA cases, but is a helpful resource to other CASA advocates when it comes to advocating educationally for children with special needs. Through her volunteer service with CASA, she continues her life's work of helping to advocate for the children of Hancock County.

Our Children



CHILDREN WITH ASSIGNED ADVOCATES

120 children were appointed to CASA during the quarter

83 children were maintained in foster care
82 of these children were assigned an advocate

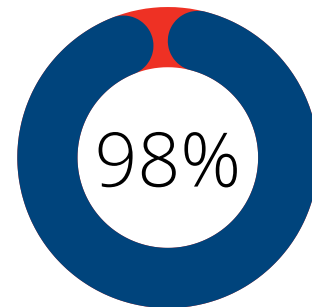
Additionally, CASA served **28 children** in alternate custody or in-home cases

PERMANENCY

19 children's cases closed. **100%** of these children achieved **permanent homes**:

- 13 Reunification
- 4 Adoption
- 2 Durable legal custody

COURT REPORTS



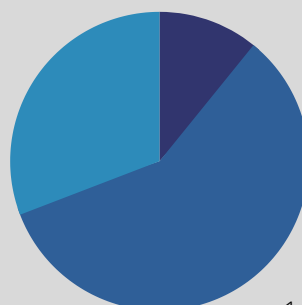
Of the **341 recommendations** made by CASA, **98%** became **Orders of the Court**

CHILD DEMOGRAPHICS

63 MALE

57 FEMALE

13-18 year old
30.8%



Under age of 1
10.8%

1-12 year old
58.3%

CAUCASIAN 84%
AFRICAN AMERICAN 13%
BI-RACIAL 2%
HISPANIC/LATINO 1%

Current Statistics

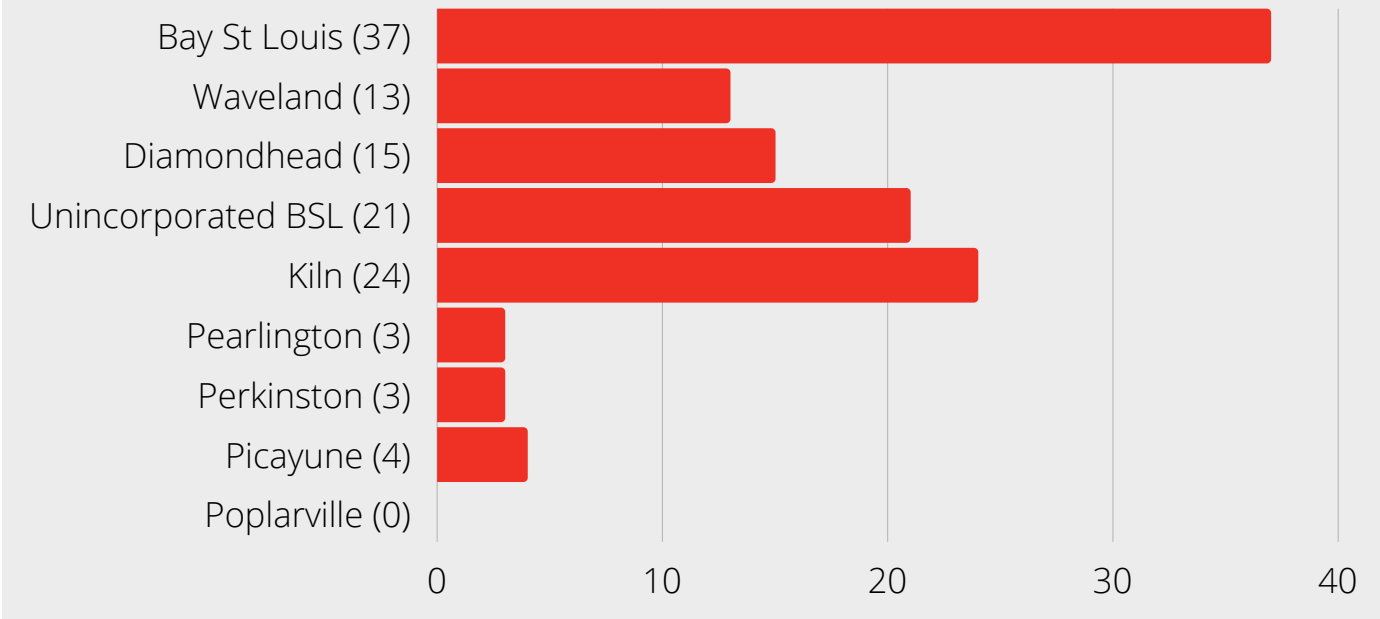
ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT IN HANCOCK COUNTY



173
Allegations of Neglect

26
Allegations of Abuse
7 Sexual
19 Physical

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

99%

of children served by an advocate

97%

of recommendations became orders of the court

95%

of children achieved a permanent placement

25

individuals trained in TBRI

24

trained in Stewards of Children curriculum

35

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.

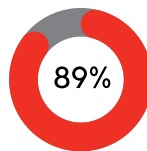


Retention

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

Court Appointed Special Advocates
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.

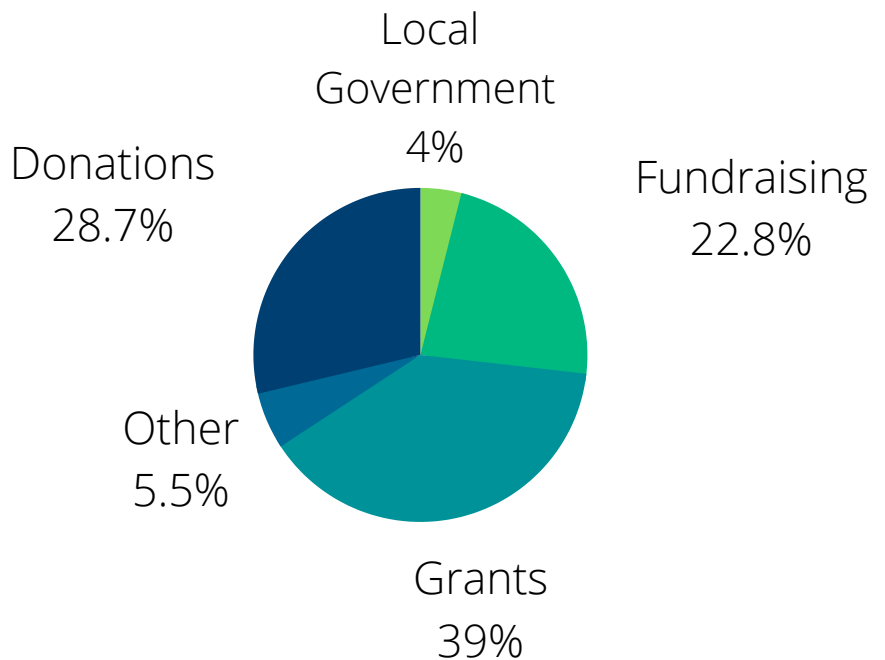
Donations can be made by check, or online through our website, PayPal, or Venmo.

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



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