

The Court Appointed Special Advocates program (CASA for short)

provides one-on-one advocacy and mentoring to abused, neglected and abandoned children who are dependents of juvenile court.



These foster children have been placed in “the system” and often removed from their families, where they are faced with obstacles and challenges around every turn. Their future is impacted by decisions made by the professionals involved in their lives: their lawyers, social workers, teachers, counselors, caregivers, and others. That’s a lot of people, opinions, and information for a child to track and understand alone.

CASA volunteers step in to coordinate all these inputs, connect the dots, and put together a plan to get the child the emotional and physical support and services he or she needs.

Juvenile court judges appoint these volunteers to advocate on behalf of the children’s educational, mental health, medical/dental, and family/sibling visitation needs. They also work to increase the likelihood that the children are placed in safe and loving homes where they will thrive.



“When I met my foster youth, he was within two years of his emancipation and had a long way to go before he earned enough credits to graduate high school. . .

I met his teachers, talked to him incessantly about attendance, pushed him, and generally tried to remove the barriers to graduation. I know that my relationship with him has changed me and who I am in the world.”

—CASA volunteer

“I know I can’t change the system. But I CAN—and AM—changing the life of my foster kid.”

—CASA volunteer



“My CASA has been my friend, my nurse and my everything.”

—Foster youth

“To me CASA stands for C for Caring, A for Affectionate, S for Sensitive and A for Ardent.”

—Foster youth



**For more information,
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Follow ACCASA on



www.casaofalamedacounty.org

**A Trusted Mentor . . .
A Necessary Advocate. . .
A Positive Change . . .
. . . empowering a
Foster Child**

**I am proud
to be
a CASA.**



www.casaofalamedacounty.org

CASA volunteers are ordinary people doing extraordinary work, from all walks of life. They are teachers, college students, business people, retirees, stay-at-home parents, etc. They all share a commitment to being a stable presence in the life of a foster child.

“I cannot change this situation, but I can ensure that . . . this young man will always remain connected to the family who means the world to him ... as long as I am his advocate, he can always count on me, no matter where he is moved. I have been with him through six placements in seven months, and each time he moves, he says, ‘You always seem to find me.’” —CASA volunteer

CASA volunteers don’t need any special educational background—only excellent oral and written communication skills, determination, perseverance, and a huge heart.

There is a comprehensive training program to prepare volunteers for this role.

ONE CHILD. ONE CASA. MANY DECISION-MAKERS.

I AM RON.




I was removed from my home when I was 3 years old. Now I'm 7, and I've been in 3 different foster homes in 4 years. I love soccer and art, but I'm performing below grade level in school.

I AM RITA.



I am Ron's CASA—his advocate, mentor, and the one person he can always count on. I connect all the pieces of the foster care system in Ron's case.

SOCIAL WORKER



I am Monica, Ron's social worker. My workload is demanding – I have several other cases, each with its own set of challenges. There can be many crises that require my time.

JUDGE



I am Judge Curran, and I preside over Ron's case. I rely on Ron's lawyer, social worker and CASA to give me the information I need to make good choices about Ron's future.

LAWYER



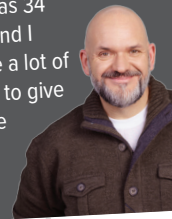
I am Chris, Ron's lawyer. I see Ron as often as I can. I also represent 160 other foster children.

FOSTER PARENT



I am Susan, Ron's foster parent. Ron's been with me about 6 months. I have 2 other foster kids living with me too.

TEACHER



I am Mr. Little, Ron's teacher. My class has 34 students and I don't have a lot of extra time to give to kids like Ron who need it.

80% of children in foster care have a significant mental health need.

In 2016, Alameda County CASA advocated for 320 foster children. An additional 1,400 children were waiting to be served by a CASA.

42% of foster youth do not complete high school in California.