



**EVERY CHILD  
HAS A CHANCE—  
IT'S YOU.**



**CASA**

Court Appointed Special Advocates  
FOR CHILDREN

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DENTON COUNTY

**2015 | ANNUAL REPORT**



# **YOUR VOICE COULD BE MY ONLY CHANCE.**

As a Court Appointed Special Advocate, or CASA volunteer, you can keep abused and neglected children safe while they reach a safe, permanent home.

CASA volunteers speak up for a child in court. You are not a foster parent, you are a voice making a difference at a critical point in a child's life.

# Dear CASA Family,

When children enter foster care, they are appointed a Court Appointed Special Advocate, or CASA. This CASA may be the one, consistent adult in a child's life, providing a voice for their best interests in the hopes of a safe and loving, permanent home. Behind that CASA is a network of supporters ensuring that CASAs and the children they serve have the resources needed to bring normalcy during a period of transition as well as hope for a future free of abuse and neglect.

This powerful network of supporters are made up of ordinary members of our community who work together in a variety of ways to produce extraordinary results. Whether it's volunteering in the office to scan case files, serving as a member of the Board of Directors, organizing a personal fundraiser to benefit CASA of Denton County, or creating a beautiful quilt for a child who has just entered foster care and no longer has many belongings to call his own—all of these are just a few of the ways our fellow community members are making a difference in the life of a child in foster care each and every day.

As we wrap up our twenty-third year of service to abused and neglected children, we know that CASA continues to provide exemplary services because of dedicated people like you. Together in 2015, we served 507 children in foster care, an increase of 4.5% in the number of children we served last year. Of our 325 volunteers in 2015, 147 volunteered as a child advocate, serving more than 21,000 hours and driving more than 185,000 miles on behalf of their CASA kids.

In addition to striving toward our goal of an advocate for every child in foster care who needs one, CASA of Denton County developed the Teen Taskforce Committee to examine how we can better serve teenagers in preparation for the transition to adulthood as they get ready to "age out" of the foster care system at the age of 18. The taskforce is made up of members of the Board of Directors, CASA staff members, and advocates, and with input from the foster care alumni groups of UNT and TWU, the taskforce has explored the unique challenges facing teenagers in foster care and what steps we as a community can take to help address those challenges.

An investment in CASA is an investment in the future of the community. We appreciate those of you who are the reason our efforts result in life changing outcomes. Your work is not wasted. Foster care can be a challenging time in a child's life. Children may be left to wonder "who is willing to take a chance on me?" Here at CASA, we know the answer to that question.

**Every child has a chance—it's you.**

Sherri Gideon  
Executive Director



# BE BY MY **SIDE.**

## **WHAT DO CASA VOLUNTEERS DO?**

CASA volunteers get to know the child and everyone involved in the child's life to advocate for the child's best interests while in the foster care system.

# Volunteers Make a Lifelong Difference

When Oliver came into foster care, he had been living with his grandparents for as long as he could remember. The court had placed him there at two years of age due to his mother's alcoholism, but the grandfather became increasingly unable to control Oliver when the boy raged, which was more and more.

The police were called to the home a few times a week as Oliver and his grandfather shouted, threatened each other, and even physically fought. Each time, the officer calmed the situation and then left until one occasion where an officer came in response to a neighbor's call that the two were fighting, and this time Oliver threatened his grandmother and the officer, too. The grandparents said they were no longer able to care for their grandson, and CPS was called in.

Advocate Ken took the case for Oliver, and the first thing he noticed was that, no matter how Oliver treated everyone else, he always showed Ken respect. Even though Ken, a military veteran who had worked with teenagers for many years, could have been Oliver's grandfather, the boy responded to Ken more as the father figure he never had.

Oliver would spend the next year in a treatment center. He was kicked out of school almost daily and allowed to wander the halls. Staff seemed to care little for the boy who caused so much trouble. Their facility was in disrepair and they lacked supervision for a house full of troubled boys. Finally Ken convinced CPS to try another placement for Oliver – after all, he seemed to be stuck in the same patterns that had started the case.

CPS found a newly opened treatment center and placed Oliver there. Ken noticed that this new treatment center didn't have holes in the walls like the last one. Most things here were clean and in working order. Oliver was being challenged by the new placement to improve, and he got an award for his participation. But, it seemed like after all that time of being

allowed to be stagnant, he didn't respond well to the need to change. Oliver became known for throwing things at staff, shouting curses, and showing little respect for anyone.

Through it all, his behavior was always the same during his visits with Ken—polite and respectful—and they spent time shopping, eating and hanging out together like they always had with no problems at all. Oliver often called Ken just to talk, especially when he wanted to share good news.

When CPS received notice that the new treatment center was discharging Oliver, saying they couldn't meet his needs, Ken began searching for a similar, nicely kept place he thought could handle Oliver, but CPS was in a placement crisis. The only treatment center that had room for Oliver was the previous placement.

Ken and his CASA supervisor mapped out a plan. They scheduled a meeting with the director of the treatment center, explaining their concerns and why they advocated for Oliver to be moved previously. Ken visited and called often, always reminding the staff that he was there for Oliver. Suddenly, the staff seemed to take more of an interest in the troubled young man as well, and Oliver responded in kind—he began to improve. A great day was when Oliver told Ken that he realized he was responsible for his own actions.

After six months, Oliver was ready to be discharged to a foster home where he now lives. He continues to see his mother and siblings from time to time, and eventually hopes to be discharged to live with his family. The judge congratulated Ken for his attention to Oliver's case and asked him to keep up the good work. Ken is definitely making a lifelong difference for Oliver. CASA volunteer advocates truly make a difference for children in need



# SPEAK UP FOR ME IN COURT.

## CASA VOLUNTEERS:

- Commit to at least one year of advocacy
- Communicate effectively both orally and in writing
- Participate in an in-depth training program
- Pass criminal and CPS background checks
- Are at least 21 years old

## READY TO SPEAK UP FOR A CHILD?

Visit [casadenton.org](https://casadenton.org) to learn about becoming a volunteer and how you can help.

# FY 2015 | Stats at a Glance

## CHILDREN SERVED

Cases Worked . . . . .	301
Children Served. . . . .	507

## PERMANENT PLANS ACHIEVED

Total Number of Children . . . . .	193
Returned to Family. . . . .	70
Placed with Legal Guardian . . . . .	30
Adopted . . . . .	57
Adopted by Relative . . . . .	17
Aged Out (turned 18) . . . . .	10
Other . . . . .	9

## OUTCOMES

- 93% of CASA recommendations were accepted by Judges/Juries.
- 56% of children achieved permanency within 18 months of CASA's acceptance of the case.
- Less than 1% of children served by CASA entered the child welfare system for a second time within six months of case closure.

## VOLUNTEERS

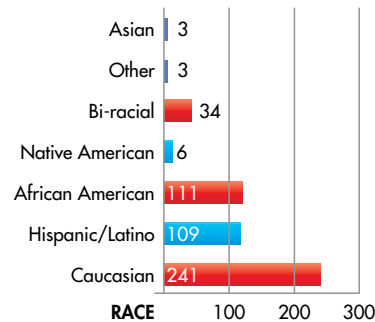
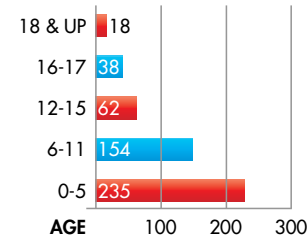
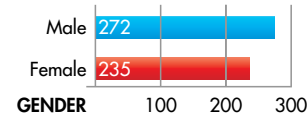
- Average length of time advocates stay with CASA of Denton County is 37 months – just over three years.

## OTHER

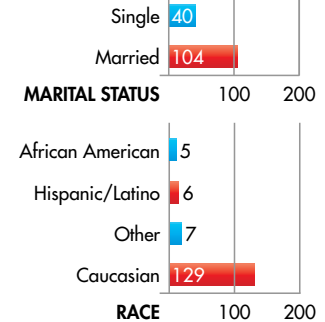
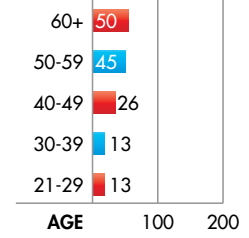
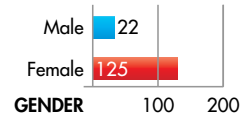
In FY 2015, CASA served 507 children, 88% of the 577 children in foster care from Denton County in that year.

86% of those children were served by volunteer child advocates. The other 14% were served by staff child advocates.

507 CHILDREN ASSISTED IN 2015



147 VOLUNTEER CHILD ADVOCATES IN 2015





# EVERY CHILD HAS A CHANCE— IT'S YOU.

## **Are CASA volunteers foster parents?**

It is a common misconception that CASA volunteers are foster parents. CASA volunteers do not house foster children; instead, they are a powerful voice for a child or sibling group, representing their best interests in court and other settings.



# FY 2015 | Audited Financial Report

## WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM?

Contributions . . . . .	\$81,390
Fund Raising Events . . . . .	\$224,227
United Ways . . . . .	\$118,533
Federal Grants . . . . .	\$83,921
State Grants . . . . .	\$205,792
Local Government Grants. . . . .	\$84,165
Corporate/Foundation/Org. Grants. . . . .	\$83,034
Interest Income . . . . .	\$359
In-Kind Contributions . . . . .	\$580
<b>Total Revenue . . . . .</b>	<b>\$882,001</b>

## WHERE THE MONEY GOES?

Personnel Expenses . . . . .	\$610,673
Occupancy Related, Phones & Repairs. . . . .	\$35,254
Casework Travel & Conferences. . . . .	\$30,386
Supplies . . . . .	\$13,159
Printing, Postage & PR . . . . .	\$18,865
Insurance. . . . .	\$4,455
Contracts & Services. . . . .	\$19,613
Dues & Subscriptions. . . . .	\$2,930
Volunteer Related . . . . .	\$29,502
Fund Raising Expenses . . . . .	\$83,941
Miscellaneous. . . . .	\$6,397
Depreciation . . . . .	\$22,146
Care4Kids Expenditures . . . . .	\$6,194
<b>Total Expenses. . . . .</b>	<b>\$883,515</b>
<b>Net Income for 2014 . . . . .</b>	<b>-\$1,514</b>



The mission of CASA of Denton County, Inc. is to provide trained community volunteers, to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children, and to promote community awareness about child abuse issues.

– Adopted 08/22/2000



# SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT **CASA.**

CASA programs need help spreading the word about the organization in order to recruit volunteers and garner other resources. Local program spokespeople are available to speak to organizations, corporations or faith-based groups about how to become involved in many different capacities.

# FY 2015 | CASA Volunteers

Special Thanks to the 325 Volunteers  
Who Made a Difference for Children in 2015

- Barbara Abernathy
- Perry Abernathy
- Nancy Acee
- A.C. Adam
- Judy Agee
- Marla Allen
- Sarah Alyea
- Stacey Anderson
- Molly Arnold
- Jonathan Bailey
- Cassidy Baker
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- Lauren Barker
- Sarah Barker
- Margaret Barnes
- Carole Basinger
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- Mikayla Berry
- Mike Berry
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- Glen Brozio
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- Angela Byers
- Andrea Calloway
- Scott Cameron
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- Hope Carmack
- Jane Challenger
- Serena Cheng
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- Teri Clark
- Tony Coaxum
- Sylvia Coffey
- Carol Cole
- Darlene Conner
- Sienna Conner
- Darlene Covich
- Ray Craff
- Kylie Crow
- Allison Dane
- Anousorn Daoheuang
- Clarice Darnell
- Lisa Davila
- Gary Davis
- Carol Delbecq
- Corey Dennis
- Manveer Myah Dhesi
- Penny Dix
- Andy Eads
- Susan Edwards
- Vicki Elder
- Richard Ellis
- Colleen Evans
- Sandra Faciane
- Madison Farham
- Larissa Faulkenberry
- Alice (Charlene) Fausak
- Brandi Felderhoff
- Dan Ferguson
- Lisa Ferguson
- Brett Ferricher
- Debby Fiorentino
- Angie Fitzsimmons
- Michael Fitzsimmons
- Kathi Flahaven
- Jonathan Flores
- Judy Fogarty
- Timothy Fogarty
- Peggy Foster
- Holly Fox
- Sarah Francis
- Jean Friedland
- Eric Fry
- Erica Fry
- Debra Furst
- Lee Gabriel
- David Garcia
- Julie Geldert
- Tracy Germansen-McCord
- Zasia Giddings
- Wes Gideon
- Susan Gleghorn
- Traci Glover
- Lorinda Gomez
- Reanne Gomez
- Keifer Graham
- Michelle Graifemberg
- Debby Grigsby
- Kelsey Hoertling
- Tiffany Hoertling
- Barbara Hale
- Laura Hall
- JaKeim Haniah
- Ashly Hanovice
- Kailey Hansen
- Mary Ann Harrison
- Jeri Harwell
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- Alicia Hawley
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- Sue Hechinger
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- Brian Jensen
- Hannah Jensen
- Jill Jester
- Felicia Joe
- Paul Johnson
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- Jaime Jones
- Yolanda Joosten
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- Sheila Julian
- Diana Kalinowska
- Diana Kelly
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- Logan Kennemer
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- Jacob Klein
- Katie Klein
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- Christina Koch
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- Shelly Krueger
- Steve Kuzmich
- Carol Langford
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- Brenda Latham
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- Roger Lewis
- Nyle Little
- Byron Lopez
- Joey Lopez
- Nicole Luttrell
- Robin Lyons
- Brandon Male
- Amina Malik
- Bob Mancino
- Debbie Mancino
- Alexys Maritt
- Jerry Martin
- Mischel Martinez
- Brandon Martino
- Brandi Matous
- Trevor Mazzola
- Connie McAnally
- Vera McBride
- Bruce McFarling
- Clifford McLeod
- Janie McLeod
- Catherine McQuillen
- Jay McReynolds
- Paula McReynolds
- Lynna Means
- Nick Means
- Laura Meilinger
- Josselyn Mendoza
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- Davin Miles
- Melisa Mitchell
- Betty Moran
- Michael Moran
- Jazmin Moreno
- Ethan Morgan
- Kimberly Muench
- Brett Mullins
- Nancy Mullins
- Patrick Murphy
- Karen Murrell
- Diane Naquin
- Natalie Newlin
- David Nieswiadomy
- Stephanie Nixon
- Bonnie North
- Robert O'Connor
- Sue O'Connor
- Sarah Olivares
- Bonnie Olsen
- Members of Omega Delta Phi Fraternity (UNT)
- Kristine O'Neill
- Samantha Parrish
- Pamela Peak
- Mark Pederson
- Pam Pedigo
- Terri Pennington
- Kerri Peschel
- Cecilia Pettit
- Lucy Phillips
- Floyd Pittman
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- Paula Wagner
- Amy Wallace
- Rachel Christie Watts
- Robin Watts
- Shirley Weidner
- Andrea Whelan
- Tyler Whitiener
- Barbara Willcox
- Bryan Willcox
- Derek Wing
- Lazzetta Wing
- Clifford Womack
- Ellen Wood
- Maddie Woolley
- Rhoda Yarboi
- Wani Yuoh
- Julie-Anne Zamorano Dean
- Madison Zitey
- Jessica Zoll



# GIVE ME A CHANCE VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME.

## **A CASA volunteer:**

Seeks solutions to achieve resolution of problems and aims to foster positive steps toward achieving permanency.

Makes recommendations for specific, appropriate services for the child and the child's family.

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# SUPPORTING THE **CHILDREN** WITH STEADFAST COMMITMENT.

## **A donor's story:**

Each year, Rob and Kim bring new friends with them to help spread the mission of CASA to new people who might not be familiar with the prevalence of the number of children in Denton County removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect or the unique challenges these children face.

**DENTON COUNTY**



# Rob and Kimberly Seay | A Donor's Story

Rob and Kimberly Seay became involved with CASA in 2004 when Rob trained and swore-in as an advocate in July of that year. No one knew at the time that more than 10 years later, Rob and Kim would still be committed to serving children in need in the Denton County community.

After serving as an advocate for a few years, Rob and Kim have continued to empower CASA and the children we serve through different avenues of support including annual monetary donations of significance. Since their first attendance in 2007, Rob and Kim have attended Evening of Elegance annually. Each year, they bring new friends with them to help spread the mission of CASA to new people who might not be familiar with the prevalence of the number of children in Denton County removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect or the unique challenges these children face.

In addition to attending Evening of Elegance, Rob and Kim support CASA and children in foster care in other ways. Just as they would for dear friends, Rob and Kim remember to share in the festivity with the CASA office by bringing bread from the local bakery and poinsettias in the winter and displaying US flags outside the CASA office for Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, Labor Day and Veterans Day through the Denton Noon Rotary Flag Program.

Rob also serves on the Board of Denton County Child Protective Services and as an active member of both the Denton Noon Rotary Club and the United Way of Denton County Board of Directors. Recently, Rob and fellow Rotarian member April Cain inspired the Denton Noon Rotary

Club to support children in foster care in need of an adoptive home by hosting the first "adoption fair" in Denton County in November 2013.

At the adoption fair, children from Denton County and other parts of the North Texas Region are treated to a fall festival that appears to the children to be an ordinary festival while in actuality is an opportunity for children in the child welfare system who are eligible for adoption to meet with adoptive parents who have already been screened and approved by the State of Texas to adopt. This event allows adoptive parents to engage and bond with children in a way that reading facts in their case file does not. Due to the success of the first year, the adoption fair continues to be held annually and in April 2016, CASA recognized the Denton Noon Rotary Club with the 2015 Outstanding Contributors Award at the Annual Recognition Dinner for their work with this event.

While CASA's mission is to provide trained community volunteers to advocate for the best interest of abused and neglected children and to promote community awareness about child abuse issues, the agency couldn't do so without supporters like Rob and Kimberly Seay. Rob and Kim's steadfast commitment to the children of Denton County not only shows in their generous contributions at annual fundraisers, which enables CASA to recruit and train new advocates, provide continuing education and support for current advocates, and serve children in foster care; but also through their daily interactions that show that children in foster care are constantly in their hearts. If actions speak louder than words, Rob and Kim are shouting their support for the children of Denton County.



**BE MY  
CHANCE.**

**BE MY  
VOICE.**

**BE BY MY  
SIDE.**

A child with a CASA volunteer is more likely to find a safe, permanent home...more likely to be adopted...and half as likely to reenter foster care.

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# **CASA**

Court Appointed Special Advocates  
**FOR CHILDREN**

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## **DENTON COUNTY**

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Fax: 940.243.1605  
Email: [info@casadenton.org](mailto:info@casadenton.org)  
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**CASA**

Court Appointed Special Advocates  
**FOR CHILDREN**

**DENTON COUNTY**

Thank **YOU** for

being our **CHANCE.**

...

being our **VOICE.**

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being by our **SIDE.**

