

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



**CHANGE A
CHILD'S STORY.™**



SPOTLIGHT

VOLUNTEER



Adrienne Hannigan became a CASA volunteer in October 2013. Since that time, she has served 16 children who were members of 6 different families. Throughout her experience with CASA, Adrienne has helped children of all ages, but she truly specializes in working with our teen population. Adrienne has diligently walked alongside her CASA children through their heartbreak and their success. She has cheered them on in each of their happy moments and lent her support to help them navigate the many challenges children in foster care are forced to endure. In addition to advocating on her own cases, Adrienne has also volunteered her time as a peer mentor, helping new volunteers to establish themselves on their first cases.

When asked about one of her favorite parts about being a CASA, Adrienne stated, "I have had a lot of tough kiddos, and some of the best moments for me are when they begin to reach out to me instead of it just being me reaching out to them. When they seek me out to ask questions or tell me things, then I know I've finally been accepted as someone they can trust." Adrienne went on to say, "Mostly, I just love what I do! I know that I'm doing something big to help these children and young adults to have a better future."

When she is not volunteering as a CASA, Adrienne is an active mom to four wonderful boys. She truly is a rockstar and has made an amazing difference for the CASA children she serves.

Thank you, Adrienne, for all you do!

THANK YOU

Our sincere thanks to the individuals who work hard year-round on our behalf

CASA Board of Directors

Jerry Gleason, President
Meg Dworsky, Vice President
Mike Noonan, Treasurer
Heather Voorn, Secretary

Members at Large

Joe Boyle
Kristina Cameron
Susan Maupin
Julie McNeill
Michelle Sargent
Chris Uram
Sarah Vahey

CASA Advisory Committee

Tony Cameron
Hollie Salinas

Honorary Members

Skye Bergeson
Virgie Bursey
Bruce Darin
Mike Hilton
Clay Johnson
Cindy June
Kevin Manson
Colleen Mora
Anna Rocha-Gray
Karen Stratton

CASA Staff

Rita Facchina, Executive Director
Denise Beran, Program Director
Kelly Baltas
Laura Blum
Melanie Collins
Jessica Chignoli
Kendra Connor
Rebecca Cullen
Rebecca Howey
Kimberly Jenkins
Katie Kopecky
Kaitlin Larson
Jackie McFedries
Meg Pennington



Dear Friends of CASA,

It's difficult to articulate the challenges everyone has faced over the past two years – I'm sure many of you have dealt with loss, anxiety and other hardships. We've all struggled to adapt to our "new normal," which seems to change on a regular basis.

But just imagine trying to navigate the realities of the pandemic as a child who has experienced abuse and neglect.

Unfortunately, there's **537** children experiencing abuse and neglect in our community (Will and Grundy counties – River Valley). They are the innocent victims of domestic violence, substance abuse and countless other issues that plague our society. And too many of these children are voiceless.

Thanks to the continued generosity of supporters like you, our incredible staff of social workers and **124** selfless volunteers serve as the voice to **400+** children who experience abuse and neglect in River Valley every single day. They are **advocates** – helping these children recover from the traumas they've endured and ensuring they find safe, permanent and loving homes they deserve.

But there's still a considerable number of children in our community that need a voice. And we can help.

Before I joined the CASA of River Valley Board of Directors, I served as a volunteer advocate for a brief period. I saw first-hand the incredible impact CASA, through our staff and volunteers, can have on the lives of these children – in courtrooms, foster homes and classrooms. Most importantly, I saw that impact in the eyes of the children I advocated for, as I helped them navigate our foster care system.

Those children I advocated for buoy my commitment to ensure every single one of those **537** children that have experienced abuse or neglect in our community also have a voice. But we urgently need your help.

I hope you'll consider a **one-time or recurring gift** – \$1,000 allows us to advocate for one child for an entire year. Or consider lending your time and talent to become a volunteer. Please help us give a voice to every child that has experienced abuse and neglect in River Valley.

Sincerely,

Jerry Gleason, Jr.
President, CASA of River Valley Board of Directors

Communities Served

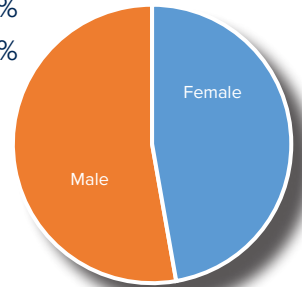
Beecher	Minooka
Bolingbrook	Mokena
Braceville	Monee
Braidwood	Morris
Carbon Hill	Naperville
Channahon	New Lenox
Coal City	Peotone
Crest Hill	Plainfield
Crete	Rockdale
Custer Park	Romeoville
Elwood	Shorewood
Frankfort	South Wilmington
Gardner	Steger
Green Garden	Tinley Park
Homer Glen	University Park
Joliet	Verona
Kinsman	Wilmington
Lockport	
Manhattan	
Mazon	

In addition, we serve children that are placed with families outside of Will and Grundy Counties.

2021 CASA Client Demographics

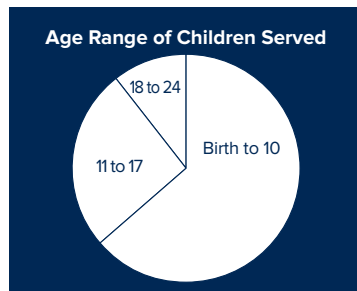
Gender

Female	190	47%
Male	212	53%
	402	100%



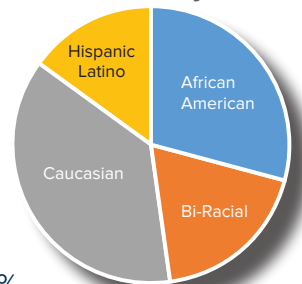
Percentage age groups served

Birth to Age 10	256	64%
Age 11 to 17	104	26%
Age 18 to 24	42	10%
	402	100%

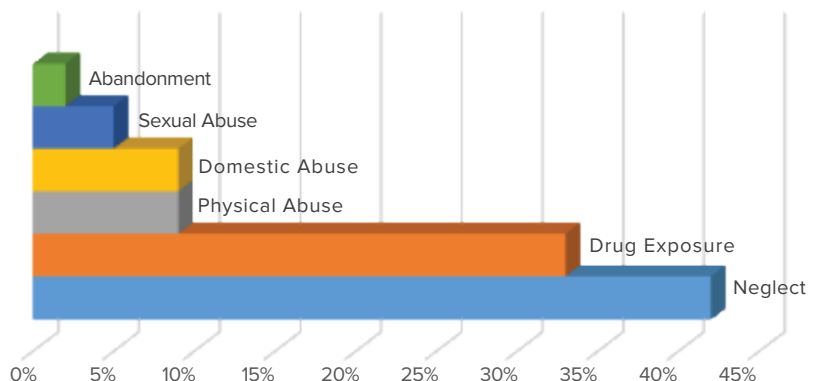


Percentage of ethnicity

African American	118	29%
Bi-Racial	75	19%
Caucasian	149	37%
Hispanic/Latino	60	15%
	402	100%



Children We Helped Came to Us as a Result of

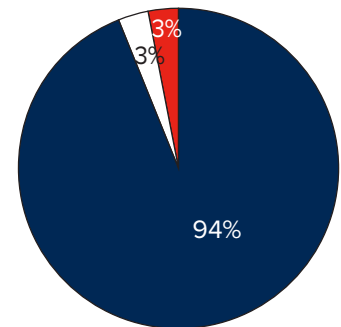


CASA of River Valley, Inc.

Statement of Financial Position - Modified Cash Basis September 30, 2021 and 2020

	2021	2020
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 446,586	\$ 400,014
Short-term investments	14,456	14,455
Total Current Assets	\$ 461,042	\$ 414,469
Property and Equipment		
Office furniture	\$ 3,671	\$ 3,671
Computer hardware and software	22,085	19,783
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(19,678)	(14,360)
Property and Equipment, Net	6,078	9,094
Total Assets	\$ 467,120	\$ 423,563
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities		
Due in one year	\$ 73,663	\$ 63,472
Due in more than one year	144,557	146,795
Total Liabilities	\$ 218,220	\$ 210,267
Net Assets		
Net assets without donor restrictions	\$ 248,900	\$ 213,296
Total Net Assets	248,900	213,296
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 467,120	\$ 423,563

2021 Functional Expenses



- Program Services
- Fundraising
- Administrative



Thank You to Our Sponsors and Partners

As we look back at 2021, it proved to be another challenging year, maybe even more so than the year before. In 2020, most events were cancelled until further notice; however, that was not so for 2021. Uncertainty became our new normal – the uncertainty of will it happen or how to make it happen safely were always key discussions. Just when we thought we could move forward with a fundraiser, we had to pivot. All the details that had been put into place were put on hold to allow for new brainstorming sessions and new plans of action.

“HAVE A HEART FOR THE CHILD” VIRTUAL GALA

Presenting Sponsor

ComEd

University Park Generating Facility



BOKA Sponsor

The Sargent Consulting Group, LLC

Technology Sponsor

Jay and Lori Bergman

Meal Delivery Sponsor

Vahey & Betouni Law & Mediation

“Have a Heart” Sponsors

D'Arcy Motors

Henkels & McCoy

Mike Noonan

Susan Smith

Heather Voorn



Corporate Table Sponsors

Delaney, Delaney & Voorn, Ltd.

Dr. Brad & Meg Dworsky

Hometown National Bank

Rodan + Fields (Julie McNeil Consultant)

WeberShandwick

Wine Sponsor

ExxonMobil

In-Kind Partner

Seattle Sutton Healty Eating - Frankfort

2022 Event Date: Saturday, May 21, 2022
The Barn at Cottonwood



With all the changes, we are grateful that our sponsors, partners, and volunteers continued to support our fundraisers this past year. Along with guests that attended our events, they allowed us to maximize our revenues to advance the CASA mission and vital programs. We couldn't do what we do without your support.

We would like to recognize those who helped make our fundraisers a success in 2021!

“GOLF FOR THE CHILD” CLASSIC

Presenting Sponsor

D'Arcy Motors



Luncheon Sponsors

ComEd/Kevin Manson

Strategic Retirement Partners

Golf Cart Sponsor

Delaney, Delaney & Voorn, Ltd.

Helicopter Ball Drop Sponsor

Greater Midwest Exteriors

Golf Ball Sponsor

Greater Midwest Exteriors

Beverage Cart Sponsors

Edward Jones/Skye Bergeson

Marquette Bank

Pay It Forward Sponsor

University Park Generating Facility

Bloody Mary Sponsor

Minnesota Lawyers

Breakfast Sponsor

The Sargent Consulting Group, LLC

Golf for the Child Sponsors

DOT Foods

ComEd/Kevin Manson

The Mather Group

Registration Sponsor

MoxieBravo

In-Kind Partner

Breakthru Beverage Group



2022 Event Date: Friday, July 22, 2022
Morris Country Club



RUNNING 4 THE KIDS

Presenting Sponsor

CITGO



Supporting Sponsors

Greater Midwest Exteriors
Currie Motors
Old Plank Trail Bank
Christ Centered Community Ministries
Hippleheuser & Associates, Inc.
The Sargent Consulting Group, LLC

In-Kind Partners

Aurelio's Pizza - Frankfort
Chicago Dough Pizza
Frankfort Food Pantry
TCBY - Shorewood

2022 Event Date: Thursday, August 4, 2022

New Lenox Commons



**RUNNING
4 THE KIDS** 5K

CASA CHRISTMAS EXPRESS

North Pole Presenting Sponsor

Midland States Bank



Santa Claus Sponsor

University Park Generating Facilities

Santa's Reindeer Sponsors

D'Arcy Buick - GMC
Holly Club of Joliet

Santa's Elves Sponsor

The Sargent Consulting Group, LLC

Prancer Sponsor

Fabrizio, Hanson, Peyla & Kawinski, PC

Rudolph's Photographer Sponsor

Associated Orthodontists

Santa's Helpers Sponsors

Dr. Brad & Meg Dworsky
Portable John

Hot Chocolate Sponsor

Syl's Chophouse

In-Kind Partners

Baltas Trucking, Inc.
Bruce and Rosemary Darin
Deerfield Construction
Painting Faces and Spaces
T.L. Jacobs Water Transport
Ty, Inc.
Joliet Central High School
Plainfield Central High School
Romeoville High School

**2022 Event Dates: Saturday, December 3 &
Sunday, December 4, 2022**





Help me find
my happy face.

A BRIGHTER FUTURE CAN “CHANGE A CHILD’S STORY™”

When CASA first met Isobel, she was 2 years old. Her mother, Maria, almost died after a vicious beating from her boyfriend, who was Isobel’s father. DCFS became involved, and Isobel was placed in foster care.

Maria was a fighter, and steadily improved in the hospital until she was able to be released. It was clear to CASA that Isobel and Maria had a strong bond; when Maria showed up for her visits with Isobel, Isobel’s eyes lit up and she would run to her mother for hugs. Maria immediately began working her list of services she had to complete to regain custody of Isobel. She loved to tell CASA about all of the things she learned in her domestic violence victim’s counseling and her parenting classes. It was clear that Maria was determined to build a better life for herself and her daughter.

Maria bravely agreed to press charges against her boyfriend, and eventually he was sentenced to 5 years in prison. Maria was overjoyed at this news, stating that she knew she and her daughter would be safe now that he was gone. CASA provided Maria with information on the Violent Crimes Victim’s Assistance fund, and helped her to fill out the forms. The money she would receive would further help Maria and Isobel to overcome their past trauma and look forward to a brighter future.

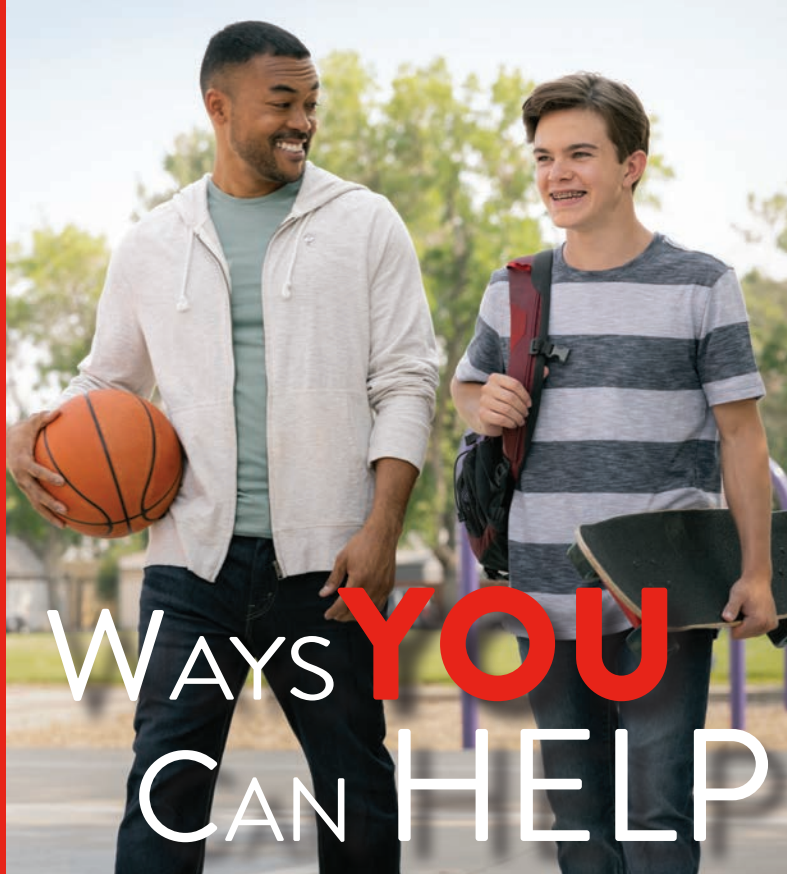
After Maria completed her services, both DCFS and CASA agreed that it was time for Isobel to be placed back with her mother. However, Isobel’s father attempted to fight Isobel being allowed to return home to Maria, stating he wanted Isobel to be placed with his family instead. When the Judge wasn’t sure what to do, Isobel’s CASA volunteer was put on the

stand to testify. Thanks to CASA’s testimony, the Judge stated that it was clear that Maria had completed everything she needed to do, and that Isobel should be returned to her care.

When Maria moved into her new apartment, CASA was able to collect donations to help Maria and Isobel to turn their new apartment into a warm and welcoming home. Both Maria and Isobel received beds and mattresses, and thanks to CASA’s wonderful network of donors, we were also able to provide them with clothing, kitchenware, toys, and personal care items.

While Isobel handled being in her foster home well, and her foster parents were fantastic, it was clear to CASA that Isobel’s heart was aching to be back with her mom. As Isobel adjusted to being back with her mother, her personality began to shine more than ever before. During CASA’s visits, she was always running, dancing, and laughing. Now, Maria and Isobel continue to do phenomenally well. Maria has just registered to begin cosmetology training, and Isobel is thriving in preschool. Thanks to their CASA volunteer, Maria and Isobel will share a happy future together.





WAYS YOU CAN HELP

Please consider making a positive difference this year by providing ongoing support for CASA of River Valley and help “Change a Child’s Story™” through planned giving. You can make a direct impact on the lives of the children in your community.

Children deserve to live in a home where they are loved and cared for by their parents or forever family. Children like Paul and Timmy who entered foster care when a neighbor found them wandering alone outside at midnight. Their parents suffered from alcoholism and the boys often snuck out when they drank too much. CASA advocated for Paul and Timmy to ensure their parents received services and the support they needed. After a year of being in foster care, the boys were reunited with their parents and were able to celebrate the holidays as a family.

CASA’s goal is to help each child overcome trauma while finding a loving, permanent home where they can thrive. We cannot achieve this goal on our own – it can only be done with your help.

There are many ways to donate to CASA of River Valley through planned giving.

CASA Corporate Sponsors

Businesses can sponsor CASA through any of our four annual fundraising events. Sponsorships vary in levels for each event. Hundreds of attendees, volunteers, community members, business owners and elected officials will learn about your organization through your sponsorship.

Memorial and Honorary Gifts

Honor your loved ones, those living and those who have passed, by supporting a child.

Bequests and Planned Gifts

Leave a legacy of a better future for children by making a planned gift of life insurance, retirement funds or other assets.

Workplace and Matching Gifts

Ask your employer about their matching gift program or make a gift to CASA of River Valley through your employer’s charitable giving campaign.

It costs \$1,000 to provide a CASA advocate for one child for an entire year. Can you help us save a child? No amount is too small. Please consider your pledge based on your ability to give, taking into consideration the following:

- \$1,000 = One child for 12 months
- \$500 = One child for six months
- \$250 = One child for three months

There are many ways to donate. Checks can be sent using the enclosed envelope, and donations are accepted online through our website at www.casaofrivervalley.org. Regardless of your donation method choice, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Thank you,
CASA of River Valley

SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT CASA!

Please tell someone about us. We can’t grow and reach 100% of the children in need unless more people support our cause. Invite someone to one of our events, tell a friend about becoming an advocate or consider making a donation. There are so many ways to make a difference in a child’s life, and we are so thankful that you do.





LEND YOUR VOICE.

A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) is a trained volunteer who is appointed by the Juvenile Court Judge to represent the best interests of a child who has experienced abuse or neglect.

CASA volunteers are appointed as Guardian ad Litem (GALs) and act as the eyes and ears of the Judge by documenting each child's circumstances and making recommendations for services and permanency. The ultimate goal of the CASA is to help ensure that every child lives in a safe and permanent home. This could mean reunification with the parents, placement with relatives, or adoption by a loving family.

Help a child who has experienced abuse or neglect! **Volunteer Today!**

2022 Training Sessions

Session 1: Feb 26 / Mar 1, 3, 5, 8, 10

Session 2: Apr 23, 26, 28, 30 / May 3, 5

Session 3: July 16, 19, 21, 23, 26, 28

Visit our website for the most updated list including session times and topics:
casaofrivervalley.org

What are the requirements to be a CASA/GAL?

- Anyone 25 years of age or older with good communication and writing skills is welcome to apply (bilingual volunteers needed!)
- Pass DCFS and criminal background checks
- Attend 30 hours of training

What are the expectations of a CASA/GAL?

- Visit children at least monthly
- Interview everyone involved in the child's life
- Prepare written court reports with findings and recommendations
- Complete 12 hours of in-service training annually

CASA of River Valley strives to contribute positive outcomes in the lives of mistreated children. CASA advocates are well-supported by case management, staff, and mentors.

To learn more about the CASA of River Valley program, please call our Volunteer Coordinator at 815-730-7072 or visit our website at www.casaofrivervalley.org.

We're waiting to hear from you!



HOPE NEEDS A HELPING HAND

**CHANGE A
CHILD'S STORY.™**



We are a nonprofit, 501(C)(3) organization that trains volunteers to advocate for the best interests of children who have experienced abuse or neglect within the Juvenile Court System.

Located in the River Valley Justice Center
3200 W. McDonough Street • Joliet, IL 60431
Phone: 815.730.7072 • Fax: 815.730.7073



CASA of River Valley is a United Way agency, a member of the National CASA Association and a recipient of the Will County Development Block Grant



Like us on Facebook:
[Facebook.com/casaofrivervalley](https://www.facebook.com/casaofrivervalley)



Follow us on Twitter:
[Twitter.com/casarivervalley](https://twitter.com/casarivervalley)



Follow us on Instagram:
www.instagram.com/casarivervalley

Sign up for our newsletter at CASAofRiverValley.org | All photos courtesy of National CASA/GAL