



2022

ANNUAL REPORT



CHANGE A
CHILD'S STORY.™



SPOTLIGHT

VOLUNTEER



Liz Zaczek became a CASA volunteer in February 2012. Since that time, Liz has provided advocacy services to an astounding 36 children representing 16 families.

When asked about her favorite part of being a CASA volunteer, Liz stated, "My favorite part about being a CASA is being able to advocate for the kids and seeing the change in their quality of life. I also love the connections we are able to build with the kids. I've worked with young kids all the way up through teens, and when they begin to light up when they see you, it's incredibly heartwarming!" Thanks to support from the Community Foundation of Grundy County, the Seneca Youth Philanthropy Program, and Liz's dedicated advocacy, one of Liz's

current CASA children is about to achieve his dream of being adopted into a safe and loving home.

Liz has been instrumental in helping CASA of River Valley to maintain a strong program for children. Liz also volunteers her time providing mentoring services to new CASA volunteers and works with our staff members to discuss enhancements to CASA's volunteer trainings.

Outside of her time spent with CASA, Liz works full-time, and loves spending her free time with her family. Liz is a wine enthusiast and enjoys traveling. When asked, Liz stated that her favorite destination was Italy.

On behalf of the children, thank you Liz, for all you do!

THANK YOU

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

CASA Board of Directors

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Mike Noonan, Treasurer
Heather Voorn, Secretary

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Dear Friends of CASA,

On behalf of CASA of River Valley, we thank you for your generous support of our mission. Because of you – our donors, partners, and friends – our incredible staff of social workers and **140** selfless volunteers were able to serve **374** children in River Valley (Will and Grundy counties) that have experienced abuse and neglect.

Unfortunately, continued social isolation and economic uncertainty created in the wake of the pandemic has disproportionately impacted innocent children in our community – in fact, the number of children that need our support has increased **135%** in just the past few years. But the sad reality is we were only able to serve **54%** of that need this past year.

The **585** children experiencing abuse and neglect in our community are the innocent victims of domestic violence, substance abuse and countless other issues that plague our society. They have endured countless traumas – often at a very young age – that very few of us could even imagine. They all deserve safe, permanent and loving homes.

CASA staff and volunteers are often one of the few lifelines these children have available to them – and every single day they advocate on their behalf in courtrooms, foster homes and classrooms. Their quiet resolve to ensure these children have a voice is both inspiring and humbling to witness.

I hope you'll consider a **one-time or recurring gift** to help these children and support the important work of our incredible staff and volunteers. Just \$1,000 will allow us to advocate for one child in River Valley for an entire year. Of course, we'll welcome anything you can give.

We are also actively searching for more people throughout the River Valley community to lend their time and talents as a volunteer advocate. You could be the one that gives a voice to a child.

We are exceedingly grateful for your support and your continued commitment to our mission.

Sincerely,

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

Communities Served

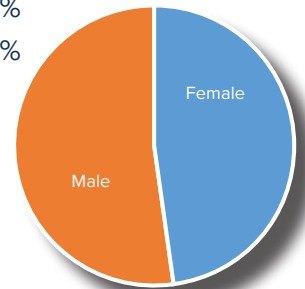
Beecher	Minooka
Bolingbrook	Mokena
Braceville	Monee
Braidwood	Morris
Carbon Hill	Naperville
Channahon	New Lenox
Coal City	Peotone
Crest Hill	Plainfield
Crete	Rockdale
Custer Park	Romeoville
Elwood	Shorewood
Frankfort	South Wilmington
Gardner	Steger
Green Garden	Tinley Park
Homer Glen	University Park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

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

2022 CASA Client Demographics

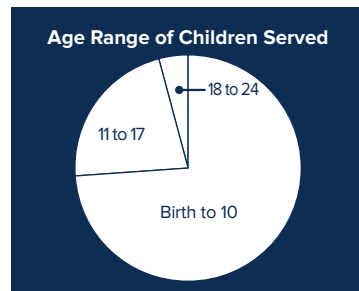
Gender

Female	179	48%
Male	195	52%
	374	100%



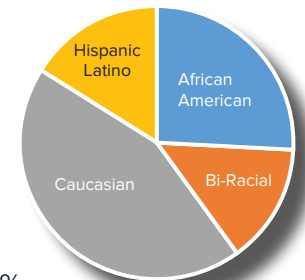
Percentage age groups served

Birth to Age 10	277	74%
Age 11 to 17	83	22%
Age 18 to 24	14	4%
	374	100%

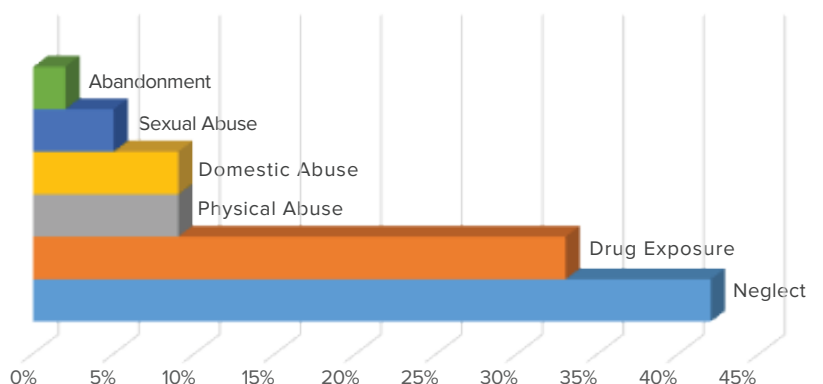


Percentage of ethnicity

African American	96	26%
Bi-Racial	54	14%
Caucasian	166	44%
Hispanic/Latino	58	16%
	374	100%



Children We Helped Came to Us as a Result of

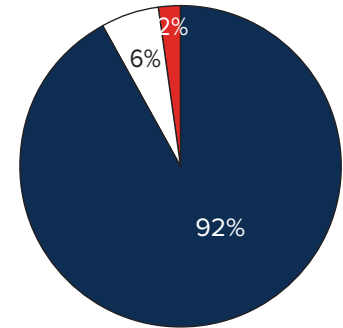


CASA of River Valley, Inc.

Statement of Financial Position - Modified Cash Basis
September 30, 2022 and 2021

	2022	2021
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 633,795	\$ 446,586
Short-term investments	14,503	14,456
Total Current Assets	\$ 648,298	\$ 461,042
Property and Equipment		
Office furniture	\$ 3,671	\$ 3,671
Computer hardware and software	22,085	22,085
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(24,989)	(19,678)
Property and Equipment, Net	767	6,078
Total Assets	\$ 649,065	\$ 467,120
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities		
Due in one year	\$ 7,552	\$ 73,663
Due in more than one year	288,559	144,557
Total Liabilities	\$ 296,111	\$ 218,220
Net Assets		
Net assets without donor restrictions	\$ 352,954	\$ 248,900
Total Net Assets	352,954	248,900
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 649,065	\$ 467,120

2022 Functional Expenses



■ Program Services
□ Fundraising
■ Administrative



YEAR *in* REVIEW Thank You

As you know, 2022 still had some unpredictability in store for us. We were able to pivot and hold our annual gala outdoors to ensure everyone's safety. It felt like we were nonstop all summer long with the gala quickly followed by the golf outing and the run. We are so grateful to our sponsors, partners, and volunteers who

managed to pull off so many great events so close together. Along with guests who attended our events, you allowed us to maximize revenues to advance the CASA mission and vital programs. Here is a look back at all those who helped make our 2022 fundraising efforts a success.

"HAVE A HEART" GALA

Presenting Sponsors

ComEd

University Park Generating Facilities



Kindness & Gratitude Sponsors

Edward Jones - Skye Bergeson

JD Bergman Charitable Foundation

The Sargent Consulting Group, LLC

Be the Hope Sponsors

Deerfield Construction

Jerry Gleason, Board Member

Schiller DuCanto & Fleck LLP

Vahey Law and Mediation, LLC, Board Member

Advocate & Accomplish Sponsors

Bishop's Hill Winery

Rick and Val Moore

Rainbow Cleaning Specialist

Corporate Table Sponsors

Dr. Brad & Meg Dworsky, Board Member

First Midwest Bank

Graycor

Hometown National Bank

Jennifer Lynch – Attorney

June, Prodehl, Renzi and Lynch, L.L.C

Rita Facchina

Rodan + Fields - Julie McNeill, Board Member

The Sargent Consulting Group, LLC, Board Member

Village of New Lenox

Voorn, Jaworski, & Preston, PLLC, Board Member

Weber Shandwick

Wengler Law Firm

Have a Heart Sponsors

Behringer Better World Foundation, CASA Volunteer

D'Arcy Buick - GMC

Exxon Mobil Corporation

John Gerfen

Mike Noonan, Board Member

Minnesota Lawyers Mutual Ins. Co.

PMI Energy Solutions

Patrick Roe

Susan Wiemeyer, CASA Volunteer

In-Kind Partners

David Nelson Jewelers

Impress Printing & Design

RME Audio Video, Inc.

Skybird Photography

Star 96

Program Ads

Thank You to all who provided ads to our program book.

2023 Event Date: Saturday, March 25, 2023
Bolingbrook Golf Club, Bolingbrook, IL



HAVE A  FOR THE CHILD.

"GOLF FOR THE CHILD" CLASSIC

Presenting Sponsor:

D'Arcy Motors



Premier Sponsor:

University Park Generating Facilities

Lunch Sponsors:

DOT Foods

Strategic Retirement Partners

Golf Cart Sponsor:

Voorn, Jaworski, & Preston, PLLC

Golf Ball Sponsor:

Marquette Bank

Helicopter Ball Drop Sponsor:

ComEd

On-Course Beverage Cart Sponsor:

ComEd

Breakfast Sponsor:

Ozinga

Bloody Mary Sponsor:

Minnesota Lawyers Mutual Ins. Co.

Golf for the Child Sponsor

The Mather Group

In-Kind Partners

Breakthru Beverage

Star 96.7

Thank You to all our Hole Sponsors

2023 Event Date: Friday, June 9, 2023

Morris Country Club, Morris, IL



RUNNING 4 THE KIDS

Presenting Sponsor

CITGO



Supporting Sponsors

Currie Motors

Hippleheuser & Associates, Inc.

Old Plank Trail Community Bank

Sterk Family Law Group

In-Kind Partners

Thank You to all our In-Kind Partners

2023 Event Date: Join our newest created event, CASA Boots and BBQ

Friday, September 8, 2023

Konow's Corn Maze, Homer Glen, IL



Thank You to our partners for their fundraising on behalf of CASA of River Valley

- 2022 Chicago Marathon Runners
- Bliss Hair Studio, Inc.
- Haunted Trails – Brian and Mary Malpeli
- Suburban Service League
- Witch's Night Out Joliet

Santa's Helpers Sponsors

BF Tire, Inc

Gost Coffee Roasters

Vahey Law and Mediation, LLC

In-Kind Partners

Thank You to all our

In-Kind Partners



2023 Event Date: Saturday, December 2 & Sunday, December 3, 2023

Departs from New Lenox Metra Train Station



CASA CHRISTMAS EXPRESS

Presenting Sponsor

Midland States Bank

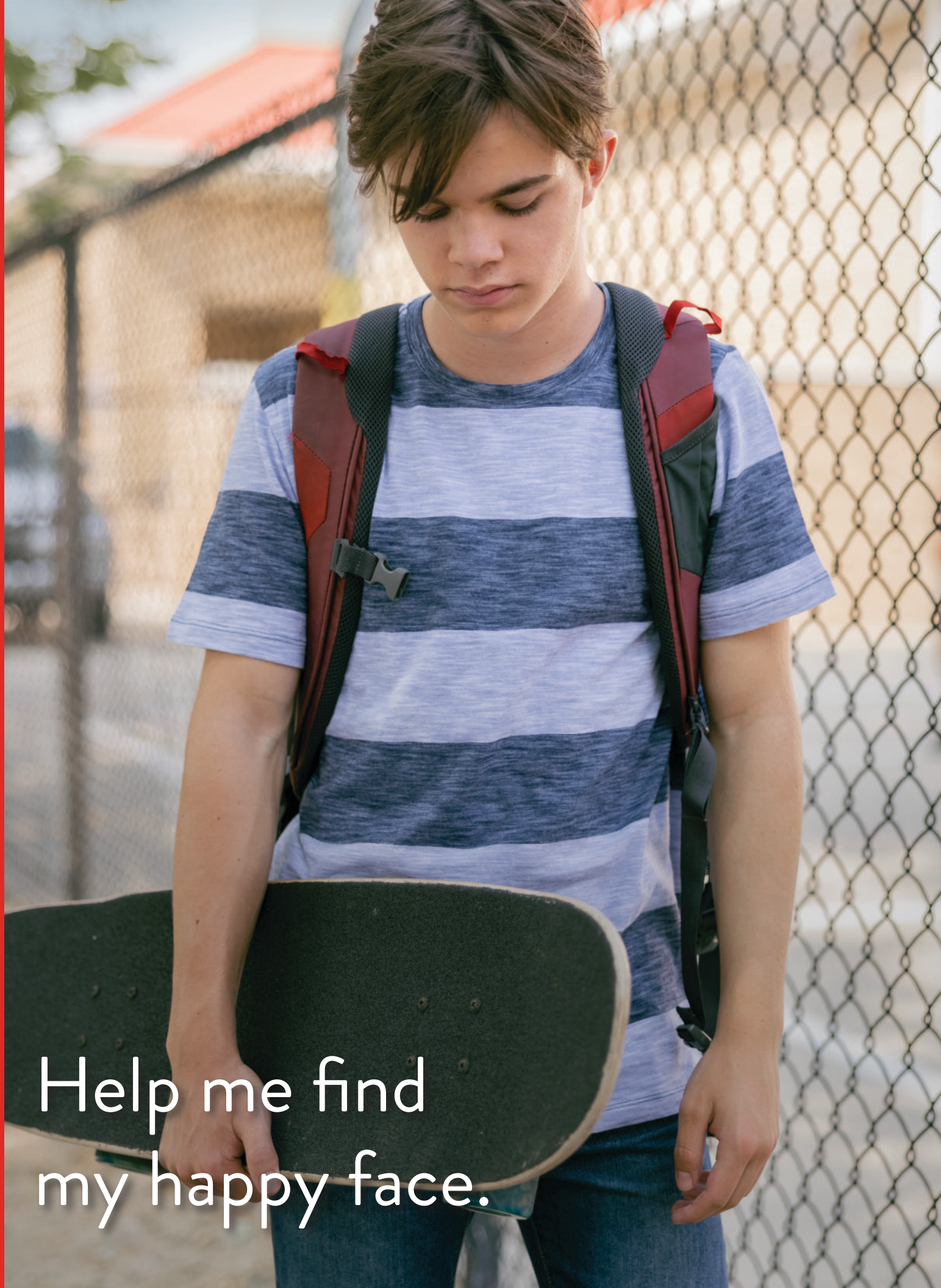


Santa's Reindeer Sponsors

D'Arcy Buick - GMC

Holly Club of Joliet





Help me find
my happy face.

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



Alicia was 8 years old when she became CASA-involved due to her mother having ongoing mental health struggles with schizophrenia and other conditions. Unfortunately, her mother had no personal support system, and police became involved after her mother was found acting strangely outside of the homeless shelter where they were staying. Alicia was placed into foster care, and her CASA volunteer, Ashley, was assigned.

During CASA’s visits, it was easy to see what a smart girl Alicia was for her age. She peppered Ashley with questions about whether her mom was safe, when she would go home, and when the next court dates would be happening. Alicia was hesitant to talk about her feelings and emotions with Ashley, so instead they spent their time together playing card games, especially Uno.

Alicia is biracial, but had never met her father, who is African-American. Alicia’s mother is Caucasian. During one of Ashley’s visits, Ashley and Alicia watched the trailer to the new Little Mermaid movie. Originally, Alicia did not like the idea that the character’s skin tone would be changed to look like hers. When Ashley asked why, Alicia said because she thought it would be ugly. Ashley told Alicia that her skin is beautiful and showed Alicia that the first Mermaid mythology originated in West Africa over 4,000 years ago; many of the original mermaids from mythology were Black. Alicia’s eyes lit up after learning this latest information, and she asked to watch the movie trailer once more. Ashley continued to focus on body positivity with

Alicia, and Alicia began to speak about herself much more positively going forward.

As time went on, Alicia began to open up to Ashley more about her feelings. She shared that while she wished she could see her mom more often, she felt much safer in her foster home because sometimes her mom got “scary.” Alicia’s mom, Beth, visited with Alicia every chance she got, but refused to take medication to manage her mental health conditions. Ashley was able to help Alicia’s foster parents build a relationship with Beth that truly put Alicia’s best interests first. Alicia’s foster parents increased Alicia’s visits with her mom, telling Beth that as long as she was mentally stable, they were happy to accommodate the extra time. As Alicia began to realize that she could stay in a safe home and still see her mother more, Ashley could see her stress melt away. Alicia began to play more and smiled easily. Beth was so excited for the extra time with her daughter that she eventually agreed to follow her doctor’s orders to take her prescribed medication. CASA was also able to advocate for Alicia to begin therapy to help her process all her emotions.

After Alicia’s court case had been open for two years, Beth contacted CASA to say she just did not think she could manage getting Alicia back full-time, as her mental health was impacting her ability to hold a job or a place to live. A meeting was held, and everyone decided that adoption would be in Alicia’s best interests, but with a special twist – Alicia’s foster parents would continue letting Alicia and Beth remain in contact, as well as allow them to visit regularly.

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. This past year, CASA advocated on the behalf of siblings Emma and Henry. Their mother Mary went through a difficult season during the pandemic where she lost her job, housing and turned to alcohol abuse, leaving her unable to care for her children. CASA advocated for Mary to get addiction treatment services, parenting classes and helped her find resources to get back on her feet. After a successful recovery, Emma, Henry and their mother were reunited, just before the holidays. The family was so excited to finally be together once again.

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.

Opportunities To Give

Corporate Sponsors

Businesses can sponsor CASA through any of our 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.

SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT CASA!

Please share CASA information. To grow and reach 100% of the children we serve, your community support is urgently needed. Invite a colleague to one of our events, ask a friend about becoming a volunteer or consider donating. There are so many ways to make a difference in a child's life, and we are so thankful that you do.



Individual Giving

Consider making an individual gift. Your one-time or reoccurring donation will have a profound impact in the life of a child.

Memorial and Honorary Gifts

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

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

Many employers will match your donation to CASA of River Valley through a corporate philanthropy program. Some companies may even provide a matching donation based on hours spent volunteering with CASA.

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 mailed 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



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 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.

2023 Training Sessions

- Session 1: Feb 25, 28 / Mar 2, 4, 7, 9
- Session 2: Apr 15, 18, 22, 25, 27 / May 2
- Session 3: June 3, 6, 8, 10, 13, 15
- Session 4: July 29, Aug 1, 3, 5, 8, 10
- Session 5: Sep 9, 12, 14, 16, 19, 21
- Session 6: Oct 26, 28, / Nov 1, 4, 7, 9

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

What are the requirements to be a CASA/GAL?

- 25 years of age (preference) with good communication and writing skills
- Bilingual volunteers especially 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 are 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



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