



CHANGE A
CHILD'S STORY.™



Impact Report

Fiscal Year

2023-2024

Introduction

Why is CASA Jefferson so important?

CASA Jefferson's mission centers around its Advocates, who play a critical role in bridging the gap between the court system and children who have suffered abuse or neglect. These trained and supervised Advocates serve as the eyes, ears, and most importantly, the voices for children in foster care, ensuring their unique needs are brought to light and prioritized. They collect vital information and make recommendations to the court, helping judges make informed decisions about the children's futures.

Every child deserves the opportunity to grow up in a safe, loving environment. Sadly, for thousands of children across the country, neglect, violence, and maltreatment define their lives. In 2023, Louisiana alone recorded **51,455** reports of child abuse, and of those, **7,151** children entered foster care.

For children who cannot return to their homes, foster care can be a confusing and overwhelming experience. That's where CASA Jefferson steps in. Court-Appointed Special Advocates are appointed by judges to stand up for the best interests of these children. By forming meaningful relationships with the children and those involved in their lives, Advocates provide a consistent, reliable adult presence. Their informed court recommendations help ensure that each child's needs are addressed and that no child falls through the cracks of an overloaded system.

Research has shown that children with a CASA Advocate are more likely to have positive outcomes. These children:

- Are more likely to find a safe, permanent home,
- Are more likely to succeed academically, and
- Are half as likely to re-enter the foster care system.

Through the commitment of CASA Jefferson's Advocates, children who have experienced abuse and neglect are not only heard but given a real chance at a safer, brighter future.

Research shows

Having a stable relationship with a supportive adult can significantly improve outcomes for children, even when they have endured serious hardships. CASA volunteers play a crucial role in providing this stability by being specially trained to understand the effects of trauma on children.

- CASA volunteers are educated to recognize the profound impact trauma can have on a child's development and well-being.
- They spend time building meaningful connections with the children and those involved in their lives.
- Volunteers communicate with service providers, teachers, and social workers to gather comprehensive information that helps them make well-informed recommendations to the court.

- Based on their findings, they advocate for services that promote healing and help children build resilience without causing further harm.
- Additionally, they support services that strengthen the relationship between parents and their children, helping to create a path toward family reunification when it is safe and possible.

By providing this critical support, CASA volunteers ensure that children in foster care have a voice and the opportunity to heal and thrive.

Our Story

Our Mission

To break the cycle of child abuse and neglect through volunteers advocating for safe, nurturing, and permanent homes for foster children in our community.

Our Vision

Our vision is to have volunteers recruited, trained, and assigned to every child in the foster care system in Jefferson Parish.

Our Purpose

Children who are removed from their homes because of reported abuse and/or neglect are placed in foster care situations. During a lengthy and complex process, a judge will determine where they may safely and permanently place. This is where an advocate steps in.



Children Reached
Forever Homes

91%



Our Goals

The following goals have been identified by our program as performance measurements to illustrate the impact of CASA Jefferson advocates who have been appointed by the Jefferson Parish Juvenile Court to a Child in Need of Care case. Our program's goal is to ensure that children are permanently and promptly placed, as well as ensuring the children have their needs met while in foster care.

GOAL 1

In 2023-2024 the average time a CASA child spends in the Department of Children and Family Service's custody will be fewer than 730 days. *(As outlined in the Adoption and Safe Families Act, Public Law 105-89, of 1997)*

- In 2023-2024, **201** CASA Jefferson children spent an average of **347 days** in the Department of Children and Family Service's custody.

GOAL 2

In 2023-2024, 80% of CASA children will achieve permanent placement. *(Through reunification, adoption, or transfer of custody).*

- In 2023-2024, **91%** of CASA Jefferson children whose cases were closed received a permanent placement.

GOAL 3

In 2023-2024, 70% of CASA children will be placed with their siblings. *(To maintain family connection)*

- In 2023-2024, **62%** of CASA Jefferson children were placed with their siblings.

GOAL 4

In 2023-2024, 60% of recommendations made by CASA Advocates will become orders of the Court. *(Recommendations are made for services including but not limited to educational, medical, behavioral health services, family connections, and permanent placements.)*

- In 2023-2024, **70%** of the recommendations made by CASA Jefferson Advocates became orders of the Court. Our Advocates made **314** recommendations, **219** of which became orders of the Court.

OUR ADVOCATES

Advocate Demographics		
Age Range	Number	Percentage
21-29	6	6%
30-39	10	10%
40-49	25	26%
50-59	24	25%
60-over	31	33%
Gender	Number	Percentage
Female	79	82%
Male	17	18%
Ethnicity	Number	Percentage
African American	13	14%
Caucasian	68	71%
Hispanic/Latino	4	4%
Asian American	1	1%
Bi-Racial	10	10%
Employment	Number	Percentage
Advocates who are employed full time	61	64%
Education	Number	Percentage
Assigned advocates with at least a bachelor's degree level of education	44	42%

Total number of assigned advocates: **73**

Total advocates discharged (resigned or terminated): **26**

Total number of advocates (active and inactive): **96**

Number of contacts with children: **723**

Number of hours contributed by advocates: **2,506**

Number of court reports advocates completed: **102**

Advocates completed **448** hours of training.

RECRUITMENT EFFORTS:

CASA conducted **17** community presentations

Initial contact with potential advocates: **42**

Prospective advocates completed orientation: **21**

Prospective Advocates completed training: **17**

Advocates sworn in this Fiscal Year: **18**



OUR CHILDREN

Children's Demographics

Age	Number	Percentage
Children Under 1 Year of Age	24	12%
Children 1-12 Years of Age	138	69%
Children 13-15 Years of Age	18	9%
Children 16-18 Years of Age	21	10%
Gender	Number	Percentage
Female Children Served	96	48%
Male Children Served	105	52%
Ethnicity	Number	Percentage
African American	90	45%
Caucasian	71	35%
Bi-Racial	19	9%
Hispanic/Latino	20	10%
Asian American	1	1%

CHILD OUTCOMES:

Number of newly assigned children to an advocate: **37**

Number of cases closed: **45**

Of the cases closed, **91% of the children achieved a permanent home at case closure.**

Number of appointed children this fiscal year: **201**

Number of children assigned an advocate: **115**

Number of children waiting for an advocate during this fiscal year: **86**

Number of new children appointed: **90**



Fiscal Year 23-24 Financials

Programmatic Revenue

Local Government Support	\$60,000
Foundation Support	\$5,000
Individual support and other donations	\$33,384
Federal and state government support	\$462,855
Fundraising events	\$55,072
Children’s Projects	\$1,800
In-kind goods and services *	\$79,691
TOTAL	\$697,802



*Calculated by the number of hours Advocates spent providing direct services to children and earned through training x \$31.80 (<https://independentsector.org/blog/independent-sector-releases-new-value-of-volunteer-time-of-31-80-per-hour/>)

