

Douglas County CASA ANNUAL REPORT for 2010

Submitted to the City of Lawrence - July 2011

Mission Statement:

Douglas County CASA provides comprehensive advocacy for abused and neglected children in need of care and under the protection of the court system. Our trained volunteers investigate, facilitate, monitor and mentor. Through compassion and commitment, they are dedicated to be the child's voice through their journey to a safe, loving permanent home.



Children Served:

LOCAL SUPPORT: Since 1991, Douglas County CASA has trained more than 500 volunteers to serve as special advocates for over 770 abused and neglected children from our community. With your continued support, we can help these children thrive in safe, permanent homes.

In 2010, Douglas County CASA volunteers advocated for 77 abused and neglected children. 15 of these children achieved permanency in a safe and stable home via adoption or reintegration with family. The 77 children served in 2009 included 39 girls and 38 boys. Ages served included the following: **birth to age 5 - 25; ages 6 to 11 - 26; ages 12 to 15 - 16; ages 16 to 17 - 7; age 18 and above - 3.**

NATIONAL SUPPORT: In 2010, more than 75,000 national CASA volunteers served as caring adults in the lives of 240,000 children. Independent research demonstrates that children with a CASA volunteer are more likely to receive supportive services and less likely to return to the foster care system.



Organization Highlights in 2010:

The new Jean Shepherd Room at the CASA office was formally dedicated in December of 2010. Throughout the

year, sibling visits and child/volunteer activities were facilitated in this special room, including Halloween, Christmas and Valentine activities. A new CASA Ambassadors group was established to provide holiday gifts, adoption gifts and other special support for children served by CASA.

Our CASA volunteers advocated for 77 children on a regular basis, making sure their best interests were met, investigating facts about the child's situation, monitoring services to the child and their family, making thoughtful recommendations to the court about the child's situation and their future, and much more. In 2010, CASA volunteers provided additional opportunities for their assigned children and youth by distributing Mengel Swim passes and special gift cards from Payless Shoes, via their "Shoes4Kids" program. A youth volunteer for our CASA program raised money to provide Halloween costumes for 16 CASA children and another young teen made CASA the beneficiary of his Bar Mitzvah project, raising over \$1,000. Douglas County CASA was also a beneficiary of the 2010 St. Patrick's Day Parade and received a \$10,500

donation. In the spring, our CASA program launched child abuse prevention and awareness efforts, including a “Pinwheels for Prevention” event at People’s Bank. A variety of outreach activities in 2010 included participation in the Lawrence Public Library’s “Caddy Stacks” event, annual community Volunteer Fair, the Lied Center Family Arts Festival, St. Patrick’s Day Parade activities, and the Day of Caring.

Programs:

As Douglas County CASA, Inc. strives to address the diverse needs of at-risk children and youth in our community, our organization continued to provide several programs to supplement the efforts of our Court Appointed Special Advocates:

1) **“My Stuff Bags”** – When CASA volunteers are sworn in to an assigned case by the judge, they are presented with a backpack, tote, or diaper bag for their CASA child. These backpacks, or “My Stuff Bags,” are filled with items of comfort and care for CASA kids, including fleece blankets, stuffed animals, toiletries, books, journals, and more.

2) **Summer Scholarship Program** – Financed by a \$5,000 grant from the Ethel and Raymond Rice Foundation, individual donations and CASA program support in 2010, this program allows local agencies to refer at-risk youth for scholarships to attend summer camps in the community. This includes children with a parent who is incarcerated, a parent who is deceased, children with mental health issues, foster children, youth with truancy issues, and those with other challenging circumstances. In 2010, this scholarship program, coordinated and administered by CASA staff, allowed 55 at-risk children to attend various day camps in Lawrence.

3) **Emergency Clothing Fund** – This special fund allows our CASA volunteers to purchase coats, jeans, shoes, socks and various clothing items for their assigned children.

4) **Birthday Boxes** - Added in 2010, the Birthday Box program provides each CASA child with a birthday gift, giant decorated cookie, and party supplies to celebrate their special day. The program is supported by in-kind donations from the Omega Phi Alpha service sorority and the KU Office of the University Registrar.



Program Statistics:

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>
CHILDREN SERVED	77	74
CASES CLOSED (adopted, returned home, other placement)	15	32
CHILDREN SERVED BY SUMMER SCHOLARSHIPS	55	37
VOLUNTEER SERVICE HOURS	6,042	5,353
MILES DRIVEN BY VOLUNTEERS	25,415	18,100

Douglas County CASA volunteers drove more than 25,000 miles in 2010 to advocate for 77 abused and neglected children. Volunteer advocates and board members volunteered a total of 6,042 hours, valued at \$129,057 - based on the estimated dollar value of volunteer time for 2010.

Volunteer Training:

CASA staff offered 16 In-Service training opportunities for CASA volunteers in 2010, including a program on the effects of domestic violence on children by the Willow Domestic Violence Center. Additional workshops included “IEPs and Advocating for Your CASA Child in the School Environment,” Roundtable volunteer discussions, book club discussion groups, and more.

In 2010, CASA staff conducted two new volunteer group training sessions. 16 new volunteers were trained and certified.

Every 35 seconds a child is abused or neglected. Every hour a child is displaced from their home.
Be the Difference. Volunteer ♥ Donate ♥ Advocate

Volunteer Recognition:

In 2010, two CASA volunteers received special recognition in Lawrence for their inspirational volunteer work on behalf of our organization. In April, Jill Miller (pictured below left with Volunteer Supervisor Elizabeth Day) was honored as CASA’s outstanding volunteer at the *Wallace Galluzzi Volunteer Awards* ceremony hosted by the United Way of Douglas County.

In July of 2010, Georgia Orchard (pictured at left in center photo) was recognized as the 2010 CASA recipient of the annual *Hon. Jean F. Shepherd Volunteer of the Year Award*. This annual award was established in honor of Judge Jean F. Shepherd, founder of both Douglas County CASA and the Citizen Review Board. Other 2010 honorees are pictured below right.



Board of Directors:

The 2010 Board of Directors of Douglas County CASA, Inc. included 12 board members from the Lawrence community:

Cara Nossaman Anderson ▪ Mary Boatright, President ▪ Julia Butler ▪
Shelly Goscha ▪ Beth Kelley ▪ Brad Kemp, Vice President ▪ Eve Kemple ▪
Missy Martin, Past President ▪ Karen Oberzan, Secretary ▪ Lisa Ramler ▪ Ruthi Rapp ▪
Brian Seymour, Treasurer ▪ Ex officio members include Libby Johnson (Kappa Alpha Theta)
and CASA Executive Director Diana Frederick

The CASA Board of Directors met 10 times in 2010. The Board is responsible for financial oversight, compliance and policy, and fundraising. The Board’s 2010 “Casa4CASA” playhouse benefit raised over \$20,000.

Impact of City Funding:

In 2010, Douglas County CASA, Inc. utilized funds provided by the City of Lawrence for general operating expenses required to carry out our mission of providing specially trained volunteer advocates for abused and neglected children of Douglas County. City funds have allowed our program to continue to support a staff that recruits, screens, trains, and oversees a dedicated corps of volunteers.

Thanks to funding from the City of Lawrence, Douglas County CASA continues to reduce the number of children who experience substantiated abuse/neglect while in placement, to increase the stability of a single CASA volunteer per child throughout the duration of their case, and to reduce recidivism for a child's return to the court system as a Child in Need of Care.

Project Goals Supported by City Funding: In 2010, 100% of children whose cases closed did not experience a recurrence of substantiated abuse/neglect while in placement; 97.4% of children experienced the stability of a single CASA volunteer during the calendar year; and 100% of children whose cases closed in 2008 did not re-enter the court system as a Child in Need of Care during 2010, thus surpassing our 90% target for low recidivism.

City funds continue to be crucial as our organization strives for our ultimate goal of providing a trained CASA for every abused and neglected child that comes into the Douglas County court system.

General Funding:

Douglas County CASA, Inc. continues to develop a diverse funding base, with financial support derived from a variety of sources, including the United Way, City of Lawrence, Douglas County, Permanent Family Fund, Crime Victims Assistance Fund, Kappa Alpha Theta, the Ethel and Raymond F. Rice Foundation, Douglas County Community Foundation, miscellaneous grants, corporate support and private donations.

TOTAL 2010 REVENUE: \$221,672

Individuals & Businesses – 32%
United Way – 14%
County – 20%
Grants – 13%
Special Events – 12%
City – 9%

TOTAL 2010 EXPENSES: \$194,119

Program - 82%
Administrative – 15%
Fundraising – 3%

In addition to coordinating the annual Casa4CASA fundraiser, the Board of Directors and Executive Director conducted two direct mail solicitations, several restaurant fundraisers and personal solicitation contacts. These mail and personal solicitation efforts raised more than \$50,000 in 2010. The solicitation and mailing lists for fundraising efforts are updated annually.

**“To give a child a CASA is to give them a voice.
To give them a voice is to give them hope,
and to give them hope is to give them the world.”**

- Pamela Butler, Former Foster Child

