

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA OF ROCK COUNTY





CASA of Rock County
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(608) 305-0187

ABOUT CASA OF ROCK COUNTY

Since 2005, CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Rock County has been recruiting ordinary people from all walks of life to become trained volunteers who step up to assist judges and serve the county's most vulnerable children.

We believe in the rights and dignity of children. We are committed to putting that belief to work for children who have experienced abuse or neglect. And we hold ourselves to the highest standards of excellence in service. Across Rock County today, we serve more than 100 children. Close to a hundred more children need our help.

We are there for the child. Whatever their age, children removed from home because of abuse or neglect face a frightening, profound unknown.

We are there to help improve the lives of children and to ensure they reach safe, permanent homes and loving families. And we do.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to recruit, train, and support community volunteers to advocate for the best interest of children who have experienced abuse or neglect.

OUR VISION

Every child will have a safe and stable forever family.

OUR VALUES

- Commitment fueled by passion and persistence.
- Relationships strengthened through communication, teamwork, and mentoring.
- The integrity and credibility of our volunteers and are proud of the advocacy they do.
- Measurable outcomes through continual improvement and accountability.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

As we close the door on this most unusual and challenging year, we are filled with gratitude for the heroic efforts of our volunteers, the unwavering support of our donors and the dedication of all our peers in the child welfare system – all who are dedicated to improving the lives of child abuse and neglect victims.

Effective advocacy for vulnerable children and families is difficult work, even under normal circumstances. It takes courage and passion to be a CASA volunteer. Working with child victims of abuse and neglect and the trauma they have endured is often heartbreaking. Speaking up isn't always comfortable, and our advocates must be persistent and tenacious as they investigate the complexities of each case. All of our advocates are instilled with the hope that CASA's voice will help rewrite each child's story and ensure their way to a safe and nurturing home.

This year, COVID-19 forced us to rethink the way we do just about everything, and as you will see in the pages that follow, CASA of Rock County adapted and our volunteers, once again, exceeded our expectations. True to form, they quickly found creative and innovative ways to safely visit their CASA "kiddos" and families. Between March and December, our volunteer advocates logged 2,663 case hours, and on behalf of the 114 children served, submitted 103 reports to the court. CASA often refers to our volunteers as "heroes," and during this crisis, they proved worthy of this distinction.

We are humbled by the steadfast dedication of our volunteers, stakeholders, and generous donors. Thank you for caring about children who can be easily forgotten. Through your time, support, and financial contributions, you demonstrate that they truly matter.



Sandy Johnson, Executive Director



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"I wanted to be involved in volunteer work that had an impact on people's lives and CASA has truly met and exceeded my expectations".

- Dan Dibbert

2020 AT A GLANCE

CHILDREN SERVED

117

ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS

67

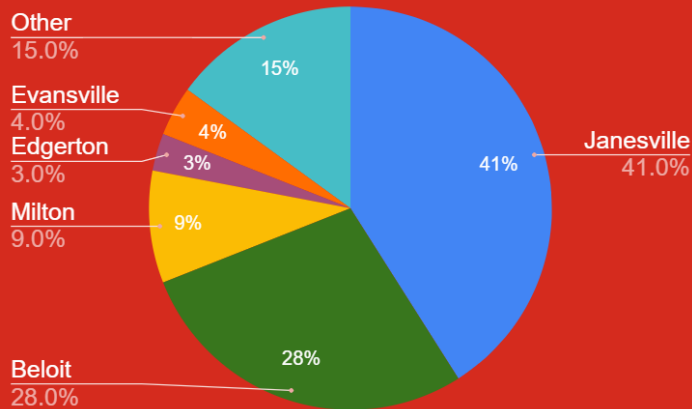
NEW VOLUNTEERS

12

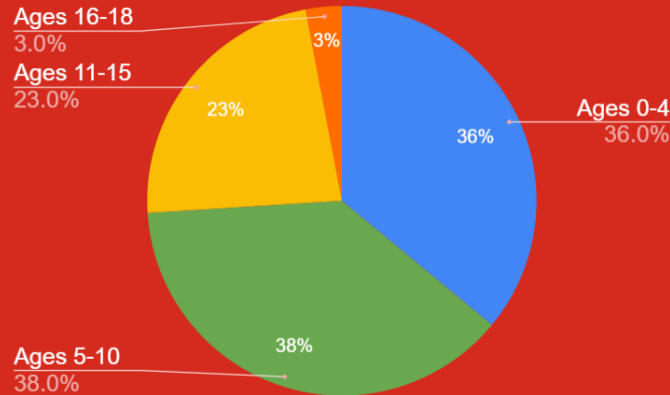
VOLUNTEER SERVICE HOURS

3,438

CITIES SERVED



AGES



NUMBER OF CHILDREN ON
OUR WAITLIST

78

CHILDREN WHO FOUND PERMANANCY

41

Reunification with Parent(s)	49%
Adoptive Home	29%
Guardianship	22%



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Dear Friends and Supporters,

Certainly, 2020 provided many opportunities and challenges to meeting the needs of youth and their advocates. What truly amazed and inspired the board was the willingness and ability of each staff member to embrace the challenges and then quickly adapt to find ways to keep the child and advocate “plugged in” and connected during a pandemic. Every child matters deeply and while many activities and events got canceled and postponed, managing the crisis and trauma of each child remained at the forefront of every decision this organization makes.

The board of directors is so proud of this passionate and dedicated staff! We could not ask for a more determined and capable group in meeting and exceeding the organization's goals, mission, and vision. We have plenty to celebrate in our statistical pages within, but even more so, we wish to celebrate our CASA volunteers; and cherish the kiddos they provide a relationship and a voice for.

As we come out of sheltering at home and begin to see each other face to face, it's our hope that you'll provide whatever support you are able to the critical work of CASA of Rock County, who believes that foster care should be temporary... not a way of life. CASA of Rock County will continue to ensure the child's voice is not lost as we empower our community members to advocate for the best interests of victims of child abuse and neglect. Thank you for your support!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lori Stottler".

Lori Stottler, Board President

"Why CASA you might ask. Because a CASA volunteer's only agenda is to advocate for the children, they have no hidden agenda. I have come to rely on CASA volunteers to help investigate cases, and meet with the children, care providers, and parents. Their services are invaluable, and their dedication unquestionable".

-Jennifer Nash-Elliott GAL

MEMBERS

President

Lorena Stottler

City of Beloit

Vice President

Andrea Gonstead

Gonstead Chiropractic Clinic

Treasurer

Celeste Fox

Rock County Circuit Court

Secretary

Kelly Sanchez

UnityPoint Health - Meriter

Gretchen Burgess

Carney Thorpe, LLC

Jeff Jenson

Festival Foods

A YEAR IN REVIEW

PINWHEELS FOR PREVENTION

Every April, to commemorate Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month, CASA of Rock County holds the Pinwheels for Prevention Event at the courthouse. Over 3,000 pinwheels are planted, one for each report of child abuse or neglect in our county each year. The pinwheel symbolizes the innocence and promise of a happy future all children deserve. Because of Covid-19 the outdoor event was canceled and instead, we planted a Virtual Pinwheel Garden with the help of many friends and supporters.



VIRTUAL VOLUNTEER TRAINING

We started off 2020 with our first volunteer training in February. However, as Covid-19 transformed our world, we adapted to create our first virtual volunteer training. Through our virtual trainings this year, we swore in 12 new volunteer advocates! We created Zoom continuing education trainings for our current volunteers to continue our "always learning model".

Along with the virtual volunteer trainings, we learned how to advocate for our kiddos virtually and from a distance. We are so grateful to have committed volunteers who adapted to virtual visits and found creative ways to stay connected to their cases.

HOLIDAY WISH LIST

Our favorite event of the year is our Holiday Wish List Gift Drive. With the help of many generous donors, we collected personalized gifts for 144 kids involved with the Rock County Child Welfare System! Though this year was challenging for many people and businesses, the number of donations made to our kiddos for the holiday season left us speechless! We would like to extend our thanks to all the businesses and individuals who donated.



OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

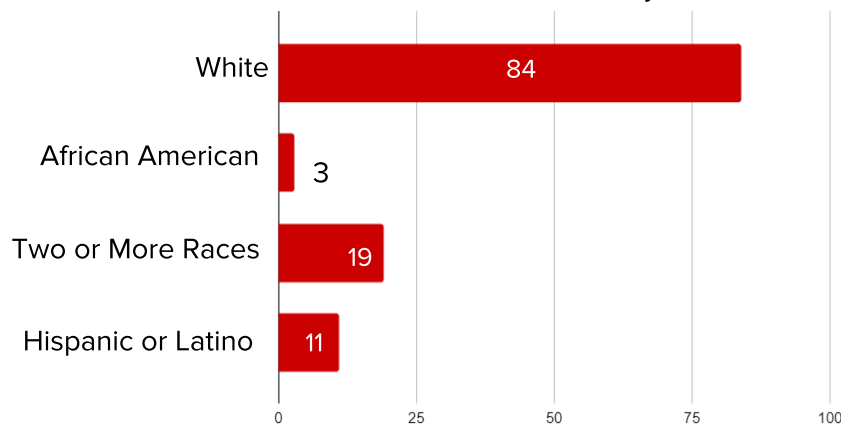
CASA of Rock County serves children and families of many different races, ethnicities, abilities, classes, gender identities, sexual orientations, and religions. We are dedicated to doing the work needed to better support our entire community. We will continue to build collaborative relationships with diverse organizations and members of our community to recruit a diverse team of Board Members, Staff, and CASA Volunteers that are representative of the population of children we serve. We will work closely with community leaders to ensure we are taking the right steps forward to create positive change and be a culturally responsive, equitable, and inclusive organization.

We recognize that racism, ableism, classism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and religious prejudice deeply affect people in our own backyard. By denouncing systemic inequities and striving to be better, we can build a better future for children of all backgrounds in our community.

In 2020 CASA of Rock County contracted with the YWCA to engage in several Racial Justice sessions for the staff, reading and working through the book “Me and White Supremacy” by Layla F. Saad. We will continue our work in 2021 with a session on Disproportionality. We are committed to being an anti-racist, anti-discriminatory organization that recognizes and opposes systemic racism and inequality within our community.

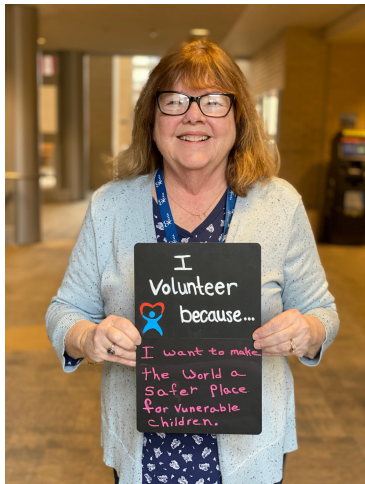
CHILD ETHNICITY DEMOGRAPHICS

*Based off the children we are currently serving and those on our wait-list from 2020 in Rock County, WI



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

2020 ACTIVE CASA VOLUNTEERS



Thank you to our resilient volunteers who adapted to advocating virtually this past year. We appreciate all that our volunteers do to help children who have experienced abuse or neglect in our community.



"The first two children I worked with were adopted by their foster parents in August of 2019. I still see them monthly even though I am not their CASA any longer. This is a relationship that will last a lifetime".

- Angel Tullar

- | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Belinda Bauer | Twila Garza | Mary Pauli |
| Elise Bergman | Julie Gietzel | Kari Pearsall |
| Devin Blay-Stahl | Kayla Guercio | Cara Pfeiffer |
| Julie Brady | Jamie Gwaltney | Callie Pinkstaff |
| Kianna Byrd | D Hahn | Judy Pophal |
| Tara Chapman | Suzanne Hamilton | Kristi Powers |
| Barb Craddick | Katyln Hanover | Tammi Rabbach |
| Stephanie DeLong | Karyssa Heppner | Verna Saladino |
| Kim Dennis | Kim Hubanks | Patti Simonds |
| Dan Dibbert | Tammy Kontny | Lacey Sonntag |
| Diane Dooley | Renee Kuehne | Amanda Stelf |
| Erin Evertt | Colleen Logterman | Connie Sveum |
| Jaleesa Ferris | Kath Magee | Silvia Thiele |
| Tammy Flesch-Strickland | Bambi Matzke | Angel Tullar |
| Meagen Flood | Deb McCann | Ellen Vierthaler |
| Jon Flora | Kelly McGuire | Jon Wangerin |
| Karen Foley Stauss | Roy Meyer | Dakota White |
| Ken Forbeck | Stephanie Michiels | Kim Wise |
| Nancy Forbeck | Don Miller | Sharon Wolter |
| Jane Foreman | Donna Oliver | Lynn Wood |
| Kathleen Gallagher | Dennis Pauli | |

CASA IMPACT AWARDS

The second Annual Break the Cycle Luncheon, where we recognize individuals and businesses with our CASA Impact Awards, was scheduled for April 16, 2020. We are grateful to all the business sponsors and individual ticket purchasers who maintained their support, even after the event was canceled due to the pandemic.

Over the summer we had an opportunity to honor our CASA Impact awardees at an outdoor location. These awardees are people who have made a significant difference in the lives of children and/or for the CASA program with their time, talent, or resources.

- Deb McCann has been a stellar CASA volunteer for over 5 years, advocating for three families and ten children.
- Cori McCann has made a tremendous impact touching the lives of many children and families in her 12 years as an ongoing social worker with Rock County Child Protective Services.
- Sue Conley has been a valuable mentor to CASA, a strategic planning advisor and was instrumental in guiding us to program independence in 2019.
- The Looking Glass has continued to provide a welcome and friendly atmosphere when hosting our volunteer appreciation dinners and other CASA fundraisers.
- East Point Sportz Bar has been so generous to our program, hosting meat raffles and fundraising events that have provided the means to purchase gifts, supplies, and other special treats to bring joy into the lives of children in foster care.

We cannot thank these individuals and businesses enough for all they do for CASA and the hundreds of children we serve in Rock County.



DEB MCCANN



CORI MCCANN



SUE CONLEY



THE LOOKING GLASS



EAST POINT SPORTZ BAR

STAFF

Sandy Johnson

Executive Director

Kim Churchill

Child Advocacy Support Supervisor

Nicole Engleson, MSW

Child Advocacy Supervisor

Kortney Karnok

Personnel and Advocacy Manager

Alyssa Whitney

Administrative and Development Specialist

Makinzie Rogahn

Outreach and Education Coordinator



Child Abuse Prevention
CASA of Rock County



"The three children I am mentoring have been working on a service project where we are making blankets for individuals who are homeless, in foster care or hospitalized. One of the children thanked me for buying the blanket materials and shared that she was excited to make a blanket for a kid in foster care - a kid just like her. This comment melted my heart".

- Twlia Garza



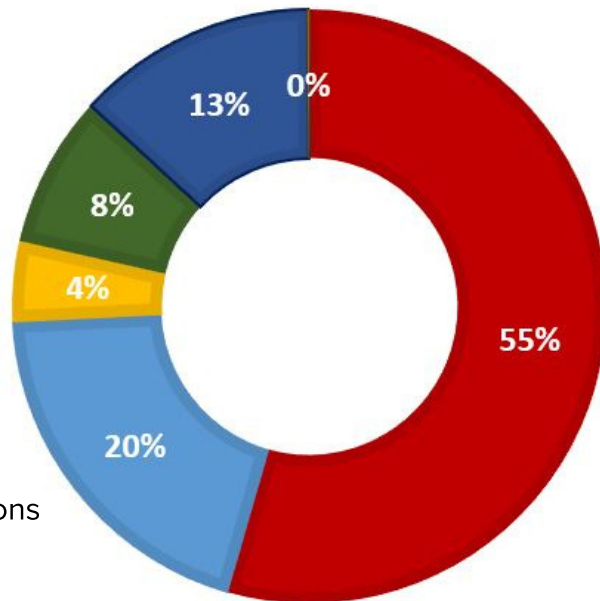
"Knowing (my kiddo) trusts me the way he does despite having relationships where he hasn't been able to trust, tells me I have done right by him in his eyes. And that is important".

- Roy Meyer

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

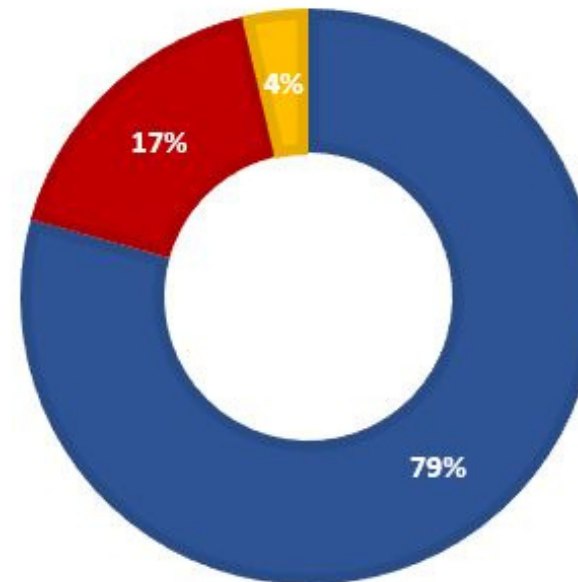
REVENUE 2020

- VOCA
\$220,600
- United Way
\$80,000
- Rock County
\$17,645
- Other Grants
\$33,500
- Fundraising and Individual Contributions
\$52,900
- Other/Misc.
\$445



EXPENDITURES 2020

- Program
\$282,854
- Administrative
\$60,740
- Fundraising
\$12,972



"The most rewarding part about being a CASA is building a relationship with and being a resource for not just my kiddo, but with his bio family, foster family, teacher, CPS worker, and CASA staff (You all ROCK!). It has taken the better part of this year, but interactions with my kiddo are much more conversational today than a year ago when we first met. Over time I feel that I have gained his trust and he is more comfortable spending time together and speaking with me".

- Jon Wangerin

GRANTORS AND SPONSORS

GRANTS

Alliant Energy
Col. Robert Morse Foundation
Ecolab Foundation
Janesville Morning Rotary
Office of Crime Victim Services (VOCA)
Rock County
Stateline Community Foundation
Women's Fund of the Community
Foundation of Southern Wisconsin

Proud Funded Partner of
United Way Blackhawk Region



BUSINESSES

ABC Supply Co., Inc.	Festival Foods	PlayMonster
Adecco	First Class Cosmetology	Premier Bank
Alongi Santas Moss	School Beloit	RD Worldwide, Inc.
Angi Energy System LLC	First Community Bank	Regal
Angus-Young Associates, Inc.	First National Bank and Trust	Sidelines
Basics Coorporative	Gonstead Chiropractic	Steamfitters
Bellasazi Salon	IBEW Local Union 965	TASC
Beloit Health System	Inclusa	Topical Review
Beloit Junior Women's Club	Intermediate Women's Club	Timber Hill Winery
Beloit Memorial Hospital - Lab	Janesville Veterinary Clinic	Travel Envy
Beloit VFW Post 2308	Johnson Financial Group	Velocity Multi-Sport & Cycling
Blackhawk Community Credit Union	Kwik Trip, Inc.	Woodman's
Blackhawk Technical College	Learning Tree, LLC	
Blackhawk Transport, Inc.	LifeCircle	
Capitol Bank	The Looking Glass	
CSL Plasma	Magee Plumbing	
DeGarmo Plumbing Inc.	Midwest Dental	
East Point Sportz Pub	Newell Boutique LLC	
Educators Credit Union	Ott Schweitzer, Inc.	
	Park City Chapter ABWA	

Thank You!

*"We are grateful that you value our program's mission and are willing to support our efforts."
- CASA Staff and Board*

DONORS

INDIVIDUALS

Shannon Ahrens

Lea Alexander

Clint Anderson

Anonymous

Larry and Karen Arft

Clarice and James Arneson

Rick and Rita Barder

Kara and Beau Barnett

Richard Barrett

Laura Barton

Alan and Jessica Bates

Belinda Bauer

Susan Behrens and David Look

Pamela Belanger

Michele and Richard Bender

Julie Berberich

Ashley Berg

Scott and Melody Bierman

Alice Blue and Surinder Narula

Paulo Briano

Jenna Bier

Jessica Bouziane

Kim Brausam

Diane Brown

Chris and Gretchen Burgess

Carol Burgess

Stephanie Burton

Marlene and Steven Bysted

Kelli Cameron

Patricia Cameron

Jeanne Carfora

Mary Carpenter

Roy and Barbara Carter

Jeremy Cartwright

Francheska Chua

Marlene Churchill

Kim and Chuck Churchill

Sue and James Conley

Emily Conner

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Lyndsey Dallman

Christine Darr

Georgena Davis

Victoria Davenport

Janice Delo

Stephanie DeLong

Gary and Vicki Dencker

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Steve Diamond and Diane

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Diane Dooley

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Richard Garcia

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Haakenson

Christopher Hagens

D Hahn and Merlin Zittlow

Katlyn Hanover

Susan Hanson

Charles and Prudy Harker

Nancy and Jim Heidt

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Marline and Tom Holmes

Barbara Hough Hood

Kimberley Hubanks

Shylia Hubolor

Tiffany Hunt

Alyson Jayne

Jeff Jensen

Dean and Sandy Johnson

Douglas and Dorothy Johnson

Renee Johnson

Doreen Johnson Lardy

Jackie and Jerry Jones

Jaysen and Julia Jorgensen

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Amy and Leland Judd

John Kantz

Kortney Karnok

Keith and Melinda Karnok

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Kastern Family

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Jane Kerr

Dawn Klitzman

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Debra Kolste

Jennie Krajeck

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Harvey and Janice Kucaba

Michael and Renee Kuehne

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Julie Lenzendorf

Mark Licht

Kristy Lucksinger

Tricia Lyons

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Kath Magee

Elizabeth Magnus

William Mathis and Richard Dexter

Deb and Terry McCann

Beth McErlean

Jessika McIntyre

Brittany Meyer

Roy and Diane Meyer

Linda Miller

Erin Montgomery

Cynthia Mooney

Ben and Heather Myers

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Bill and Debbie Nelson

Cathleen Neumann

Cristine Neumann

Penelope Nevicosi

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Debi Orsborne

Randi Othrow

Camilla Owen

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Rave Patel

Kirk and Diane Patterson

Dennis and Mary Pauli

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Alyssa Whitney and Dan
Schooff

Dan Wilcox
James and Connie Winter
Kim Wise
Sharon Wolter
John and Becky Wong
Lynn Wood
Jacquelin Wood
Gina Wyse

*We apologize for anyone we may have missed

Thank You!

*"The generosity of the individuals in our community is an inspiration to us all."
- CASA Staff and Board*

HOW CAN YOU HELP?



VOLUNTEER

Our volunteers are the heart and soul of the CASA program! Volunteers get to know the child by going on visits with their CASA kiddo(s). They further get to know the child by talking with everyone in that child's life.

Volunteers also have constant communication with their supervisors to assist them with their cases. They use the information they gather to inform the Court of what the child needs, wants, and their best interests for them at that time.

Be a Superhero, be an Advocate!
Apply now on our website.



DONATE

Support CASA of Rock County by making a one-time or monthly donation. Your sustained support helps us advocate for more children in need. Join our Heroes for Hope monthly giving program!

Learn more about our Heroes for Hope monthly giving program and how to donate online.

www.CASARockCounty.org

STAY CONNECTED:

Search for CASA of Rock County on these social media platforms



SPREAD THE WORD

We need people to help create awareness and promote who we are and what we do. This can be done through "liking" our social media pages and sharing posts, posting event notices, or inviting us to speak at an organization or club. To help promote CASA and raise funds, we put on various fundraising events throughout the year, and we could always use extra help!

