



2026 IMPACT REPORT

Anne Arundel County CASA, Inc.

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Dear Friends & Partners,

Picture a courtroom hallway. A child sits alone, waiting for someone who actually knows their story.

Then a CASA volunteer walks in — not as a stranger, but as someone who has spent weeks getting to know that child's world. That moment, repeated hundreds of times a year across Anne Arundel County, is the real measure of what this organization does.

Last year, more than 190 children and families moved through our county's juvenile court system — neighbors experiencing a traumatic, chaotic time, who needed someone they could count on as they healed. Our Court Appointed Special Advocates stepped into that role: consistent, caring adults who believe in the power of simply showing up.

That's the part of this work that's easy to overlook. Advocacy isn't only what happens in the courtroom. It's the quiet accumulation of small, consistent choices — a phone call returned, a visit kept, a promise honored — that eventually adds up to a child believing, maybe for the first time, that someone is in their corner.

This past year, we served 124 of the 190 children in care in Anne Arundel County. Getting there meant paying attention to things donors rarely see: strong training, real support for our staff, and advocates who knew they had a team behind them. That's the kind of work that doesn't make headlines, but it's exactly what let 124 children have someone show up for them this year.

As AACCASA enters its 29th year, we've been thinking a lot about time. Not just the hours our advocates log, but what that time actually builds: trust, understanding, a sense that someone is paying attention. We've watched children who once flinched at questions start to laugh again. That shift doesn't happen in a single visit — it happens because someone kept showing up, week after week, until showing up stopped being a surprise and started being something they could count on.

None of it happens without you. Whether you've given your time as a volunteer, your voice as a supporter, or your resources as a donor, you are the reason a child in Anne Arundel County has someone showing up for them today. That's not an abstraction — it's 124 children who had someone in their corner this year, each one changed by a specific person's willingness to stay the course.

Thank you for being that person, year after year.



Rebecca Tingle
Executive Director



Jean Sovinski
Board President

Our HISTORY

In 1993, a handful of local attorneys recognized the need for a CASA program in Anne Arundel County. With the support from the local Bar Association, the Circuit Court, and the Department of Social



Services, Anne Arundel County CASA, Inc. (AACCASA) was incorporated. AACCASA began serving children in July 1997. With a small staff of five professionals, we rely on volunteers to achieve our mission.

Since our inception, over 762 exceptional CASA volunteers have worked diligently to improve the lives of over 1,004 children in need in our community. Our dedicated volunteers contribute over 10,000 hours of their time annually to help these children who are unable to help themselves. AACCASA is a privately held 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. We are funded through grants, donations, and fundraising and are part of a network of 15 CASA programs serving 23 Maryland counties.

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Our LEADERSHIP

PRESIDENT

Jean Sovinski

Managing Partner |
Studio 343

TREASURER

Shawn Schoene

Senior Vice President | First
National Bank

VICE PRESIDENT

Cynthia Barbieri

Business Strategy & Initiatives
Manager, SVP | Bank of
America / Merrill Lynch

SECRETARY

Krysti Lantz

Residency Program Coordinator,
Internal Medicine | Luminis
Health

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STAFF

Rebecca Tingle

Executive Director

Tracey Lane

Program Coordinator

Christine Acton

Child Advocate Specialist

Mary Ellen Barnes

Child Advocate Specialist

Libby Barrett

Child Advocate Specialist



Our VISION

A world where every child who has experienced abuse or neglect is given the opportunity to thrive in a safe and loving home.





Our **MISSION**

To provide volunteers to advocate for and support abused and neglected children in the court system to ensure their right to safe, stable permanent homes.

Our **VALUES**

1. COMPASSIONATE & CARING

We are mindful, intentional, and responsive in recognizing the lived experiences and well-being of the children and families we serve, as well as our volunteers, board members, and staff.

2. EXCELLENCE

We are responsible at our core to deliver the highest level of training and support for our CASA volunteers so they can provide quality advocacy for our children to ensure their best opportunity for a safe and stable home.

3. PARTNERSHIP

We recognize the value of collaboration to foster cohesive relationships with community stakeholders and the children and families we serve to ensure open communication and trust.

4. INTEGRITY

We recognize and appreciate the generosity of our supporters and we value excellence in program delivery, fiscal responsibility, and outcome measurement to instill trust.





WHO WE SERVE

ABUSED AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN ARE AMONG THE MOST VULNERABLE IN OUR SOCIETY.

Children adjudicated as CINA (Child In Need of Assistance) by the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County:

- In foster care due to abuse/neglect - NO fault of their own
- Diverse ethnic population
- Up to 21 years of age
- 50% have biological parents who have substance abuse and/or mental health diagnoses
- Nearly 20% of the children are substance exposed, including newborns
- Over 50% of the children have a "mental health diagnosis"

♥ WHAT WE DO

CASA VOLUNTEERS RECEIVE EXTENSIVE INITIAL AND ONGOING TRAINING ON VARIOUS TOPICS:

- Judicial and child welfare systems
- Court report writing
- Impact of family issues: substance abuse, mental illness and violence
- Collaboration, cultural awareness



Our CASAs

CASAS ARE IMMERSED IN ALL ASPECTS OF A CHILD'S LIFE AND:

- Visit weekly with the child
- Review all court and DSS records
- Gather information from EVERYONE in the child's life
- Advocate for the child's needs: medical, psychological, educational and social
- Remain focused that their child finds a stable, permanent and loving home



CHILDREN WITH A CASA...

Spend less time spent in foster care, receive more services, are more likely to be placed with siblings, and have one consistent adult advocating for their best interests.



REWARDS FOR THE COMMUNITY

Adult citizens who are more stable and stronger.



WIDE-SPREAD IMPACT

Benefits that ripple through the lives of their biological and foster families, their schools, churches, and workplaces, and their other caregivers.



ONE SHARED COMMUNITY GOAL

Moves us closer to our shared Community Goal of ensuring safe, loving and permanent homes for all children.



Our **VOLUNTEERS**

**ALL CHILDREN DESERVE A SAFE, STABLE HOME
WITH A LOVING FAMILY TO CARE FOR THEM.**



Anne Arundel County CASA is central to fulfilling society's most fundamental obligation by making sure a qualified, compassionate adult will fight for and protect a child's right to be safe, to be treated with dignity and respect, and to learn and grow in the security of a loving family.

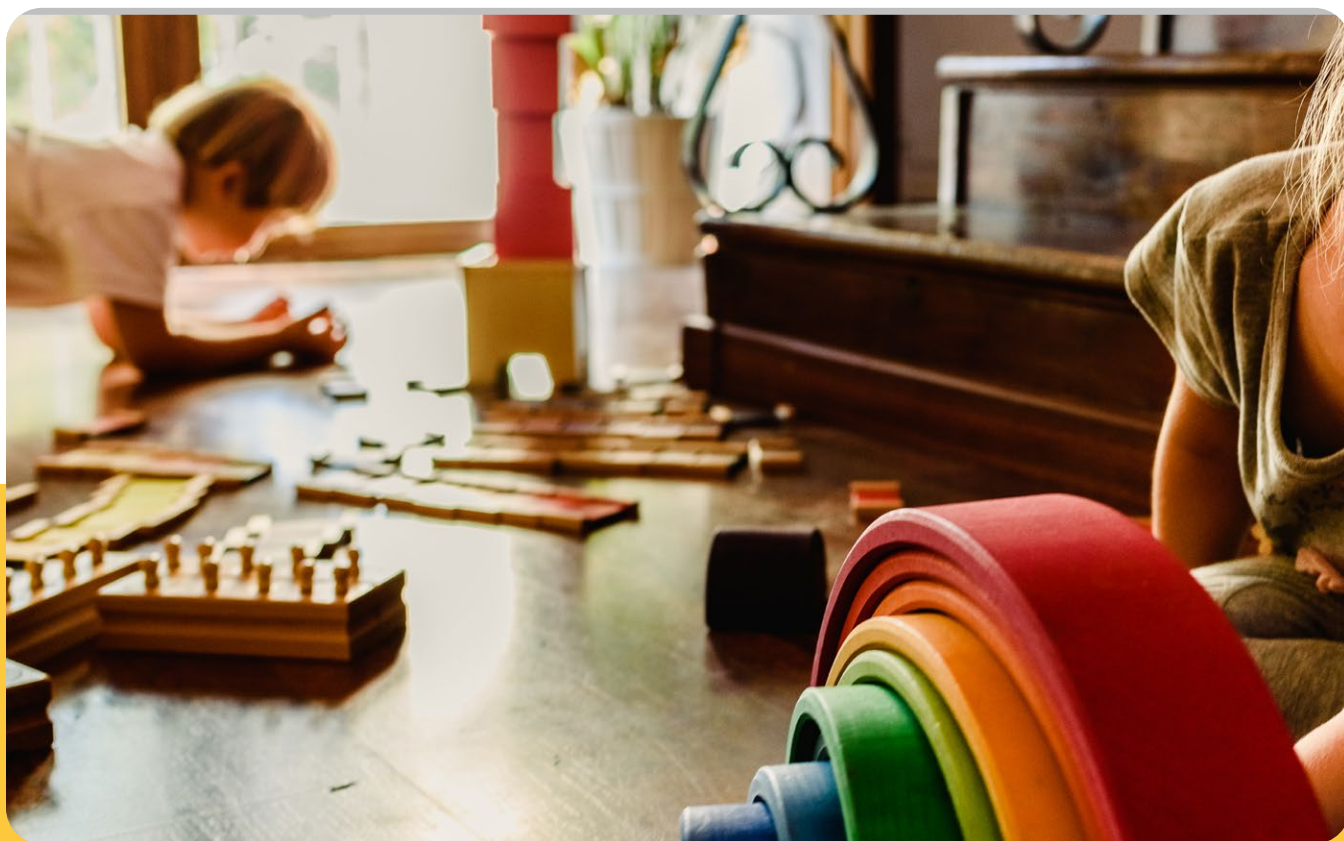
AACCASA achieves its mission through the appointment of each CASA volunteer. A judge appoints a CASA to one foster child or sibling group. The CASA gathers information, ensures necessary services and advocates for the child in court.

**THE CASA IS OFTEN THE ONLY CONSISTENT,
RELIABLE ADULT IN THE CHILD'S LIFE.**

With a CASA, the child has fewer foster care placements, receives more services, is less likely to suffer re-abuse, is more likely to be placed with siblings and more likely to find a safe, permanent home.

Our **IMPACT**

We believe every child who's been abused or neglected deserves to have a dedicated advocate speaking up for their best interest in court, at school and in our community. AACCSA educates and empowers diverse community volunteers who ensure each child's needs remain a priority in an over-burdened child welfare system.



When the state steps in to protect a child's safety because the people responsible for protecting them have not, a judge appoints a trained CASA volunteer to make independent and informed recommendations and help the judge decide what's best for the child.

Did you know?

**THERE WERE OVER 500 KNOWN
VICTIMS OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT
IN ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY LAST YEAR.**



Our **DIVERSITY COMMITTEE**

OUR PURPOSE

Increase the effectiveness of Anne Arundel County CASA, Inc. (AACCASA) by advocating and advancing the values of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Belonging (DEIAB).



Did you know?

They range in age from infancy to 21 years and represent every segment of the County. They have unmet medical, educational, emotional, developmental and social needs.





OUR COMMITMENT

Anne Arundel County CASA, Inc. seeks to deepen its knowledge and understanding of the diverse identities and cultures of the children we serve to promote their best interests. We will strive to infuse fundamental values and practices of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility and Belonging into every aspect of our work.

"I find it difficult to find words strong enough to express or convey my thoughts and feelings towards CASA and the work the volunteers do, so I will say with my whole heart and on behalf of all those who have been given a hand up, thank you and thank you again.

ROBERT G. WALLACE

Founding Member of the CASA Board, Past Board President, Retired
Administrator of the Circuit Court for Anne Arundel County



MAKING IT HAPPEN

- We commit to assisting volunteers, staff, and board in developing a deeper appreciation of the systemic, structural, and generational issues that impact the lives of the children we support to better advocate for their needs.
- We are examining our recruitment strategies to ensure that we are attracting individuals who bring diverse backgrounds and experiences.
- We are continuing to expand our outreach to, and engagement with, community leaders who understand the root causes and systemic issues that bring children into the foster care system to better inform the work we do.
- We are re-committing to reaching community stakeholders regarding the critical importance of the AACCASA program and inviting them to partner with us to create opportunities for the children we serve.



FY26 OUTCOMES

- ▶ 100% of the judges reported that the CASA volunteers increased their ability to make well-informed decisions
- ▶ 92 CASA volunteers were assigned to 124 children, serving 65% of the children in foster care
- ▶ 44 new children received a CASA volunteer
- ▶ 35 new volunteers were trained to support children in need
- ▶ 22 cases closed, placing children in safe, permanent homes
 - 41% were adopted
 - 41% returned home
 - 9% were placed with a relative
 - 5% were living independently at age 21
 - 4% were closed by the court





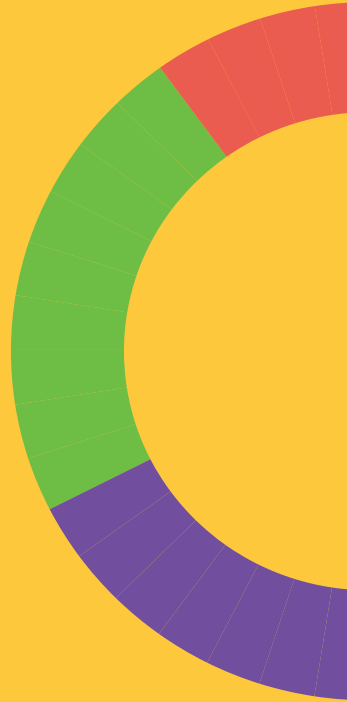
- ▶ 100% of CASAs written court reports were accepted by the Court (154 court reports submitted)
- ▶ 89% of our CASAs recommendations were ordered by the Court
- ▶ Of the 22 children whose cases closed, 95% were living in a permanent home at case closure
- ▶ CASA volunteers donated more than 10,028 hours totaling \$366,128 in volunteer time
- ▶ 100% of the Judges indicate that:
 - They want a CASA appointed to EVERY CINA (Child in Need of Assistance) case.
 - They read the CASA court report before hearing from anyone else as CASA has no agenda other than the best interest of the child.
 - The CASA court report contains the most objective and unbiased information which helps the Judges make informed decisions.



"CASA is made up of the most compassionate people I have ever been involved with, they impact young people in a way that most can't imagine in their most difficult times."

JEFF OSTENSO

IRONMARK CEO,
Former CASA Board member



Our **INCOME: \$698,057**

*95% of functional expenses went to
program services*



Did you know?

- **THEY MAY HAVE SPENT UP TO THREE YEARS IN FOSTER CARE, AND SOME NEVER FIND PERMANENT HOMES.**
- **ALL OF THESE CHILDREN ARE INVOLVED IN THE FOSTER CARE AND COURT SYSTEM THROUGH NO FAULT OF THEIR OWN.**

Our DEMOGRAPHICS

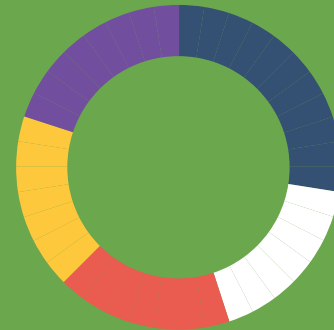
SERVING 124 CASA CHILDREN

OUR CHILDREN SERVED BY GENDER:



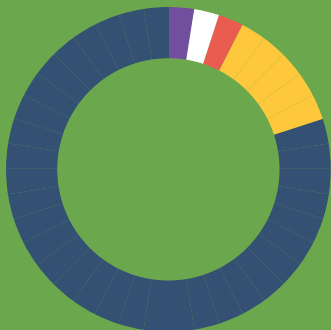
52%

48%



OUR CHILDREN SERVED BY AGE:

- 17% Birth - 2
- 20% 3-6
- 31% 7-13
- 22% 14-17
- 10% 18-21



OUR CHILDREN SERVED BY ALLEGATION TYPE:

- 1% Multiple Allegations
- 12% Extraordinary Needs of the Child
- 81% Neglect
- 4% Physical Abuse
- 2% Sexual Abuse



OUR CHILDREN SERVED BY RACE:

- 76% Caucasian
- 18% African American
- 4% Latino
- 1% Bi-racial
- 1% Asian American

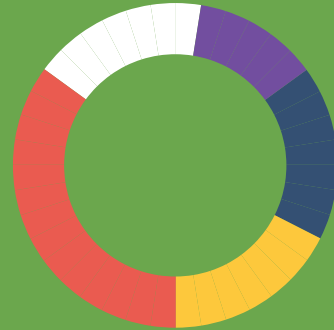
SERVED BY 92 CASA VOLUNTEERS

OUR CASAs ASSIGNED BY GENDER:



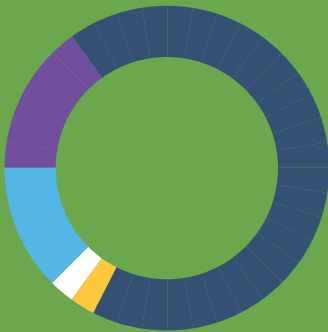
15%

85%



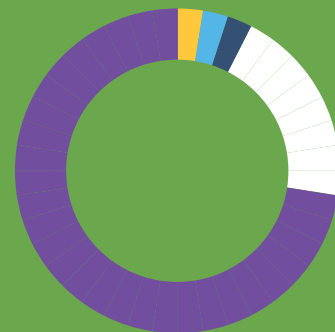
OUR CASAs ASSIGNED BY AGE:

- 12% 21-29
- 17% 30-39
- 17% 40-49
- 17% 50-59
- 37% 60+



OUR CASAs ASSIGNED BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS:

- 67% Full-Time
- 17% Part-Time
- 11% Retired
- 4% Not Employed
- 1% Student



OUR CASAs ASSIGNED BY RACE:

- 76% Caucasian
- 18% African American
- 4% Latino
- 1% Bi-racial
- 1% Asian American







CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY CASA, INC.

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