



*Every child deserves a champion,
An adult who will never give up on them,
Who understands the power of connection
And insists that they become the best
They can possibly be.*

-Rita F. Pierson



MY FOSTER CHILD'S TEAM:
CASA Volunteer:

Caseworker:

GAL (child's attorney):

Deputy Juvenile Officer:

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Proud Partner Agency



United Way
of Central Missouri

A Foster Parent's Guide to CASA



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CAPITAL CITY CASA

What is a CASA?

A CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) is a trained community volunteer assigned by a judge to represent the best interest of a child under the Court's jurisdiction due to abuse and/or neglect. A CASA's goal is to insure that the child is always in a safe, nurturing place and that everyone is working together to resolve problems and achieve permanency for the child.



Who are the CASAs?

CASAs are people from all walks of life who are committing their time and energy to improve the lives of children in their community. CASA volunteers are carefully recruited and thoroughly screened. They receive 30 hours of pre-service training before their first assigned case, and they receive ongoing training and support from experienced child welfare professionals.

What does a CASA do?

The judge appointing the CASA to a case has ordered them to become familiar with all aspects of the child's life. They are expected to keep in regular contact with the child to develop a relationship that allows them to understand and communicate the child's needs and wishes. Each CASA is generally assigned to one child or sibling group at a time and typically stays with their assigned case until the child's permanency is established.

Some of a CASA's most important duties are to maintain contact with and collect information from the child's parents; the attorneys involved with the case; caseworkers; and foster parents, service providers, teachers, doctors, relatives and anyone else who has knowledge of the child's situation. Often, a CASA's interactions with all of these people facilitate helpful communication that might not otherwise occur among those involved with the child. **The CASA is prohibited from disclosing information to anyone other than the Judge, GAL, caseworker, and juvenile officer.**

CASAs also attend all family support team meetings and court hearings. They collect and review all documents concerning the case. CASAs are required to submit regular reports to the Court that present the facts of the case and offer recommendations regarding the child's best interest.

How are CASAs involved with foster and adoptive parents?

The CASA is required to regularly visit the child wherever the child is living. Foster and adoptive parents' cooperation with these visits will help make them a positive experience for the child and can lead to a long-term mutually supportive relationship between the CASA and the foster parents. The CASA will want to get to know you. They will want to know how you think things are going and what help you think is needed. How is the child adjusting? Do you see needs the child has that no one else has noticed? Are recommended services for the child happening as you were told they would? You are in a better position than most to know these things, and the information you can give to the CASA is crucial. The CASA, in turn, will be letting the Court know what they learn about the case from you and others. Talking openly with a CASA is a way of getting your ideas and needs as they relate to the child voiced to the Court.

