



CASA celebrates successful fiscal year-end!

Dear Friend of CASA:

CASA of Sonoma County has had a full and productive fiscal year. Summer always signifies year-end reports, outcomes and readiness to start our new year. With summer upon us, we are spending time in the community reaching out and spreading the word on our good work! You can help too. As you read this newsletter we ask that you share this information with friends and colleagues interested in our work - ensuring children in the foster care system have both a voice and the services they need for a stable future.

Learn more about CASA's impact

Executive Summary

In fiscal year 2015-16, CASA strived to expand our impact by serving more foster youth with ongoing advocacy. To do this, we enhanced the training and volunteer specialization components of our program to further promote the goals of:



- Ensuring the safety and security of children during their time in foster care.
- Facilitating permanency through the development of meaningful adult relationships.
- Encouraging placement with kinship care, other family members or through adoption.
- Promoting enhanced well-being for children and youth - birth to 21 years old.

These goals are fulfilled by the dedication and expertise of caring community members, who contribute their time, energy, resources, and experience to having a lasting impact on a young person's life.

The CASA program has also shown its economic impact in the fiscal year 2015-16 through:

- Designating over \$20,000 in funds for enrichment and scholarship services -- opportunities for the children and youth we serve.
 - Providing over \$400,000 in professional in kind services through 20,000 hours of volunteer child advocacy.
 - Expansion of our office space, youth facilities and training/conference areas.
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Children Demographics

CASA of Sonoma County serves 232 foster children and youth annually. These children have entered the

Sonoma County Juvenile Dependency System due to no fault of their own having fallen victims because of abuse and neglect.



- They range in age from birth to 21, and currently reside in all parts of Sonoma County.
- 100% of the children served are low income
- Of the children served in fiscal year 2015-16:
 - 38 are birth to age 5
 - 67 are age 6 to 11
 - 98 are between 12 and 17 years old
 - 29 are 18 years old and above
- Of children and youth served, 120 of them are male and 112 of them are female.
- Their demographics breakdown is:
 - 31% Hispanic/Latino
 - 42% White/Non Latino
 - 6% African American
 - 18% Native American
 - 3% Asian/Pacific Islander

CASA Volunteers

CASAs advocate for children and youth in the courtroom in all areas of their lives in order to support the child welfare goals of safety, permanency, and well-being. In addition, CASA provide more specific advocacy for:



- Transition age youth (transitioning out of foster care)
- Education advocacy
- Medical and mental health advocacy
- Safety and well-being
- Life skills and social enhancement

In the fiscal year 2015-16, CASA continued its efforts to recruit a diversified pool of applicants, seeking press coverage in diverse communities, participating in events that target different groups such as the [Sonoma County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce](#) and the [North Bay Black Chamber of Commerce](#).

In the fiscal year 2015-16, CASA also developed new outreach materials, enhanced our social media presence and partnership with local media outlets.

Launching CASA's 20th Year Celebration



CASA of Sonoma County was founded in 1996 and graduated its first class of volunteers in 1997, being then recognized by the [National CASA Association](#).

Sonoma County Superior Court Judge Arnold Rosenfield and our founding Executive Director Millie Gilson founded the CASA program out of concern for the many children languishing in the foster care system, often victims of poorly documented or ill-conceived decisions.

Judges often express the need for unbiased and crucial information in their overwhelming caseloads, and look to CASA to provide that information.

*As we prepare to celebrate these 20 years of advocacy for positive futures for foster children we invite you to **SAVE THE DATE** and follow event updates through our [Facebook event page](#)!*

What's Happening this Summer!

CASA as the beneficiary of the 2016 Sonoma Music Festival

We are happy to announce that our CASA of Sonoma County has been selected as a beneficiary of the 2016 Sonoma Music Festival presented by Bruce Cohn of B.R. Cohn Charity Events (BRCCCE).

We are very excited with this opportunity and ask that you join us in fulfilling one of the requirements, which is to recruit 10 to 15 volunteers for each of the three (3) days of the event. This is a really fun volunteer activity and volunteers who participate are also allowed to enjoy the concert.

For you to get involved and help CASA receive these funds please follow [this link](#) and sign up to volunteer. Fill out the Volunteer Sign Up Form with your contact information and please make sure you list "CASA of Sonoma County" in the box named "Club/Organization Affiliation". Then please email info@sonomacasa.org letting us know you signed up, so we can track the number of CASA volunteers.

Thank you so much for your help in securing funds for our CASA of Sonoma County Program.



CASA presence in the community!

Several informational booths have been scheduled for the Santa Rosa Wednesday Downtown Market and the Sonoma Tuesday Farmers' Market. Our CASA volunteers will be out there representing our program. They are our ambassadors who will be sharing, with confidentiality, their first-hand experience on being a Court Appointed Special Advocate - CASA and inviting more community members to become CASAs themselves. In addition, they will be bringing our community awareness concerning the issues of child abuse and neglect.

If you are a CASA volunteer and would like to join us in one of those booths, we still have slots available for the Sonoma Farmers' Market in August, September and October. Please email cocasa@sonomacasa.org to sign up.



**Pictured here: Board Members Extraordinaire
Roni Brown & Mary Ann Wakefield**

CASA Beautification - improving our facilities.

Special thanks to Tracy Krikorian who has kindly donated her time to renovate a second room here at the Los Guilicos facilities where we are

located. She has been working hard on getting our library/conference and meeting room space. The room has been totally refurbished, including the addition of new file cabinets, conference tables. We also have laptops available for our volunteers and youth when needed. Read more about the importance of foster youth having a chance to work on laptops [here](#).



CASA had a brief appearance at the 4th of July Parade in Sonoma.

CASA volunteers made an appearance at the 4th of July Parade in Sonoma joining [BR Cohn Sonoma Music Festival](#) float.



CASA Summer Training

Our Summer Training took place this July and we are so proud of the prospective volunteers who have stepped up! They underwent about 40 hours of classroom training, field visits and observations in preparation to becoming child advocates. We can't wait to get them ready to help create a brighter future for a Sonoma County foster child!

We offer quarterly training sessions! Next training is in the Fall, for dates click [here](#). Learn more about what it takes to be a CASA volunteer [here](#)!





CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA of Sonoma County

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