



WHAT IS A CASA VOLUNTEER?

YOUR CHILD'S COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE

The Guardian ad Litem (GAL) has appointed an advocate to act on behalf of your child or children. Advocates are often referred to as your child's CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate). The CASA works with and in behalf of the Guardian ad Litem, which means they represent the **best interest** of your child or children in the child welfare system.

CASAs are court appointed trained volunteers within the Guardian ad Litem and CASA Office. Their job is to gather information regarding your child and the situation that brought him or her into the care of the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS). After they have talked to all the appropriate people, they will write a report to the GAL. The GAL will present that information to the judge, recommending what they believe is best for your child/children.

The GALs purpose is to make sure that your child receives the best representation in the courtroom and any recommended services that DCFS has to offer. The information that you give the CASA will help the judge make an informed decision about your child. All information will be kept in strict confidence and will only be shared with the judge, the attorneys, and CASA Supervisor.

Please allow the advocate to meet with the children twice a month in order to develop a relationship. CASAs are authorized to meet with children at home, at school, or to take them on an approved outing or to get a meal. They are allowed to drive the child in their personal car. They are authorized to see where children sleep, visit their school, have knowledge of any medication a child might take, as well as any other circumstances that affect the child's environment and well-being. They are also authorized to contact professionals on the case.

CASAs are not attorneys or a part of DCFS. They are trained volunteer advocates.

The CASA Volunteer on your case is _____

The CASA Supervisor/Coordinator is _____

If you have questions your child's advocate will be glad to answer them or at any time you may call the supervisor for additional information.