

## What is a CASA?

### Court Appointed Special Advocate

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CASA Stands for Court Appointed Special Advocate. CASAs are highly trained citizen volunteers assigned by a judge to represent and advocate for a child's best interest in the child protection system. CASA volunteers act as the "eyes and ears" of the judge. Volunteer advocates get to know the child and others involved in the child's life. The information they gather through their independent investigation helps them to make best interest recommendations that will allow the judge overseeing the case to make an informed decision. CASA volunteers provide a consistent, reliable, trustworthy adult presence during an unstable time in an abused or neglected child's life.

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#### Your CASA Volunteer:

**Does** talk to people who might have information about your children. These people can be school personnel, doctors, attorneys, probation personnel, etc.

**Does** get to know your child and may visit with your child independently.

**Does** get to know you and visit you where you are living.

**Does** get copies of all court reports, documents, and educational information on the case.

**Does** take notes. The CASA writes reports that can be submitted to the court telling the judge about what they have learned.

**Does** try to do what is in your child's best interest.

#### Your CASA Volunteer:

**Does not** give you or your child legal advice or counseling.

**Does not** decide what happens with your child's case. All case decisions are made by the judge.

**Does not** choose sides in family disagreements.

**Does not** provide you with transportation to/from work, appointments, errands, etc.

**Does not** tell anyone else outside the court case anything about your life, your child's life, etc.

**Does not** purchase things for you and your child, but may be able to help connect you with appropriate resources.

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