

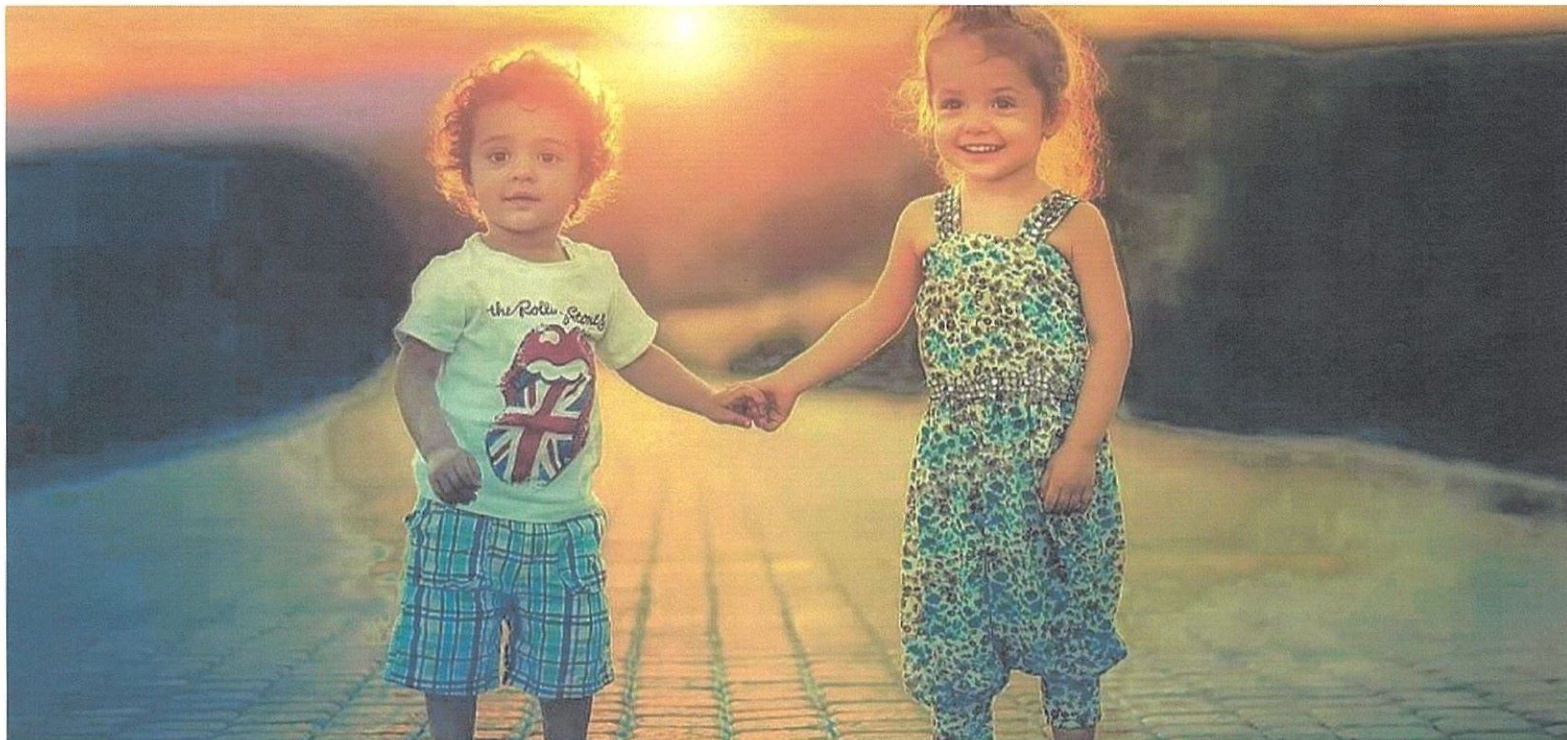


CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA OF SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN, INC

..... **2021 ANNUAL REPORT**



A life of promise and possibilities is waiting.

Our Staff:

Jamie Brooks

Executive Director

Patricia Conroy

Volunteer Coordinator

Lyndsey Anderson

Volunteer Coordinator

Amy Bush

Volunteer Coordinator

Our Board:

Frances P. Chickering

President

Marian Tripplett

Vice President

Audrey Salesberry

Treasurer

Amber Janowski

Member

Betty Taylor

Member

Jeralee Kunkee

Member

Ladana Clark

Member

As we began this year, we could not have predicted the tenacity of the ongoing pandemic. Through our collective pain we have learned that when we work together, we will grow and thrive. This year we increased our volunteer retention rate (over 85%), trained 26 new volunteers (virtually) and increased the number of children served by 41% over fiscal 2020. Nowhere is this more impressive than with our dedicated CASA volunteers, all 66 of them, that have found a way to navigate the foster care system in these uncertain days and support 114 spectacular children. Collectively, our volunteers made over 1100 visits to "their" children providing a kind smile, a listening ear and expert advocacy. They attended every court hearing, sent thousands of emails and attended hundreds of meetings. Our volunteers are often called the "eyes and ears" of the court—and during a year of quarantine and caution, they certainly were.

This year was successful because of you! We are grateful for the support of our dedicated funders and our community partners that financially support our work. Thank you to our "Friends of CASA" volunteer group who spend countless hours helping to raise funds and increase volunteer recruitment. We could not do this work without the leadership of our dedicated Board of Directors and expert staff. Most of all our program and our community is grateful for our dedicated, incredible CASA Volunteers who have used their time and talents serving the best interests of our most vulnerable local foster children's best interests are served and they grow up and create a life of promise, possibilities, and permanency.



OUR CHILDREN

CHILDREN SERVED: 114 (fiscal 2021)

AGE		ETHNICITY		GENDER	
0-5	46	Hispanic	1	Identifies Male	68
6-11	39	Caucasian	84	Identifies Female	45
12-15	16	African American	19	Identifies non-binary	1
16-20	13	Biracial/Multi-racial	9		
		Native American/PI	4		

CHILD OUTCOMES (36 closed cases)

Reunification with parent	24 children
Adoption	8 children
Young adult voluntary FC	2 children
Age Out/Other	4 children

TOTAL TIME IN FOSTER CARE (closed cases)

12-17 months	12 children
24-29 months	9 children
30-35 months	9 children
over 35 months	6 children

Average # months in foster care: 27.2

Average number of children assigned to a CASA Volunteer	2.0
Number of children served by CASA whose cases reopened after two years	0
Average number of times CASA Volunteer meets with their CASA Child monthly	3
Average length of time a CASA Volunteer is assigned to a child	23.5



OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers are the lifeblood of our work. Each volunteer is thoroughly vetted, trained for over 30 hours and agrees to advocate for a child, meeting weekly in most cases, until that child is in a safe, permanent and loving home or reunified with their parent. Other volunteers assist with data entry, help with outreach, fundraising, and serve on our board.

- CASA Volunteers trained: **26**
- CASA Volunteers serving children: 66 (increase of 47% over 2020)
- Other volunteers: **15**
- Hours contributed by volunteers advocating for children: **3886** (value to community based on accepted rate of 28.54/hour: \$111,000)
- Miles driven by CASA Volunteers: **22,900** (value to community: \$13,000)
- Child visits by CASA Volunteers: **1127**
- Percent of Court Hearings Attended by CASA: **100%**
- Average length of time volunteers remain with the program: **29.4 months**

Why I volunteer.....

Every child deserves a home where they feel safe, wanted and loved. When the world went virtual due to COVID, one of my children came home sick to her stomach asking about those kids who only get a hot meal at school or go to school as their safe space. "What about them, mom? What's going to happen to them?" I didn't have a good answer for her.

Previously I had conversations with a friend who worked for CASA and I decided right then I needed to be part of the solution--even if I helped just one child. 6 kids later I have witnessed a young lady tell her very emotional and personal story through her tears, watched kids run happily toward a mom they only see once a week, siblings take pictures together hoping to be able to keep their relationship as vivid as a photo, and sat beside the young lady once again as she was adopted by a loving family. Not every story ends with the fairy tale ending but the steps along the way are what keeps me coming back. I have been honored to be a part of their lives and entrusted with their stories and they each hold a special place in my heart. To give a chance for these kids to have someone they can talk to and trust--to know they are not alone until they have a safe and loving family--THAT'S WHY I'M A CASA.



4 different high schools

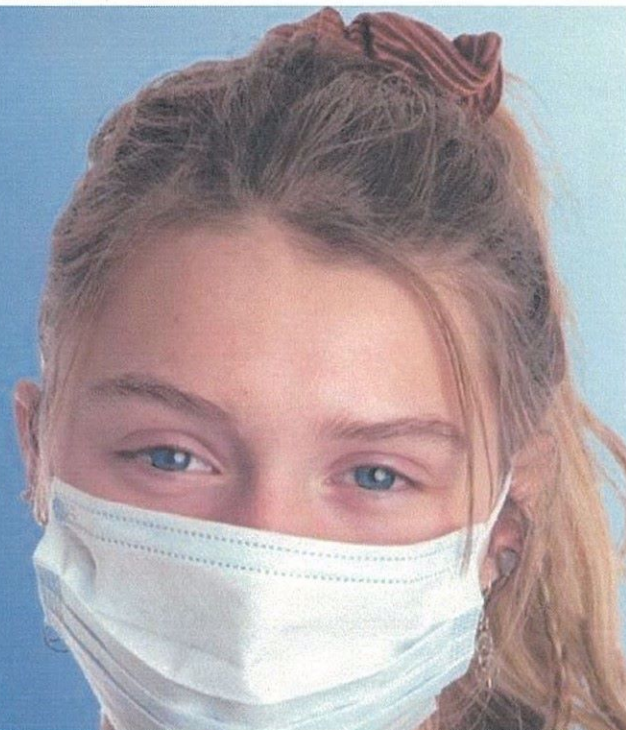
unable to make friends, constantly changing schools because of changes in foster homes

7 caseworkers

several changes in child protection specialist workers and foster care givers

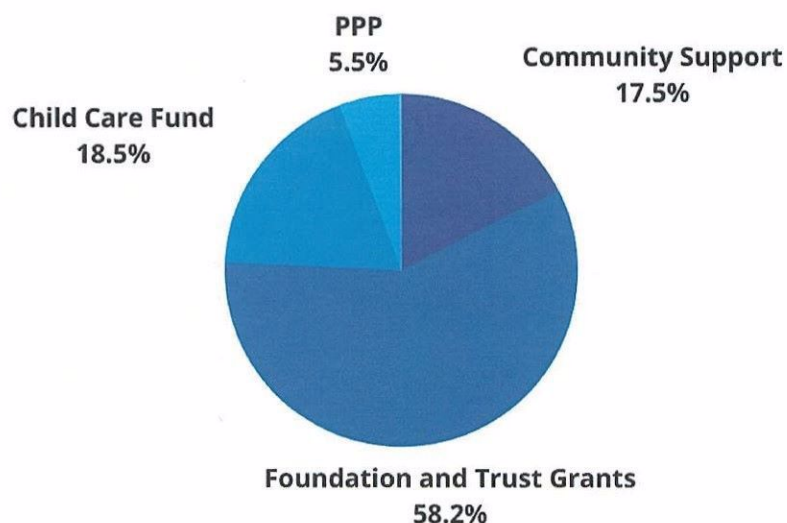
1 CASA Volunteer

Court-appointed Special Advocate has followed her throughout the life of her case in juvenile court

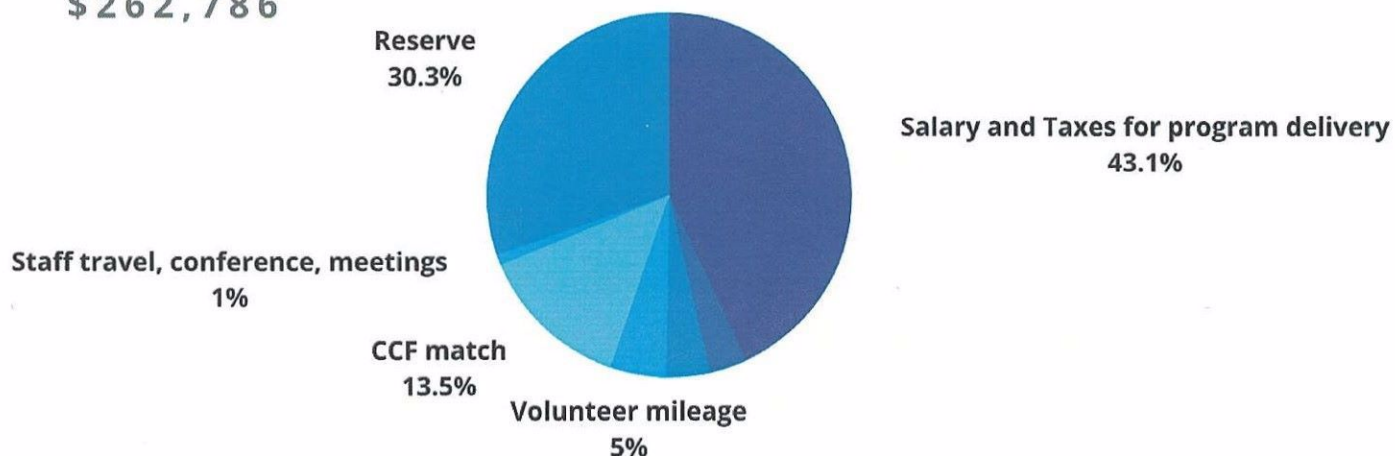



REVENUE AND EXPENSES

REVENUE =
\$262,786



EXPENSES =
\$262,786





Make a difference
in a child's life.

CHANGE A
CHILD'S STORY.™



CONTACT. SUPPORT. VOLUNTEER.

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