

**CASA of Graves County and Southwest Kentucky  
STRATEGIC PLAN 2024 - 2026**



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## ***Background.***

CASA of Graves County and Southwest Kentucky is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving abused and neglected children in the following Kentucky Counties: Carlisle, Fulton, Graves, and Hickman Counties.

The CASA programs in Kentucky are part of a larger national network. The National CASA/GAL Association for Children is a national organization advocating for abused and neglected children in the court system and in foster care. There are over 900 local CASA programs across the country receiving technical assistance and training from National CASA/GAL.

## ***Vision.***

Aspiring for every child to have the opportunity to grow up in a safe environment.

## ***Mission.***

To provide trained community volunteers for court appointment to advocate on behalf of dependent, abused, and neglected children in our communities.

## ***Values:***

- **Compassion** – Concern for the children we serve
- **Advocacy** – Take action to support the safety of abused/neglected and dependent children while valuing each person for who they are
- **Service** – Support what makes a positive change in the lives of children we serve
- **Awareness** - Engaging all stakeholders to aid in our mission

## ***Executive Summary.***

This strategic plan sets our organization on a trajectory for deepening our impact and improving every aspect of our organization. Our plan goals are:

- Develop and maintain a healthy, effective Board and staff.
- Recruit and retain volunteers to support the mission
- Enhance fundraising performance to support organizational growth and impact.

## ***Strategic Context.***

CASA stands for Court Appointed Special Advocate. CASAs are community-based volunteers who are appointed by judges to serve on child abuse and neglect cases. Once assigned to a child, the volunteer researches the child's case, reviews documents, interviews relevant people, and makes a report to the court as to what is in the best interest of the child, in terms of services, placement, visitation, reunification, and permanency.

CASAs are objective, community volunteers who are not part of the child welfare system, who focus their efforts solely on gathering information and making recommendations regarding children in abuse, neglect, or dependency cases-- who would otherwise have no voice. Volunteers are carefully screened and are very well trained; they receive a minimum 30 hours of initial training and 12 hours of ongoing training each year.

CASA volunteers monitor the child's living situation to make sure they are safe and to make sure their psychological, physical, educational and other needs are met. Volunteers are often the only constant the child knows as he/she moves through the labyrinth of the child welfare system. When a CASA volunteer accepts a case, they must agree to stay with it until the child has a safe, permanent home. Because volunteers carry only 1 or 2 cases at a time and are assigned to each case for its life, they typically have a depth and breadth of information that other parties may not have.

### ***Landscape Scan.***

The following factors shape the external landscape of child abuse and neglect cases in Kentucky:

- 16,347 Kentucky children were involved in court cases of abuse, neglect, and dependency in 2023
- 3,472 of those children had the help of a CASA volunteer
- 1,211 trained CASA volunteers are actively working in Kentucky

Our program advanced our mission in the following ways in 2023:

- 131 children served
- 803 volunteer hours
- 37 active volunteers

### ***Horizon.***

The Board and organization leaders execute this strategic plan to be completed over a 2-year period from 2024 - 2026.

**Goals.**

- **Goal 1: Develop and maintain a healthy, effective Board and staff.**

2024 Strategies	2025 Strategies
Recruit one board member to represent each of the following counties: Carlisle, Fulton, Hickman	Hire and onboard additional staff member after identifying area of greatest need
Evaluate staff compensation & benefits – compare to other KY CASA programs of similar size	Board members send personal notes of thanks to CASA volunteers
Board members meet with new volunteers during a session of a preservice training to welcome them - 3 to 5 minute appearance	Revise and update Board matrix
Board members recognize a volunteers CASA anniversary – signed anniversary card or call to each volunteer	Integrate a review of strategic plan progress into each Board meeting
Success Metrics	Success Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At least one Board member from each County serves</li> <li>● Staff compensation benchmark study completed</li> <li>● At least one Board member present for each preservice volunteer training</li> <li>● Board recognition of CASA volunteer service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Additional staff member hired and onboarded</li> <li>● Deepen Board engagement in volunteer recognition</li> <li>● Regular monitoring of strategic plan progress</li> </ul>

● **Goal 2: Recruit and retain volunteers to support the mission**

2024 Strategies	2025 Strategies
Identify and document groups to make presentations to: Civic groups, Corporations such as hospitals, retired teachers	Offer Board members the opportunity to make group presentations in the community to recruit volunteers
Pilot effort to have at least one Board member join Volunteer Coordinator for group presentations	Increase number of male volunteers through expanding network of past and current male volunteers
Define typical CASA volunteer characteristics	Balance recruiting efforts across Counties served based on data related to cases and need
Promote the opportunity to volunteer as a pair (married couples, mother/adult child, father/adult child, friends)	Engage current or former male volunteers to recruit men to volunteer through personal one on one communication
Success Metrics	Success Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● List of community, civic, and professional groups created</li> <li>● Increase active volunteers from 32 to 42</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Defined Board role and engagement in volunteer recruiting</li> <li>● Increase active volunteers from 38 to 48</li> </ul>

● **Goal 3: Enhance fundraising performance to support organizational growth and impact.**

2024 Strategies	2025 Strategies
Identify one fundraiser to alternate with playhouse fundraiser done every other year	Implement and pilot new fundraiser to alternate with playhouse fundraiser done every other year
Identify local businesses to include contact information to partner with on fundraising.	Partner with at least 2 local businesses to receive a percentage of sales or silent auction.
Create a contact list of local businesses including accountants, financial planners, and funeral homes to share organizational information with for potential donation/giving.	Disseminate organizational information to identified businesses

Increase price of Kringle to \$15	
Pilot Playhouse fundraiser with an increased ticket price of \$10 with additional prizes	
<b>Success Metrics</b>	<b>Success Metrics</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternate year fundraiser identified</li> <li>• Increase fundraising revenue from \$8,000 to \$9,500</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New fundraiser event hosted with net revenue of \$5,000</li> </ul>

***Our Path Forward.***

This strategic plan sets us on a trajectory for deepening our impact and improving every aspect of our organization. As we carry out this plan, we anticipate seeing a number of important benefits, including:

- Highly engaged Board of Directors and Staff
- Diverse, prepared, and inspired volunteers
- Increased ability to support and deliver our mission