

Georgia Court Appointed Special Advocates, Inc.

Annual Report

2008-2009



“A few days after I was placed in a foster home, I was introduced to my CASA volunteer... She cared about me and only wanted to hear what I wanted and what was in the best interest of me. It felt amazing.”

--Jacke, former foster youth



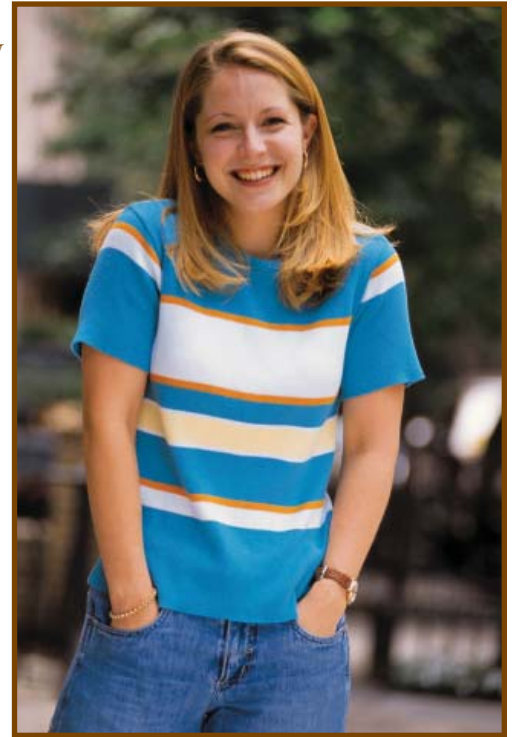
In the words of Jacke, former foster youth...

“Before CASA intervened in my life, I had never been to the dentist, I dug through dirty laundry to find clothes to wear to school. There were times when I went to bed with school lunch being the only meal I ate that day, and drugs were a constant exposure in my home. To me all of this was normal; it was my life. I had a roof over my head so obviously I wasn’t the most unfortunate kid, but all of my needs were not met.

My seventh grade year I met not only my best friend, but I met the family that would show me that my life was not normal. They tucked me in along with their own kids when I spent the night, they included me in when they celebrated holidays, and they were the ones who picked me up when my step father decided to turn off the electricity or lock me and my sister out of the house. I have always been a person who craved nothing but success, but the day I got off the bus to find DFCS [Department of Family and Children Services] standing on my porch waiting to take me to a place full of unknowns, I lost all of my drive in life. I knew nothing about these people and I was supposed to get in the car and trust them. My mama may not have been able to feed me every day of my life, but I was taught not to trust strangers.

A few days after I was placed in a foster home, I was introduced to my CASA volunteer. Of course I resented her at first, but at the time I resented everyone who tried to comfort me. But this was a person who wanted to get to know me and allow me to get to know her. She cared about me and only wanted to hear what I wanted and what was in the best interest of me. It felt amazing. For the first time my needs came before everything else. When it was time to start thinking about where I was going to be placed, my family was out of the question. There were drug addicts and drunks on both my father’s and my mother’s side. When I thought about being placed in the care of my best friend’s parents I knew just by the few DFCS workers I had come in contact with that they would have laughed at the idea. There had never been a case in my home town where a child was placed in a home who was of no relation to the child or were not foster parents. But my CASA volunteer did everything in her power to make it possible. She met with my friend’s parents and helped them do everything they had to do to make me a part of their family. On my court date, thanks to my CASA volunteer, I went home with my best friend and her family. DFCS made it clear that they didn’t think this was in the best interest of me.

I am now healthier than I have ever been and have regular doctor and dentist appointments. I am a senior in high school where I take all honors and AP classes. I maintain a 3.8 GPA and plan to attend UGA to become an ER physician. My case may not have been within the norm, but it was very successful. If my CASA volunteer wouldn’t have considered what everyone else considered the impossible, my case wouldn’t have ended so happily.”



(Note: Photo not of actual former foster youth)



As community partners in the child welfare system, CASA volunteers increase abused, neglected and abandoned children's access to services, promote safety, and advocate for timeliness and permanency for children involved in juvenile court proceedings. CASA volunteers are independent advocates and provide individualized attention for children in a massive state system.

CASA Volunteer Janessa Helps Pre-Teen Sarina to Thrive

Sarina was an eleven year old child in Western Georgia who was neglected by her parents and placed in foster care. She had lived her entire life thinking that peanut butter warmed in the microwave was a great dinner and that bathing with water from a bucket, along with brushing her teeth with the same water, was adequate hygiene. She lived in a home where extension wires ran to a neighboring home to provide electricity for appliances. Janessa became Sarina's CASA volunteer. She worked with Sarina to help her feel comfortable in her foster home, where Sarina learned to eat a wide variety of foods at the dining room table with her foster family. Sarina grasped the concept of personal hygiene needs, began to thrive in school and adapted well to the structured foster home environment. Thanks to the support of Janessa, Sarina is like any other pre-teen now. She is now in a home with her adoptive parents.



CASA Volunteer Dan Helps Reunify Jamey and Jaden with their Father after Losing their Mother

Two young boys in North Georgia, Jamey and Jaden, lost their mother at her untimely death. With their father in prison, the boys were placed in foster care and CASA volunteer Dan was assigned to advocate for their best interests. Once he took the case, he realized that the boy's father was not currently being considered as a possible option for placement once he was to be released from prison within a year. Dan visited the father in prison and found out that he truly loved his children and had never been given an opportunity to work on the goals he needed to meet in order to have them eventually live with him. Dan was instrumental in helping to facilitate the father working on the goals that he could complete while still incarcerated, including parenting classes, drug counseling and individual counseling. Once released from prison, the father moved to a halfway house and was able to find employment while continuing his counseling. Once his life was back on track, Jamey and Jaden began to visit with him. Thanks to the work of CASA volunteer Dan, the boys did not have to endure the loss of another parent – they were legally reunified with him.



(Note: Names changed and photos not of actual CASA volunteers and children)

Dear Supporters:

We want to sincerely thank you for the support you've given to Georgia CASA and our CASA affiliate programs in the state over the past fiscal year. We are very close to having 100% of Georgia's counties served by a CASA program! The newest CASA program that began this year was CASA of the Alapaha Judicial Circuit in South Georgia.

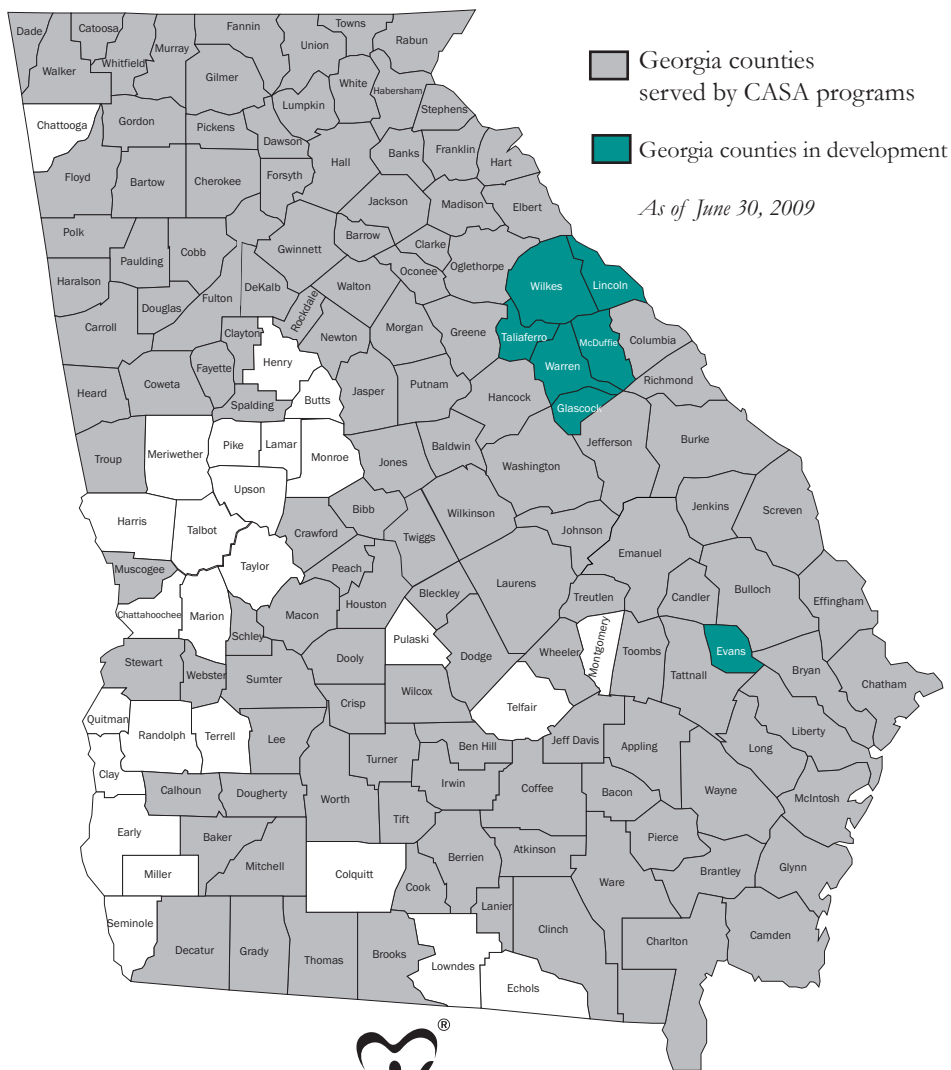
As shown by this fiscal year's audit, 92% of Georgia CASA's expenses were for services to its affiliate programs. As we do all we can in empowering our affiliates, through their CASA volunteers, to provide the highest quality of advocacy to children, you can also help. Please consider becoming a CASA volunteer; assisting with fundraising, trainings and events; using your skills as a board or advisory board member; or giving a charitable donation. Don't forget to tell your friends and family about the CASA program as well.

Abused, neglected and abandoned children need CASA volunteers to advocate for their best interests, both in and out of the courtroom, as they bring urgency to the needs of these children. CASA volunteers are a critical piece of the massive child welfare system and help to ensure that children are placed in safe, permanent homes as quickly as possible. Again, thank you for your support and the value you place on the CASA program!

Sincerely,

Jack O. McMillan, Jr.
Board Chair

Duaine Hathaway
Executive Director



Financial Information

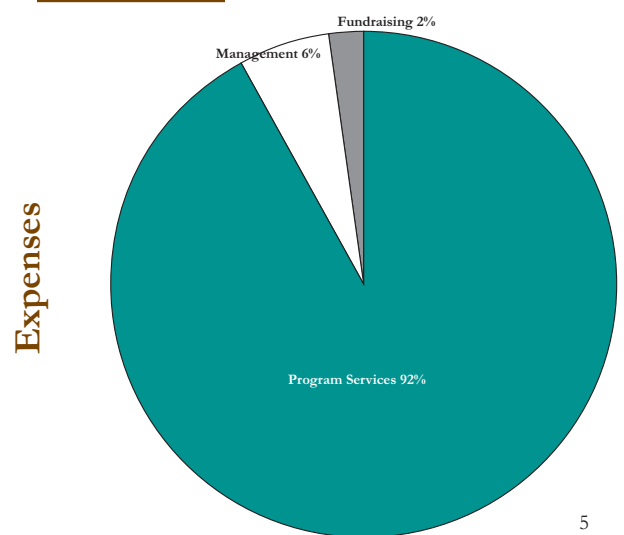
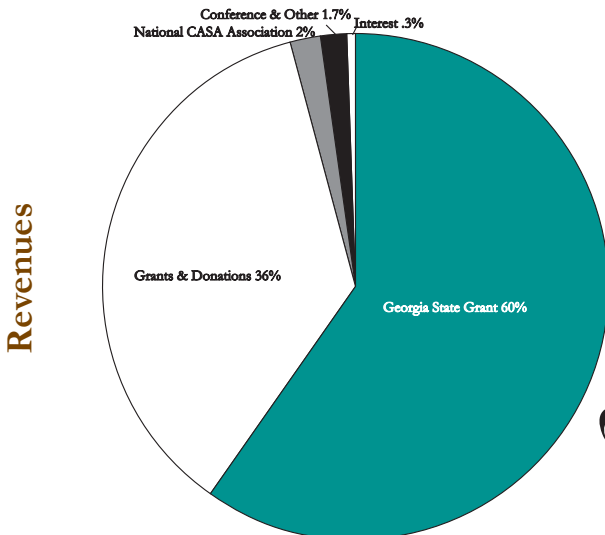
June 30, 2009 and 2008

ASSETS

	2009	2008
<i>Current assets</i>		
Cash	\$ 1,240,344	\$ 1,271,055
Receivables from grants and contracts	487,214	510,188
Promises to give	<u>482,402</u>	<u>142,133</u>
<i>Total current assets</i>	2,209,960	1,923,376
Long-term promises to give	7,500	82,209
Cash restricted for long-term purposes	20,000	-----
Office equipment	79,415	75,666
Less: accumulated depreciation	<u>(75,653)</u>	<u>(74,188)</u>
Net equipment	3,762	1,478
<i>Total assets</i>	<u>\$ 2,241,222</u>	<u>\$ 2,007,063</u>

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

<i>Current liabilities</i>		
Accounts payable	\$ 358,024	\$ 416,038
Accrued expenses	<u>13,982</u>	<u>6,832</u>
<i>Total liabilities</i>	372,006	422,870
<i>Net assets</i>		
Unrestricted	1,248,740	1,204,646
Temporarily restricted	<u>620,476</u>	<u>379,547</u>
<i>Total net assets</i>	1,869,216	1,584,193
<i>Total liabilities and net assets</i>	<u>\$ 2,241,222</u>	<u>\$ 2,007,063</u>



Program Operations & Training

❖ The following trainings were offered to affiliate programs throughout the year, enabling staff to enhance their skills and knowledge in managing a CASA program and in training and supervising CASA volunteers:

- Council of Programs (director meetings) in Fall 2008 and Spring 2009
- Trainings of the Facilitator in Summer 2008, Fall 2008 and Winter 2009
- Volunteer Supervisor Training in Winter 2009
- Orientations for new affiliate program directors during year



Attendees at the Summer 2008 Training of the Facilitator

❖ Georgia CASA conducted nine site visits to affiliate programs as part of the quality assurance process to ensure adherence to standards. The process helps to enable the highest quality of advocacy is provided by CASA volunteers to the children served by the CASA organization. Programs have site visits every four years, or more often if needed or requested.

❖ Georgia CASA staff provided technical assistance to affiliate programs on all aspects of program management and operations throughout the year.

❖ The Georgia CASA state conference was held in March 2009 in Atlanta. Over 400 people participated in the conference, which included special guests Mark Washington, Department of Human Resources Assistant Commissioner and Dr. Shirley Garrett, motivational keynote speaker. Twenty-two workshops were held for participants to enhance their advocacy skills for abused and neglected children. The 2009 CASA Volunteer of the Year in Georgia was awarded as well as three affiliate programs with the Awards of Excellence.



Karen Nasworthy, 2008 CASA Volunteer of the Year (holding plaque), with Jack McMillan, Georgia CASA Board Chair, Melissa Mitchell, Mountain Circuit CASA Program Director and Duaine Hathaway, Georgia CASA Executive Director



Top right: SOWEGA CASA received the 2009 Innovative Program Award of Excellence; Above: Carroll County CASA received a 2009 Established Program Award of Excellence; Left: CASA for Children received a 2009 Established Program Award of Excellence



Legislative

❖ CASA and Foster Youth Day at the Capitol was held in February 2009. Governor Sonny Perdue presented a CASA Proclamation to the large group gathered at the Capitol. First Lady Mary Perdue was also in attendance. CASA staff, board members and volunteers met with legislators to encourage continued support of the CASA organization in Georgia and for Senate Bill 79 (Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Compliance Act of 2009) and House Bill 254 (Expediting Permanency for Abused Children Act of 2009). Legislators were invited to join their CASA constituents for a luncheon donated by Chick-fil-A, Inc. to close out the day.

Program Development

❖ CASA of the Alapaha Judicial Circuit began, serving Atkinson, Berrien, Clinch, Cook and Lanier counties.

❖ Atlantic Area CASA expanded to McIntosh County.

❖ CASA services were in development for the Toombs Judicial Circuit and Evans County. CASA of the Northern Judicial Circuit was in the process of moving to operate under Mountain Circuit CASA.

For the year, 48 affiliate CASA programs, serving 126 counties and 45 of the 49 judicial circuits in the state, had 2,037 CASA volunteers that advocated for 8,707 children.



Attendees at CASA and Foster Youth Day at the Capitol gather to receive a CASA Proclamation from Governor Sonny Perdue prior to meeting with their legislators

Events & Fundraising

❖ Georgia CASA's three-year, \$3.6 million capacity building campaign concluded, with over \$2.8 million in pledges.

❖ A Gentlemen's Committee hosted a preview party to the Georgia CASA Luncheon & Fashion Show on March 4, 2009, at Regents Park in Atlanta. On display was a watercolor portrait painted by artist Priscilla Glass, especially for the Luncheon & Fashion Show.

❖ The fifth annual Georgia CASA Luncheon & Fashion Show, with presenting sponsor Brasfield & Gorrie, was held on March 18, 2009, at Maggiano's in Buckhead. The Honorary Chair was Marcy McTier, Life Member of the Georgia CASA Board, who has contributed immensely to the success of CASA in Georgia and most recently chaired Georgia CASA's capacity building campaign. The late Honorable Sanford J. Jones, Fulton County Juvenile Court, was the featured speaker. Ted Hall, news anchor with WXIA-TV in Atlanta, was emcee, and 200 attendees enjoyed fashions from several Atlanta boutiques. Seven prize packages were raffled during the event. Over \$30,000 was raised from the event.



The Gentlemen's Committee

*Duaine Hathaway with
Marcy McTier*



Communications & Volunteer Recruitment

❖ Georgia CASA's quarterly e-newsletter, the *CASA Online Connector*, was distributed to over 5,000 recipients each time.

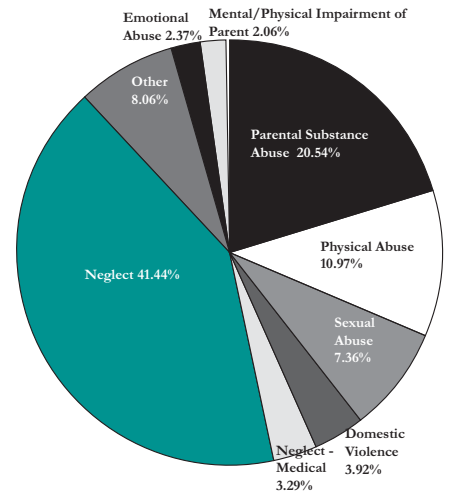
❖ The Metro Atlanta CASA Collaborative (Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton & Gwinnett counties, along with Georgia CASA) held its third volunteer recruitment campaign in Fall 2008, with continued success. Each campaign has resulted in about 100 CASA volunteers being sworn-in to serve children.

Report on Affiliate Programs

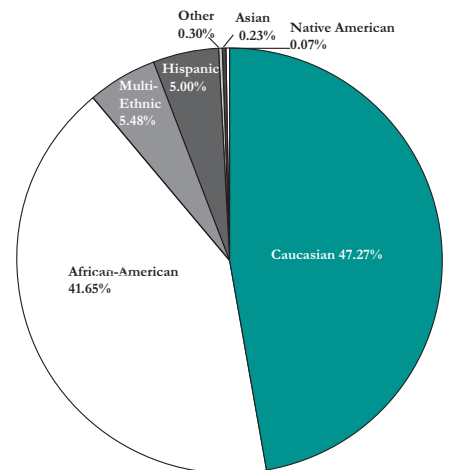
Program	Children Served	New Children	Closed Children	Active Children	CASAs
Advo-Kids	90	55	32	56	28
Alcovy	141	49	61	56	27
Appalachian	241	104	104	137	47
Athens-Oconee	142	66	50	91	52
Atlantic	99	27	24	75	22
Augusta	348	124	143	184	36
Bartow	319	133	125	194	77
Camden	75	28	29	36	26
Carroll	179	60	78	101	58
CASA for Children	240	104	113	125	73
Central Georgia	266	70	54	209	77
Chattahoochee*	11	11	13	4	2
Children's Voice	129	33	28	93	45
Clayton	794	350	372	296	111
Coastal Plain	155	57	47	107	34
Cobb	355	164	209	141	56
Coweta	143	79	46	82	44
DeKalb	159	63	52	98	81
Dougherty	13	13	--	13	5
Enotah	204	35	8	107	44
Floyd	73	26	28	43	19
Forsyth	156	69	77	88	59
Fulton	473	236	172	309	135
Glynn	324	118	101	145	58
Gordon	95	44	78	19	7
Gwinnett	107	44	45	62	36
Hall-Dawson	380	133	156	231	147
Houston	99	41	29	66	36
Lookout Mountain	115	45	51	60	23
Mountain**	168	69	65	103	45
Murray/Whitfield	78	50	30	48	22
Northern**	--	--	--	--	--
Ocmulgee	201	67	76	125	50
Ogeechee	24	2	--	3	2
Paulding	238	70	81	162	54
Piedmont	145	85	52	93	49
Polk & Haralson	89	44	47	39	16
Rockdale	241	105	100	134	56
S.A.F.E.	26	14	3	22	13
Savannah/Chatham	563	197	218	345	128
South Central	161	68	9	62	18
Southwest Georgia	30	14	13	17	6
SOWEGA	149	90	57	97	31
TLC	265	151	147	118	24
Thomas	108	39	77	39	12
Tri-County	126	35	29	97	17
Troup & Heard	170	51	72	98	29
TOTALS	8,707***	3,532	3,401	3,401	2,037

Children Served in DFCS Custody
Pie Charts

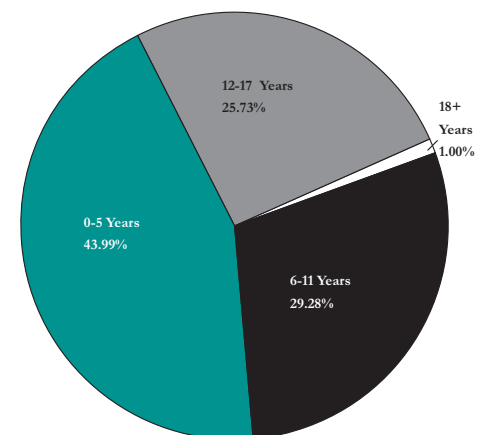
Type of Deprivation



Ethnic Background



Age



*Program restarted operations under new management during year
 **Northern began operating under Mountain during year
 ***7,374 children were served who were in the legal custody of the state; pie charts include statistics for children in DFCS (Department of Family and Children Services) custody only



Beacon of Light (\$5,000 and above)

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Mr. and Mrs. Bradley Currey, Jr.
John and Mary Franklin Foundation
Georgia Department of Human Resources
Mr. Robert H. Gunn, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Bradley Hale
John H. and Wilhelmina D. Harland Foundation
The Home Depot Foundation
The Sartain Lanier Family Foundation
The Ma-Ran Foundation
Mr. Jack O. McMillan, Jr.
The National CASA Association
SunTrust Directed Funds: The Harriet McDaniel
Marshall Fund
Supreme Court of Georgia Committee on Justice for
Children
Synovus Foundation
Joseph B. Whitehead Foundation
David, Helen and Marian Woodward Fund

Champion (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

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John and Rosemary Brown Family Foundation
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Mr. Frank D. Inman
Mrs. Marcy McTier
Emily Winship Scott Foundation
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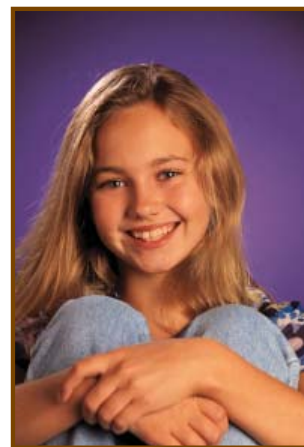
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Ms. Nancy Wood

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CASA of the Appalachian
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GE Foundation – *matching gift*
Mrs. Solveig Harden



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Ms. Louisa H. Hunter
ING Foundation – *matching gift*
Gayle and Bill Ide
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Inman United Methodist Church
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Mr. and Mrs. William Izlar
Dr. and Mrs. Michael Johns



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In honor of Plum and Jonathan Clawson-Simons
By Mr. and Mrs. George and Susan Heberton

In honor of Ms. Miriam Dent
By Ms. Carolyn Dobbins

In honor of Ms. Melinda Griffin
By Ms. Catherine G. Henson

In honor of Ms. Solveig Harden
By Mrs. Karen N. Sibley

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By Mr. and Mrs. L. Jack Glass

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By Mitzi Kintz

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In honor of Marietta and Skip Petters
By Ms. Carolyn Dobbins

In honor of the birth of Max
By Dr. Ronald Kerman

In honor of Ms. Karen N. Sibley
By Mr. and Mrs. John Izard
Mrs. Lucy Carpenter Vance
Sue and John Wieland

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In memory of Sylvia Attkisson's Father
By Mrs. Karen N. Sibley

In memory of Mr. Bill Childers
By Mrs. Eleanor S. Childers

In memory of Mr. John Howett
By Mrs. Karen N. Sibley

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Diana Waters
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*Georgia CASA Staff at the
Spring 2009 Council of Programs/Leadership Training Dinner*

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Elizabeth Hiatt, Executive Director

Alcovy CASA Program

Newton & Walton Counties

Jim Killman, Executive Director

Athens-Oconee CASA Program, Inc.

Clarke & Oconee Counties

Christian Orobello, Executive Director, CEO

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Program of Advocates for Bartow's Children, Inc.

Bartow County

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Jessica Parkes, Executive Director

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CASA Glynn, Inc.

Glynn County

Lisa East, Executive Director

CASA of Houston County, Inc.

Houston County

Terry DiDiego, Executive Director

CASA of the Northern Judicial Circuit, Inc.

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CASA of the Ogeechee Judicial Circuit, Inc.

Bulloch, Effingham, Jenkins & Screven Counties

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CASA of Paulding County, Inc.

Paulding County

Martha Carver, Executive Director

CASA of Polk and Haralson Counties, Inc.

Haralson & Polk Counties

Andrell Turner, Administrative Director

CASA of Southwest Georgia, Inc.

Baker, Calhoun, Decatur, Grady & Mitchell Counties

Dan Provence, Executive Director

CASA of Troup and Heard Counties, Inc.

Heard & Troup Counties

June Nelson, Interim Executive Director

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Bibb, Cranford & Peach Counties

Tracy Willis-Kight, Executive Director

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Rosalind Alston, Program Coordinator

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Dawn West, Executive Director

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Program of Clayton County Juvenile Court

Clayton County

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Coastal Plain CASA, Inc.

Irwin, Tift, Turner & Worth Counties

Greg Millette, Executive Director

Cobb County CASA

Program of Juvenile Court of Cobb County

Cobb County

Carlene Redmond, Program Coordinator



Need complete contact information for each program? Visit www.gacasa.org

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Coweta County

Traci Corne, Executive Director

DeKalb County CASA

DeKalb County

Marian Parker, Interim Executive Director

Dougherty CASA

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Dougherty County

Stephanie Davidson, Program Director

Enotah CASA, Inc.

Lumpkin, Towns, Union & White Counties

Susan Zealy, Executive Director

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Iris Thomas Ross, Executive Director

Gordon County CASA Program

Program of Gordon County Juvenile Court

Gordon County

Anne Pitts, Program Coordinator

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Dawson & Hall Counties

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Murray & Whitfield Counties

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Rockdale County

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Thomas County CASA, Inc.

Brooks & Thomas Counties

Asuncion Ellis, Executive Director

Tri-County CASA, Inc.

Appling, Jeff Davis & Wayne Counties

Denise Graham, Executive Director



Our Vision

Each abused or neglected child involved in juvenile court proceedings shall have a safe and permanent home.

Our Mission

Georgia Court Appointed Special Advocates, Inc. develops and supports court-sanctioned, community-based programs that provide trained and supervised volunteers to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children involved in juvenile court deprivation proceedings.



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