



2021-2022 IMPACT REPORT

Enotah CASA is a volunteer powered network of people committed to fighting for the safety and needs of abused and neglected children; acting as their voice to ensure they have a nurturing permanent home in which to thrive.





DELLA LAGO

A Message From Our **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

What a year! Like most of you, we are continuing to learn how to navigate in this COVID-changed world. With the slowing of COVID and the associated isolation in 2021, reporting of abuse and neglect increased, resulting in a surge of children entering foster care.

At CASA we believe that every child has the right to a safe and loving home, so we have worked tirelessly to meet this increasing need. We know that children who have a caring adult, standing with them and voicing their needs do better and find a safe, permanent, nurturing home more quickly.

Being a CASA myself, I take great joy in being a voice for the children I serve. I know firsthand what a difference the gift of time, encouragement, and support make in a child's life. It is an honor to serve as the Director of Enotah CASA. I hope as you look over this year's annual report you will be inspired by the difference we have made and be motivated to lend your support to the work that remains to be done.

As you review this report, remember that each number, dollar, and story represent a precious, vulnerable, child like my little 5-year-old Emily, CASA Tim's 8-year-old Jonah, and CASA Elizabeth's teenage Jordan. These children are real children in our community whose lives have been forever changed by a person just like you!

With gratitude on behalf of our children,

**Lift a Child's Voice.
Change a Child's Story.**

- Enotah CASA established 1999
- Serving the Enotah Judicial Circuit in Lumpkin, Towns, White, and Union counties



At Enotah CASA, we believe that every child has the right to be treated with dignity, to be safe, and to thrive in a loving home.

I AM FOR THE CHILD



Together we give abused and neglected children a voice. We give them hope. We change their lives. Won't you join us?



"CASA has been the ONE constant in my foster children's lives for the last five years. They are always there to support the children at swimming lessons, T-ball games, cheerleading and all the special life events. We have been very blessed. We love our CASA!"

-Ronda Ledford, Foster Mom



"A CASA myself, I have come to admire the important role CASA plays in communities. Enotah CASA has become part of my DNA, my heart, and my soul. I believe in CASA's mission. For Nick and I, giving financially means helping CASA achieve their goals which have become our own goals. Knowing our assistance will help train a few more CASAs so more children will have a voice fills our hearts with joy."

-Annie Marie & Nick Shreiber, CASA Advocate and Donor



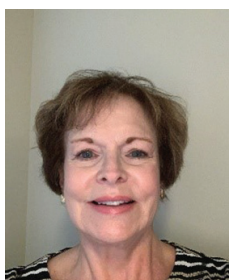
CASA Advocates are the true eyes and ears of the Court. They often bring information and resources to the table that attorneys wouldn't otherwise know exist.

-Robyn Adams, Childs Attorney, R.K. Adams Law



"Advocating for a child and helping them obtain a permanent loving home is one of the most rewarding experiences a person can have in life."

-Nicole Lonano M.S. Lead Advocate Supervisor and Towns County Supervisor



"Being an adult who speaks up for a hurting child is a privilege which cannot be recognized with honors or pay. When entering CASA training 15 years ago, I could not have dreamed of the richness of this journey. Although I have seen fear on children's faces and tears in their eyes, I know their lives were made better by having a CASA to speak for them. The ultimate reward is the child's sweet smile when they realize they have an advocate and friend."

-Liz Ruf, Enotah CASA Board Member, CASA Advocate, and Donor



OUR VISION

A North Georgia community in which every child in the foster care system has an advocate and the opportunity to achieve a safe, permanent, and loving home.



ABBY IS FINALLY HOME!

At the tender age of 3 little *Abby was removed from her home due to her mother's continual drug use. Abandoned by their father, Abby's siblings were already being cared for by other family members. Unfortunately for Abby, Foster Care was the only option.

Within a month, Abby was connected to John, her CASA volunteer advocate. Abby and John hit it off right away and although Abby was placed out-of-town, John made the journey to see her without fail. Never missing one of their monthly home visits, John also attended birthday parties, foster family events, as well as the foster care meetings, and her regular court hearings. For Abby, John had become part of her family.

Seeing a little girl that wanted nothing more than to be loved and safe, John advocated for her best interests tirelessly. After witnessing



months of missed scheduled visits, counseling sessions, and a refusal to follow Family Treatment Court recommendations by Abby's mother, John made a heartfelt recommendation for Abby to remain with the foster family who loved and cared for her as if she their own biological child. The court listened.

After nearly three-years and a roller coaster emotions, just before her seventh birthday, Abby's dream of a permanent home became reality. Adoption day was full of hugs and laughter. Abby, with her CASA by her side, just as he had been for over 3 years, was finally home.

* Abby is a fictitious name used to protect this child's identity

CARING. COLLABORATIVE. COMMITTED.

Walk into any juvenile court room in the ENOTAH circuit you will see one or more of our CASA volunteers and an advocate supervisor. They are interacting with the attorneys, parents, case managers and other court agents, ensuring everyone involved has the most current information regarding the child, their needs, and progress. CASA volunteers bring the people in the courtroom and everyone who is part of the child's life together as team, working together for the best interest of the child.



OUR MISSION

To provide trained, screened, and supervised volunteers to advocate for the best interest of abused and neglected children requiring court intervention.



“Our CASA kids need us to stay in the fight to ensure they have a voice... they deserve nothing less.”



CAROLEEN WOODS
2022 CASA OF THE YEAR

After four-years of battling on *Michael's behalf as his Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), Caroleen was faced with her greatest challenge when eleven-year-old *Michael suffered a mental health crisis requiring immediate hospitalization.

The local regional hospital was not staffed to provide the 24/7 monitoring required to ensure Michael's safety. The Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) was given the task. Short-staffed themselves due to the Christmas holidays, DFCS reached out to Caroleen for help.

Without hesitation Caroleen stepped in, staying with Michael night after night, even organizing volunteers to help. This effort meant Caroleen sacrificed time with her own family over Christmas and the New Year holidays. Caroleen felt that Michael was “just like one of her own children” and she would do whatever was needed to ensure his safety and care.

The only constant in Michael's life through his four years in the foster care system, Caroleen was able to give Michael's Physicians the medical and mental health history and life background they needed to properly treat him.

Today, thanks to Caroleen's passionate advocacy and personal commitment to Michael, he is doing well. He is in a new foster home where he is getting the medical services and special care needed to thrive.

* Michael is a fictitious name used to protect this child's identity

CELEBRATING HOME

Children with a CASA advocate are more likely to find a safe, permanent home. Of the children who found their forever homes with the help of Enotah CASA this year:

34 Were Reunified with Family

16 Were Adopted

5 Were Placed in Permanent Guardianships



FUNDING



We are grateful to all our supporters whose gifts are helping us reach our goal of providing a CASA advocate for every child in the Enotah Judicial Circuit. Special thanks to the Enotah Circuit District Attorney, county Commissioners, Mayors, and county government leadership. Your support makes what we do possible.

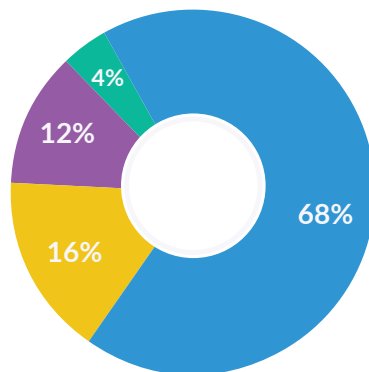
2021-2022 Income

County & Victims Funds
\$18,272

Contributions
\$50,406

Fundraising
\$69,754

Grants
\$300,656



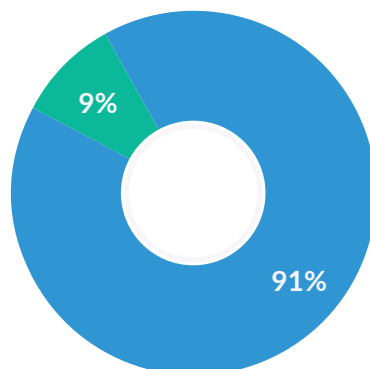
Cost of Advocacy Per Child:

- \$50 per day
- \$200 per month
- \$2400 per year

2021-2022 Expenses

Administrative
\$36,734

Program
\$369,931



Annual Taxpayer Savings from CASA Services:

\$465,905

Looking Ahead: 2023 Community Events



April - Child Abuse Awareness Month/I Am For The Child Conference



October - The Blairsville Sorghum Festival

OUR WORK



More than numbers... sadly thousands of our children across Georgia and right here in our communities are living this story every day. Together we can change each child's story.

IN GEORGIA

EVERY DAY

- **118** Incidents of child abuse or neglect are reported

IN 2021-2022

- **15,838** Children were removed from their homes for abuse or neglect and placed in foster care
- **9,045** children were supported by **2,592** CASA volunteer Advocates

IN THE ENOTAH CASA CIRCUIT

IN 2021-2022

- **652** reports of abuse and neglect to children were received by DFCS
- **206** children were supported by **82** CASA volunteer Advocates
- **5,824** Advocate case hours were provided
- **44,468** miles were driven by Advocates on behalf of the children they support

ADVOCATE. DONATE. VOLUNTEER

Join us in the fight. Help us ensure that every child in the Foster Care system has an Advocate to share the journey, fight for their best interests, and help them find a safe and loving forever home.

- Attend a discovery meeting to learn more about becoming a volunteer Advocate
- Join the I Am For The Child Giving Circle by sponsoring an Advocate for a child: \$50 day, \$200 a month, \$2400 a year
- Donate a gas card to help offset fuel costs for Advocate visits
- Sign-up for our newsletter to stay informed and learn about upcoming events at enotahcasa.org
- Follow us on social media and share our stories of hope with your friends and family

ENOTAHCASA.ORG



ENOTAH CASA TEAM

Della Lago
Executive Director
Brett Myers
Lumpkin County Supervisor
Katie Dunlap
White County Supervisor
Nicole Lanano
Lead Advocate & Towns County Supervisor
Gina Bennett
Union County Supervisor
Debbie Shofield
Administrative Assistant
Fran Parks
Outreach Coordinator

ENOTAH CASA BOARD MEMBERS

Quataunda Armstrong
Director, Lumpkin County & CASA Advocate
Ty Brunet
Director, Lumpkin County
Bob Conaway
Board Chair, Lumpkin County
Tim Henry
Secretary, Union County
Jason Lemley
Director, White County
Jennifer Little
Vice Chair, Lumpkin County
Jennifer Mahan
Director, Union County
Yolanda Ming
Director, Lumpkin County
Liz Ruf
Director, Towns County & CASA Advocate
John Seymour
Treasurer, Towns County
Susan Stalcup
Director, Union County
Fred Stock
Director, Union County & CASA Advocate
Ben Wallace
Lumpkin County Director



Offices in Dahlonega and Blairsville

706-864-0300

Mailing Address:
PO Box 2198
Dahlonega, GA 30533



Outreach@enotahcasa.org
www.enotahcasa.org

BECOMING AN ADVOCATE

CONTACT US

706-864-0300
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enotahcasa.org



FORMS AND INFO

We collect your information and learn more about each other.

SAFTY FIRST

Background checks and fingerprinting are required of all our Volunteers.



TRAINING

A 6 week training course is required to become a CASA Officer of the Court

ASSIGNMENT OF CHILDREN

This is where you become a voice for a child in foster care!

