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www.casatexas.org | 512.459.2272



2017 Annual Report

What's Inside

Setting the Stage: A message from our Board President and Executive Director

Advocacy By the Numbers: Children served, cases closed, active volunteers and more

2017 financials and the generous donors who make this work possible

Vision

For every child who needs us, CASA of Travis County envisions a trained volunteer advocate, a safe home and a promising future.

Mission

CASA of Travis County exists to promote and protect the best interest of children who have been abused or neglected, by training volunteers to advocate for them in courts, in schools and in our community to help them find safe, permanent and loving homes.

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your gifts of time and resources to Austin's most vulnerable children last year. In 2017, we set the stage for upcoming growth, reemphasizing our vision of a trained CASA volunteer for every child in need. Our Board of Directors adopted a new strategic plan that focuses on the quality of our advocacy for children.

We established priorities for measuring data to ensure our effectiveness, data that will guide the enhancement of our advocacy into the future. We evaluated caseloads for our staff to ensure optimal support for volunteer advocates. And, using child safety, best interest, and trauma-informed principles as our guideposts, we updated our expectations of volunteer advocates to include best practices in quality advocacy.

In 2017, CASA of Travis County received accreditation by Praesidium, Inc.—an abuse prevention company working with organizations serving youth and vulnerable populations—for our rigorous screening and supervision policies regarding children's safety. This reflects our efforts to ensure that our own organization is as safe as we can be in our work with children. In addition, we also collaborated with Praesidium on the development of a CASA-specific Certified Praesidium Guardian™ curriculum. CASA of Travis County continues to be a leader and innovator among CASA programs nationwide, and we constantly strive to be the very best organization we can be.

Enhancing the quality of our advocacy while growing to serve more children means an increased need for crucial financial and human resources. In 2017, we secured a substantial increase in our Victims of Crime Act funding from the Office of the Governor. We were also honored to receive a \$450,000 matching grant from a local family foundation whose fundraising challenge we successfully met. A large part of that success came from the launch of our Visionary Circle, a giving society of dedicated supporters who believe in CASA's vision and want to make a significant impact by donating \$20,000 or more to give at least 10 children a CASA volunteer for a year.

By honing a precise and strategic plan forward in 2017, and developing significant resources towards the execution of that plan, we are steadily moving towards our goal of serving all children in need in Austin. We started 2018 automatically appointed to all children 5 and older, but now we are already serving all children ages 4 and older. Our goal is to serve all children ages 2 and older by the end of 2018. We look forward to sharing even greater progress to these goals next year in our 2018 Annual Report!

Sincerely,

David Rubin, 2017 President, Board of Directors
Laura Wolf, Chief Executive Officer

Setting the Stage

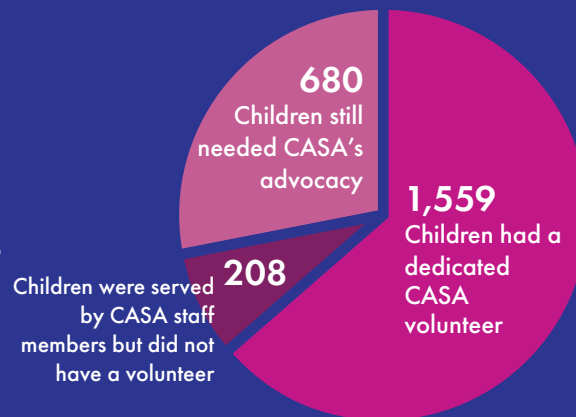
1,767 children served with the help of 721 active volunteers

741 Children's cases closed with the help of CASA

78% Children's cases closed with family reunification or relative placement

84% Children's cases closed with a permanent home

Of the 2,447 children in the Travis County courts due to abuse or neglect



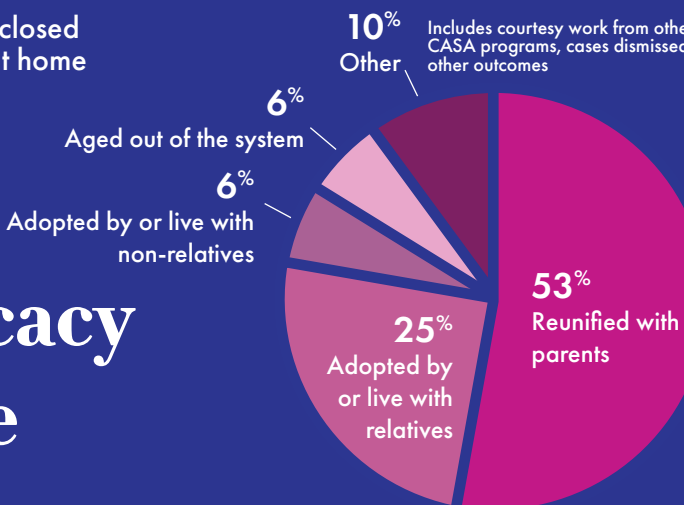
Child Age/Gender

0-4 = 27%
5-13 = 52%
14-17 = 17%
18 and over = 4%
51% male and 49% female

Child Race/Ethnicity

Hispanic = 51%
African-American = 25%
Caucasian = 16%
Bi-Racial/Multi-Racial = 6%
Other/Not Specified = 2%

Of the 741 children's cases closed



Advocacy by the Numbers



Chris needed guidance

Chris spent over 10 years in the foster care system before he aged out. He had a CASA volunteer by his side the entire time. His volunteer drove across Texas to keep Chris in touch with his siblings when they lived far apart and worked hard to keep Chris connected to his mom, even though she wasn't able to parent him. Chris's high school, his football team, and the community he'd built were strong motivators for him. When a placement didn't work out, there were always concerns about finding a new home in this community. To help him stay in this positive space, Chris's CASA volunteer got to

know, and would vouch in the courtroom for, kinship placements—families who knew Chris well and cared about him but weren't licensed foster placements. The CASA volunteer also focused on educational advocacy for Chris: communicating with his football coach to make sure he stayed eligible for the team, encouraging his involvement in the arts, and maintaining regular contact with the school to ensure Chris was in good shape. After turning 18 and aging out of foster care, Chris graduated high school and went on to college with a football scholarship.

“It's about responding to requests for the small things, requesting records every week, and asking questions. It's knowing the child really well. I know what happened a year ago. I know what happened at the treatment center. I remember and can tell others.”

- Jen Collins
CASA Volunteer



“It's hard to believe how many kids are in need and how close they are to me. I'm able and a part of my community, so I can make things a little bit better contributing how I can. I'm compelled more to be a person of action.”

- Naphtalie Gbolahan
CASA Volunteer



2017 Donors

* = Members of the Powerful Voice Society who donate \$2,000 or more per year
** = Members of the Visionary Circle who donate \$20,000 or more per year

\$100,000+ Anonymous (1) Kozmetsky Family Foundation Michael & Susan Dell Foundation	Kim & Carter Strickland* Texas Bar Foundation Melinda & Barry Twomey* Emily & Daniel Walker Laura D. Wolf**	Cindy & Scott Cole* Jason & Lisa Collins* Yolanda & Chris Conyers* Cross Texas Transmission Stephen & Jami DeLanoy* Dell, Inc. Craig & Candace Dickerson* Anonymous (2)* David & Joelle Beisner* Jessica & Jimmy Blacklock* Justin Blalock Linda & David Carter* Mike & Cara Clifford* ConocoPhillips Company Crystal & Cory Covert* Covert Buick GMC Bill & Laurel Daniel* Donald D. Hammill Foundation Kathryn Nowlin Duncan* Anissa & Todd Everett Facebook, Inc. HealthTronics, Inc. H-E-B In-N-Out Burger Foundation Katherine Jones The Junior League of Austin Amy & Kemp Kasling* Jeff & Ivy Larson* Holly & Gavin Massingill Susan and Tommy Nelms* Kimberly & Brian Noonan Perkins-Prothro Foundation Kari & Lee Potts* Potts Blacklock Senterfitt, PLLC Kristina & John Recker* RetailMeNot, Inc. Vicki Roberts & Jeff Nash* Rebecca Rooney Joyce & Jack Sampson* Silicon Valley Bank SXSW Conferences & Festivals Patricia Tamminga* Theodore P. Davis Charitable Trust UBS
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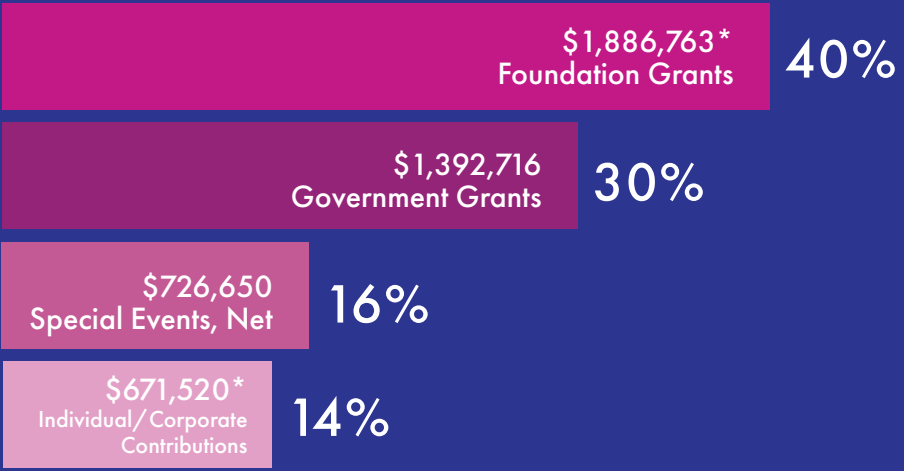
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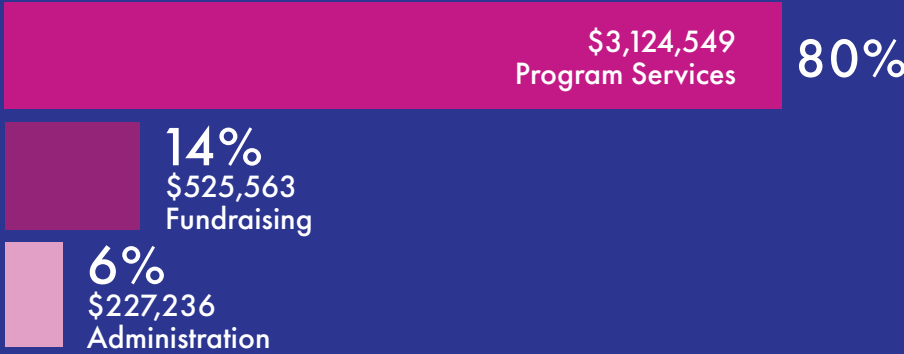
2017 Fiscal Report

Revenue & Community Support Total: \$4,677,649*



*In accordance with accounting rules, includes net \$638,211 in pledges or grants of funds to be paid in future years.

Expenses Total: \$3,877,348



If you feel you've been left off this list or we misspelled your name, please accept our apologies and email lzurbrugg@casatavis.org so we can properly thank you.



“While there’s so much inconsistency and uncertainty in the life of a child who’s in the foster care system, their CASA volunteer may be the one person who is consistently there for them. A CASA is an adult who this child can rely on to be there for them, give them encouragement, and advocate for their best interest.”
- Jocelyn Lewis
CASA Volunteer

CASA’s advocacy helped stabilize a family

Tania’s longtime addiction to drugs prompted a case with CPS, and her children, Mariah and Jackson, were removed from her care and placed in the home of their grandparents. Tania’s history of substance abuse meant that relationships were strained, especially with her daughter. Early in the case, Mariah fell ill and went to the hospital. Tania didn’t have approval to visit at that moment, and called Mariah’s CASA volunteer in tears. CASA was able to secure a supervised visit for Tania to see Mariah in the hospital. After being almost unable to help her child, Tania grasped the reality of potentially losing her children and began to take recovery seriously. She found a rehab program that worked for her needs, and since it was outside of the CPS network, her children’s CASA volunteer advocated Tania be authorized for admission. Throughout the process, their CASA volunteer was there for Mariah and Jackson, encouraging them to take therapy at the pace they needed, checking in on school issues, and being a consistent, trustworthy adult on the case. Tania completed her rehab, rebuilt her relationship with her kids, and secured an apartment near the grandparents to have a strong support system. The family was reunified, and Tania even went on to support others in recovery.



Many children are placed in the incredibly scary and unfair position of navigating through a complex court system. As CASA volunteers, we are the advocates, shepherding kids through this difficult journey and watching out for them along the way. In a world filled with limitations, we’re investigative journalists and detectives tasked with rounding up the critical parties to figure out a creative and best solution.
- Ben Rubenstein
CASA Volunteer and Board Member

CASA knew Ellie’s history

After more than 5 years in foster care and at least 8 different homes and placements, Ellie was finally adopted by relatives, an event that wouldn’t have happened without CASA’s long-term involvement in the case. Ellie’s mother had passed away before she entered the foster care system, and her father had attempted to completely disengage with the mother’s side of the family after a falling out. He told the CASA volunteer and CPS that the mother’s family wasn’t around or involved, and tried to alienate Ellie from that side of the family. Early in the case, the CASA volunteer reached out to the maternal relatives, but no one was able to help at the time. After many placement challenges for Ellie over the years and her ending up in a residential treatment center, the volunteer decided to try again with the maternal relatives in hopes of securing a better, more permanent home for her. Ellie’s CASA volunteer remembered the workplace of one



of the maternal aunts and managed to get into contact with her once more, and she wanted to help. She brought a large group of family members to a meeting in support of Ellie, and during this meeting, another aunt and uncle offered to be a placement. The family had not known where Ellie was for over 6 years, so it was an emotional reunion for everyone. Her uncle even brought Ellie a necklace with her and her mother’s birthstones. The aunt and uncle ultimately adopted Ellie, giving her permanence with her own family after years in foster care.



Thank you for all you’ve done for kids in 2017!