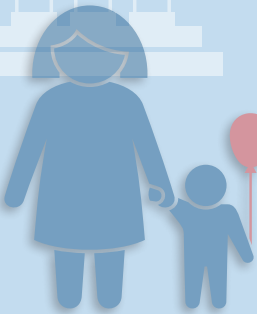


# 2021 Impact Report



## Who We Are

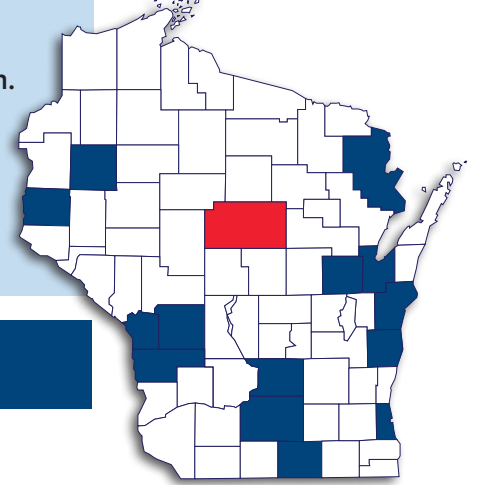
The Wisconsin **Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)** Association champions and gives a voice to abused and neglected children by supporting and growing local CASA programs.



- CASAs are **trained citizen volunteers** appointed by a judge to advocate for the best interest of children in the child welfare system. Through weekly visits with their assigned child, CASA's provide an additional layer of safety while amplifying the voice of vulnerable children.
- Local CASA programs currently **serve 14 WI counties**
- Wisconsin CASA Association is a member of the **National CASA Association**

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**Barron • Brown • Columbia • Dane • La Crosse • Manitowoc • Marinette • Milwaukee • Monroe • Outagamie • Rock • Sheboygan • St. Croix • Vernon**



## 2021 BY THE NUMBERS

**7,300+** Wisconsin children were eligible for a CASA  
**579** Advocates served **966** Children  
**23%** Increase since 2017

The Wisconsin CASA Association is working to support current and future local programs so the **6,300** unserved children receive an Advocate.

*The Children's Justice Act 2022 Assessment Survey concluded more resources like CASA programs and mental health are needed in Wisconsin, particularly in rural areas.*

Local CASA programs serve **14** of **72** Wisconsin Counties

**2** programs started in **2021**:  
St. Croix and Sheboygan Counties

Currently **7** counties and Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe need assistance to develop new local programs.



## CASA Works

Studies show that children with a CASA do better in school, spend less time in the child welfare system and are less likely to return to out of home placement.



## What Sets CASA Apart

- Trained Advocates are **sworn in by the court**, reporting to the judge presiding over the child's case until the CHIPS order concludes.
- While social workers, foster parents and kinship may change, an **Advocate's consistent presence** leaves a positive, lasting impact on the child.
- Volunteers receive **30 hours of specialized training** before they are appointed by a judge
  - Require 12 hours of continuing education yearly

# We Support Local Programs

The Wisconsin CASA Association supports and expands local CASA programs throughout the state, ensuring all local programs have an efficient model to recruit volunteers and serve as many children as possible.

Online and in-person training for Advocates and trainers



Wisconsin CASA portal: encouraging network communication among programs, data collection, shared best practices and monthly newsletters

Five customized geographic recruitment campaigns featuring billboards, radio and print ads, earned media and social media. The campaigns resulted in increased awareness, millions of general public impressions and filled advocate training classes

## Increased Awareness

- Statewide news media coverage with an ad value equivalency of more than \$175,000
- Social media generated hundreds of new social media followers and increased engagement
- More than 22,000 webpage views
- Annual "I am for the Child Day" raises the profile of CASA's work and demonstrates the widespread support for CASA



Our unique program, provides CASA children statewide with suitcases filled with comfort items and hygiene necessities, so the children don't have to carry their belongings in a garbage bag



Wisconsin CASA leaders regularly meet with local, state and federal legislators to educate them about CASA and encourage collaboration and support



## What Judges Say...

*"We support CASA Advocates who help us identify risky situations and spare children from ongoing anguish, improving their quality of life."*

Judge Michael Waterman,  
St. Croix County Circuit Court

## Challenges to Serving More Children include:



- Children in out-of-home placements for longer periods of time due to addiction epidemic (opioid, heroin, etc.)



- Lack of funding to build capacity in existing local programs as well as funding to launch new local programs in unserved counties



- Time constraints: It takes about 18 months to start a new CASA program



- Need for additional staff to supervise additional Advocates

Additional funding provides more resources, decreasing the timeline to develop more programs and serve more children.



**CASA**  
Court Appointed Special Advocates  
**FOR CHILDREN**

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