

# CASA Volunteer



A **Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)** is a trained community volunteer who is appointed by a judge to advocate for the best interests of an abused, neglected or abandoned child in juvenile court proceedings.

The CASA volunteer gathers information about the child's situation, attends court proceedings and makes a recommendation to the judge so that the judge has the information to make a decision about the child's future. The CASA volunteer advocates for the safety, permanency and well-being of the child.

## QUALIFICATIONS

- ✓ Sincere care for the well-being of children
- ✓ At least 21 years of age
- ✓ Pass criminal background checks
- ✓ Good verbal & written communication skills
- ✓ Ability to be objective & non-judgmental
- ✓ Available to attend all court hearings
- ✓ Commitment to CASA program for at least 1 year or until case is resolved

## HOW TO BECOME A CASA

- ◆ Complete an application, including 4 personal/professional references
- ◆ Undergo criminal background checks
- ◆ Be interviewed by a CASA staff person
- ◆ Complete 40 hours of training
- ◆ Be sworn-in by a judge

*To get started, contact a local affiliate CASA program. For a listing of programs, visit [www.gacasa.org](http://www.gacasa.org) or call Georgia CASA at 404.874.2888 or 1.800.251.4012.*

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CASA VOLUNTEER

- ◆ Visit the child
- ◆ Explain the role of a CASA volunteer
- ◆ Keep the child informed of all aspects of the court proceedings
- ◆ Gather independent information about the child to make recommendations to the judge in the child's best interests
- ◆ Seek cooperative solutions with other participants in the child's case
- ◆ Interview the parents, guardians or caretakers, social worker & other service providers
- ◆ Review records related to the family
- ◆ Prepare written reports for court hearings
- ◆ Attend & participate in court hearings & other related meetings
- ◆ Identify potential resources within the family & community to meet the child's needs
- ◆ Keep all records & information confidential
- ◆ Monitor provisions of service plans & court orders
- ◆ Ensure the child's wishes are known to the judge
- ◆ Advocate for the child in the community
- ◆ Consult with local CASA program staff for support & guidance
- ◆ Maintain focus on the child until permanency is achieved

## BENEFITS OF BEING A CASA

As a CASA volunteer, you will ultimately help to change a child's life for a brighter future. You can help to end the cycle of abuse and neglect. Among many other benefits, you will have an opportunity to learn about the juvenile court system and become actively involved in your community.