

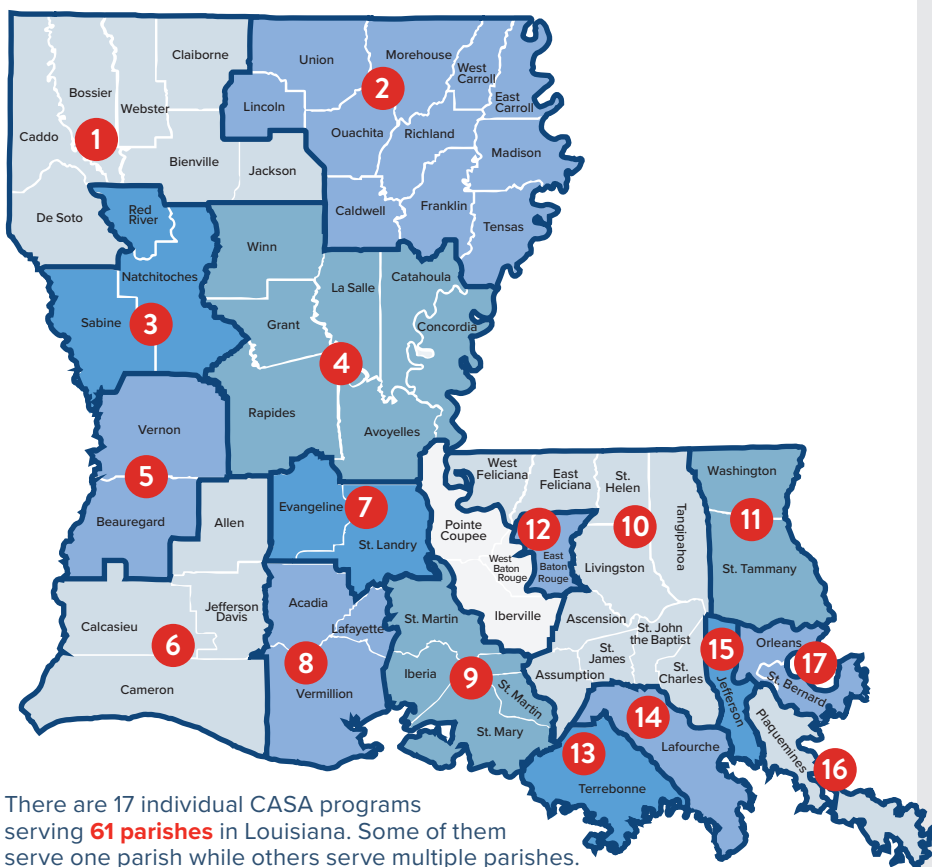


CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

LOUISIANA

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) volunteers are caring and competent community individuals who are supervised and supported by CASA professional staff, and appointed by a judge to represent the best interests of abused and neglected children in court.



There are 17 individual CASA programs serving **61 parishes** in Louisiana. Some of them serve one parish while others serve multiple parishes.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Volunteers for Youth Justice | 10 Child Advocacy Services |
| 2 CASA of Northeast Louisiana | 11 Youth Service Bureau |
| 3 CASA of Central Louisiana | 12 Capital Area CASA |
| 4 Children's Advocacy Network | 13 CASA of Terrebonne |
| 5 CASA of West Central Louisiana | 14 CASA of Lafourche |
| 6 Family & Youth Counseling Agency | 15 CASA Jefferson |
| 7 CASA of St. Landry-Evangeline | 16 CASA of Plaquemines |
| 8 CASA of South Louisiana | 17 CASA New Orleans |
| 9 CASA of the 16th JDC | ○ No CASA program |

“The judicial community cannot do this job alone. We need the support of the community. CASA advocates are the most effective community representatives that our country has come up with yet. — Judge Leonard Edwards (Ret.)”

CASA in Louisiana in 2020

3,524 children served

1,583 dedicated volunteers

50,256 volunteer hours served for children

\$1.36 million in volunteer service

CASA: A Wise Investment in Louisiana

CASA saves taxpayer dollars

Children with an advocate leave the system sooner than a child without an advocate, saving the state on foster care costs. Research shows that one year of CASA advocacy costs less than one of foster care.

CASA helps children in foster care thrive

Children with a CASA receive more services critical to their well-being and are more likely to succeed in school.

CASA has positive long-term effects on communities

By supporting children as they mature and become young adults, we reduce the likelihood they will face incarceration, homelessness, or unemployment.

CASA is an effective public-private partnership

CASA programs engage members of the community to transform the lives of children who have experienced trauma and tragedy, increasing public transparency and accountability.



On any given day in Louisiana there are more than **4,000 children** in foster care due to abuse or neglect



What is Foster Care?

Foster Care is a protective service provided to children in custody of the Department of Children and Family Services. It provides substitute, temporary care for a planned period of time when a child must be removed from their home.

Why do children get removed from their home?

Children are removed from their parents or relatives because of child abuse, neglect, and other circumstances.

Children removed from their home because of abuse or neglect face a frightening, profound unknown.

We make sure they don't face it alone.

CASA advocates help these child victims heal and thrive, through a dedicated, one-on-one relationship.



1 in 7 children experienced child abuse or neglect in the last year

52,862

reports of child abuse or neglect in Louisiana were called in to DCFS's hot-line last year



Independent, national research identified the effectiveness of CASA volunteers serving children in foster care. Highlights of the findings:

- A child with a CASA volunteer is more likely to find a safe, permanent home, spending less time in foster care.
- A child with a CASA volunteer is half as likely to re-enter the child welfare system.
- A child with a CASA volunteer is more likely to do well in school and perform better academically and behaviorally.
- Children and youth assigned a CASA volunteer reported significantly higher levels of hope. A child's hope has been linked to numerous positive outcomes such as overall wellbeing, increases in self-control, positive social relationships, and optimism.



Being in foster care is living in a constant state of flux: homes, schools, families...everything is always changing, often suddenly and without warning. My only constant was my CASA advocate. Without her, I would have been lost in the system.

— Melissa, foster care alumni



CASA advocates remain appointed to the child's case throughout its duration, so while the child may have multiple attorneys, social workers, therapists, and foster placements throughout the life of the case, **they will have only one CASA advocate.**



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LouisianaCASA.org
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