



Alameda County CASA

“Making a Difference in the Lives of Foster Children”



Oakland School Board Meeting
June 24, 2015

Our History

CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) was started by Judge David Soukup in Seattle, Washington in 1976



David Soukup
Founder of CASA

The National CASA Association represents more than 975 CASA programs across the country including Washington, D.C. and the U.S. Virgin Islands

CASA of Alameda County was established in 1987

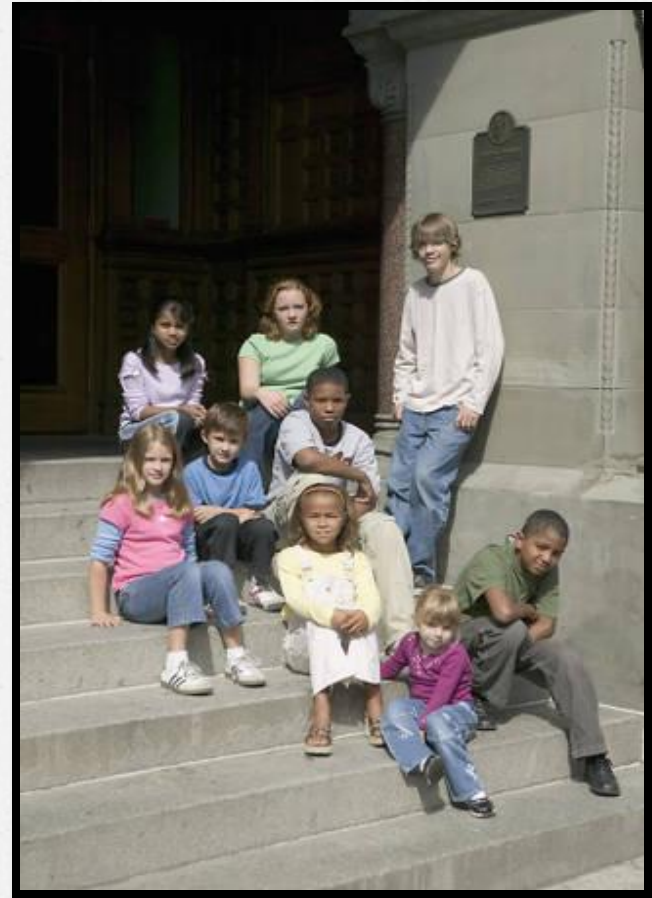
Mission

- To promote and support quality volunteer advocates to speak for the best interests of abused and neglected children in the Juvenile Dependency Court System



CASA Youth

- Ages range from 5 to 18-20 years of age
- Approximately half are boys and are African-American and youth of color
- Many have educational needs and are truant



The Need For Advocates



- o We have approximately 1600 youth in the Alameda County Foster Care System
- o We have approximately 50 youth on our waitlist
- o Many youth from the system end up homeless or in the delinquency system

Advocating for a Child



You will make recommendations to the court in regard to the child's placement and well being

In addition to building a bond/rapport with the youth you will work with attorneys, educators and social workers involved in the child's case/life



Who Are Our Advocates

- o Community members ages 21 to 80
- o Working professionals, college students, retirees



- o A diverse and growing group of heart-centered volunteers that are dedicated to improving the lives of youth

Advocate and Mentor

- o Role Model
- o Friend
- o Guiding hand

“I knew it would be good for the child, but not that it would have such a positive influence on me.”



Who Can Be An Advocate?

- o Adults 21 and older who have the compassion and commitment to work with our youth
- o Those who have successfully passed screening requirements which include a written application, personal interview, references and criminal record and background checks
- o Acceptance into our 36 hour training program

Essential Requirements

- o 1 year minimum commitment/10 hours a month
- o Assures that the youth's best interests are being represented at every stage of the case
- o Attends two Court Hearings annually and makes written recommendations to the Court on what is best for the youth
- o Updates case supervisor by phone and with logs once per month as to progress being made with youth
- o Is a consistent figure and role model in the proceedings and provides continuity in the life of a child

Training

- Volunteers attend a 36 hour mandated training over a period of 4-6 weeks
- Classes are given by professionals in the fields of law, social work and education
- Opportunities for the seasoned volunteer or novice to share their experiences and learn more about the Juvenile Dependency System
- Being sworn in as an Officer of the Court upon graduation

OUSD and its School Board and its supporters Can Become a Valuable Community Partner

- o Expand our outreach by volunteering for our community relations team, help at CASA events, and developing our social media campaigns
- o Make a financial contribution so we can serve twice as many abused and neglected youth referred to our program spending less time on the wait list.
- o Make In-Kind donations such as bus passes, gifts for the holidays, tickets for community events, educational computer software

Help Us Make a Difference in the Life of a Child

- o For more information about how you can be a community partner please contact:

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