Message from Board President and Executive Director

Dear Supporters,

In 2007, when CASA was brand new to Passaic County, we received a referral for a three-year-old boy named James. While handing over James’ case file, one of the court employees remarked, “I like the concept of your program, but I don’t know why you were assigned to this child. He is a lost a cause—he’s a vegetable.”

Since then, James has flourished. When he was first appointed a CASA volunteer in 2007, he was completely nonverbal. At the convalescent center where he lived, they would often tie the wheel of his wheelchair to the hallway railing to restrict his mobility. James was the victim of shaken baby syndrome at 6 months old. Unfortunately for James, foster care won’t end with the permanent resolution of reunification or adoption. He will always require 24 hour care to meet his special needs. It was because of CASA that he was moved out of that inappropriate residential setting to one that met his needs. Now, James is able to fully communicate his needs and desires through both verbal and nonverbal communication techniques through this his world has grown. Last year, he visited Disney World. For the last few summers he has gone to the beach and even tried body surfing on an assisted device.

Thanks to the intervention of his Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteer, James received the appropriate therapy, education and resources to move him to a less restrictive setting, where he has been thriving since the age of three.

This year CASA has helped James, as well over 212 other children, grow because of the chances they had given to them by Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteers while in the foster care system.

James is now safe, and the over 212 children served by a Court Appointed Special Advocate this year have had their voices heard thanks to your support.

Sincerely,

Erica Fischer-Kaslander
Executive Director

Janice Erzmoneit
Board President

Mission

Passaic County CASA exists to advocate, facilitate, and influence life-changing decisions for children in the foster care system.

Our vision is to have a safe and loving home for every child.
WHO WE ARE

Passaic County CASA is made up of dedicated staff, board members, and volunteers.

Staff members

Erica Fischer-Kaslander, M.A.
Executive Director

Gina Cetta, J.D.,
Case Supervisor
and Internship Coordinator

Deborah Morone, M.Ed.,
Case Supervisor And Trainer

Andrea Quiceno, B.A.,
Case Supervisor

Margaret Curreri,
VolunteerCoordinator

Pamela Saunders, B.A.
Office And Financial Coordinator

Sarah During, J.D.,
Case Supervisor
2016–2017 Board of Directors

Officers
Janice Erzmoneit, CPA, President
Peter Lefkowitz, Esq. Vice President
Michael Morano, Esq. Secretary
James A.M. Dykes III, Treasurer

Trustees
Jonathan Aber
Lindsay Janel, Esq.
Ronda Casson- Cotroneo, Esq
Boris Zaydel, Esq.
Theodore Goss

2016–2017 Volunteers
Thank you to the individuals, businesses, and community organizations who generously supported Passaic County CASA in 2017.


GROWTH IS NEVER BY MERE CHANCE; IT IS THE RESULT OF FORCES WORKING TOGETHER.

- JAMES CASH PENNEY


*To protect the privacy of our individual donors, we have not listed their names.*
CASA in the COMMUNITY
CASA BY THE NUMBERS

212

CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE WERE SERVED BY 91 volunteers for a total of 5840 donated hours.

That includes:
416 hours in court
512 hours writing court reports and recommendations
1,940 hours visiting with the child

All with the best interest of the child in mind.
OPPORTUNITIES TO “LIFT UP A CHILD” IN FY 2018

- Attend a volunteer information session to learn how to advocate for a child
- Make a tax-deductible donation of cash or appreciated securities
- Become a member of the CASA Board of Directors
- Ask your employer to match your gift to CASA
- Join the CASA Ambassadors Team
The training provided is informative and enjoyable. The rewards are just awesome. The feeling of having helped a child in some small way is indescribable. - Candance Eardley, CASA Volunteer

I don't know where I would be if CASA hadn't been assigned to my case. I would probably be homeless or in jail - instead, I have a home and a family who cares about me. - 26-year-old former CASA child

I wanted to do something to help the future generations of kids, even if it's only one kid at a time
- MaryAnn Pocock, CASA Volunteer

CASA volunteers have always helped me be in two places at once. Together, we've had a lot of successes, from reunifications against almost impossible odds to successful adoption to everything in between.
- Passaic County Division of Child Protection and Permanency Caseworker

Even the small contributions a CASA makes along the way can make a big difference.
- Jodi Hudspeth, CASA volunteer

Being a CASA helps children know they aren't alone. They have someone in their corner who can offer unconditional support and friendship - Rich Rolek, CASA Volunteer

I want to thank you for your kindness in supporting my dreams and making each day a little better than the one before.
- Former CASA youth