March 31, 2020

Dear Friends:

With New York City family courts closed, child protective judges are hearing only emergency cases remotely. Limited court oversight, system-wide staff shortages and social distancing for caseworkers leave foster homes and high-risk families with minimal support or supervision. Which means that CASA Advocates are needed now more than ever to:

- monitor the safety and well-being of children and youth in foster care,
- support families and foster families during this high-stress time, and
- protect children's rights, and bring urgent safety concerns to the attention of the courts.

CASA-NYC is determined to step up our advocacy during this crisis to ensure that children and youth in foster care have their needs met and rights protected. To do this we have moved our 30-hour training for new volunteer Advocates to a remote format. We expect 22 new volunteer Advocates will complete training next week and be assigned to the cases of children and families who are waiting for services. These new Advocates will join our team of more than 250 volunteers who are working to:

- provide consistent communication and support during this pandemic to children and youth currently and formerly in foster care, as well as their parents and foster parents,
- help families access emergency financial assistance,
- ensure children have the equipment and supplies they need for online learning,
- advocate for college students who have been moved out of their dorms, to makes sure they have safe places to live, and
- facilitate visitation between children and their parents, even if it must be virtual.

Please help us continue to train and activate new volunteers to meet the urgent needs of children and youth in New York City Foster Care by making a gift today.

Be well,

Kerry Moles
Executive Director
CASA-NYC