

Impact Report

FISCAL YEAR
2025-2026

Together, we're creating brighter futures for children involved in the foster care, juvenile justice, and truancy systems across our community.



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY



Show up. Change a life.



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Dear Friends,

Like you, we believe in showing up and changing lives.

That belief has always been at the heart of CASA. And because of our compassionate and dedicated community, this year we were able to show up for more young people, in more ways, than ever before.

Our Advocates brought what children need most: a consistent, caring adult who listens, speaks up, celebrates their strengths, and stays beside them through hard and uncertain times. Our supporters made that possible. You gave us the ability to say yes—yes to more children, yes to more opportunities, and yes to the individual things that can make a young person feel known and valued.

Now we are building on that foundation.

This year we adopted an ambitious new strategic plan guided by a simple vision: to support young people even more deeply and for longer. Over the next two years, we will reach families earlier and stay connected longer. And we will continue growing the kind of support that helps young people not simply get through difficult circumstances but see possibility in what comes next.

We are deeply grateful for all you do to make this growth possible.

As you read through this report, please remember that every number is so much more than a statistic. It represents a young person facing one of the most challenging times in their life, who found support and hope because someone decided to show up.

Thank you for being one of those people.

Paz Padilla
President

Lynn Petrovic
Executive Director



Our Mission, Our Vision, Our Pledge

OUR MISSION

CASA of Santa Cruz County advocates for children and youth, providing court appointed volunteers so each child and youth in the Dependency and Juvenile Court systems feels cared for and connected with the people, families, and resources they need to heal and flourish into adulthood.

OUR VISION

All children are nurtured in the hearts and homes of safe and loving families.

OUR PLEDGE

We pledge to take action to reduce our individual, our agency, and community implicit biases that contribute to systemic inequities. We, the staff and the board of directors, will collectively commit to advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion policies and practices internally, in collaboration with community partners, and in our work with families and youth.

A SNAPSHOT OF OUR CASA COMMUNITY IN 2025-26



96

Foster Youth Served



71

Justice-Involved
Youth Served



10

Truancy Youth Served



6

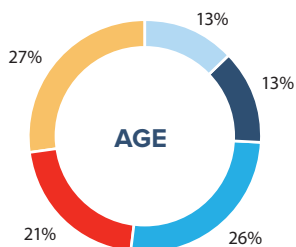
Youth Involved in
Multiple Systems



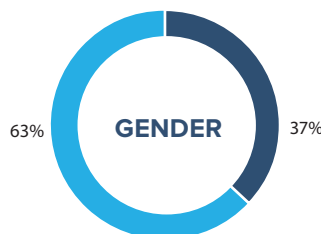
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Active CASA of Santa
Cruz Advocates

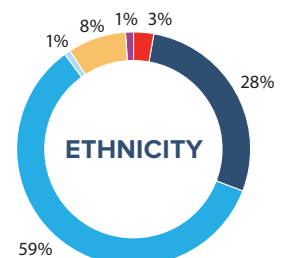
DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE CHILDREN WE SERVE



0-5
6-10
11-15
16-17
18-21



Male
Female



Black
White
Latino
Native American
Multi-Racial
Unknown



Stories From Our Community

Youth Voices

My Experience with CASA

by Eric*

CASA has been more than just social advocates. They have been my allies throughout my journey, guiding me and supporting the dreams and aspirations I hope to achieve one day. At times when life got difficult, CASA has never enforced decisions or judged me. Instead, they have given me the autonomy I need to build independence while strongly encouraging me to discover the significant potential I am capable of.

CASA has also invested in me, awarding me a scholarship that has significantly influenced and supported me throughout my journey and my goal of transferring to San Diego State University. Not only have they supported, guided, and helped me, but they have also built a network that has become my support system. They have championed my voice, uplifted me, and gone to bat for me.

“... Not only have they supported, guided, and helped me, but they have also built a network that has become my support system. They have championed my voice, uplifted me, and gone to bat for me.”

– Eric



Initially, I thought having a CASA was a drag. I thought it was the court sending another person to keep eyes on me and providing me with yet another person I couldn't trust. So I did what I thought I could to shake my CASA off: I would miss sessions, keep talking to a minimum, and disclose next to nothing about myself, hoping they would give up just like everyone else.

But, to my annoyance, they consistently showed up, still cheerful as ever, and were still interested in me. And I'm glad they did.

Not knowing that they would play a key role in my life, I couldn't see what CASA was seeing in me. But over time, I was able to build trust and started enjoying our sessions. Eventually, I was able to work with a new CASA, again having to build that trust. It took time as well, but it became super rewarding. I was able to connect with someone who had similar interests to me and was even exposed to new ideas and perspectives about life.

Looking back, my CASA has really influenced my trajectory in life in a positive manner. I truly believe that the reason I have been given the opportunity to be where I am today is because my CASA has shown me the light and sought out opportunities that have become stepping stones toward finding my own definition of success.

*fictitious name



CASA Advocate Sharon and Mia*

Advocate Sharon was matched with seven-year-old Mia* and became a caring, trusted presence throughout her year involved in the foster care system. Sharon consistently showed up for Mia as she moved from a resource family to reunifying and stabilizing with her mom.



“Every week, Mia was excited to see me and couldn’t wait to go to the CASA house. We were both so grateful to have such a welcoming place to spend time together—a space where she could play, create, and simply feel comfortable and safe.”

— Sharon, CASA Advocate

SHARON AND MIA’S TYPICAL AFTERNOON VISIT AT THE CASA HOUSE

On Wednesdays, Sharon would pick Mia up from school, get her a snack and ask where she wanted to go. Her answer was always the same: “To CASA.”

At the CASA house, Mia could play, explore and, just as importantly, feel safe and comfortable. She was excited about every stuffed animal and toy and wanted to play with them all. After a few visits, she found her favorite place: the art room.

Mia would head straight there and spend her time creating her own art and craft projects. She was incredibly creative, often amazing Sharon and the staff with her ideas. She even made her own storybook, complete with paper cats, clothes and different scenarios. She especially loved when other kids were at the house to play and create with her.

When it was time to leave after a few hours, Mia would look at the clock. And, if it wasn’t exactly 5pm yet (when the CASA house closes) Mia would complain and ask to stay. For Mia, CASA had become more than a place to visit. It was a place where she felt safe, happy and connected to Sharon.

*fictitious name





CASA Volunteers

Our work would not be possible without the amazing volunteers who give their time, talents, and energy to CASA. Whether advocating for a young person, helping at an event, or working behind the scenes, each contributes something impactful to our mission. We are deeply grateful for their generosity, dedication, and the many, many ways they strengthen our community.

Advocates

Cindy Alcantara
Charese Allen
Agustin Almoril Porras
Vanessa Arizmendi
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Daniel Atler
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Solenn Augustin
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Naomi Brauner
Rebecca Breton
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Dana Dentino
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Nancy Friedhoff
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Kaia Garcia-Vandegrift
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Amy Gonzalez
Dora Gonzalez
Peter Goodman
David Gorley
Victoria Granger-Jones
Ashley Green
Kent Halpern
Brenda Hanning
Adara Harness
Courtney Harrison
Laurie Hartsfield
Evan Henderson
Shiloh Henderson
Naydelin Hernandez
Britney Holeman
Kimberly Horowitz
Jose Ibarra
Wendy Jacoby
Michael Javaheri
Larry Johnson

Douglas Kamradt
Judy Kash
Peggy Kenny
Taylor Knights
Sarah Kudela
Alan Lamb
Robert Lange
Hailee Lawton
Gail Mahood
Cindy Margolin
Susan Maroun
Ari Martinez
Gail Marzolf
Kerry McDonald
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Christine Montelaro
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Sara Nevin
Martin Nicholes
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Brenna Ramsay
Melody Randel

Sheina Miriam Rapoport
Meghan Reilly
Mary Jane Reilly Jaramillo
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Mary Anne Robb
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Angelica Ruiz
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Katie Schutz
Kathryn Slaughter
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Nancy Whaley
Anne Young



Financial Overview

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

July 1 to June 30

REVENUE AND SUPPORT*	2025-26 (prior to audit)	2024-25
Individual Donations	\$570,320	\$900,077
Private Grants	\$517,270	\$552,591
Government Grants	\$1,075,660	\$696,100
Fundraising Events	\$256,239	\$179,291
Miscellaneous	\$110,944	\$27,840
Total Revenue and Support	\$2,546,433	\$2,355,899
EXPENSES		
Program Services	\$1,840,956	\$1,800,819
General & Administrative	\$183,427	\$192,448
Fundraising	\$226,631	\$170,080
Total Expenses	\$2,251,014	\$2,163,347

*Multiple-year grants and donations are recorded in full the year they are received.

With Thanks

Our work wouldn't be possible without the generosity of over 700 individuals, businesses, foundations, and government agencies who supported us last year.

Guardian Circle of Monthly Donors

Charles Adams
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How to Help Children and Youth

- **MAKE A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION**, a monetary gift, stock transfer, or even a vehicle.
- **ESTABLISH A MONTHLY DONATION**, and join CASA of Santa Cruz
- **LEAVE A LEGACY**, and join CASA's Legacy Society.

- **BECOME A VOLUNTEER.** Join the Friends of CASA, or become an Advocate
- **SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT CASA** to your colleagues, friends, and family.



CASA of Santa Cruz is a
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Tax ID #77-0305354



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Annual Impact Report



Leave a Legacy of Hope

Become a part of CASA's Legacy Society—a caring circle of donors who ensure future generations of youth have the advocacy and opportunity they deserve. A simple bequest in your will, trust, or retirement plan makes a lasting difference.

Current Legacy Society members can be found inside this report on page 5.

To learn more, share plans you've already made, or request CASA's complimentary Estate Planning Guide, contact us at 831-761-2956 x106 or visit www.casaofsantacruz.org/legacy

831.761.2956

www.CASAofsantacruz.org

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