



Showing Up For Children Since 1992

CASA of Santa Cruz County Impact Report FY2024/2025





OUR VISION

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

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 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.



DEAR FRIENDS,

It is an honor to continue our legacy of showing up for children since 1992, standing alongside the most vulnerable youth in our county, together with the families, community partners, and **CASA volunteers and supporters who make this work possible.**

Make no mistake, this year has been a challenging one. Increased uncertainty, fear, and financial pressures make it harder for the children of our community to feel safe and to thrive. This is especially true for families who have recently immigrated, who are members of the LGBTQIA+ community, and those facing housing, food, and health challenges.

In response, with your support, we continue to do what we have always done—show up for the most vulnerable children in our community. We remain focused on our core mission, advocating for kids' health and safety so they can heal and thrive. And through it all, we have reached the momentous goal of **offering an Advocate to every eligible child in the juvenile court system within 30 days.** We have ensured that every child, youth, and baby under the jurisdiction of the court—whether due to abuse, neglect, or justice involvement—had access to a volunteer Advocate who could stand up for their best interests, connect them to the resources they need, and help them navigate school, home, and court challenges.

In Spring of 2025, we hosted more than 35 community input sessions, led by people who have lived experience under the jurisdiction on the juvenile court system. What we heard, loud and clear, is that CASA has made a profound difference—and that families need us now more than ever. From this input, we are excited for our 2026-2029 plans and the impact we can make on future generations of our community.

Thank you for your care, commitment, and being part of this journey. Aligned and deeply committed, we are meeting today's needs while stepping boldly into the future—always showing up for every child in our community.

With gratitude,



Lynne Petrovic
Chief Executive Officer



Paz Padilla
Board Chair, FY2025/2026

WILLOW'S STORY



Celebrating my CASA by Willow

Good parents are something we take for granted. So when a child comes along with parents who aren't good, those who have lived more fortunate lives don't understand.

Most couldn't imagine a child, still young enough to sleep in their parents' bed, lying awake all night, terrified of the person next to them. It was like this for me, fear, loneliness, and the expectation that they wouldn't show up.

Fortunately, I wasn't just depending on my parents. My godparents came through for me, but eventually I reached the age where I was pulling away—as most teenagers do. The fear and loneliness came back with a vengeance.

It was around this time that I met my CASA, Casie. Most of the time we just sat and talked about life, or whatever we were doing for hobbies. I'm pretty easy to please, so every week we did the same thing: talked and drank tea. Over the years she came to my birthday parties and witnessed my graduation. We still talk even now.

For much of my life, apart from my time with my godparents, I was with adults who would eventually leave. So when I started meeting with Casie weekly, it slowly changed how I thought about people. Before I met her, I had an unconscious assumption that the world, and all the people in it would abandon me if given the chance. After I met her, I slowly realized it was the people I had thought were my whole world that had abandoned me.

Having an impartial party with a fresh perspective, someone who consistently showed up, was exactly what I needed most as I transitioned to adulthood.



THE BENEFITS OF CHAMPIONING EVERY CHILD



For a child or youth navigating the foster care and/or juvenile probation system, the role of a consistent, caring CASA volunteer is incredibly impactful. Extensive research shows youth paired with a CASA are far more likely to thrive in key areas than peers without an advocate.

With a CASA, foster children are more likely to be placed in a safe, permanent home, and remain connected to loved ones. Youth experiencing probation are more likely to successfully complete the terms of their probation and re-connect with community in a timely manner with a CASA's help. CASAs make sure both foster and justice-involved youth receive the vital health services they need and deserve in order to heal and thrive. They support youth to stay on track educationally, graduate high school, and explore career paths. Studies find youth with a CASA report greater hope, self-efficacy, and resilience. They are less likely to re-enter the child welfare or juvenile probation system.

In short, volunteer advocates lift up youth who feel unseen and unheard and connect them to the resources they need to thrive. They champion children's needs in courtrooms, classrooms, health care, and communities. CASAs empower youth to envision a brighter tomorrow and believe in themselves to achieve their dreams.

THE CHILDREN WE SERVE ARE MORE LIKELY TO:



Achieve a permanent home



Receive vital services in a timely manner



Be on track to graduate from high school



Less likely to reoffend



Report higher levels of hope



Have long-term connections to loved ones

THE POWER OF **ADVOCACY**



When Sue relocated from Canada to Santa Cruz, she wanted to meet members of her new community and give back. She had always been passionate about working with young people, so when a neighbor suggested CASA, she signed up for training right away.

Sue began supporting a resilient youth named Sasha* who was placed out of state in a residential treatment facility. Navigating the differences between that state's system of care as well as California's requirements meant Sue had to work twice as hard to get Sasha the services she needed.

But Sue was not deterred. "Finding a way to engage with a child in the way they need is our role," she said. Despite the distance and complexity, she built a personal connection through phone calls and online meetings. Over time, Sasha began to trust Sue and rely on her guidance.

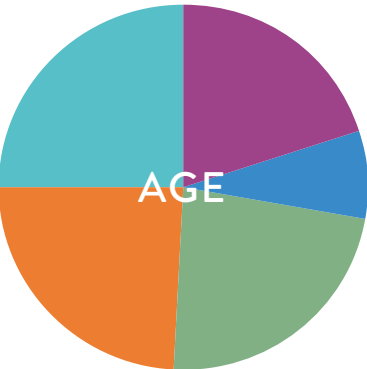
One of Sue's proudest moments as an Advocate came from working with Sasha. At first, Sasha could only express frustration through aggressive, highly colorful language. Sue worked with her to reduce escalation and manage overwhelming emotions. Together, they created what they called "psychic swearing," a tool that has helped Sasha tremendously while strengthening their connection.

Sasha returned home to her family and continues to heal from her past experiences. Sue and Sasha made plans to spend quality time together, getting their nails done and practicing meditation. They also intend to continue using the techniques and strategies that have helped Sasha manage her emotions and build trust. Sue sees her role in Sasha's journey as a gift, stating, "If I can help illuminate that path, it is a great honor."

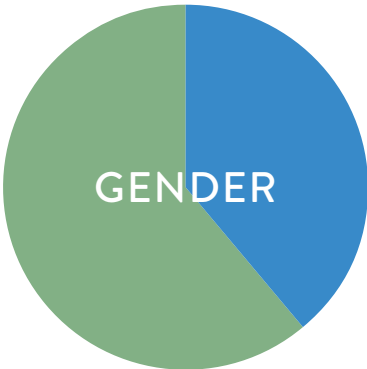
*fictional name

WHO WE SERVE

Children and youth in foster care and the juvenile justice system often face trauma, instability, and systemic inequities. Behind each statistic is a young person with unique strengths, resilience, and the need for consistent support on the path toward stability and hope. We now offer an Advocate to every eligible child in foster care and juvenile court within 30 days.



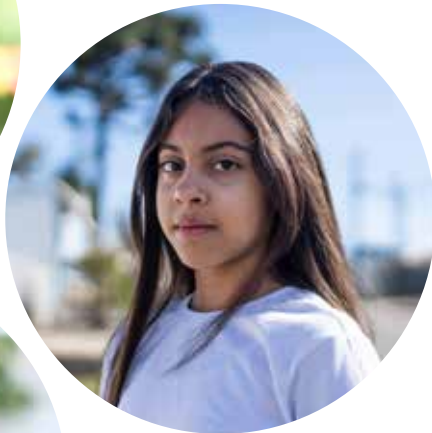
5 and Under	20%
6-10	8%
11-15	23%
16-17	24%
18 and Over	25%



Female	39%
Male	61%



Hispanic/Latinx	61%
White/Caucasian	24%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1%
Black/African American	4%
Multiracial	3%
Native American	1%
Unknown	6%





CASA OF SANTA CRUZ **IMPACT IN 2024/25**

Matching advocates to a child or youth needing support can provide a transformative experience, shaping their future. Advocates offer guidance, mentorship, and emotional support, helping them navigate challenges. With a caring adult, these children and youth develop resilience, self-esteem, and essential life skills.



110

Foster Youth
Served



71

Justice-
Involved Youth
Served



2

Dual-Status
Youth Served



146

Active CASA
of Santa Cruz
Advocates

HOW TO HELP CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Thanks to the support of our donors, CASA is able to advocate for children in foster care and the juvenile court system, ensuring they have the resources they need to succeed. You can champion a child in our community with a gift today.



MAKE A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION, a check in the mail, an online credit card donation, stock transfer, a gift through your employer's matching gift program, or even a vehicle.

ESTABLISH A MONTHLY DONATION, and join CASA's Guardian Circle of recurring monthly donors for as little as \$10 a month.

JOIN THE LEGACY SOCIETY. There are many ways to ensure future generations of children and youth have an Advocate at their side.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER. Join the Friends of CASA, or sign up for an information session about becoming an Advocate at: www.CASAO SantaCruz.org.

SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT CASA to your colleagues, friends, and family.

CASA of Santa Cruz is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (# 77-0305354)



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

JULY 1ST TO JUNE 30TH

REVENUE AND SUPPORT*	2024-25	2023-24
Individual Donations	\$717,310	\$370,890
Private Grants	\$590,221	\$789,089
Government Grants	\$696,100	\$396,755
Fundraising Events	\$226,991	\$193,425
Miscellaneous	\$1,845	\$2,950
Total Revenue and Support	\$2,232,466	\$1,762,109
EXPENSES		
Program Services	\$1,751,029	\$1,664,129
General & Administrative	\$177,252	\$176,135
Fundraising	\$217,777	\$207,827
Total Expenses	\$2,146,058	\$2,048,091

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Mark Stone

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Everardo Munoz

Marita Villareal (termed off 6/25)

Bill Parro (termed off 3/25)

Andrea Willy (termed off 9/25)

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COMMUNICATIONS & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Magi Diego

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Ana Menara

ADVOCATE SUPERVISOR

Angie Redlich

*on 6/30/2025

VOLUNTEERS FY2024/2025

CASA of Santa Cruz County is so grateful for the volunteers who champion every child in our community. Our work would not be possible without them. They come from all over the county, representing a wide range of backgrounds, ethnicities, and experiences, but all have an amazing capacity to care. They are truly community heroes, consistently showing up and being committed to the best outcome for a child's future.

ADVOCATES

LoCindy Alcantara
Charese Allen
Agustin Almoril Porras
Arnold Alper
Andrea Alvarez
Vanessa Arizmendi
Daniel Atler
Benjamin Augarten
Solenn Augustin
Thomas Bakewell
Nicole Benjamin
Naomi Blanco
Joscelyn Boudreau
Naomi Brauner
Rebecca Breton
David Brodkey
Amber Burke
Craig Calfee
Elizabeth Cameron
Cecilia Carrillo
Rhonda Carvalho
Kimberly Chavez Perez
Stephan Choutov
Leanna Christie
Thomas Coile
David Coleman
Lizette Contreras Corrales
Peter Cooper
Stacey Cooper
Shawn Cornejo
Hannah Cornell
Mai Dao-Horton
Elena D'Arcey
John David
Jennifer Deming
Sarah Domondon
Juan Echeverria
Dee Edwards
Rachel "Rae" Fadlovich
Kathryn Fahl
Julia Feldman
Ellen Ferguson
Blanca Fernandez
Les Forster
Megan Fox
Rachel Freeman
Liliana Galvan
Azucena Garcia Cazarez
Maritza Garcia
Sophia Gastelum

Virginia Gerberick
Lani Giovanetti
Denise Gomez
Amy Gonzalez
Dora Gonzalez
Evelyn Gonzalez
Peter Goodman
David Gorley
Victoria Granger-Jones
Brenda Hanning
Courtney Harrison
Laurie Hartsfield
Erin Hayes
Savannah Hayes
Britney Holeman
Kathy Hundemer
Melissa Hutchinson
Jose Ibarra
Wendy Jacoby
Sophia Javaheri
Larry Johnson
Douglas Kamradt
Malissa Kaping
Peggy Kenny
Cynthia Kent-Mills
Mary Koehring
Natalie Kwasniak
Alan Lamb
Hailee Lawton
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Cindy Margolin
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Amber McGough
Michele Mckee
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Abigail Mittelstedt
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Sheri Morano

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Linda Parriott
Lindsay Patel
Catherine Perrin
Mohini "Mo" Peters
Tesi Pickett
Bee Pollicino
Julianne Porras-Center
Maria Quiroz Mendoza
Sheina Miriam Rapoport
Valerie Rathbone
Jessica Ravetz
Meghan Reilly
Rachel Rester
Andrea Reyes
Natalie Reyes
Serena Riddle
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Yvette Robledo
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John Rogers
Annie Rooke
Katie Schutz
Rodney Sellers
Brianna Silva
Kathryn Slaughter
Regine Smith
Kelly Souza
Taylor Stamos
Julia Stilwagen
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Cassedy Sullivan
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Marcie Talia-Rice
Susanne Teichmann
Leticia Tovar
Ariel Tse-Mckeown
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Susan Verducci Sandford
Anthony Villano
Pushya Wahl
Renee Wall
Susan Walton
Lynlea Wellman
Larry Willis
Olivia Winter
Casie Wright
Anne Young
Emily Zamora
Michelle Zavarella
Rachel Zuerchern

FRIENDS OF CASA

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Margene Chmyz
Caroline Currie
John David
Mary Dean
Cynthia Druley
Edna Elkins
Sesario Escoto
Consuelo Espana
Bonnie Farrar-Dunbar
Katherine Fowler
Jenni Fox
Margaret Gordon
Sally Griffin
Ashley Halderman
Lisa Hall Magee
Lisa Hickman
Judy Hubbard
Wendy Hurst
Wendy Jacoby
Meg Janes
Dale Johnson
Patrice Keet
Janet Kennedy
Patty Kolar
Marilyn Koll
Peggy Anne Lacey
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Florence Lesar
Susan Maresco
Patsy Marinelli
Loree McCawley
Teall Messer
Sue Murphy
Bill Parro
Sara Pope
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Liz Riehl
Linda Simpliciano
Bob Smeenk
Mary Alice Susca
Esther Sylvan
Portia Tanaka
Franco Tandoi
Kent Thompson
Betsy VanWagenen
Nancy Whaley
Anne Young

WITH THANKS



Our work wouldn't be possible without the generosity of over 875 individuals, businesses, foundations, and government agencies. We are grateful for all our donors and granters and appreciate every one of them for giving what they can to our organization.

GUARDIAN CIRCLE OF MONTHLY DONORS

We are so grateful to our monthly donors whose stable funding helps CASA increase its impact while decreasing administrative costs.

Charles Adams	Carol Fuller	Joel Landis	Rachel Ruby
Cecilia Avila-Gallo	Ron Goodman	Brenda Large	Berdell Spellman
Lawrence Banducci	Ashley and Bob Halderman	Lynda Leigh	Marianne Talfinger
Kay Bartlett	Susan Hanson	Cindy Margolin	Timothy Ulen
Colleen Bellows	Amy Harrington	Isabella Mariano	Corrie Verbraken
Susan Coale	Susan Hirano	Megan and John Martinelli	Joe Wallace
Stefania Dal Zio	Cheri Hung	Vikki Monroe	John Westcoat
Elaine Duxbury	Wendy Hurst	Donna Prochazka	Kendra Wolfe
Mark Eastman	Wendy Jacoby	Janna Rivas	

SCHOLARSHIPS

Through the generosity of a select group of donors, we're able to provide scholarships that help students pursue their education with fewer financial obstacles.

Bill McCabe Memorial Scholarship Paul Hopper Memorial Scholarship Zachary Parrish Memorial Scholarship

LEGACY SOCIETY

These individuals have included CASA of Santa Cruz County in their will, trust, or donated to our Endowment Fund. If have named CASA of Santa Cruz County in your estate plans and don't see your name listed, or would like to join the Legacy Society, please contact magi@casaofsantacruz.org.

Dave and Kay Bartlett	Margaret Gordon	Leola Lapides and Bob Katz	Karen Semingson
Cynthia Druley and	Amy and David Harrington	Cindy Margolin	Nancy and Ray Sherrod
Famy Diener	JoAnn Hughes	Barbara Murray	June Smith
Wilma Gawthrop	Dale Johnson	Mark Nance	Kent Thompson M.D.

EVENT SPONSORS

Thank you to the following individuals and businesses who brought our fiscal year 24/25 events to life.

Bay Federal Credit Union	Emma Forlanda	Leola Lapides and Bob Katz	Santa Cruz Community Credit
Bob and Patrice Keet	Gail Michaelis-Ow and	Leticia Bess and Family	Union
Burton S. Rees	George Ow	Margaret Gordon/Sesario	Talmadge Construction
C&N Tractors	Janis Ost	Escoto & Eva Acosta	The Jean & Ed Kelly
California Giant Berry Farms	Jeff Kane Insurance	S. Martinelli & Company	Foundation
Dale Johnson and Isebill	Solutions	Mary and Rudy Bergthold	West Coast Community
Gruhn	Jenni and Paul's NamaStay	Meg and Steve Bontadelli	Bank
Driscoll's Inc.	Yogis of the Heart	PP&Co.	
Ed Newman Family	John Lehr and Family	Santa Cruz Beach	
Charitable Fund		Boardwalk	

Phone Number: (831) 761-2956

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