



**Voices for
Children.**
A child heard. A life changed.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY
FY2021-2022
Impact Report
Supplement

Reaching New Heights

“Connection is the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued.”

— BRENÉ BROWN

Early this fiscal year, Voices for Children’s Riverside County program reached a special milestone: our **1,000th child in foster care was matched with a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) since our program’s inception in 2015**. That’s 1,000 children who’ve experienced caring, individualized support to ensure their needs are met. That’s 1,000 children who felt seen, heard, and valued when they may not have otherwise.

Every day, there are thousands of children living in Riverside County’s foster care system. While the reasons that brought them into foster care vary, they all have some common connections. **Each one experienced abuse or neglect; many were removed from their home; and each one was let down by the adults in their life.** Fortunately, 338 dedicated community volunteers stepped up and served as CASAs this year. They devoted countless hours to writing court reports, collaborating with professionals on their cases, spending quality time with their case youth, and more — all to help judges connect the dots and make the best decisions about their futures.

Voices for Children began operating the Riverside County CASA program in 2015. This fiscal year, our CASAs advocated for **486** youth in foster care — **more than three times as many as our first year**. To support the next 1,000 children who need us, we must continue to inspire new volunteers to advocate on behalf of the children we serve. Last summer, we welcomed our first Recruitment and Outreach Coordinator, a full-time staff member focused exclusively on recruiting CASAs and engaging with the community about our program and the need for volunteers. We also secured a new office space, which opened in Spring 2022 in Riverside’s La Sierra neighborhood.

In this report, you will read inspiring examples of advocacy and meet CASAs who are making a difference and celebrating volunteer milestones. We also recognize the generous donors and community partners without whom we could not achieve our life-changing mission.

THIS YEAR IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY JULY 1, 2021 – JUNE 30, 2022

- **486** children in foster care received a CASA
- **338** community members served as CASA volunteers
- CASAs conducted **1,294** visits to their case youth

THE WAY BACK HOME



“Adam” was 10 and “Mary” was 8 when they were found alone and scared in a car. Their parents were struggling with opioid addiction, and when they were found, the kids didn’t know how long they had been waiting for their parents to return. The siblings were assigned to CASA Cassie and placed with their paternal grandparents, who stepped up and welcomed them into their home.

CASA Cassie met with the children every other week through FaceTime, as social distancing guidelines were in place. Once restrictions were lifted, she took them on outings and bonded over their interests — for Adam, it was football, and for Mary, it was animals (especially horses!). CASA Cassie also developed a strong relationship with the family.

At their next hearing, Adam and Mary’s social worker asked the court to order that the parents no longer be provided with services to reunify with their children. However, CASA Cassie saw how committed the parents were and how hard they were working to change their lives. **Like many children in foster care — more than anything — Adam and Mary wanted to go home to their parents.** CASA Cassie asked the court to give them more time, and the judge agreed.

For Mary and Adam’s parents, losing their children was rock bottom. They were eager to participate in services to live a sober life and regain the right to parent their children. They took advantage of every opportunity to visit Adam and Mary and slowly but steadily began rebuilding their family. CASA Cassie encouraged and supported them at every step.

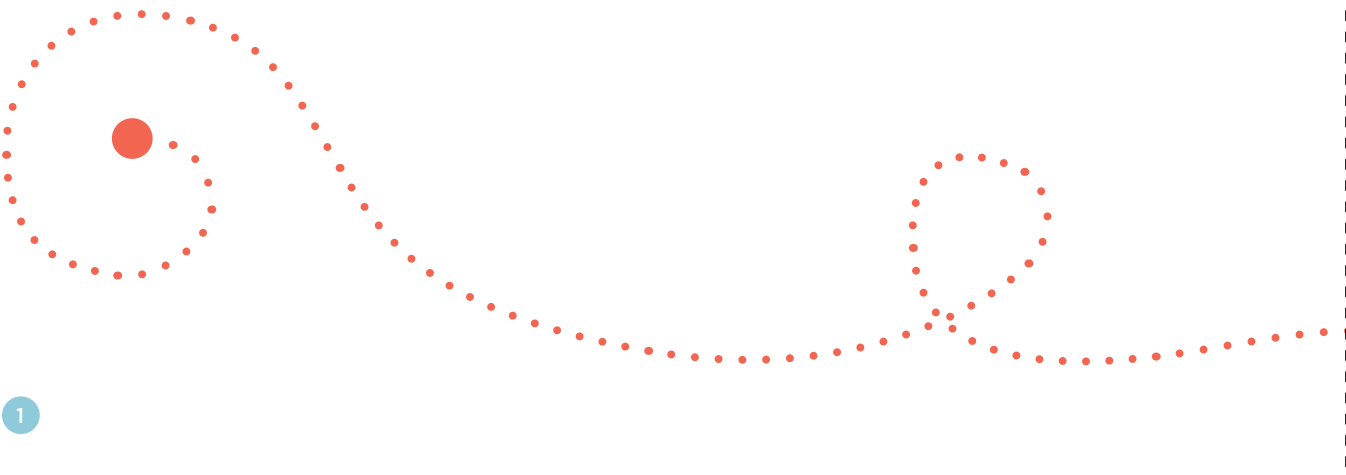
The COVID-19 pandemic strained the already overburdened child welfare system. The children’s social worker changed five times in just a few months and would often encourage the grandparents to consider adoption. However, they would always decline because they wanted their son and daughter-in-law to have a chance to regain custody of their children. As the children’s advocate, CASA Cassie could see the full picture and reassured the grandparents that she understood what they wanted most: to see their family reunited.

When it was time for the court to determine if the children could return home, the new social worker had little information about the parents’ progress in drug treatment and their housing situation. Fortunately, CASA Cassie provided these updates to the judge. She explained Adam and Mary felt safe with their parents and that going home with them was in the best interest of the children.

Shortly after, Adam and Mary were finally able to reunite with their parents. When the case officially closed in February 2022, CASA Cassie was the first person the mother hugged when they exited the courtroom.

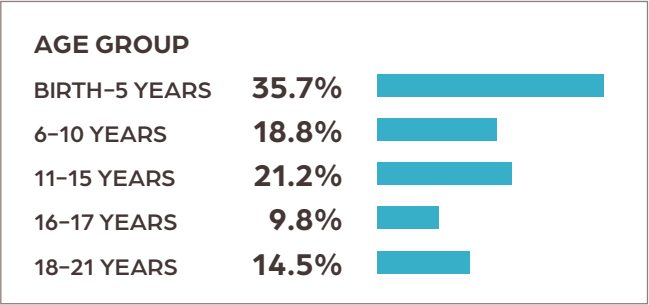
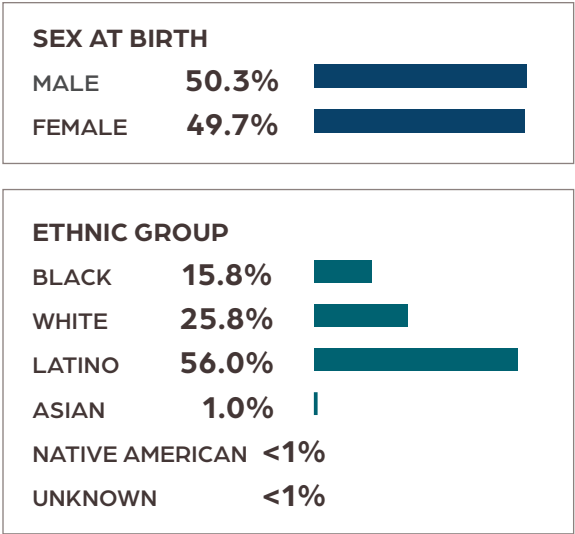
Today, the family is happy and thriving. The mother still thanks CASA Cassie and often says she believes CASA Cassie is why her kids are with them today.

CASA Cassie’s dedicated advocacy and consistent support helped this family achieve reunification.



OUR COMMUNITY'S CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

THIS YEAR IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY
JULY 1, 2021 – JUNE 30, 2022*



Inspirational Volunteerism



- <18 MONTHS: **163** CASAS (48%)
- 18 MONTHS-2 YEARS: **47** CASAS (14%)
- 2-3 YEARS: **53** CASAS (16%)
- 3 YEARS-7 YEARS: **75** CASAS (22%)

THE GIFT OF TIME

21,000 HOURS VOLUNTEERED

STEPPING UP

90 dedicated community members became CASAs this year, completing Advocate University, Voices for Children’s comprehensive training program for new CASA volunteers.

*Source: Webster, D., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Wiegmann, W., Saika, G., Chambers, J., Hammond, I., Ayat, N., Gomez, A., Misirli, E., Hoerl, C., Yee, H., Flamson, T., Gonzalez, A., & Ensele, P. (2021). CCWIP reports. Retrieved Oct 19, 2021, from University of California at Berkeley California Child Welfare Indicators Project website. URL: <https://ccwip.berkeley.edu>

Our Volunteers

Our CASA volunteers are the heart and soul of our mission. Coming from many backgrounds and walks of life, they share a commitment to speaking up for our community’s most vulnerable children. The following individuals served during Fiscal Year 2021-2022 and have been dedicated Voices for Children CASA volunteers for three or more years.

- 5+ YEARS**

Pushpa Ananthanarayan
Andrew Boucher
Theresa Brennan
Pauline Daerr
Julie Dawson
Melanie Fitzgerald
Robert Geibert
DiAnn Hampton
Frances Harris
Shelley Mitchell
Stacey Morse
Gina Newton
Cathy Perring
Catherine Peterson
Barbara Ragsdale
Deborah Roberts
Melanie Royer
Crystal Swain
- 3+ YEARS**

Samantha Tajalli Tehrani
Susan Taylor
Diane Valenzuela

Deema Al-Omar
Loretta Altamirano
Melissa Caton
Pamela Comings
Clarissa De Jesus
Kristen Eichhorst
Nicole Fliear
Bianka Gartner
Susan Goodsell
Nancy Green
Robyn Harmon
Shelly Henderson-Cuthbertson
Jacob Hernandez
Peggy Huetten
- Deborah Ireland Sagara
Chary Jackson
Barbara Leadholm
Karen Lovett
Karen Macias
Julie Martel
Jaime McDermott
Alberto Monge
Susan Nelson
Marianne Pekala
Ryan Poley
Dawn Rose
Kara Shaffer
Gloria Simpson
David Smith
Stephen Smyth
Lawrence Torres
Armando Valles
Roberta Wesley

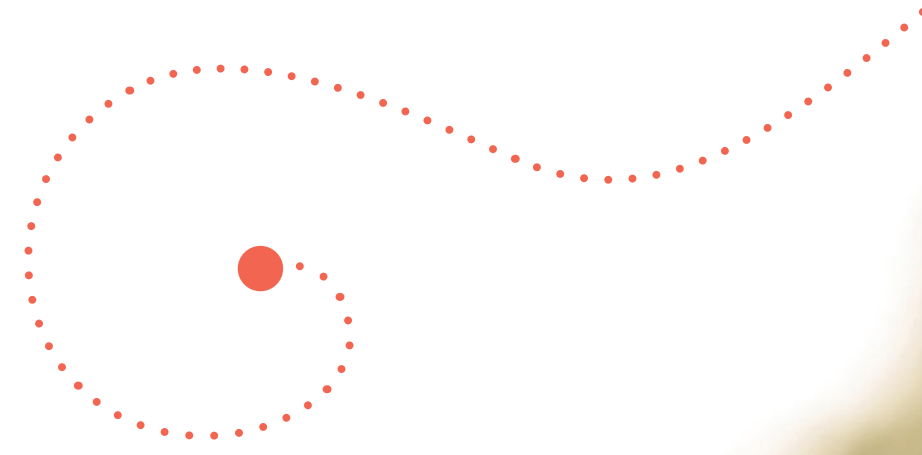


CASA BOB | Became a CASA in 2017

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

MAYA ANGELOU

CASA Bob has been “William’s” CASA for five years. Although William has made frequent moves across Riverside County and beyond, CASA Bob has always been there for him and drives to see him no matter where he is. Recently, CASA Bob took on two additional cases of youth who are currently placed out-of-county and provides remote advocacy.



*“All kids need is a little help, a little hope,
and somebody who believes in them.”*

MAGIC JOHNSON

Our Community Partners

COLLABORATING AGENCIES

Assistance League of Temecula Valley
Banning Chamber of Commerce
BNI Success Professionals
County of Riverside, Department of Public Social Services
County of Riverside, Probation Department and Southwest Juvenile Hall
E. Hale Curran Elementary School
Greater Riverside Chamber of Commerce
Hearts and Hands – Assistance League of Riverside
Murrieta/Wildomar Chamber of Commerce
Palm Desert Area Chamber of Commerce
One Simple Wish

Regional Access Project Foundation
Riverside County Office of Education
Riverside Elks Lodge #643
Superior Court of California, Riverside County – Juvenile Division
TEAM Referral Network Riverside Lunch Chapter
TribalSTAR

“FOSTERING CULTURE” PARTNERS

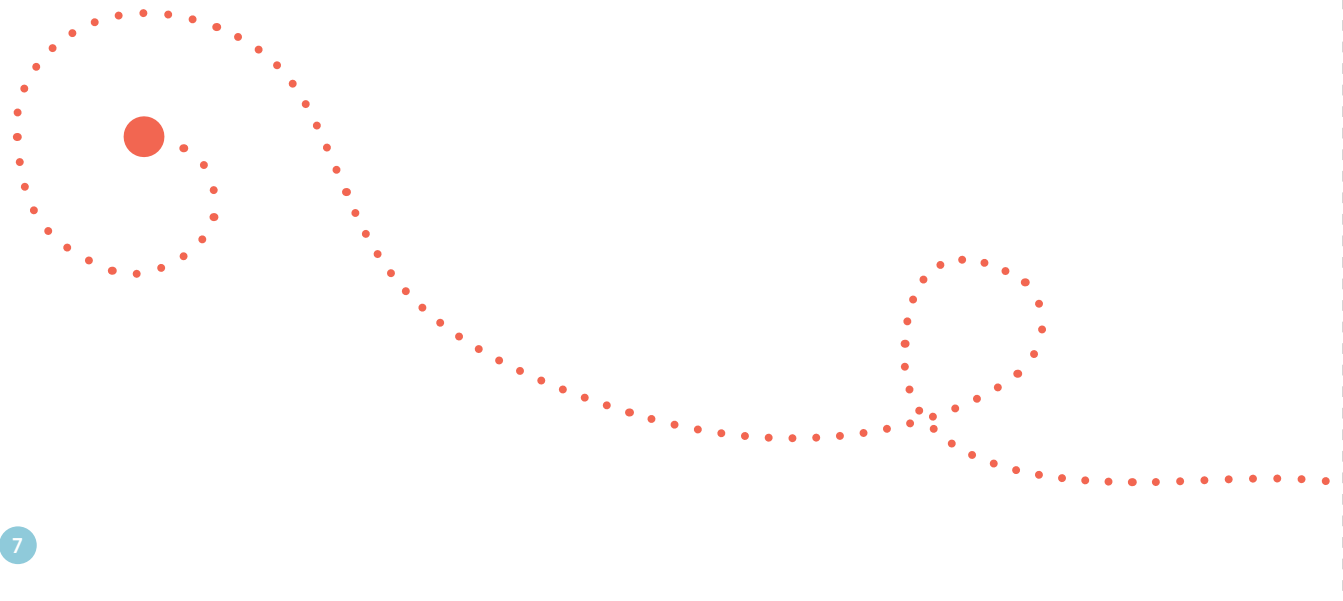
March Field Air Museum
Palm Springs Art Museum
Riverside Art Museum



CASA CHRISTINA | Became a CASA in 2020

“Charity is no substitute for justice.”
ST. AUGUSTINE

CASA Christina advocates for a brother and sister who entered foster care after it was discovered their father was physically abusing them. Although the siblings are placed at opposite ends of the county, CASA Christina never misses a visit. She also holds each youth’s educational rights and helps ensure they receive the services they need to succeed at school.



Our Supporters

Our work is made possible thanks to the generosity and support of many individuals, companies, foundations, government agencies, and other community partners. We are grateful to the following donors who made financial gifts of \$100 or more between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022.

\$400,000+

David J. Dunn+

\$100,000+

California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services
Focusing Philanthropy
Judicial Council of California
Riverside County Transportation Commission

\$50,000+

County of Riverside EDA CDBG Program
The Annenberg Foundation
Jocelyn Bauer/The Bauer Foundation

\$25,000+

Anonymous (2)
City of Corona CDBG
City of Moreno Valley CDBG
Desert Healthcare District
S. Mark Taper Foundation

\$15,000+

Desert Community Foundation
In-N-Out Burger Foundation
Inland Empire Community Foundation
Regional Access Project Foundation
Susan Rigney

\$10,000+

Irene W. and Guy L. Anderson Children’s Foundation
California Foundation for Stronger Communities
City of Hemet CDBG
City of Riverside CDBG
Kaiser Permanente
The P&G Fund of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation
Riverside County District Attorney’s Office
Supervisor Kevin Jeffries, District 1
Supervisor Karen Speigel, District 2
Supervisor Chuck Washington, District 3

\$5,000+

B.P.O.E. Lodge #643
City of Temecula CDBG
God’s Gift
Mechanics Bank
Nordstrom Charitable Giving
Pacific Premier Bank
Pacific Western Bank
Rite Aid Foundation KidCents
The Roripaugh Family Foundation
Katie and Daniel Sullivan
Union Bank
U.S. Bank Foundation

\$1,000+

100 Women Who Care Riverside–Corona (100WWCRC)
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BigHorn Golf Charities
City of Indio
Clarissa and Frederick De Jesus
Desert 4 Baggers
F5, Inc.
Facebook
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Goodwin Family Memorial Trust
Courtney Gryniewski
Brad Horwitz
Jersey Mike’s
Liz Jones
Nancy Lindsay
Juliana Manion–Copley
Morongo Band of Mission Indians
Andrea and Gregory Moser
Jessica and Rafael Muñoz
Pechanga Resort and Casino
Supervisor V. Manuel Perez, District 4
Provident Savings Bank Charitable Foundation
Yadira Rike
Sarah R. Simonds
The Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation
Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians
Spectrum

Our Supporters

Patricia and Michael St. Clair
St. Clair Enterprises, Inc.
Stettenheim Foundation, Inc.
Walmart Foundation
Kathy and Chuck Washington

\$500+

Anonymous
Assistance League of Temecula Valley
Marsha and William Carey
The Honorable Susanne S. Cho
The Law Office of Julio C. De Leon
Joy Diffendal
Kelly and J.D. Douglas
Amy Eybsen
Robert Galluzzo
Robert Geibert
Jane Jonkhoff
Catherine and John Kinser
David Lynch
Keith MacDonald
Richard Miller
Jane Mills
Diana Schneider
Stephen Smyth and Jeff Tonjes
Carrie Snuggs
Nancy Steinman

\$250+

Joyce Ann Adams
Cynthia Baca
Sylvia Bermudez

BNI Success Professionals
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Gary Geuss
Consuello and Jeffrey Giba
Carmen and Jerry Herrera
Kerry U. Laster
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Erika Maldonado
Dana Mancigli
Rick and Francisco McCarthy
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Nancy Olsen
Shonna Perry
Quality Commercial Pest Control, Inc.
Citlalli Rojas
Brittany Sanguma
Erma Shanklin
Target Corporation
Thrivent Financial
Dana Torrey

\$100+

Pushpa Ananthanarayan
Pamela Beck
Therese and John Bourbon
Robin and Lawrence Brock
Rita Bronson
Cynthia Brossman
Margaret Buckley
Evelyn Cortez
Janet Davison
Delta Kappa Gamma

Our Supporters

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Yourcause.com
Hector Zatarain

MEMORIALS & TRIBUTES

The following individuals were honored by their loved ones with gifts between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022.

Steve D. Atkins ⁺	Robert Geibert	Keri Ohlrich
Sarah Campbell	Steven Keller	Valentina Rocnik ⁺
Jana Carlson	George Lai	Sheri Ron
Ramona De La Torre ⁺	Lisa May	Mahzad Tashakori
Milo Frank	Brianna Miller	Dana Torrey and Manny Siordia
DiAnn and Ron Hampton	Jessica Muñoz	Tribute Anonymous

⁺Deceased



www.speakupnow.org

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