



FY2024-2025  
**IMPACT REPORT**





## *Our Mission*

Voices for Children transforms the lives of abused, abandoned, or neglected children by providing them with trained, volunteer Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs).

## *Our Vision*

Voices for Children believes that every child deserves a safe and permanent home and, to that end, will provide a trained CASA volunteer to every abused, abandoned, or neglected child who needs one and advocate to improve the lives of children in the foster care system.



## *From the President & CEO and Board Chair*



**Jessica Muñoz, Esq., MFS**  
President & CEO



**Kristi E. Pfister, Esq.**  
Chair, Board of Directors

**Dear Friends,**

**We are delighted to share this year's Impact Report with you, which highlights Voices for Children's steadfast commitment to the young people we serve. This year, we celebrated our 45th anniversary in San Diego County and our 10th anniversary in Riverside County. Over the years, with the support of people like you, we have been able to enhance and expand the advocacy we provide to meet the changing needs of the communities we serve.**

When children experience abuse or neglect and it is unsafe for them to remain in their homes, they enter foster care. Each child and family are assigned to a juvenile court judge who makes the decisions about what happens next. Judges appoint community volunteers to advocate for the child's best interests and to get to know the child as an individual. These volunteers are called Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs).

CASA volunteers provide consistency, stability, and hope to the youth they serve. Stated very plainly: they show up. CASAs build rapport and meaningful relationships with a child and often with their family or caregivers. No matter how complex or seemingly simple a child's needs might be, CASAs seek to understand how that child's needs might be best met and then advocate to ensure those needs are addressed.

In San Diego and Riverside Counties, Voices for Children is the only organization authorized by the local courts to recruit, train, and support CASA volunteers. At Voices for Children, we are inspired by the dedicated resolve our CASA

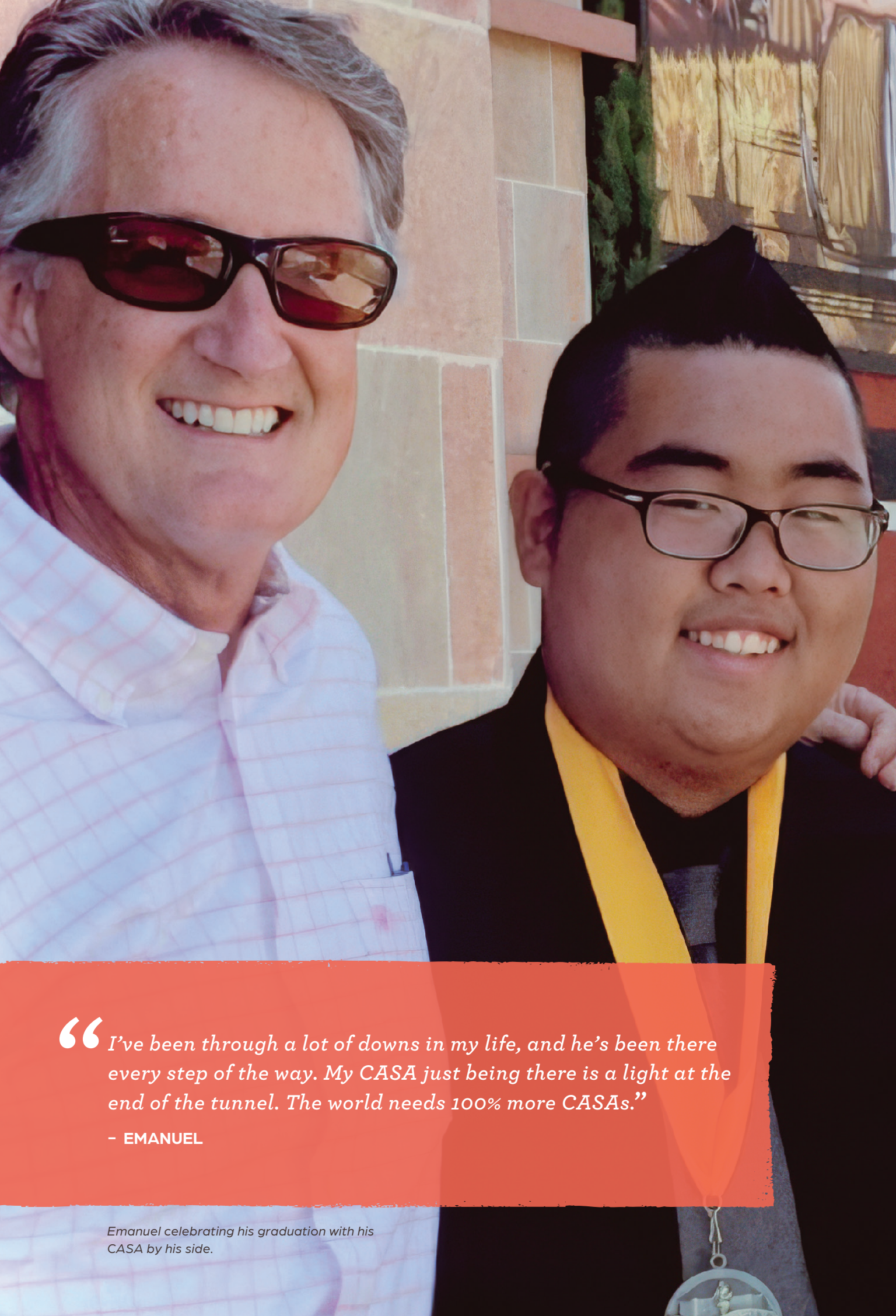
volunteers display each and every day. Motivated by our CASAs' willingness to be present in the lives of children, Voices for Children has been an impactful presence in our community for 45 years.

**Thanks to the efforts of our committed CASA volunteers and the talented professional staff who support them, Voices for Children provided direct advocacy to more than 2,300 youth in foster care across San Diego and Riverside Counties as well as case monitoring services to hundreds of other children.**

You have made this possible. We would not be able to advance our mission without our CASA volunteers, Board members, generous donors, and community champions. We are grateful for all we have accomplished together and look forward to what we will accomplish together in the years to come.

With appreciation, always,





“*I’ve been through a lot of downs in my life, and he’s been there every step of the way. My CASA just being there is a light at the end of the tunnel. The world needs 100% more CASAs.*”

- EMANUEL

*Emanuel celebrating his graduation with his CASA by his side.*

# Honoring 45 Years of Advocacy in San Diego County and 10 Years in Riverside County

Every child deserves to be seen, heard, and supported. For 45 years in San Diego County and a decade in Riverside County, Voices for Children (VFC) has stood alongside children in foster care.

At the heart of our work are Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteers – community members who advocate on behalf of the youth they serve in courtrooms, classrooms, and communities. In FY24–25, over 1,200 CASAs supported more than 2,300 children across both counties. Behind each number is a child whose life changed because one caring person chose to show up.

In San Diego, what started 45 years ago as a small initiative has evolved into one of the most prominent and respected CASA programs in the nation, trusted by the courts and deeply rooted in the community. Our volunteers are expertly trained in trauma-informed advocacy, equipping them to meet the complex needs of children today.

In Riverside County, what began just 10 years ago has grown into a vibrant program powered by community engagement. A key driver of this momentum recently has been one of the most effective recruitment tools: word of mouth. Time and again, new CASAs say they were inspired to join because someone they trusted shared how life-changing the role can be. As more people hear these personal stories, awareness deepens, and more individuals are motivated to take action.

This year, we launched our Real Word Consultants pilot program, building on the success of our Real Word Speakers Panel. These former youth in foster care now serve as ambassadors, training CASAs, raising awareness, and ensuring that lived experience informs our work and drives greater impact.

We've also embraced a kin-first culture, advocating for children to be placed with family or caring adults connected to their history. CASAs play a critical role in preserving these bonds that support a child's cultural identity, emotional well-being, and long-term stability.

## IN THIS REPORT, YOU'LL SEE THE POWER OF CASA ADVOCACY THROUGH STORIES LIKE:

- **CASA Susie & "Lexi"**: CASA Susie's attentiveness uncovered a hidden medical condition in 17-year-old Lexi, leading to lifesaving care.
- **CASA Will & "Jack"**: CASA Will helped Jack overcome obstacles that nearly derailed his college dreams. Today, he is thriving in his first year at USC.
- **CASA Barbara & Three Sisters**: Barbara championed the bond between three siblings, helping turn a temporary placement into a permanent, loving home.

These stories, backed by strong outcomes and collaborative partnerships, reflect our enduring commitment to every child in foster care. As we mark 45 years in San Diego and 10 years in Riverside County, we are guided by the resilience of the children we serve, the dedication of our volunteers, and the trust placed in us by the courts, donors, and community leaders.

This report is a testament to the vital role of advocacy, that every child deserves someone who listens, believes, and acts with unwavering commitment. Our supplemental reports offer deeper insights into each county's milestones and achievements.

Looking ahead, Voices for Children remains firmly committed to its mission: to expand access, deepen impact, and ensure no child in foster care walks alone. With a CASA by their side, every child's future holds the promise of safety, belonging, and hope.

# OUR IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS



## 2,362

**CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE SERVED WITH  
ADVOCACY BY VOICES FOR CHILDREN  
ACROSS SAN DIEGO AND RIVERSIDE  
COUNTIES**



## 2,320+

**COURT REPORTS WERE COMPLETED DURING  
THE LAST FY**



## 1,294

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS  
SERVED AS CASA  
VOLUNTEERS**



## 352

**CASES CLOSED WHILE SERVED BY A  
VOICES FOR CHILDREN CASA ENDED  
IN REUNIFICATION, ADOPTION,  
OR GUARDIANSHIP**



## 219

**VOICES FOR CHILDREN CASAS  
HELD EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS  
ON BEHALF OF THEIR  
CASE YOUTH**

# An Act of Advocacy, a Life Saved

Within the foster care system, countless youth face challenges that extend beyond placement instability, often enduring unmet needs that go unnoticed or unaddressed. A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) plays a critical role in bridging that gap by listening closely, advocating fiercely, and ensuring that each young person's well-being is prioritized.

In September 2024, Susie was sworn in as a CASA and assigned her very first case, a teenage youth "Lexi", who was placed in a group home in San Diego County. Although new to the role, CASA Susie brought a deep commitment to her advocacy and began spending time with Lexi. CASA Susie built trust through consistent visits and meaningful conversations. Over time, Lexi would confide that she often didn't feel well physically. CASA Susie immediately raised concerns with the group home staff, but her observations were repeatedly dismissed.

Everything changed in early 2025 when CASA Susie was notified that Lexi had been hospitalized. She rushed to the hospital with a court order in hand to speak with doctors and understand the severity of the situation. At the same time, she contacted both the social worker and Lexi's attorney, neither of whom had been informed of the hospitalization by the group home. Both were deeply concerned and grateful for CASA Susie's outreach.

From that moment on, CASA Susie remained by Lexi's side. She communicated daily with the medical team and visited almost every day. Just days after Lexi was admitted to the hospital, her case was scheduled for a hearing. At the hearing, CASA Susie provided a detailed update on Lexi's medical condition. During the hearing, Lexi's attorney publicly acknowledged the critical role CASA Susie had played. She stated that without CASA Susie's attention to Lexi's symptoms and her swift action, Lexi's condition might have gone undiagnosed, with potentially devastating consequences.



Lexi's attorney noted that despite her frequent complaints of stomach pain, which were often managed with over-the-counter remedies, no one had previously suspected a severe underlying condition. Lexi had never trusted anyone enough to disclose the full extent of her health issues. CASA Susie's genuine connection and persistent advocacy created the safe space Lexi needed to open up, which led to a medical evaluation that revealed a rare, severe disorder. Lexi's attorney praised Susie's empathetic, unwavering dedication and acknowledged that she had never witnessed such a strong bond between a CASA and a youth before.

**Because of CASA Susie, Lexi is now receiving the lifesaving care she urgently needed.**

CASA Susie's commitment to listening without dismissal and advocating relentlessly highlights the vital role CASAs play in ensuring that the medical needs of youth in foster care are recognized and addressed. When concerns are overlooked or minimized, the consequences can be life-threatening. By acting as a vital link between the child, healthcare providers, social workers, and the court, CASAs help secure the care that supports immediate health and long-term success.

*Names and identifying details have been changed to protect confidentiality*

# Our Service History



## 2025

Voices for Children celebrates 45 years of service in San Diego County and 10 years of service in Riverside County



## 2023

CASA program for Pechanga Tribal Court launched



## 2017

Juvenile Justice program established



## 2015

CASA program in Riverside County launched



## 1983

CASA program in San Diego County launched



## 1980

Established in San Diego County as the Children in Placement program by Kathryn F. Ashworth, Esq., and Elizabeth Bacon



Scan the QR code to see a detailed timeline of the organization's history.

# OUR COMMITMENT TO FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES



At Voices for Children, we recognize that seeking to understand the families and communities of the children for whom we advocate is a vital, ongoing commitment, especially for organizations that serve vulnerable populations like children in foster care. These children often come from historically marginalized communities and deserve advocacy that is inclusive, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive.

In FY24-25, we strengthened our commitment to the communities we serve through several key programs and initiatives that reflect our core values and deepen our impact:

## Provided Training to CASAs and Staff

- Hosted educational sessions on topics including implicit bias, disability awareness, and communication across cultural differences.
- Equipped staff with practical tools to build more respectful, inclusive work environments.

## Strengthened Training Delivery Through a Trauma-Informed Lens

- Completed a trauma-informed checklist for all presenters to ensure a safe, more supportive learning environment.
- Enhanced LGBTQ+ content in training materials across both counties to better reflect and serve our diverse communities.
- Offered training opportunities to CASA volunteers to support their work with parents and caregivers.

## Enhanced Comfort and Belonging in Court Spaces

- Collaborated to provide comfort-care items in the courthouses, helping create a more welcoming environment for children and families.

## Promoted Cultural Awareness and Inclusive Celebrations

- Celebrated cultural heritage through community events.
- Provided guidance to staff and volunteers to ensure holiday programming was inclusive of the youth we serve.

## Emphasized CASA recruitment efforts targeted to Spanish-speaking audiences

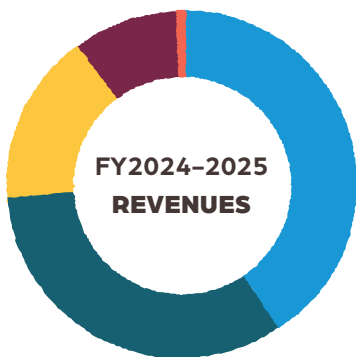
- Shared intentionally the need for CASA volunteers who speak Spanish.
- Secured numerous media opportunities with Spanish-language news outlets.



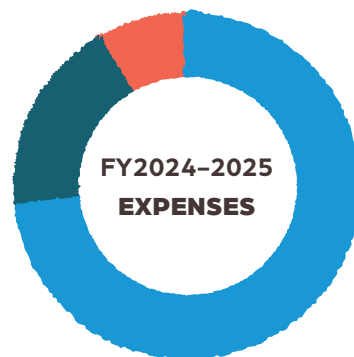
# STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

FY2023-2024 & FY2024-2025

REVENUES	FY2023-2024	FY2024-2025
Gifts and Contributions	\$3,599,145	\$3,875,802
Special Events (less direct benefits)	\$2,280,579	\$1,520,817
Government Funding	\$3,223,087	\$3,141,835
Contributed Goods, Services, and Facilities	\$65,297	\$49,860
Investment Return	\$543,426	\$910,749
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$9,711,534</b>	<b>\$9,499,063</b>
EXPENSES	FY2023-2024	FY2024-2025
Program	\$6,405,437	\$6,973,079
Management and General	\$780,847	\$806,529
Fundraising	\$1,492,690	\$1,755,603
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$8,678,974</b>	<b>\$9,535,211</b>
Change in Net Assets	\$1,032,560	(\$36,148)
Net Assets at the Beginning of Year	\$11,645,004	\$12,677,564
<b>Net Assets at Year End</b>	<b>\$12,677,564</b>	<b>\$12,641,416</b>



- GIFTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS **40.80%**
- SPECIAL EVENTS **16.01%**
- GOVERNMENT FUNDING **33.08%**
- CONTRIBUTED GOODS, SERVICES, AND FACILITIES **0.52%**
- INVESTMENT RETURN **9.59%**



- PROGRAM **73.13%**
- MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL **8.46%**
- FUNDRAISING **18.41%**

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

FY2023-2024 & FY2024-2025

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>FY2023-2024</b>	<b>FY2024-2025</b>
Current Assets	\$13,550,270	\$13,926,015
Property and Equipment	\$385,504	\$330,056
Other Assets	\$2,575,433	\$1,722,625
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$16,511,207</b>	<b>\$15,978,696</b>
<b>LIABILITY AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>FY2023-2024</b>	<b>FY2024-2025</b>
Current Liabilities	\$2,264,417	\$1,947,085
Long-term Liabilities	\$1,569,226	\$1,390,195
Net Assets – Without Donor Restrictions	\$10,930,133	\$11,645,968
Net Assets – With Donor Restrictions	\$1,747,431	\$995,448
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$16,511,207</b>	<b>\$15,978,696</b>



# Your Support Gives Children a Voice

During FY24–25, Voices for Children received generous financial support totaling **\$9,499,063**. Because of you, we provided advocacy to more than 2,300 children living in foster care across San Diego and Riverside Counties.

## GIFTS, GRANTS, & CONTRIBUTIONS

Voices for Children is funded primarily by support from individuals, private foundations, businesses, and service groups who believe in our mission and join us in investing in our community's children. We are grateful for their contributions, which impact thousands of lives and will continue to make a difference for years to come.

Additionally, we apply and compete for government grants to recruit, train, and support CASAs for children in San Diego and Riverside Counties. We are grateful to receive support from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services through the U.S. Department of Justice, Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), along with various Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), and other grants awarded by our state, county, and city jurisdictions.

We invite you to review the San Diego and Riverside County supplements to this report, which include donor listings showcasing the broad community support for local children in foster care through the exceptional advocacy of our CASAs.



## BY THE NUMBERS:

- **1,294** CASA volunteers
- **104,000+** hours donated
- **\$4.1 million+** in donated time\*
- **\$49,860+** in-kind donations of media, special activities for children, development opportunities for staff, and professional services

*\*According to the Independent Sector, volunteer time in California is valued at \$40.14 per hour.*



Proud recipient of the 2024 GuideStar Platinum Seal of Transparency and a four-star Charity Navigator rating.

# LEADERSHIP

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### FY2024–2025

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*President & CEO*







*Voices for Children adheres to the "Trauma-Informed Care Code of Conduct" developed by San Diego Foundation, Clinton Foundation, and the County of San Diego.*



[speakupnow.org](https://speakupnow.org)

858-569-2019 | San Diego County

951-472-9301 | Riverside County

IRS tax I.D. #95-3786047

