

Chesterfield CASA



FY 2016-2017
Program Evaluation

Introduction

The mission of Chesterfield CASA is to promote safe, permanent homes for abused and neglected children by providing trained volunteers to advocate for them throughout their involvement in the juvenile court. CASA volunteers are charged with four main duties as specified in the *Code of Virginia*:

- 1) investigate the case to provide factual information to the court,
- 2) submit a written report to the court which includes recommendations as to the child's welfare,
- 3) monitor the case to ensure compliance with the court's orders, and
- 4) assist the *Guardian ad litem* attorney.

As volunteer advocates perform these duties, they are always supported by CASA staff who answer the volunteers' questions and help them navigate the legal and child welfare systems.

Characteristics of the Program

Chesterfield CASA was founded in 1996 as a nonprofit organization. We serve Chesterfield County, as well as the city of Colonial Heights. Both localities share one local Department of Social Services and are encompassed under the 12th Judicial District Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. The total overall population of this suburban area exceeds 344,000. Since accepting cases in 1997, our program has provided a powerful voice in court for more than 1,500 children.

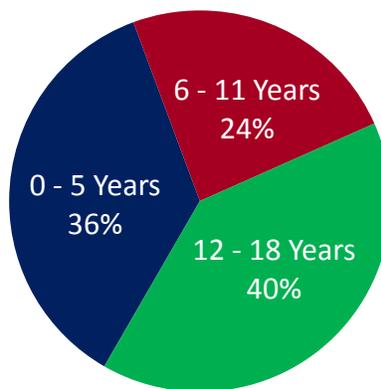
Annual Highlights

- In conjunction with Henrico CASA and Richmond CASA, we offered a five-hour training workshop on The Resources and Realities for Older Foster Youth to all volunteers in the metro Richmond region. Our featured speaker was Chauncey Strong, former chair of the Foster Care Alumni of America, who shared his personal story and highlighted the culture of foster care and importance for finding permanence for youth aging out of the system.
- We continue to be proud of our efforts with Henrico CASA to host our Annual Superhero Run, which raised nearly \$53,000 in our 8th year. Using the tagline "Every child needs a hero but abused children need superheroes," we encouraged 430 runners to participate in our event and had more than 100 volunteers from various community groups help with the logistics of the day, including the Family Fun activities held in conjunction with the Kids' Mile Run and 5k Race.
- We are always striving to partner with other community agencies to promote child safety and well-being. Staff actively participated in the Chesterfield Court Improvement Project, Chesterfield Child Abuse Prevention Team, and Chesterfield Partnership for Youth. We also increased public awareness/education of child abuse through various community presentations and fairs.

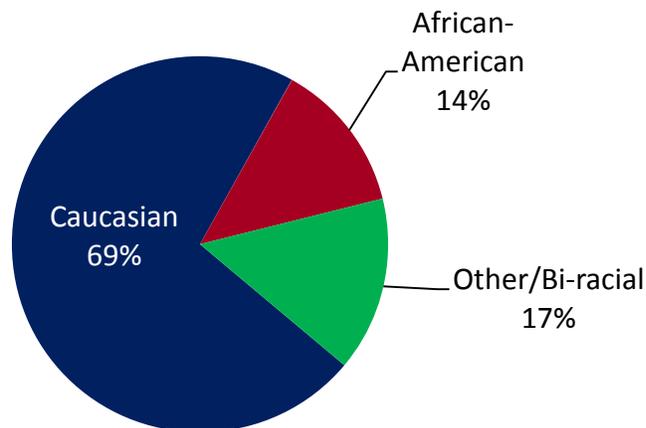
Children Served

Chesterfield CASA was appointed to 193 children in FY16-17, representing 130 cases. Four of these children were closed or transferred to another jurisdiction before we could assign a CASA volunteer. In previous years, CASA operated a waiting list of children who were appointed to the program from the juvenile court, but for whom no volunteer was available. Through targeted recruitment and training efforts, we are nearing our goal of immediately assigning a volunteer to every child appointed to our program. At the end of FY16-17, only six children had not been assigned a volunteer, most of whom were appointed in the few weeks prior to the end of the reporting period. An analysis of the demographics and characteristics for children served by CASA is detailed below.

Age of Children Served



Race of Children Served



Major Issues Impacting CASA Cases

Issue	# Children	% of Total Served
Criminal involvement by parent/caregiver	128	70%
Domestic violence in home	107	58%
Economic instability	125	68%
Mental health concerns – child or family	136	74%
Single parent/caregiver	132	72%
Substance abuse by parent/caregiver	120	66%
Prior involvement w/ Child Protective Services	106	58%

During the year, 97 children were newly appointed to the program and 92 were closed. Cases were most frequently closed because the child was placed in the custody of parents or other relatives, as shown below.

Reasons for Case Closure

Outcome	# Children Closed	% Children Closed
Child died	1	1%
Third party custody	3	3%
Child aged out	6	7%
Transfer/Remove from docket/Other	12	13%
Adopted	14	15%
Custody to relative	26	28%
Reunification or remain with parent	30	33%
TOTAL	92	100%

The average length of time in the program prior to case closure was 413 days. The table below details specific length of service for all closed cases during the year.

Length of Service for Closed Cases

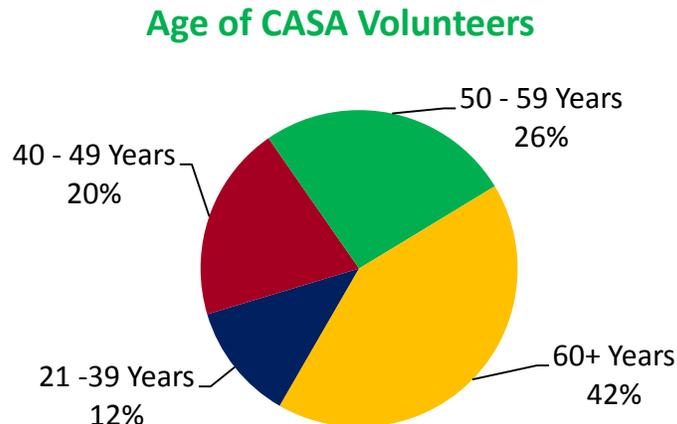
Months in Program	# Children Closed	% Children Closed
0 – 3 months	16	17%
4 – 6 months	12	13%
7 – 12 months	23	25%
13 – 18 months	13	14%
19 – 24 months	10	11%
2 or more years	18	20%
TOTAL	92	100%

CASA Volunteers

In FY16-17, 74 volunteers provided advocacy service to children at Chesterfield CASA. During the year 13 new volunteers were trained and seven left the program.

These volunteers contributed over 5,920 hours in FY16-17, valued at \$154,550. They also drove nearly 23,000 miles during the course of their volunteerism. These hours and miles are tracked monthly through timesheets submitted to the Program Director.

Similar to other CASA programs across the country, the majority of Chesterfield CASA volunteers are female (85%) and Caucasian (83%). Of all volunteers, 81% have a college or post-graduate experience/degrees. Many CASA volunteers balance employment with their advocacy responsibilities, as 37% of them hold full-time jobs and 19% work part-time. Another 28% are retired. The chart below shows the age breakdown for our volunteers.



Program Staff & Governance

For FY16-17, Chesterfield CASA employed five staff: Executive Director, Program Director, two Advocate Supervisors, and the Training & Advocate Supervisor (part-time). The latter position supervises a small caseload of volunteers, but spends the majority of the time recruiting, screening, and training new volunteers. This staffing structure has been in place since 2011 and adequately meets the needs of our program while also ensuring Chesterfield CASA stays in compliance with the regulatory requirements of a 30:1 volunteer-to-supervisor ratio.

Chesterfield CASA's staff exhibits impressive longevity. One Advocate Supervisor has been employed nearly ten years (and served as a volunteer for three years prior), the Executive Director has been in place 13 years, and the Program Director has 18 years of service with the program.

Chesterfield CASA is under the direction of a Board of Directors, which is comprised of citizens who have a passion for helping children in need, these individuals provide leadership, financial oversight, and strategic vision for the agency. Members may serve one or two three-year terms

and are committed to helping the agency maintain adequate resources, promoting CASA’s mission in the community, and providing fiscal and programmatic oversight.

Program Revenue

For the FY ending June 30, 2017, CASA’s total revenue was nearly \$334,400 while program expenses were \$315,850. A breakdown of revenues by funding source is shown below.

Revenue Funding Sources

Funding Source	% of total revenues received
Private Foundations	34%
State Government	18%
Victims of Crime Act (federal grant)	17%
Individual Contributions	10%
Special Events	8%
Corporations	4%
Local Government	3%
Churches & Civic Groups	2%
Other	4%
TOTAL	100%

The table below shows program revenues across the past five years. Revenues have fluctuated over time while program expenses have increased an average of 4% each year.

Total Program Revenues by Year

