

Chesterfield CASA

July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021

Program Evaluation/Annual Report



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 1,800 children.

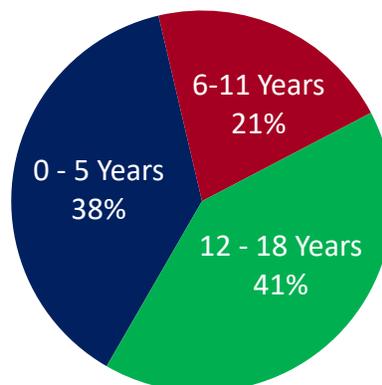
Annual Highlights

- Our training program resulted in 14 new volunteers being inducted into the program. This was accomplished by training volunteers using Zoom to keep them and staff safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic we held our first virtual gala, “A Night Out, But In” on April 30, 2021. It was held live on YouTube and people could donate money, purchase VIP charcuterie boxes and tumbler, and bid on auction packages. The event grossed \$30,000 and donors as far away as New Jersey participated in the virtual fundraiser. One donor gave Chesterfield CASA its first gift of stock.
- We are always striving to partner with other community agencies to promote child safety and well-being. We increased public awareness/education of child abuse through various community presentations and fairs such as Chesterfield County’s National Night Out Kickoff held on June 26.

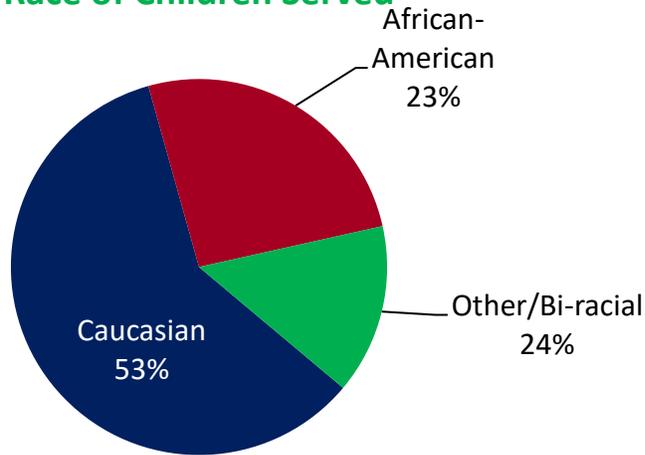
Children Served

Seventy-one Chesterfield CASA volunteers served 144 children in FY 20-21. In the past our program has sometimes been forced to operate 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 typically able to very quickly assign a volunteer to every child appointed to our program. An analysis of the demographics and characteristics for children served by CASA is detailed below.

Age of Children Served



Race of Children Served



Case Type

Type of Abuse	# Children	% Children
Abuse/Neglect	129	90%
CHINS	6	4%
Custody/Visitation	8	5%
Relief of Custody	1	1%
TOTAL	144	100%

The Role of the CASA Volunteers



CASA’s work requires that volunteers and staff gather information about each child and submit a written report to the Court at each substantive hearing. Within these reports, volunteers offer recommendations for services that the child and family might need, in addition to what living arrangement/placement is in the child’s best interests. During the course of the year, Chesterfield CASA staff and volunteers:

- made 504 recommendations about the best interests of the children
- enjoyed strong confidence from the juvenile court judges, who ordered 96% of the recommendations offered.

During the year, 54 children were newly appointed to the program and 64 of the children’s cases were closed. Cases were most frequently closed because the child was placed in the custody of parents or other relatives, as shown below.

Placement Close

Outcome	# Children Closed	% Children Closed
Adoptive Placement	11	17%
Own Home	23	37%
Relative Placement	15	24%
Third Party	4	6%
Foster Home	3	5%
Runaway	1	1%
Other Home Placement	6	9%
Group Home	1	1%
TOTAL	64	100%

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
Less than 1 month	0	0%
1-11 months	23	36%
12-17 months	18	28%
18-29 months	10	16%
30-47 months	7	11%
48+ months	6	9%
TOTAL	64	100%

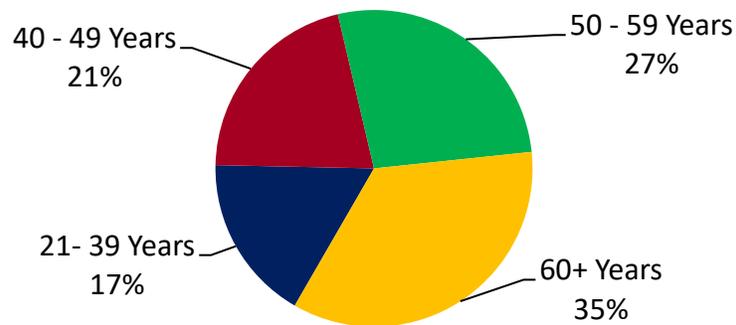
CASA Volunteers

In FY20-21, 71 volunteers provided advocacy service to children at Chesterfield CASA. During the year 14 new volunteers were trained and 8 left the program. The majority of advocates who resigned did so because of health, family, or work commitments outside of their control.

CASA volunteers donated 4,272 hours valued at \$121,922 during fiscal year July 1, 2020. They also traveled 10,043 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 (86%) and Caucasian (80%). The chart below shows the age breakdown for our volunteers.

Age of CASA Volunteers



Program Staff & Governance

For FY 20-21, Chesterfield CASA employed five staff: Executive Director, Program Director, and three Advocate Supervisors (one of whom is part-time). The Advocate Supervisors spend the majority of their time supervising our volunteer advocates so they feel supported in their roles. All staff share the responsibility of recruiting, screening, and training new volunteers interested in joining the program. Our staffing structure allows us to meet 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 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, 2021, CASA's total revenue was \$373,678 * while program expenses were \$346,606*. A breakdown of revenues by funding source is shown below.

Revenue Funding Sources

Funding Source	% of total revenues received
Private Foundations	23%
State Government	15%
Victims of Crime Act (federal grant)	15%
Special Events	8%
Individual Contributions	3%
Corporations	4%
Local Government	8%
Churches & Civic Groups	8%
Other/Interest	16%
TOTAL	100%

Unaudited Figures. Chesterfield CASA is being audited during October 2021*