



## IN FY2017

**833** CASAs donated their time in New Mexico, standing up for children and youth experiencing foster care and providing 1,667 reports of findings and recommendations to the courts

**2,057** children and youth received support from a CASA

**1,809** abuse or neglect cases were assigned a CASA

**1,008** additional children and youth's cases were monitored by CASA staff, who tracked unassigned cases, attended hearings, and advocated for the child or youth

“CASA reports are invaluable...The updates on education, medical care, etc. are of particular value. Seeing how long the child has been in care and the percentage of their life in care is helpful. The reports help flesh out the issues related to the children and help highlight discrepancies between other reports the court receives.”

– From a CASA site visit in the 5th Judicial District

## CASA PROGRAMS IN NEW MEXICO

<p><b>Albuquerque</b> New Mexico Kids Matter 505-903-0305 nmkidsmatter.org</p> <p><b>Alamogordo</b> Serviceheart – Otero and Lincoln Counties 575-551-6540 serviceheart.com</p> <p><b>Carlsbad &amp; Artesia</b> Eddy County CASA Carlsbad: 575-887-5966 Artesia: 575-746-6077 eddycountycasa.org</p> <p><b>Clovis</b> Curry &amp; Roosevelt County CASA 575-769-2656</p> <p><b>Deming &amp; Silver City</b> CASA of Luna, Grant &amp; Hidalgo Counties Deming: 575-567-1183 Silver City: 575-388-4747</p>	<p><b>Farmington</b> San Juan County CASA 505-325-5358 childhavennm.org</p> <p><b>Grants</b> Cibola County CASA 505-290-9634</p> <p><b>Hobbs</b> CASA of Lea County 575-393-0015 casaofleacounty.org</p> <p><b>Las Cruces</b> Mesilla Valley CASA 575-527-0035 mesillavalleycasa.org</p> <p><b>Las Vegas</b> Fourth Judicial District CASA 505-454-0223 casafourthnm.org</p>	<p><b>Rio Rancho &amp; Los Lunas</b> CASA Partners 4NMKids 877-358-8249 casasandoval.org</p> <p><b>Roswell</b> Chaves County CASA 575-625-0112   casakids.org</p> <p><b>Santa Fe, Rio Arriba, &amp; Los Alamos</b> CASA, First Judicial District 505-820-1500   casafirst.org</p> <p><b>Taos &amp; Raton</b> Youth Heartline Taos: 575-758-0106 Raton: 575-445-2400 youthheartline.org</p> <p><b>Truth or Consequences, Socorro, &amp; Torrance County</b> Rio Grande Valley CASA T or C: 575-884-4437 Socorro: 575-838-4031 Torrance County: 505-384-2880</p>
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## STRENGTHENING THE NM CASA NETWORK

The New Mexico CASA Network comprises the 15 Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) programs in 29 communities across the state, which recruit and train volunteers speak up for the best interests of children and youth that have been abused or neglected. As a member of the National CASA Association, NMCAN supports local CASA programs across New Mexico by offering:

- **Collaborative network building:** We value a supportive network of peers to share new ideas as well as fuel motivation and inspiration to advocate for children and youth.
- **Training, technical assistance, and quality assurance:** All CASA programs—large and small, rural and urban, established and new—deserve support relevant to the needs of their local community. We apply evidence-based strategies and adhere to a high level of standards to help CASA programs pursue their goals.
- **A unified voice to inform state policy and connect with the broader community:** Together, we identify and improve gaps within the child welfare system. This complex structure has many challenges, but we share the responsibility for addressing barriers and improving the health and well-being of our community’s most vulnerable children and youth.

# CASA's Impact In New Mexico



## WHAT DOES A CASA DO?

CASAs get to know children and youth by talking with everyone in their life: parents, relatives, foster parents, teachers, medical professionals, attorneys, social workers, and others. They gather information to inform judges and others of what the child/youth needs and what will be the best permanent home for them. One year of CASA advocacy costs less than one month of foster care. These stories from local CASA programs demonstrate the value and impact of our work.

### DEVELOPING FAMILY RESILIENCE

Lisa struggled with mental illness throughout her life, and after the birth of her son Jacob, experienced post-partum depression so severe that she was unable to care for Jacob. Lisa visited her son regularly, who was placed with a relative three hours away, and worked to improve her ability to care for Jacob. Yet, her progress was mixed, and NM's Children, Youth, & Families Department (CYFD) began to make plans for Jacob's adoption. At this point, Jacob's CASA volunteer, Maria, stepped in to insist that improvement takes time. The mother—with the right support and creative approaches to treatment—would be able to provide her son with a safe, stable, and loving home. Maria brought together CYFD, a therapist, and other service providers to develop a focused, responsive treatment plan to reunite Jacob with his mom. Ultimately, they reunited, and Lisa continues to receive treatment and support to be a good mom. Maria was a tireless advocate who supported the development of the family's resilience and strength. Credit: Youth Heartline

### ESTABLISHING PERMANENCE

Leo enjoyed a happy childhood until his mother passed away when he was 12 years old. He never knew his father, and at a vulnerable point in his life, he was placed in a foster home with over 10 children. Lost and grieving, Leo ran away. After being matched with CASA volunteer Steven, he had a stabilizing force in his life, supporting him as he tried to have a normal childhood. Furthermore, Stephen recognized that what Leo needed most was the stability and love that only a caring family could provide and advocated tirelessly for this outcome. Leo was adopted by a caring family and has established legal and relational permanence. Credit: Youth Heartline

### OFFERING

#### MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION

CASA volunteer Jason was matched with 8-year-old Michael who was placed at the emergency shelter due to neglect. By regularly visiting Michael after school, Jason learned his grandparents lived in another state. Jason kept them informed of Michael's progress in school, and because of Jason's ongoing communication, the grandparents were always present for hearings via telephone. They were confused about how to navigate the child welfare system, but having a CASA made it bearable. When the case went before the court, Michael's biological father committed to a treatment plan, resulting in the unification of Michael and his father. Today, Michael continues to stay with his father in a safe and permanent home. Credit: Childhaven

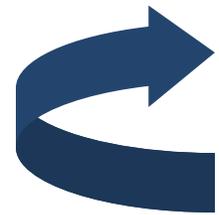
### BUILDING TRUST

After many years on a case, CASA volunteer Sophia believed the four children were in a home where they would be safe and able to succeed. This case took many turns, including a trial home placement with the parents. Sophia visited them in the family home along with a treatment foster home, emergency shelter, and several foster homes. All the youth now have a strong bond despite various outcomes—two children were adopted, but Karen aged out of care at age 18. However, Karen remained focused and attended college. She kept in touch with her biological mother Becca but acknowledged why she did not return home. Becca encouraged Karen's studies and success. At a hearing, Becca stood up in court to thank Sophie and told the judge that she didn't know who chose the CASA for the case but they chose the right one, trusting Sophie to be the best advocate for her children. Credit: Childhaven

## CASA PROGRAMS CHANGE LIVES



A child with a CASA is more likely to find a safe and permanent home.



A child with a CASA is half as likely to re-enter foster care.



A child with a CASA is more likely to succeed in school.

"CASA volunteer reports highlight concerns which we try to address...The CASA report is child-focused and aligns most closely with that of us judges. I most appreciate how the personality of the child manifests in the report. The reports makes the child into a person, which is especially helpful if they are not in the court room...When I am ruling on a case, I sometimes mention that I'm doing this because of the information provided by the CASA volunteer."

— From CASA site visit in the  
11th Judicial District