

Role of Local Programs



CONSISTENT WITH THE NATIONAL CASA/GAL MISSION, VISION, VALUES AND CORE MODEL, LOCAL CASA/GAL PROGRAMS:

Provide a sound organizational framework to recruit, screen, train, supervise, support and retain court appointed special advocates/guardians ad litem. These volunteers advocate for the best interests of children and youth who are involved in judicial proceedings in their jurisdiction related to abuse or neglect so that every child can be safe, have a permanent home, and the opportunity to thrive.

To that end, the role of a local program is to deliver the following as related to best-interest child advocacy:

Support Volunteers to Advocate for the Best Interests of Children Who are Involved in Judicial Proceedings Related to Abuse or Neglect

- Mandate that child safety and permanency are a priority
- Make recommendations for access to culturally appropriate, therapeutic, age-appropriate, developmental, educational, medical and mental health services for each child to begin healing from their trauma
- Report to the court with independently obtained fact-based information/recommendations regarding the child's needs and best interests
- Ensure each child has an adequate advocacy plan for normalcy, permanency and the opportunity to thrive
- Advocate for the child's best interests within the judicial system while maintaining confidentiality as prescribed by law
- Know the community resources, understand the children's needs and work to meet those needs
- Ensure that advocacy is provided for all aspects of the child's life

Raise Community Awareness

- Raise community awareness of issues related to child abuse and neglect
- Raise community awareness of the CASA/GAL mission
- Provide education to the community, to include local and Tribal officials and state legislators, regarding CASA/GAL's role
- Create a positive presence in the community served

Interact Effectively with Key Judicial and Child Welfare Stakeholders

- Create and maintain positive relationships within the judicial system
- Educate the judiciary on the Core Model and the role of CASA/GAL volunteers
- Understand and meet the needs of the judiciary
- Ensure that all CASA/GAL staff and volunteers are advocating in compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)
- Build a rapport with other local child welfare stakeholders including State and Tribal child welfare agencies

Recruit, Screen, Train and Support Volunteers

- Recruit, support, and retain volunteer advocates who reflect the community served
- Thoroughly screen volunteers according to National CASA/GAL standards, state laws and federal regulations
- Train screened volunteers according to National CASA/GAL approved research-informed curricula and training standards
- Ensure volunteers are effectively supervised and recognized
- Ensure volunteer advocates receive continuing education to expand their knowledge of those issues and practices that impact the children we serve

Ensure a Program with a Strong Foundation

- Comply with National CASA/GAL standards, membership and reporting requirements and applicable laws
- Work actively and collaboratively with National CASA/GAL to support and achieve the mission of the CASA/GAL network and our collective national impact
- Promote the value of CASA/GAL volunteers by demonstrating the ability of one person to make a tremendous impact in a child's life
- Build, maintain, and grow relationships with funders and donors to secure diversified and sustainable funding
- Know the trends of child abuse within the jurisdiction and surrounding areas and use this data to inform growth plan and strategies
- Continuously evaluate the effectiveness and stewardship of the program's efforts and resources
- Establish a case management system to maintain information and activities for reporting to National CASA/GAL, state and national entities

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- Collaborate and cooperate with other local CASA/GAL programs, state organizations and National CASA/GAL to increase the number of children served
 - Operate under the governance and oversight of a board of directors or administrative authority
 - Recruit effective volunteers and staff who reflect the community served
 - Generate the necessary resources for program operations and sustainability