

CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

**CHILD ADVOCATES
DENVER CASA**



CASA

THE MOMENTUM OF HOPE

CHILD ADVOCATES - DENVER CASA

ANNUAL REPORT





MISSION OF CHILD ADVOCATES DENVER CASA:

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The Mission of Child Advocates - Denver CASA is to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children in Denver Juvenile Court through the services of specially selected and trained community volunteers from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Our vision is that all children will have a lifelong connection with a caring adult in a safe and nurturing home where they can thrive.

We have launched an innovative new program model that will enable us to advocate for 100% of abused and neglected children in need in Denver County by the year 2020. Our Peer Coordinator Model, as it is called, is a cost-effective new service delivery model that will allow us to increase our services to children with only a modest increase in resources. Over the next three years, we will expand our services and reduce the cost per child by 40%. We will provide a powerful voice for every abused and neglected child in Denver County. To be successful in meeting 100% of the need for Court Appointed Special Advocacy, we will need to recruit and train 200 new CASA volunteers and raise \$660,000 in 2017.



*"CASA is opportunity. CASAs give our kids chances to explore and experience things they never considered."
-Guardian Ad Litem, Dani Diercks*

Guardian Ad Litem thoughts on CASA Haley Potts: "Ms. Potts was an exemplary CASA on my case and, in my opinion, went above and beyond the expected duties of a CASA. She was very involved with the children and the family through many contact over the life of the case. She was a valuable member of the team, advocating for her positions and giving input on all aspects of the case. She performed her own independent investigation, communicating with all parties and collaterals, and kept everyone on track with the issues she wanted resolved. She was a good communicator and her involvement in the case positively impacted the family. Even though these are difficult cases, she kept a level head and was able to present information to the family in a positive light. She exhibited the type of effort, knowledge, and skills that we would want to see in all CASAs and was a shining example for the CASA program."



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It's easy to recall, when reflecting on the past year, the few major changes that helped redefine and alter the course of Child Advocates – Denver CASA. What may seem small, in reality helped solidify our plans for 2017. 2016 provided us with the opportunity to review, renew and refocus our program goals as we moved closer to our 2020 Vision: A CASA for every child in need. To name a few:

- We have five Advocate Supervisors with a wide range of experience working daily with up to 35 CASAs, ensuring our volunteers have the support and tools they need to effectively advocate for the children in the Denver Juvenile Court system.
- We participated in many outreach activities, sometimes in collaboration with our partners around the city, to spread our message and also recruit volunteers to be CASAs or ambassadors for the organization.
- We have become a fixture in the Truancy Court, realizing that we can have an impact on kids and their families early, helping to prevent them from becoming a case in the Dependency and Neglect Court.
- We have also laid the groundwork to offer specialized training to our CASAs to not only identify potential victims of sex trafficking but also to work with children who have already been victimized.
- Lastly, our Youth Empowerment Program began in September 2016 and will continue to grow thanks to the support of foundations and corporate sponsors who are excited about ensuring that older youth who age out of the system have the proper tools, experience and information to become successful adults.

We believe we are on the cusp of achieving some very exciting things for Child Advocates – Denver CASA. But to have a greater impact, we rely more on our donors, corporate and foundation partners and especially our volunteers. We greatly appreciate your support in 2016 and look forward to working with you in 2017 as we continue to serve the kids and families who need us the most.

With gratitude,

Nancy Stewart
Executive Director



DONORS:

We can do important work for our children because of the support of individuals, foundations, corporations, and government agencies who care about the lives of children and generously support our efforts. Our deepest gratitude to our partners who share the Child Advocates - Denver CASA mission and successes.

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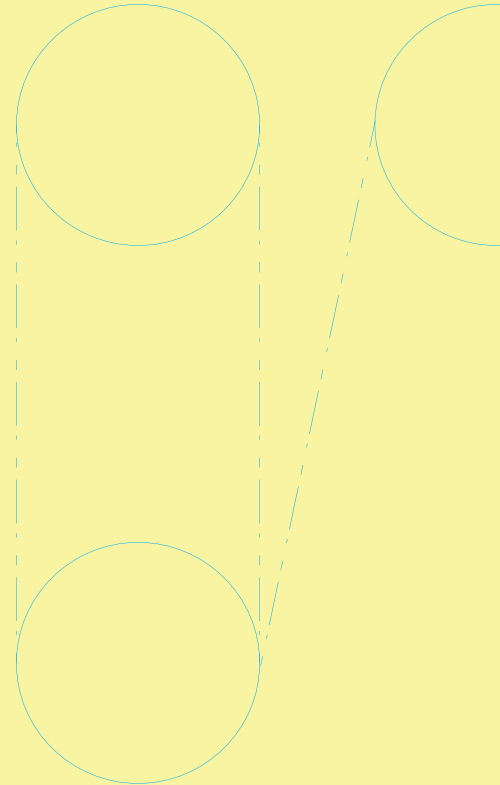
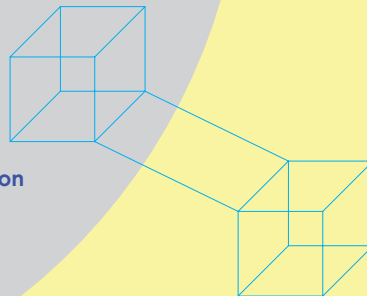
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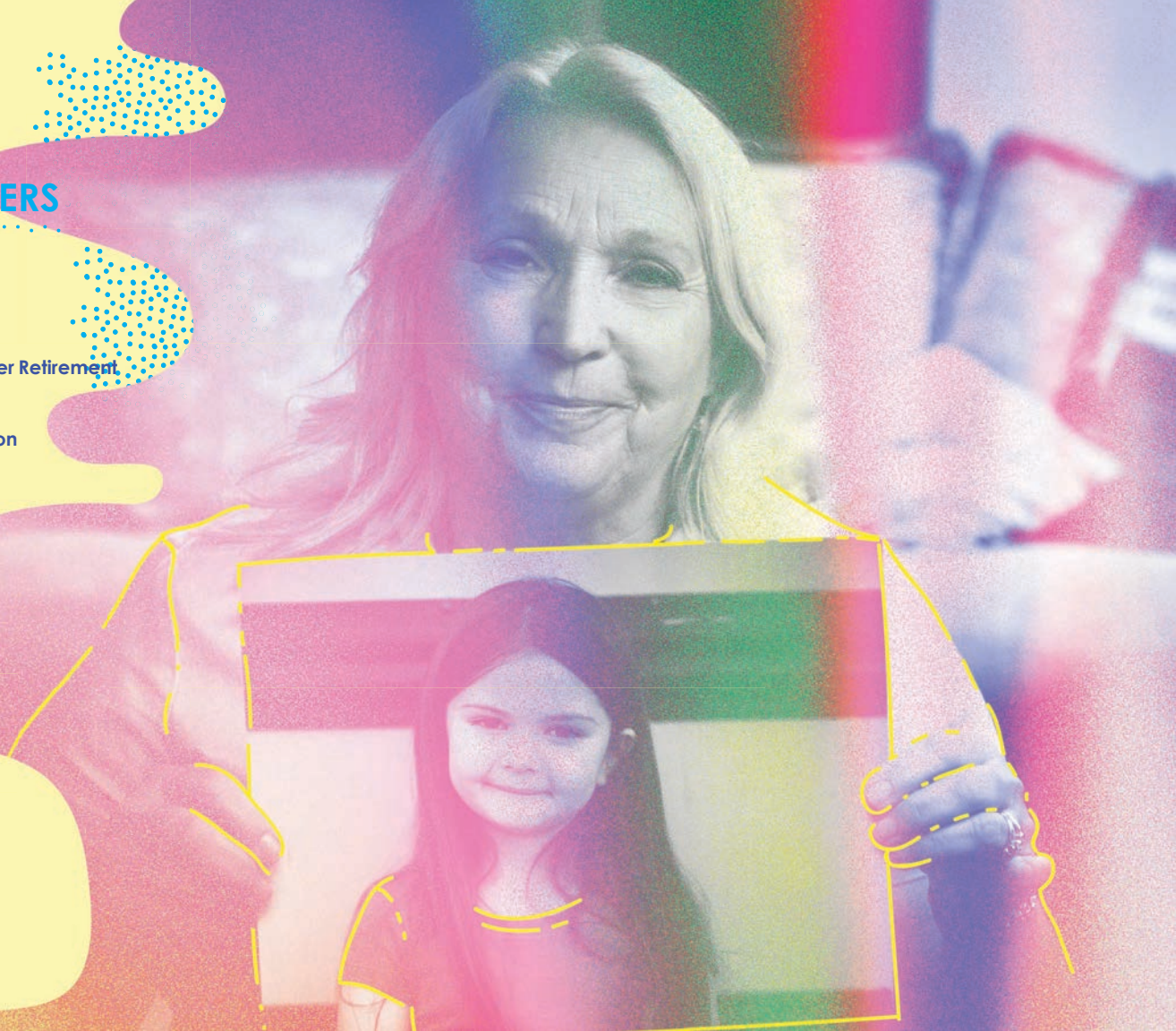
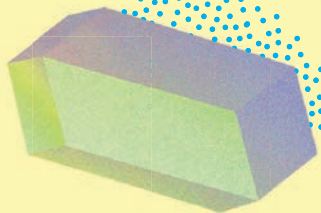
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Please accept our sincerest apologies if we have neglected to list your contribution or have misspelled your name. If you will let us know of any errors we will get it right the next time and report the error in our newsletter. A BIG thank you to all our supporters!!



VOLUNTEERS

Our CASA Volunteers
who make it happen.
CASA is cost effective:
1 CASA supervisor =
30 volunteers = 75-90
children served

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CASA VOLUNTEERS BRING HOPE WHERE THERE WAS NONE

CASAs donate their time to act as the independent eyes and ears of the court, investigate in the field, and speak solely in the interest of the child.

- They are sworn officers of the court
- They work with the most severe cases of abuse and neglect
- They monitor kids' health and education
- They identify the unmet needs of children and parents
- They facilitate communication among social workers, therapists, teachers, foster families, and parents
- They advocate for a child or siblings and make objective recommendations to judges insuring that the welfare of the children is the number one priority in decision-making.





PEER COORDINATORS

Linda Burch
Sherrie Cantor
Louis Erwin
Claire Kosanke
David Zinger

CASA is the only non-profit organization that empowers everyday citizens as appointed officers of the court. Your involvement will have a direct impact on a child's life and perhaps generations to come.

WILL YOU LEAVE A LEGACY?

Planned gifts are a crucial source of future funding that enables Child Advocates-Denver CASA to plan and carry out the best possible programs to advocate for children and youth in Denver. If you are remembering Child Advocates-Denver CASA in your will, trust, life insurance policy, and/or other planned gift, thank you! We will work hard to carry forward your legacy of compassion for Denver's most vulnerable children.

*We strongly suggest that you consult with your attorney or other independent professional advisor to ensure that your plans are in compliance with all applicable laws.

"I just want to say that the CASA on this case has been a godsend." - Judge Laurie Cohen-Ringler



STAFF

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Director of Development &
Public Relations

Mary Beth Kruger
Development & Volunteer
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Suzy Martin
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Advocate Supervisor



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THE MOMENTUM OF HOPE BY THE NUMBERS

.....

4,500 • children served with critical services over the last 22 years

372 • children served

201 • volunteers worked 7,449 hours on behalf of children in need

79¢ • of every dollar raised go towards programs

1,579 • visits with children

260 • court appearances and 188 court reports written

6,390 • contacts with professionals to keep children safe

**Jeff Adler, Guardian Ad Litem,
is on the record stating that
Carolyn Meritt is the "Kindest
most devoted CASA."**





CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

**CHILD ADVOCATES
DENVER CASA**

**BE EMPOWERED.
HELP A CHILD.
END THE CYCLE OF ABUSE.**

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