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2018

ANNUAL REPORT

Court Appointed Special Advocates of Cook County (CASA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of children in foster care throughout Cook County. By advocating for children who have experienced abuse or neglect, our volunteers give them a voice and a chance for a better life.

A YEAR OF WORKING DIFFERENTLY FOR STRONGER OUTCOMES

2018 was a year of growth and expansion driven by our ambitious goals that were focused on securing resources needed for much greater impact in helping children who have experienced abuse or neglect. We are proud of our success this year!

Over 1,000 children in Cook County were gifted quality toys through CASA of Cook County's partnership with the toy industry. This year marked the fourth year that CASA of Cook County collaborated with the Toy Industry Foundation to put together "Play Your Part Chicago," an event in which children in Cook County's foster care system are not only gifted toys, but also experience a day at Guaranteed Rate Field. Furthermore, we were able to provide a CASA Advocate for 325 children. Out of the 325 children served, 129 were new children never served by CASA of Cook County. Most importantly, we successfully helped children achieve permanency by closing out 62 children in 2018. Of the 62 children closed in 2018, 68% were returned home to a natural parent, legal guardian or adopted. Helping children achieve permanency in a convoluted and lengthy court process is a major accomplishment for our program.

Our success would not have been possible without our donors, dedicated volunteer advocates and talented staff. Our donors have generously given their time and resources and have financially supported CASA of Cook County to increase our reach by 6%. Our volunteer advocates have donated countless hours to ensure that no child is left behind. Their dedication and perseverance along with their commitment to advocate for the best interests of the child help to mitigate the many biases and injustices that children would ordinarily endure without an advocate.

Our talented staff spent a total of 6,696 hours serving on complex cases in addition to the direct support they provide CASA advocates. Staff zealously advocated for children in Cook County's Juvenile Court by making 1,055 recommendations on their cases. Out of the 1,055 recommendations made to Judges, 896 were accepted. This accomplishment speaks positively of the staff and the program's credibility and the value placed on CASA's work among the Cook County Juvenile Judges.

The future of our organization is filled with tremendous opportunities. We will continue to focus on the need of children we serve. We remain committed to enhancing our operations, expanding our donor base and increasing our ability to touch as many lives as possible of children in foster care that need our support!

Best regards,



Lana Vukovljak

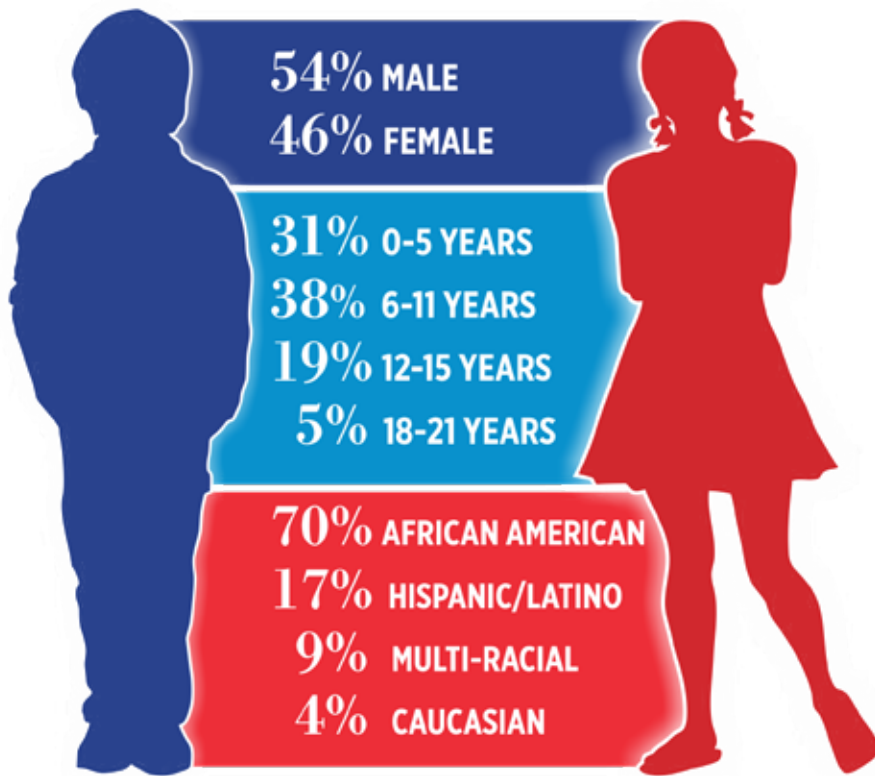
Lana Vukovljak
Board President



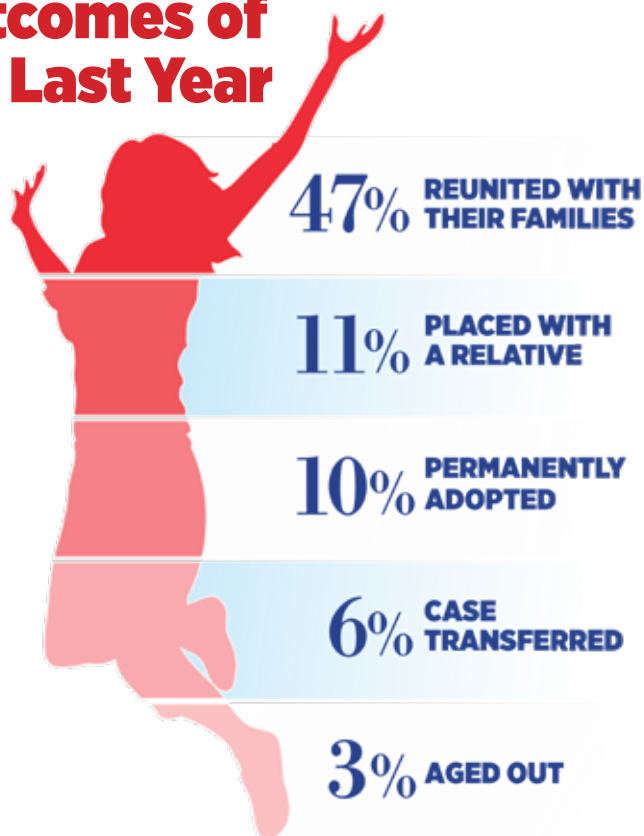
Bonita Carr

Bonita Carr, Ed.D.
Executive Director

About the Children Our CASAs Serve



Outcomes of the Last Year



62 CHILDREN CASES CLOSED IN 2018.

325

CHILDREN
HAD THE
BENEFIT OF...



214

CARING
VOLUNTEER
ADVOCATES



WHO GAVE OVER

25,680

HOURS OF
THEIR TIME



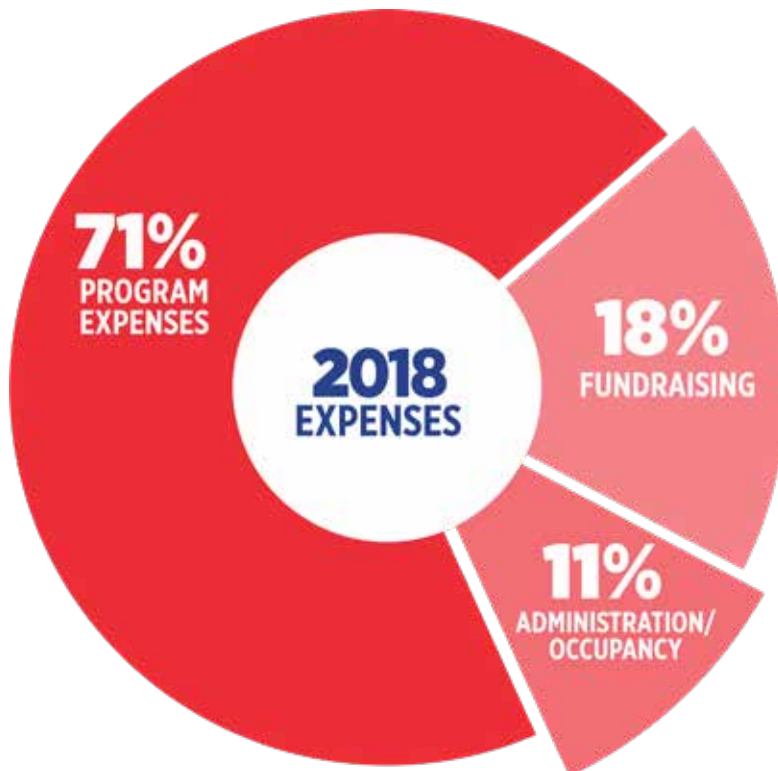
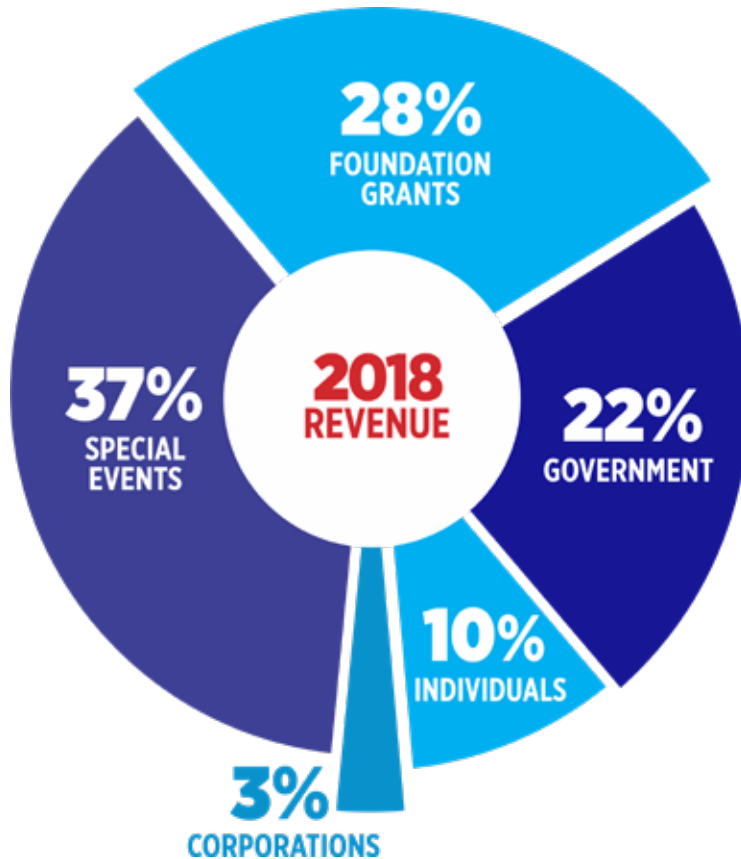
SAVING THE CHILD
WELFARE SYSTEM

\$590,640

(\$23/HR)



STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES



**Corporate
Contributions
\$23,500**

**Foundations
\$208,637**

**Special Events
\$273,681**

**Government
Grants
\$157,677**

**Individual
Contributions
\$67,628**



Highlights of 2018

Partnerships were a key focus throughout the year, as we view this as critical to our long-term strategy. We saw excellent progress on this front.

Partnerships

You're probably familiar with one corporate partner in particular, as they are a household name. We're honored to thank AT&T for partnering with us. The angel tree project was huge success. AT&T approached us with a generous offer to have 300 employees buy all of our current CASA children gifts for Christmas. Each one of our children received two gifts of their choice.



Kappa Alpha Theta (Epsilon Phi Chapter University of Chicago) is an international not-for-profit organization. Their philanthropy is CASA. They have graciously partnered with us by hosting an annual fundraiser for us. Theta women led the way in their fundraising efforts by raising over \$100,000 for our organization in 2018.



The Toy Industry Foundation have partnered with us over the past four years. This partnership allows us to give thousands of toys to children who are in child protective services.



Akerman Law Firm financial partnership has allowed us to give gift cards to youth who are aging out of the system and print volunteer training materials.



Mitchell Gold & Bob Williams Chicago's signature store partnered with us by hosting and underwriting our annual cocktail reception fundraiser to support CASA's work and create awareness of the tremendous needs of children in foster care in Cook County. This evening is filled with music, food, cocktails and auctions!





CASA is Making a Difference

Stories of Our Impact

Like a bridge over troubled water, parents are a sustaining force that will carry their children through all of life's storms. But what happens when parents themselves need a bridge to successfully traverse the obstacles of life? It is during such times that CASA steps in to be their bridge of support.

In 2018, CASA became a bridge in the life of a lady named Frances. She was only 19 years old, and her 2-year-old son and 6-year-old daughter had just been transferred into the custody of DCFS because she was unable to properly provide for the children.

Both children had medical needs; not major, but still medical needs that needed attention on a regular basis. The children were returned home to their mother after a short time, but under an order of protection. The order of protection listed several services that the mother needed to complete. While it was clear that the mother loved her children and wanted to take care of them; she needed help to do it. She was still growing up herself.

This proved to be difficult for the young mother because she had very few resources and very little family support and knowledge of how to navigate the system in which she and her children had been placed.

A CASA volunteer named Tracey changed all of that. Tracey connected with the mother and the children right away. Tracey complemented the young mother on her strengths rather than the deficits the system had highlighted.

The CASA visited regularly and checked in via phone or text frequently as well. The CASA helped the mother to become more organized, to find organizations to help young single mothers, a work program and even a housing advocate. The CASA provided excellent detailed court reports to the Court that gave a clear picture of progress.

Within 8 months of the CASA's assignment to the case, the mother was found to be fit, willing and able to care for the children and the case was closed. There was a huge celebration in the courtroom that day. Lots of hugs and tears, even from the mother's attorney and the Judge!

2018 Board of Directors

*The members of the Board of Directors,
as of December 31, 2018, are:*

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CASA STAFF

*Staff Members as of
December 31, 2018 are:*

Bonita Carr, Ed.D.
Executive Director
Candice Brown
Office Administrator
Shante' Elliott
*Director of Community
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Kanu Ihekumere
Development Director
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Advocate Supervisor
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Advocate Supervisor
Taslina Munshi
Advocate Supervisor
Shelley Spears
Advocate Supervisor

INTERNS

Laura Rogalsky
Victoria Largin

2018 Family of Supporters

CASA of Cook County gratefully acknowledges the commitment of the supporters who have contributed to the success of our 2018 activities. In doing so, we were able to demonstrate our commitment to our mission.

\$50,000-\$109,999

Impact 100
Kapp Alpha Theta
VCVA

\$25,000-\$49,999

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The Toy Foundation

\$10,000-\$24,999

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Col. Stanley McNeil
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Mary Hasten Foundation
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Church
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Steven Loveless
Christina Ochs
Pepsico Foundation
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Mike Capuzzi
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DLA Piper
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Fourth Presbyterian
Donald Gimble
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Kevin Howard
Kapani Family Charitable
Foundation
Louis Leonardo
Pat Moran
Gertrude B. Nielsen
Foundation
Quarles & Brady
Smokeball

\$1,000-\$1,999

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Susan Cobb
Adam Holmes
Joanna Koh
Mary Ann & William Kopp
Jan Lupinek
Frank Meyer
Susan Obler
Catherine Reiter
N. Rosie Rosenbaum
Toni Rosseth
Rotary One
Bret Saberhagen
Hamilton Thies

\$500-\$999

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James Bryant
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Cecilia Coffey
Kevin Cole
Katherine Sim Drew
Fidelity Charitable
First Congregational
Matthew Gambs
Julie Gardner
Sameer Ghazneivi
Lee Henderson
Allen Herrel
Robert Kakiuchi
Cheryl Keane
Miwon Sinjoo Kim
Kim Miwon
Aibgael Taylor
Mark Teufel
Melissa Turk
Daniel Watson
Doughlas Whitney
Keela Williams
Wonderful Giving
Marie Zidek

\$250-\$499

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Elizabeth Allen
Rita Anand-Padhi
Kevin Ashley
Rich Bonahoom
Kathleen Byrne
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Angela Corpus
Annie Darmofal
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Karen Fitzner
Sameer Ghaznau
Lewis Goldstein
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Adam Holmes
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Phylis Katz
Tom Kavoelek
Corey & Lori Kilkelly
Helen & Bernard Ko
Jennifer Maloney
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Network for Good
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PayPal Charitable Giving
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Eric Soule
Sydney Spartaro
Ashley Sternberg
Jud Synder
Unison Home
United Way of Metro
Ryan Vann
Damir Vukovljak
Daniel Wallace
Wells Fargo Community
Brent Williams
Alyssa Wrek

\$50-\$200

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