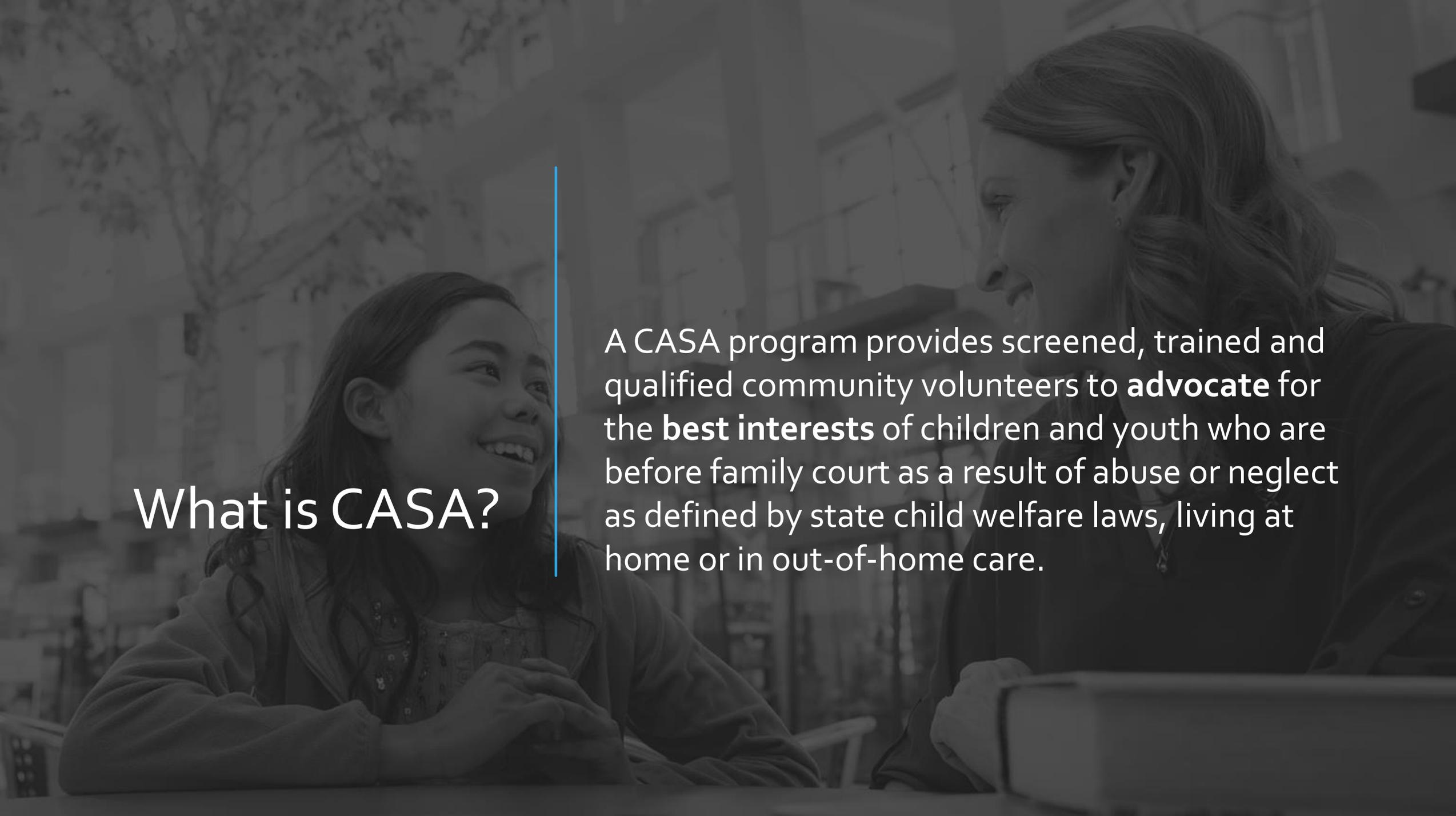




CASA

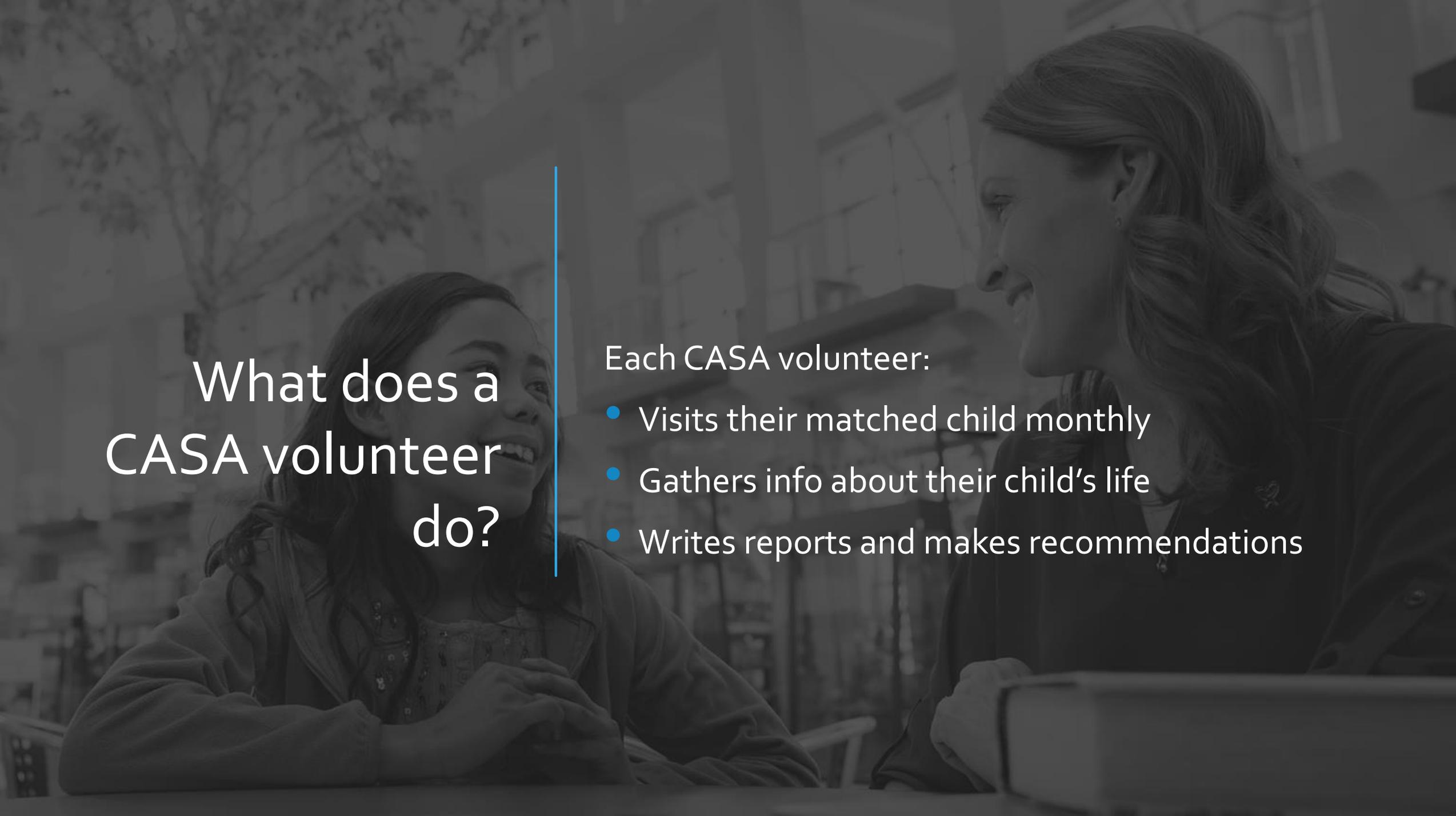
Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA OF LEXINGTON



What is CASA?

A CASA program provides screened, trained and qualified community volunteers to **advocate** for the **best interests** of children and youth who are before family court as a result of abuse or neglect as defined by state child welfare laws, living at home or in out-of-home care.



What does a CASA volunteer do?

Each CASA volunteer:

- Visits their matched child monthly
- Gathers info about their child's life
- Writes reports and makes recommendations



Requirements to Serve

- 21 years or older
- Pass background checks
- Complete 30-hour training
- Oath of confidentiality
- 12 hours of continuing education annually
- 5-10 hours a month for at least 2 years

What's the difference?

CASA volunteers are unique. Unlike lawyers and social workers who are required to consider the parents' or family's best interests, the CASA volunteer focuses solely on what is best for the child or children.



CASA Mission, Vision and Values

- **MISSION:** CASA of Lexington's trained and supervised volunteers advocate through the family court system to ensure all victims of child abuse and neglect are safe and thrive in a permanent home.
- **VISION:** A community where every child lives and thrives in a safe, caring and permanent home.
- **VALUES:** Integrity, compassion, resiliency, stewardship, collaboration, inclusiveness, professionalism, and sustainability.

History of National CASA



- First CASA program launched in 1977 in Seattle
- Today there are nearly 950 CASA programs nationwide
- 49 of 50 states have CASA programs (North Dakota is the outlier)

History of CASA of Lexington



- Program planning began in 1986
- Became standalone nonprofit in 2003
- Funded by private donations, grants, fundraisers and contributions from local governments
- 2024 volunteers: 275
- 2024 children served: 673
- Counties served: Fayette, Bourbon, Woodford, Scott, Jessamine, Garrard and Lincoln

Fayette County in 2024

- CASA of Lexington volunteers: **163**
- Fayette County children who received a CASA volunteer: **423**
- Number of new substantiated cases of abused and neglect: **1,060**

CASA of Lexington Growth



- 2000: 70 children served
- 2003: 100 children served
- 2008: 102 children served
- 2013: 171 children served
- 2018: 626 children served
- 2023: 681 children served
- 2024: 673 children served

Zach's Story

- One of five kids who survived extreme physical neglect and sexual abuse by their parents
- Moved to placement after placement, no one was willing to keep him long-term
- Provisionally diagnosed with autism; CASA volunteer pushed for assessment that revealed he did not have autism
- Now has appropriate diagnosis and receiving effective interventions
- Adopted and living with one of his siblings
- All five siblings had CASA volunteers
- Four of five have now been adopted and fifth is expected to be adopted soon



What is a CASA Volunteer Manager?

- Paid staff person
- 1:30 ratio to CASA volunteers by state law and National CASA standards
- Attend first home visit
- Always attends court hearings
- Guides CASA volunteers through the process

LOCAL FUNDING FOR CASA SERVICES

In CASA of Lexington's seven-county service region (2023 Calendar Year)



TOTAL PROGRAM BUDGET

\$1,382,122

TOTAL CHILDREN SERVED

681

COST PER CHILD SERVED

\$2,030



BOURBON

56%

of program budget provided by local governments

\$52,392

total annual allocation from local governments

\$93,380

cost to serve children

46

children served in 2024



FAYETTE

11%

of program budget provided by local government

\$100,000

total annual allocation from local government

\$911,470

cost to serve children

449

children served in 2024



GARRARD

45%

of program budget provided by local governments

\$19,892

total annual allocation from local governments

\$44,660

cost to serve children

22

children served in 2024



JESSAMINE

35%

of program budget provided by local governments

\$40,000

total annual allocation from local governments

\$115,710

cost to serve children

57

children served in 2024



LINCOLN

66%

of program budget provided by local governments

\$16,108

total annual allocation from local governments

\$24,360

cost to serve children

12

children served in 2024



SCOTT

29%

of program budget provided by local governments

\$40,000

total annual allocation from local governments

\$140,070

cost to serve children

69

children served in 2024



WOODFORD

88%

of program budget provided by local governments

\$46,380

total annual allocation from local governments

\$52,780

cost to serve children

26

children served in 2024



VIDEO