

Contact: Alicia Moffatt, CASA Marketing, Recruitment, and Retention Specialist
Phone: 602-452-3594
Email: almoffatt@courts.az.gov



Court Appointed Special Advocates More Volunteers Are Needed Throughout Arizona

PHOENIX – Children who have experienced abuse or neglect can be involved with multiple systems—the court system, the child welfare system, the health care system, and the school system. As a result, returning to school can be difficult and unpredictable, with a lot to juggle.

The start of a new school year can be overwhelming, but it can be especially challenging for children in foster care. Children removed from their homes are sometimes faced with having to switch schools, and the work of a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer is a valuable resource to help the child through this transition.

“Our volunteers are in frequent contact with teachers and school administrators to form a partnership to better understand the child’s unique strengths and challenges. These interactions with the child’s school, combined with the volunteer’s relationship with the child, empower our volunteers to advocate in court for what the child needs to thrive academically,” said Charles Gray, State CASA Program Manager. “The goal of a CASA is not only to advocate in court but also in the classroom. By ensuring the children served have all they need to learn and perform in the classroom, they are setting them up for success.”

When CASA volunteers are appointed by a judge, they get to know the child and talk to family members and other adults in the child's life to find out what they need to heal and thrive. CASA volunteers advocate for stability with respect to a child’s living situation and school placement, with the child’s best interest in mind. CASA volunteers interact and build relationships with everyone in the child’s environment who has a hand in their education—parents and foster parents, teachers, social workers, attorneys, and others.

CASA volunteers do not need any prior special training and come from all walks of life. Anyone 21 years of age or older, who can pass a thorough background check and complete 30 hours of training, is encouraged to apply.

Another way to get involved is a program with similar requirements called the Foster Care Review Board (FCRB) in which volunteers are appointed by the court to a 5-member panel that meets virtually one weekday per month to review the cases of children in foster care to make recommendations to the court regarding the best interest of the youth involved.

To learn more about becoming a CASA volunteer visit, AZCASAVolunteer.org and watch a short [video clip](#) to learn more about how you can make a difference. To learn more about becoming a FCRB volunteer visit, AZFCRB.org.

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CASA of Arizona and the Foster Care Review Board operate in all 15 counties in Arizona and are open year-round to recruit and train volunteers to help the children in Arizona’s foster care system. The programs are administered by the Arizona Supreme Court. Follow CASA of Arizona on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and now [LinkedIn](#)!