



Annual Report 2019-2020

KENTUCKY CASA NETWORK, INC.

CHANGE A
CHILD'S STORY.™





MISSION

The mission of the KCN is to support the development, growth, and continuation of Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) programs in Kentucky. CASA programs recruit and train volunteers to advocate on behalf of children who have come into the court system as a result of dependency, neglect, or abuse.

ABOUT

The Kentucky CASA Network (KCN) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, governed by a board of directors, that provides ongoing development, training, technical assistance, and resources to local CASA programs across Kentucky. The KCN also advocates for the needs and interests of CASA programs and volunteers with industry stakeholders in Frankfort, participates on state child welfare policy-making committees, and advances the CASA mission statewide.



Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Annual Report

CONTENTS

From the State Director’s Desk 2

Collaboration | *CASA Day at the Capitol* | *Statewide Outreach* 3

Service | *Network Trainings* | *Annual Conference* 4

Accountability | *CASA’s Impact* | *Services to Local Programs* 5

Gratitude | *2019 KCN Awards and Recognitions* 6

Transparency | *Financial Overview* 7

Equity | *Growth Plan* | *Diversity, Equity & Inclusion* 8

Current Local CASA Programs 9

FROM THE STATE DIRECTOR'S DESK



Dear Kentucky CASA Network friends and supporters,

Collaboration. Service. Accountability. Gratitude. Transparency. Equity. These six words, our newly adopted Kentucky CASA Network values, are at the core of what we do in achieving our mission of growing, developing, and supporting local CASA programs in Kentucky. Throughout this annual report, we are proud to share how these values are intertwined in all of our work and the work of the 23 local CASA programs that support a network of more than 1,300 CASA volunteers who provide best-interest advocacy to abused, neglected, and dependent children in the Commonwealth.

This past fiscal year began with significant accomplishments for the network. In 2019, over 450 CASA staff, board members, and volunteers attended the annual State Conference in Owensboro, Kentucky -- the largest on record. This year, volunteers provided CASA services for nearly 4,000 children statewide -- the highest number in the history of CASA in Kentucky. There was also a record number of CASA volunteers trained and activated and two new CASA programs created, bringing the number of counties covered by a CASA program to more than half of all counties in the Commonwealth.

The KCN spent significant effort this fiscal year in developing our new three-year Strategic Plan for the organization, a four-year Strategic Growth Plan for establishing more CASA programs in the Commonwealth, and prioritizing the creation of a new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan. Local programs participated in active committees focusing on volunteer recruitment strategies, data collection, and performance measurement, all of which focus on the quality of CASA advocacy.

The fiscal year ended with the challenge of working to support local CASA programs throughout the nationwide coronavirus pandemic, during which programs have conducted virtual trainings and virtual visits with children to ensure the continuity of CASA services. As an organization, we have had to find other ways to learn from and connect with each other. Fortunately, those six organizational values remain at the forefront of our work, despite the obstacles that the pandemic has presented. During these challenging times, I am reminded of the Japanese principle known as "kaizen," the concept of small incremental steps for growth and slow continuous improvement of an organization to reach a desired outcome. We must continue in our efforts to do our best, one step forward at a time, keeping in mind our organizational values: collaboration, service, accountability, gratitude, transparency, and equity.

Sincerely,

Andrea Bruns
State Director

COLLABORATION

The strength of CASA in Kentucky lies in working in good faith as a unified team with local CASA programs, the National CASA/GAL Association, child welfare agencies, local communities, and statewide stakeholders.

INAUGURAL CASA DAY AT THE CAPITOL

On February 25, 2020, the KCN hosted the inaugural CASA Day at the Capitol in Frankfort, Kentucky. The KCN was joined by more than 100 participants from local CASA programs - volunteers, staff, and board members - to meet with more than 40 legislators to speak about CASA advocacy and the impact their work makes in the lives of abused and neglected children in Kentucky.

In addition to the scheduled meetings, several officials and legislators addressed the group to thank them for their service, including First Lady Britany Beshear, Attorney General Daniel Cameron, Auditor Mike Harmon, Senator Morgan McGarvey, Speaker Pro Tem David Meade, Representative Joni Jenkins, Representative Kim Moser, and Representative Jason Nemes.



STATEWIDE OUTREACH

The KCN made targeted efforts this year to work with stakeholders and statewide organizations that work with children and families. This work, in conjunction with a statewide brand awareness marketing campaign, has helped to share CASA's mission and generate new CASA volunteers. In addition to hosting information tables at several events, KCN staff presented at the Kentucky Paralegal Association Conference, the Kentucky Judge Executives Association annual meeting, the Kentucky Student Council Association Conference, and the Summer Family Resource and Youth Service Centers Conference. Additionally, KCN staff are active participants with the Children's Justice Act Task Force, and the State and Regional Interagency Councils for Services and Supports to Children and Transition-age Youth.

SERVICE

We believe in putting the needs of the programs we serve first. We are here to assist the programs, boards, staff, and volunteers to develop and become as highly effective as possible in their service to children involved in the court system.

NETWORK TRAININGS

In the '19-20 fiscal year, the KCN facilitated 13 network-wide trainings for 270 participants, incorporating both virtual and in-person meetings, transitioning to all-virtual in March 2020 to practice social distancing during the pandemic. Some of the training topics included:

- Pre-service facilitator training and ongoing webinars
- Volunteer coordinator training
- Executive Director values-driven leadership
- State CASA Grant financial reporting
- Navigating the Optima database
- Implicit bias
- Programmatic webinars (related to volunteer recruitment, retention, and management)

The KCN has also continued to update the continuing education resource library for current CASA volunteers to offer remote options for completing their required annual training hours. CASA volunteers recorded 375 hours of continuing education using these resources during this fiscal year.



ANNUAL CONFERENCE

In partnership with the Administrative Office of the Courts, the KCN hosted our annual statewide CASA conference on November 16, 2019 at the Owensboro Convention Center. This was the largest statewide conference to date, with more than 450 attendees from across the Commonwealth. Attendees included CASA volunteers, staff, and board members, as well as Citizen Foster Care Review Board (CFCRB) state board members. Keynote speaker Joshua Wayne explored how CASA and CFCRB volunteers can help children in foster care grow into successful, independent young adults. Throughout the day, attendees participated in breakout sessions that covered important topics such as:

- Understanding Implicit Bias: Starting the Conversation;
- Self-Care: Preserving the Well-Being of Child Welfare Advocates;
- Supporting Youth in Overcoming Physical, Emotional, and Educational Challenges;
- Recognizing Economic Bias in Child Advocacy;
- Panel of Experienced CASA and CFCRB Volunteers; and
- A Crucial Partnership: Wisdom from DCBS Representatives.



ACCOUNTABILITY

We report on our activities and decisions to local programs, stakeholders, donors, grantors, and community partners. We accept responsibility for our activities and decisions. We report and disclose the result of activities and decisions in a transparent manner.

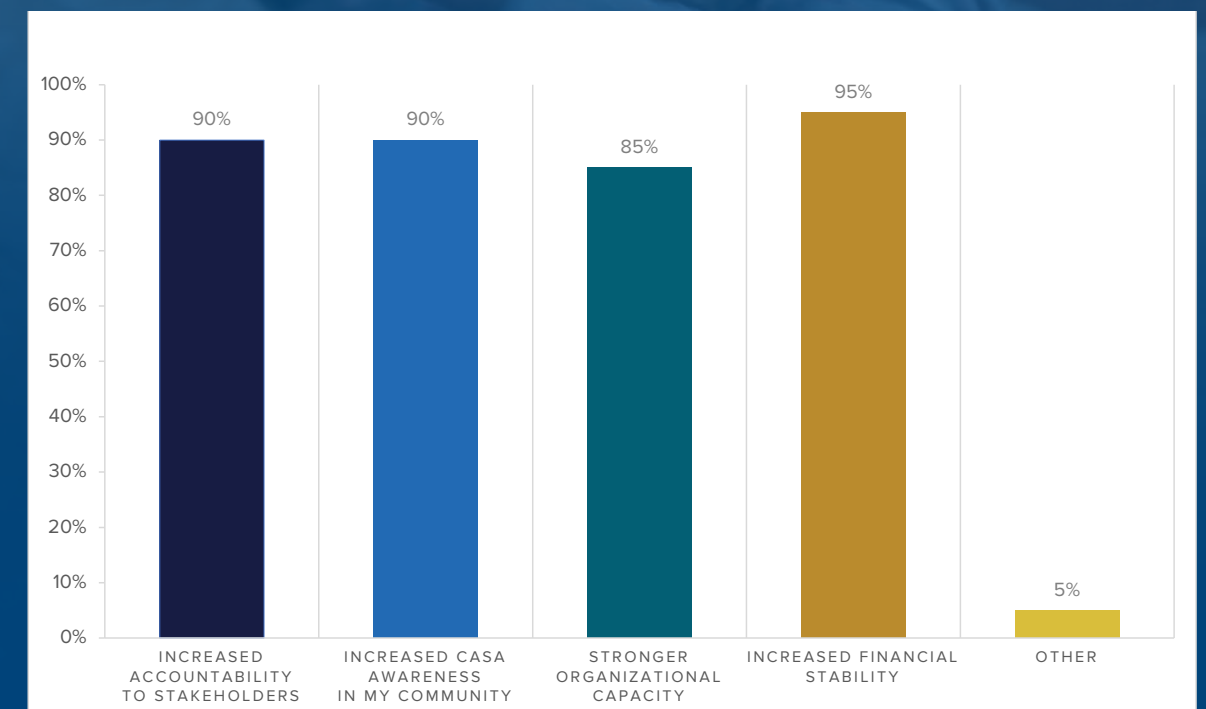
CASA's Impact in Kentucky in 2019:



22,373 Children Were Involved in Cases of Abuse, Neglect, or Dependency

KCN SERVICES TO LOCAL CASA PROGRAMS

The KCN supports the development, growth, and continuation of local CASA programs throughout Kentucky. Each year, local programs provide feedback about their satisfaction of the services the KCN provides. For the 2019 calendar year, local CASA programs indicated that they experienced several benefits as a result of the KCN's work, as indicated in the graph below.



GRATITUDE

We appreciate the opportunity and resources we have been provided to strengthen CASA in Kentucky. We are grateful for the work of local CASA programs with a shared vision with the KCN and each other.

2019 KCN Awards and Recognitions



Larry Cullen
Volunteer of the Year
CASA of the Bluegrass



Carolyn Loeff
Board Member of the Year
CASA of Lexington



Judge Brandi Rogers
Judge of the Year | Crittenden, Union, Webster Co.



CASA of Madison and Clark Counties
Program of the Year

Kentucky CASA Pioneer Awards

- Judy Beaven and Margie Bradford**
CASA of Nelson County
- Chris Cook**
CASA of Midwest Kentucky
- Ruth Hawkins**
CASA of Madison County

- Michelle Jones, Carolyn Smith, and Norma Thomas**
CASA of Knox and Laurel Counties
- Mike Foster and Tina Newby**
CASA Program of Christian County, KY

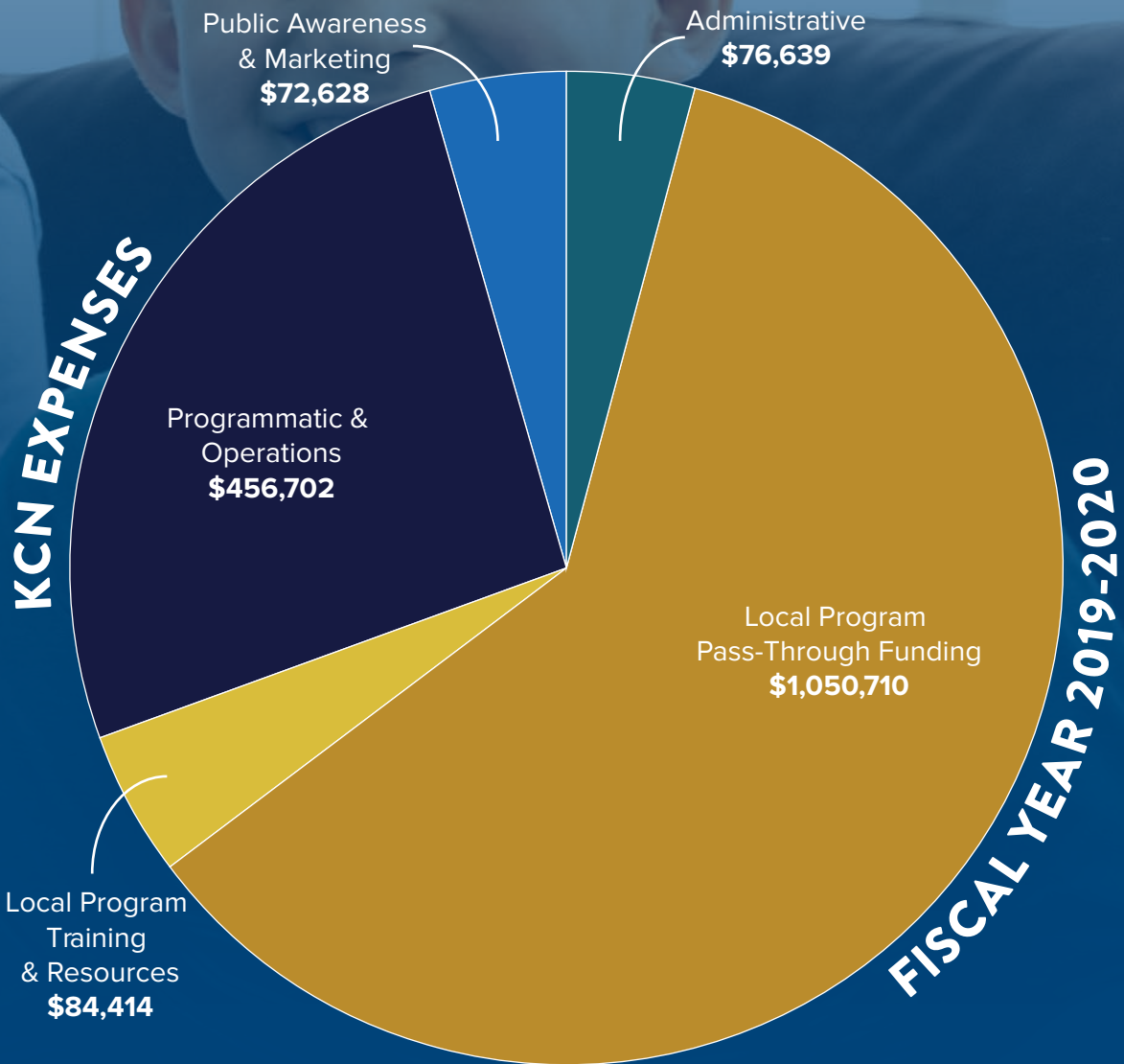
TRANSPARENCY

We value the trust that we have been given by programs, grantors, community partners, stakeholders, and donors. To maintain that trust, we believe in making publicly available our financial and programmatic information regarding services performed.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Revenue for FY 2019-2020 totaled \$1,698,983 and included funds from the following: state contract with the Kentucky Justice and Public Safety Cabinet, federal VOCA grant, National CASA/GAL Association grants, Children’s Justice Act grant, and other unrestricted sources, such as fundraising events and membership dues. The KCN’s expenses for the year, as outlined in the graphic below, totaled \$1,741,093.

In this fiscal year, the KCN participated in several online giving days, including Giving Tuesday and KY Gives Day, and hosted a charity team for the annual Bourbon Chase. In August 2019, the KCN was selected by the Kentucky Auctioneers Association to be the charitable recipient of their annual auctioneering event, and in March 2020, the KCN was selected by the Kentucky Student Council Association to be the charitable recipient for the 2020-2021 school year.



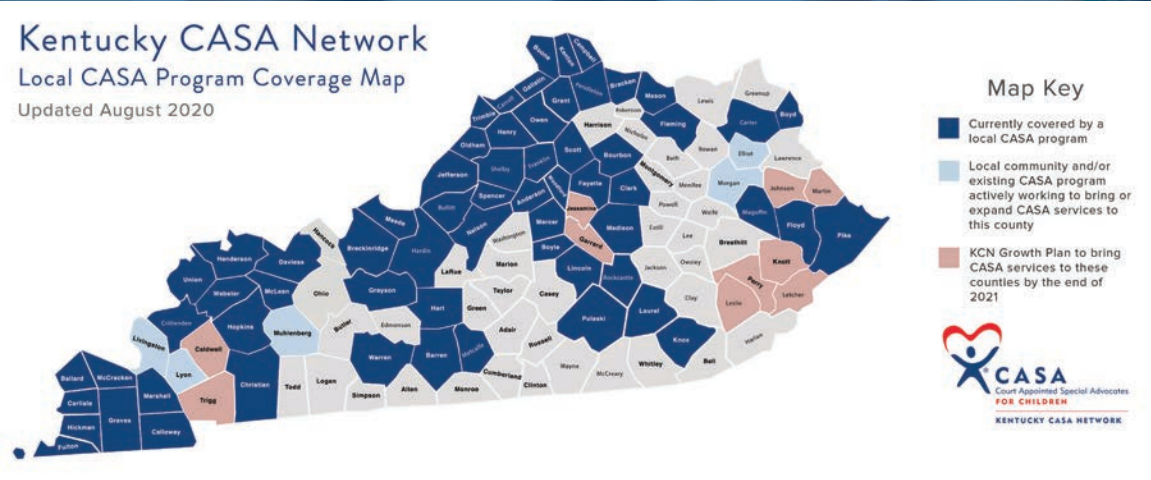
EQUITY

We believe in all children receiving the resources and access to services they need to reach their full potential.

GROWTH PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The KCN is diligently continuing the work to meet the 2018-2021 Growth Plan goals of expanding CASA coverage throughout the Commonwealth. During this fiscal year:

- CASA of Southern Kentucky obtained National CASA/GAL Association membership;
- CASA of Midwest Kentucky (formerly CASA Program of Hopkins, Webster, and Crittenden Counties) took over service provision for Henderson and Union Counties;
- The KCN began foundational building for starting a program in Perry County; and
- Existing programs continued to expand into neighboring counties:
 - » CASA of Lexington expanded into Scott County
 - » CASA of West Kentucky expanded into Ballard County
 - » CASA of Graves County & Southwest KY expanded into Carlisle, Hickman, and Fulton Counties
 - » CASA of Madison and Clark Counties expanded into Clark County
 - » CASA of Ohio Valley expanded into McLean County



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION WORK

The KCN invited Pastor Edward Palmer, a Certified Diversity Trainer with expertise in reducing racial disparities in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, to Paducah and Owensboro to round out 2019’s four regional Implicit Bias Training offerings. His Implicit Bias Training utilizes a data-driven approach to providing a basic understanding of implicit bias, how it affects decision-making, and the impact of unintentional biases. The KCN will continue working with Pastor Palmer to offer more intensive training with the goal of promoting network-wide understanding of racial disproportionality and developing strategies to ensure CASA staff and volunteers mitigate disparities within child welfare. The KCN also plans to engage in efforts to evaluate and address organizational culture in order to model anti-racist organizational practices for the network.

The KCN also offered “Recognizing Economic Bias in Child Advocacy” at the state conference. This session covered misperceptions surrounding poverty, Kentucky legal views of poverty and child maltreatment, and allowed participants to practice identifying instances of economic bias as they may manifest in child welfare work.

CURRENT LOCAL CASA PROGRAMS

CASA OF THE BLUEGRASS

Serving Anderson, Boyle, Franklin, and Mercer Counties
Laura Weddle, Executive Director

BOONE COUNTY CASA

Serving Boone and Gallatin Counties
Colleen Maier, Executive Director

CASA PROGRAM FOR BRACKEN, FLEMING & MASON COUNTIES

Serving Bracken, Fleming, and Mason Counties
Rebecca Palmer, Executive Director

CASA PROGRAM FOR BULLITT COUNTY

Serving Bullitt County
Dana Elkins, Executive Director

CASA OF CARROLL, GRANT AND OWEN COUNTIES

Serving Carroll, Grant, and Owen Counties
Julie Scott Jernigan, Executive Director

CASA PROGRAM OF CHRISTIAN COUNTY, KY

Serving Christian County
Regina Kelly, Executive Director

CASA OF EASTERN KENTUCKY

A project of Judi’s Place for Kids serving Floyd, Magoffin, and Pike Counties
Pamela Taylor, Interim Executive Director of Judi’s Place for Kids
Morgan Carver, CASA Program Director

CASA OF GRAVES COUNTY & SOUTHWEST KY

Serving Carlisle, Fulton, Graves, and Hickman Counties
Stephanie Floyd, Executive Director

CASA OF THE HEARTLAND

Serving Hardin County
Norma Hatfield, Executive Director

CASA FOR KIDS SERVING KENTON, CAMPBELL & PENDLETON COUNTIES

Serving Campbell, Kenton, and Pendleton Counties
Nicky Jeffries, Executive Director

CASA OF KNOX AND LAUREL COUNTIES

Serving Knox and Laurel Counties
Debra Hauser, Executive Director

CASA BY THE LAKES

Serving Calloway and Marshall Counties
Angelia Boyd, Executive Director

CASA OF LEXINGTON

Serving Bourbon, Fayette, Scott, and Woodford Counties
Melynda Jamison, Executive Director

CASA OF MADISON AND CLARK COUNTIES

Serving Clark and Madison Counties
Victoria Benge, Executive Director

CASA OF MIDWEST KENTUCKY

Serving Crittenden, Henderson, Hopkins, Union, and Webster Counties
Daphyne Maddox, Executive Director

CASA OF NELSON COUNTY

Serving Nelson County
Kate Broadus, Executive Director

CASA OF NORTHEAST KY

Serving Boyd and Carter Counties
Carol Adams, Executive Director

CASA OF OHIO VALLEY

Serving Daviess and McLean Counties
Rosemary Conder, Executive Director

CASA OF THE RIVER REGION

Serving Henry, Jefferson, Oldham, Shelby, Spencer, and Trimble Counties
William Myers, President & CEO

CASA OF SOUTH CENTRAL KY

Serving Barren, Hart, Metcalfe, and Warren Counties
Jana Sublett, Executive Director

CASA OF SOUTHERN KENTUCKY

Serving Lincoln, Pulaski, and Rockcastle Counties
Lexi Foster, Executive Director

TRI-COUNTY CASA

Serving Breckinridge, Grayson, and Meade Counties
Lori Aldridge, Executive Director

CASA OF WEST KENTUCKY

A project of Child Watch Counseling & Advocacy Center
Serving Ballard and McCracken Counties
Janie Criner, Executive Director of Child Watch Counseling & Advocacy Center
Stephanie Moss, CASA Program Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joe Schuler - Chair
KY Cabinet for Health and Family Services

Suzanne Blazar - Vice Chair
Freelance Trainer

Tiffany Yahr - Secretary
KY Cabinet for Health and Family Services

Bryan Bulkley - Treasurer
Waystar

Chris Ordway
The News-Enterprise

Sara Osborne
MML&K Government Solutions

Hollie Spade
AT&T Kentucky

Karen Wright
ReWork EKY: Eastern KY Concentrated Employment Program

Stephanie Floyd - Local Program Representative
CASA of Graves County & Southwest KY

STAFF

Andrea Bruns - State Director

Brittany Garrett - Director of Communications

Melissa Paris - Director of Training

Mary Lewis - Regional Program Capacity Specialist: Eastern KY

Kelsey Washburn - Regional Program Capacity Specialist: Western KY

Mary Turner-Scott - Administrative Assistant

Norma Thomas - Grants Specialist

Kentucky CASA Network, Inc.

1640 Lyndon Farm Court
Suite 108
Louisville, KY 40223
(502) 238-2154



info@kentuckycasanetwork.org
www.kentuckycasanetwork.org
facebook.com/kentuckycasanetwork