



2022-2023
**ANNUAL
REPORT**

PREPARED BY



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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear friends,

We have some exciting things to share with you as we start our new year!

Please take some time to read about the kinds of things we have been able to do for the children we served this past year. We are very proud of our work and hope that you will be too. From welcoming new board members - we have an all-time high of 17! - to assigning mentors to our vulnerable teens to continuing our tutoring services and more, we are making a real difference for the children and families we serve.

As always, we are grateful to you for your support!

Tracey Heisler

Executive Director



CASA SHAW MISSION

CASA SHaW provides well-trained, trauma-informed volunteers to serve as advocates in court for children living in foster care. Our goal is to ensure that every child served has a safe, permanent home and the resources and services needed to thrive and not just survive adverse childhood experiences. We are committed to educating ourselves and the community about the causes and impacts of child abuse and neglect, the need for racial equity in a disproportionate system, and how to best advocate for and meet the needs of children in foster care in Somerset, Hunterdon, and Warren Counties.



CASA SHAW HALLMARKS



In addition to providing advocacy services for 135 children in foster care, CASA SHaW also:

- Trained 8 new advocates
- Operationalized Fostering Futures mentoring initiative
- Trained 17 advocates to be Fostering Futures mentors
- Utilized staff and advocates' expertise in advocate trainings, parent videos, and podcasts
- Welcomed 3 new board members
- Created a new, 3-year strategic plan
- Created a video series for parents and caregivers to strengthen their skills
- Engaged a Director of Diversity and Inclusion to ensure equitable advocacy for all children
- Produced bi-monthly podcasts on a variety of foster care-based topics
- Increased access to concrete resources for families
- Provided resources for families in crisis external to CASA
- Engaged community partnerships to provide gifts for more than 200 children
- Offered low-income parents a "holiday shop" so they could get gifts for their children
- Expanded trainings on Adverse Childhood Experiences and the History of Race in Child Welfare for community partners and the CASA network



CASA SHAW FINANCES

A LOOK AT THE FINANCES

Overall Expenses for FY 2022-2023: \$618,716

Funding Streams:

- 64%** Government Funding
- 8%** Foundation
- 11%** Corporate Funding
- 7%** Fundraising
- 10%** Individual donors

We also expended \$11,661 in Connie Fund requests for the children.

Plus, we received \$66,173 in-kind donations for the foster youth we serve and their families.

CASA SHAW FINANCES

FINANCIAL DONORS AND INITIATIVES

We appreciate and are grateful for all of our supporters. Whether you are an individual who makes a donation or attends an event, a corporate sponsor, a small business providing in-kind support, or a foundation providing grant funding, you are equally important to our success. Here is a sample of some of our supporters this past year:



Lowell Johnson Foundation





OUR LATEST NUMBERS

CASA SHAW COURT ADVOCACY

TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED

135

CASA VOLUNTEERS ASSIGNED

88

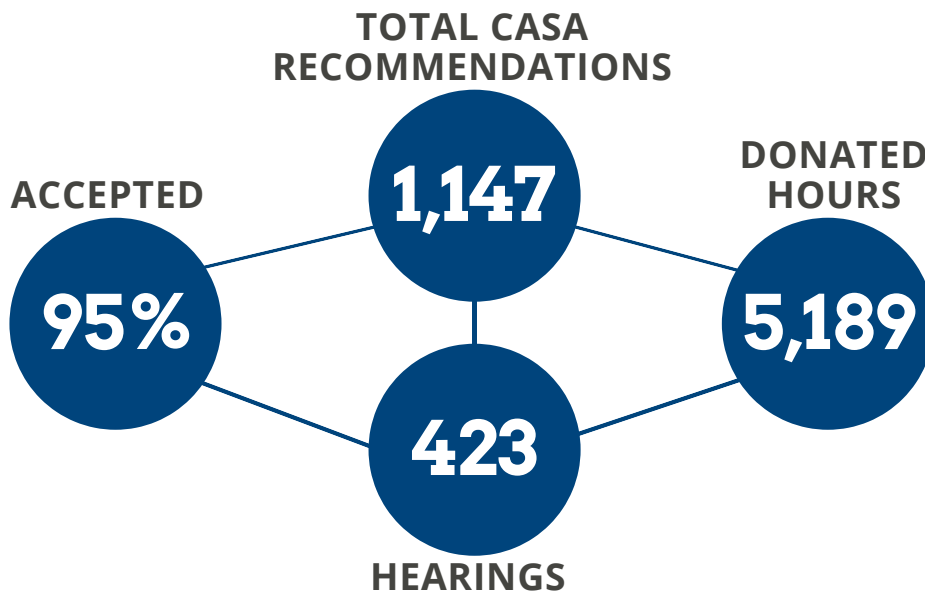
CASES CLOSED

55

PLUS:
CASA SHAW TRAINED 17 ADVOCATES TO BECOME FOSTERING FUTURE MENTORS

OUR LATEST NUMBERS

CASA DEMOGRAPHIC DATA



OUR TRAVELING TUTOR PROGRAMMING CONTINUES TO BE AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF SERVICE TO FOSTER CHILDREN WITHIN OUR SERVICE REGION.

AGE:
FROM BIRTH TO AGE 21

NUMBER OF CHILDREN:
GIRLS: 60
BOYS: 75

RACE:
ASIAN: 2%
BLACK: 24%
HISPANIC/LATINO: 11%
MULTIRACIAL: 17%
WHITE: 46%



COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS

Social Media:

- Facebook Page: **1.3K followers**
- Facebook Private Group for CASA volunteers: **53 members**
- Instagram: **840 followers**
- YouTube: **66 subscribers**

(no funds were spent to attract or gain "likes" or followers on any of CASA SHaW's social media platforms).

All social media accounts saw growth in followers, subscribers, and members over the fiscal year (except the Facebook Private Group; we had 3 individuals leave that group). CASA SHaW deleted its Twitter account after internal discussion about the altered state of the platform, not reflecting the values of our mission and nonprofit.

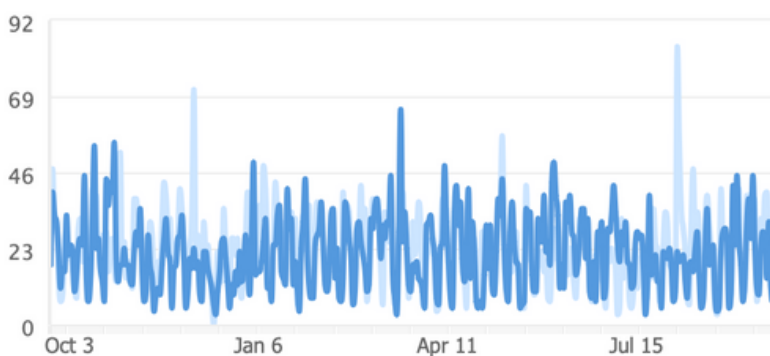
The **CASA Connection** podcast continues to be a key part of the outreach plan of action. New episodes uploaded once every two weeks and focuses on education and awareness surrounding the world of foster care. The podcast is hosted by Tracey Heisler and Jeff Warren. A number of guests were part of the podcast including CASA volunteers and staff members. The CASA Connection can be found on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, iHeartRadio, Podbean, and Amazon Music.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS

CASA SHaW Family Video Series: Through a grant provided by the Lowell Johnson Foundation, we began laying the foundation for family video series, housed on our YouTube channel. This video series is a resource intended for both resource and biological caregivers to utilize to learn more about child development and other issues that face foster youth.

Email contact: **1,395 individuals are subscribed** to the CASA SHaW email list. **31 total email blasts** that consisted of monthly newsletters, updates, and funding appeals throughout the fiscal year.

Website traffic over the past year remained steady.





COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS

Communications-based collaboration with CASA of NJ and other CASA programs in the network to help enhance our programs' collective PR and marketing efforts.

Ellen Davis volunteered to head up the informal CASA of New Jersey statewide PR/Marketing group that meets monthly. Jeff Warren also participates, and helps to generate social media graphics for the statewide network to utilize on a monthly basis. CASA SHaW believes that sharing resources within the network will only benefit the foster youth we serve.

The Executive Director appeared on a number of radio shows throughout the year on WNJR to discuss various issues surrounding foster care as well as fundraising initiatives.



RACIAL EQUITY & INCLUSION TRAINING AND OUTREACH

Advocate Amanda Gilliam joined the CASA SHAW staff as inaugural Director of Diversity and Inclusion in February. Charged with developing and operationalizing SHAW's diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy, she takes a visionary approach that is decarceral, centers racial justice, and is rooted in community care and well-being.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data is critical to understanding disproportionality and disparity within our organization, the communities we serve, and society at large. Robust data collection and review enables us to identify systemic inequities, set baselines, and measure progress toward our goals. Reflecting our commitment to intersectional analysis, this year we began exploring ways to collect demographic data on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE), and disability. Having this data will enable us to identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth in both our advocacy for children and organizational culture.

Advocate Meetings

Trust is key to advancing our DEI priorities. Engaging authentically, openly, and often with SHaW community members nurtures a culture of inclusion where people are heard and valued. Amanda has been meeting with advocates 1:1 since March to talk about their experiences and share ideas for additional education, support, and development. These meetings have proven invaluable: by sharing actionable feedback on our current DEI initiatives, as well as identifying areas where we can strengthen our impact, our advocates help drive decision-making that is both timely and impactful within and beyond our organization and the children that we serve.



RACIAL EQUITY & INCLUSION TRAINING AND OUTREACH

Redesign and Board approval of DEI plan

Using insights gleaned from ongoing data collection, 1:1 advocate meetings, as well as a review of current program materials, the Director of Diversity and Inclusion introduced a revamped DEI plan for Board approval this spring. Holistic, intersectional, and data-informed, the updated plan addresses inequity within our organization and provides strategies to interrogate and disrupt the systems of oppression that affect the children we serve. Specifically, the plan establishes mechanisms to improve talent recruitment and retention practices, enhance education and training opportunities, and increase supplier diversity in the organization. To drive accountability to and advocacy for the people we serve, the plan prioritizes building authentic relationships with community partners, consistently and genuinely engaging people with lived experience, and strengthening connections to those within the broader child welfare system committed to eliminating the racial disproportionality and disparate outcomes experienced by children of marginalized identities.

Aspirations and overall goal

The urgency of the moment, and build upon the leadership in this air.

Whether you are a supporter, a stakeholder, a donor, an advocate, a board member, or a staff member, we all have a role to play in advocating for children in the foster care system. Thank you for all that you do to help us move CASA SHaW's mission forward as we seek to serve every child who needs an advocate. In the words of Mary Mead, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." That's who we are, and that's what we do.