



2020-2021

ANNUAL REPORT

PREPARED BY



www.casashaw.org

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Fiscal Year 2020-2021 was a challenge for many of us. This past year, the COVID-19 pandemic altered the future of not only our program, but other New Jersey-based CASA programs within our network as well, particularly from a fiscal standpoint. You, our partners in this work, stepped up and allowed us to continue to serve every eligible child in out-of-home placement within Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties. We could not have done it without you.

Overall, I am very happy to report that the FY 2020-2021 was a great year for CASA SHaW. Our volunteers, staff, and Board of Trustee members produced positive results to further our child advocacy mission. I hope that as you read through this report and see the magnitude of the work being done, you will be as moved as I am by the dedication of those in our tribe who seek to Give Every Child a Chance (#GECC) and to be the voice for vulnerable children in our community. I want to thank you, too, for your ongoing support for the work we do. Together, we make a difference. I, like you, am dedicated to changing a child's story.

- 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 FINANCES

A LOOK AT THE FINANCES

Overall Expenses, 2020-2021: \$522,856

Funding Streams:

Government: **75%**

Foundations/Corporate: **6%**

Fundraising: **4%**

Individuals donors: **10%**

In-kind donations: **5%**

Where Funds Raised Were Directed:

Programming: \$436,855, **84%**

Administration: \$26,143, **5%**

Fundraising: \$59,858 (director of development; fundraising costs)
11%

OUR LATEST NUMBERS

CASA SHAW COURT ADVOCACY

TOTAL NUMBER OF
CHILDREN SERVED

139

CASA VOLUNTEERS
ASSIGNED

85

CASES CLOSED

45

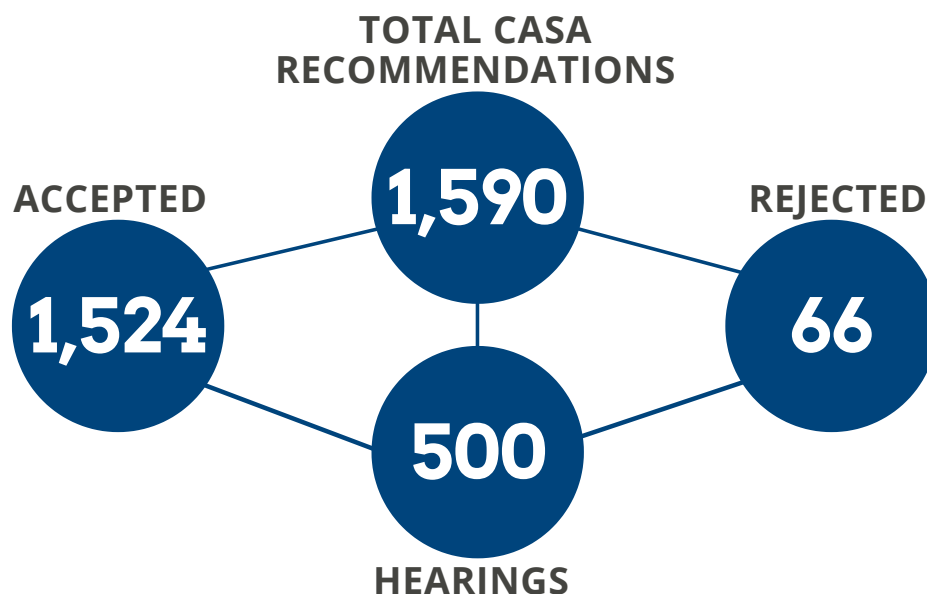
TOTAL NUMBER OF
CASA SHAW
VOLUNTEERS

130

PLUS:
CASA SHAW
TRAINED 30 NEW
VOLUNTEER
ADVOCATES.

OUR LATEST NUMBERS

CASA VOLUNTEER DATA



96% OF RECOMMENDATIONS ACCEPTED BY THE COURT.

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

WHILE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC PROVIDED INCREDIBLE HURDLES FOR OUR TUTORS OVER THE PAST FISCAL YEAR, THIS PROGRAM WILL CONTINUE TO BE UTILIZED IN THE FUTURE FOR FOSTER CHILDREN OF ALL AGES DUE TO ITS SUCCESS IN PREVIOUS YEARS.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS

Social Media:

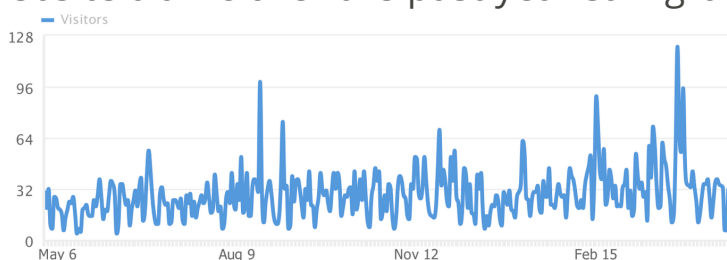
- Facebook Page: **1,074 likes**
- Facebook Private Group for CASA volunteers: **47 members**
- Twitter: **1,168 followers**
- Instagram: **641 followers**
- YouTube: **43 subscribers**

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

19 videos were generated over the past year including the Healing HeARTS gala. Videos were generally interview style and recorded over Zoom that focused on an array of issues within the foster care system.

Email contact: **1,346 individuals are subscribed** to the CASA SHaW email list. **44 total email blasts** that consisted of monthly newsletters, updates, and funding appeals throughout the fiscal year.

Website traffic over the past year saw gradual growth





COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS

Press releases: 15 total on subjects ranging from racial equity, supporting federal childcare funding legislation, CASA SHaW information sessions, issues within the foster care realm, new board members, new office move, etc.

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

On-air television appearances via Comcast Newsmakers were halted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Executive Director was invited on and appeared on a number of radio shows throughout the year on WNJR.



DIVERSITY AND RACIAL EQUITY OUTREACH

Annually, and FY 2020-2021 was no different, CASA SHaW has trained our advocates, staff, and child welfare partners about systemic bias, the impacts of trauma, and the profound, lifelong impacts of poverty and disenfranchisement. We are committed to listening, to learning, and to fighting for equality.

CASA SHaW completed our 8-months long racial equity circles for board, staff, and volunteers with a focus on the African American experience.

Annie Murray of Califon, a CASA volunteer since 2016, said “the racial equity group was of great benefit in giving me insight into my own prejudices and sense of entitlement. I have grappled with the issue of race much of my life and been aware of how racial prejudice can destroy people and communities. But these sessions gave me an opportunity to investigate my own biases. The readings were excellent and the discussions were stimulating. I was especially impacted by the book, *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson.”

The idea behind the racial equity circles is that if individuals take time to understand one another's experiences in an intimate and respectful way, CASA's volunteers will be better advocates for the foster children served. As a result of racial equity circle's success, CASA SHaW will be holding racial equity circles this coming Fall that will specifically focus on the Asian-American experience within our communities.



SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Throughout FY 2019-2020 CASA SHaW filled children and family requests for items through the Connie Fund. CASA SHaW provided food, diapers, wipes, toys, and technology during the pandemic. This totaled \$24,575.

Art auction donations were welcomed and a wonderful way to come together during a difficult year. While the pandemic impacted fundraising, the art auction in the spring of 2021 raised \$15,757 while friends of CASA SHaW donated \$12,000+ in artwork.

Child visits were completed regularly. CASA SHaW volunteers and staff maintained contact with schools, parents, therapists, doctors, and other community-based stakeholders.

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 who we are, and that's what we do.