

City of Lawrence
Social Service Agency
Bi-annual Report
2013

Reports on activity should be submitted electronically to Casey Toomay, Budget Manger at ctoomay@lawrenceks.org. Reports on activities from January to June are due on July 15th. Cumulative reports on activities from January through December are due on February 15th.

Agency Name:

Reporting period:

January - June
(deadline July 15)

January - December
(deadline February 15)

1. Give a brief narrative of the activities that were funded with City funds over the reporting period checked above.

92 abused and neglected children from 57 family groups were served by 50 CASA volunteers from January 1, 2013 through June 30, 2013. Children served during this time period included 56 girls and 36 boys. These children included the following age ranges: ages 0-5: 33; ages 6-11: 36; ages 12-15: 11; ages 16-17: 11; age 18: 1. A volunteer training class was held in February/March and 7 new volunteer advocates were trained; a second training class for new volunteers was held in June, and 6 volunteer advocates were trained during the summer session. During the first half of 2013, 16 children achieved permanency when their Child in Need of Care cases closed. 10 children were adopted, 1 was placed with a legal guardian, and 5 were reintegrated with a parent.

City funds were used toward training costs for new volunteers and helped support a child/advocate match for 17 new children served during this time period, while providing support for volunteers to continue serving 75 children who were already on our case load. City funds were also utilized to provide and/or promote numerous in-service training workshops for volunteers, with topics ranging from Mental Health First Aid, Stop Gap, Domestic Violence workshops, CASA Day at the Capitol, Book Discussion (*The Center of Everything* by Laura Moriarty), Childhood Poverty, Roundtable Discussion, Strengthening Families Ambassadors Training, Trauma Informed Advocacy and Brain Development; Healthy Moms, Happy Babies – Domestic Violence Impact; Autism Spectrum Disorders; Court Teams for Infants and Toddlers. The staff also participated in Fostering Futures facilitator training via National CASA as they prepare to offer this new curriculum to volunteers serving older youth in the fall. 6 hours of annual in-service training is mandatory for all CASA volunteers to maintain their certification.

2. Provide specific detail (and supportive documents, if needed) to demonstrate progress made toward your goals/objectives.

Our 2013 CASA program objectives included: 1) Child safety; 2) CASA/Child stability; and Child permanency.

- 1) Our goal of 95% of children assigned a CASA volunteer will not experience substantiated abuse or neglect in 2013 has been met so far this year. 100% of children served during this time period remained safe and did not experience a recurrence of abuse or neglect while in care.
- 2) Our goal of 90% of children served by Douglas County CASA will remain with the same CASA volunteer throughout 2013 was achieved. 1 child did have a change of CASA volunteer during this time period, but the overall goal of stability in CASA assignment was achieved.
- 3) Our goal of 90% of children whose cases close will not re-enter the local jurisdiction of the court as a child in Need of Care within 2 years was achieved. 100% of CASA children who achieved permanency in this time frame remained in safe, permanent homes, with no instances of recidivism reported.

3. How have you impacted the citizens of Lawrence?

As advocates for our community's most vulnerable children, Douglas County CASA volunteers have had a tremendous impact on 92 abused and neglected children during the first half of 2013. By monitoring their safety and advocating for their medical, educational, emotional and permanency needs, our volunteers have facilitated more court-ordered services and better outcomes for children ranging from birth to age 18. These efforts have made a positive impact on our community as we strive to protect and nurture children whose parents are unable to provide this support. Facilitating safe, permanent homes for children has a positive impact on our entire community.

Another important impact on the community was the leadership role that Douglas County CASA assumed to coordinate and host meetings to plan collaborative local activities for National Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month in April. Thanks to this collaboration, 300 "Pinwheels for Prevention" were planted at City Hall, the Douglas County Courthouse, and on the KU campus, and City and County proclamations recognized April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month. In addition, this collaboration led to the training of nearly 50 Strengthening Families Ambassadors to reward positive parent-child interactions throughout the community and increase awareness of child abuse prevention resources and supports, including the Five Protective Factors. This collaborative effort led from the CASA office ultimately resulted in the formation of an official task force: the Douglas County Child Abuse Prevention Task Force, which now has 32 members, including diverse agencies such as CASA, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Success by Six, Headquarters, United Way, the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, the District Attorney's Office, StopGap, the Douglas County Child Development Association, KVC, FYI, TFI, the Lawrence Public Schools, and many more.

4. What barriers, if any, have you encountered?

The most significant barrier has been the steady and substantial increase in the number of child abuse and neglect cases reported in our community, which has prompted a crucial demand for more CASA volunteers. There were 72 new Child in Need of Care (CINC) cases filed in Douglas County District Court in 2011, and there were 110 new CINC cases filed in 2012. This reflects a 52% increase during the past year alone. Mid-year in 2013, there have already been 73 new CINC cases filed, prompting our family court judge to predict more than 150 new CINC cases by year's end as these CINC court filings continue at a "record pace." There are nearly 50 children on our waiting list for a CASA volunteer. Unfortunately, our current part-time Volunteer Supervisors are all at their maximum staff-to-volunteer ratio mandated by the National CASA Association. To train more volunteers to serve more children, we must increase staff hours and find the additional dollars to do so.

5. Review the line-item budget you provided in your application. How much of your allocation has been spent?

We have received half of our \$25,000 annual allocation from the City, and we have spent the \$12,500 that was distributed to our agency this spring.