



2015 Social Service Funding Application – Non-Alcohol Funds

SECTION 1. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Legal Name of Agency: Douglas County CASA, Inc.
Name of Program for Which Funding is Requested: General Program Support
Primary Contact Information (must be available by phone 5/23/14 and 5/30/14 from 8 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)
Contact Name and Title: Diana Frederick, Executive Director
Address: 1009 New Hampshire, Suites A&B, Lawrence, KS 66044
Telephone: 785-832-5172 Fax: 785-856-1279
Email: dfrederick@douglas-county.com

SECTION 2. REQUEST INFORMATION

- A. Amount of funds requested from the City for this program for calendar year 2015: \$25,000
- B. Will these funds be used for capital outlay (equipment or facilities?) No. If so, please describe: NA
- C. Will these funds be used to leverage other funds? No. If so, how: NA
- D. Did you receive City funding for this program in 2014? If so, list the amount and source for funding (i.e. General Fund, Alcohol Fund, etc.): Yes. We will receive \$25,000 from the City General Fund in 2014.
1. How would any reduction in city funding in 2015 impact your agency?
Any reduction in our current funding would reduce the number of children (0-18 yrs) served by our CASA program. The additional assistance our agency provides to children for clothing, shoes and other essential support would also be diminished. At a time when the need for our services has substantially increased and other funding sources are precarious, any reduction in city funding would be devastating. National CASA funding was cut 63% in 2012 and this prior level of funding has not yet been fully restored at the federal level, making local financial support more important than ever before. Our grant funding from the Kansas Attorney General's Office (Crime Victims Assistance Fund) is also questionable for 2015 due to state budget concerns. The current number of abused and neglected children on our waiting list for a CASA volunteer is higher than it has been in nearly a decade, and a reduction in City funding would cause this number to increase even more. The impact on our community's most vulnerable children would be significant. Reports of child abuse and neglect have steadily increased in Lawrence and Douglas County and the rising number of Child in Need of Care cases in our district court have reflected this increase.
2. If you are requesting an increase in funding over 2014, please explain why and exactly how the additional funds will be used:
We are not requesting an increase in funding over 2014 due to projections of limited 2015 City funds.

SECTION 3. PROGRAM BUDGET INFORMATION

- A. Provide a detailed budget for the proposed program using the following categories: personnel (list each staff position individually and note if new or existing), fringe benefits, travel, office space, supplies, equipment, other.

Estimated 2015 Budget:

Personnel	(payroll & taxes)	\$186,451
1.0 FTE Executive Director (existing)		\$51,774
1.0 FTE Administrative Assistant (existing)		\$29,400
.8 FTE Advocate Coordinator (existing)		\$26,958
.62 FTE Adv. Coord. (existing)		\$21,283
1.0 FTE Adv. Coord. (existing/expanded)		\$33,787
.25 FTE Development Director (new)		\$10,000
Payroll taxes		\$13,249

Fringe benefits	\$35,740
Health Insurance	\$35,000
Workers Comp	\$740
Travel (staff training, workshops, conferences)	\$3,750
Office space	\$29,840
Rent	\$24,000
Utilities & Maintenance	\$ 5,840
Supplies	\$7,000
General office supplies, printing & postage	\$7,000
Equipment	\$5,029
Copier/Fax/Postage Meter Rental	\$1,706
Office equipment, phones, software, furniture	\$3,323
Other	\$45,013
Professional fees (accounting, licensing)	\$5,282
Memberships & Insurance	\$4,431
Kids Clothing, Shoes & Scholarship Funds	\$13,600
Volunteer Training & Appreciation	\$4,500
Outreach & Fundraising (Vol. Recruit, Events)	\$17,200
TOTAL	\$312,823

B What percent of 2014 program costs are being requested from the City? 8%

C Provide a list of all anticipated sources of funding and funding amount for this program in 2015:

ESTIMATED 2015 INCOME

GRANTS	\$172,323
United Way	\$34,050
Douglas County	\$45,500
City of Lawrence	\$25,000
Other grants	\$67,773
(Crime Victims Assistance Fund, Permanent Families Fund, Douglas County Community Foundation, NCASA, Children's Justice Act, Rice Foundation, Shumaker Family Foundation)	
FUNDRAISING	\$92,000
Mail Solicitation & Special Events	\$92,000
DONATIONS	\$43,500
Kappa Alpha Theta	\$6,500
Board & Miscellaneous Donations	\$37,000
OTHER	\$5,000
Interest income	\$5,000
TOTAL	\$312,823

SECTION 4. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM / NEED TO BE ADDRESSED BY PROGRAM

- A. Provide a brief statement of the problem or need your agency proposes to address with the requested funding and/or the impact of not funding this program. The statement should include characteristics of the client population that will be served by this program. If possible, include statistical data to document this need.

Child abuse and neglect are ongoing problems in the Lawrence community and throughout the nation. At least 900,000 children are abused or neglected each year in the United States, and an estimated 1,740 children die at the hands of those who ought to be their fiercest protectors. In Douglas County, there were 1,973 reports of child abuse and neglect in FY2013, and 65,421 reports in Kansas. Every year in our community, dozens of children are removed from their homes due to abuse and/or neglect, and placed in DCF protective custody as a Child in Need of Care (CINC). As a result, these children are thrust into foster care or other placements while the court and social service systems decide their future. These children are among the most vulnerable in our community, and they rely on the support of a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) to assure their safety and long-term care. Children who were identified as abuse victims in the past are 94.6% more likely to suffer further maltreatment compared to children who were not victimized previously. A CASA volunteer carefully monitors the child's continued safety, ensures their medical and educational needs are met, and that thoughtful, informed decisions are made regarding the child's future, including a safe, permanent home.

The number of abused and neglected children in our community varies from year to year, but the recent recession and related stressors on parents are linked to a marked increase in the number of abused and neglected children in Douglas County who are in need of a CASA volunteer. In 2013, our agency served 112 children with the following demographics: 68 girls, 44 boys; age groups included 46 children from birth to age 5; 39 children from ages 6 to 11; 14 children from ages 12-15; 13 youth from ages 16-18. Substance abuse by one or more parents is typical in these cases and the rise in meth labs and meth use in the Lawrence area, and abuse of prescription drugs, are linked to an increase in child abuse and neglect. Domestic violence and mental illness are also prevalent family issues. Most children served by CASA are from low-income families. As of May 1, 2013, our volunteers have already served 84 children so far this year and there is currently a waiting list of more than 60 children who are in need of a CASA.

The requested city funding will allow our agency to recruit, train and supervise community volunteers to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children from birth to age 18 who are under the protection of our court system. This funding will also support our child clothing fund and special aid for other critical needs. As the number of children who need a CASA volunteer continues to increase, a decrease in city funding would be especially devastating to our agency. The ultimate goal of CASA agencies nationwide is to provide a CASA volunteer for every Child in Need of Care, but increased funding is required to serve more children and eliminate local waiting lists.

- B. How was the need for this program determined?

Child abuse and neglect are long-term, ongoing tragedies on both a local and national level. The need for CASA programs was determined on the national level by Seattle Judge David Soukup in 1976. From the bench, Judge Soukup recognized the unique challenges confronting child victims of abuse and neglect and the limitations he faced in getting sufficient facts to make appropriate decisions regarding their long-term welfare. As a result, Judge Soukup developed an idea that changed judicial procedure and thousands of children's lives: train community volunteers to serve as Court Appointed Special Advocates, or CASAs, to represent the best interests of abused and neglected children in the courtroom and beyond. There are now nearly 1,000 CASA programs nationwide, including 23 in Kansas.

The need for our local program was first determined by District Court Judge Jean Shepherd in 1991. Judge Shepherd, now retired, identified a crucial need for a CASA program to serve Lawrence and Douglas County and this need prompted her to establish our CASA program 23 years ago. The constant influx of new abuse and neglect cases every year in our community clearly demonstrates the ongoing need for our local CASA program. Judges, attorneys, child welfare workers and parents overwhelmingly report that CASA volunteers make a difference with the children they serve. Douglas County District Court Judge Peggy Carr Kittel affirms the local need for CASA volunteers and regularly requests a CASA for Child in Need of Care cases in our community.

- C. Why should this problem/need be addressed by the City?

Protecting the rights and safety of abused and neglected children is one of society's most fundamental obligations and is crucial for a healthy, vibrant community. All children should be raised in healthy and nurturing homes, free from abuse and neglect. The safety and well-being of children in our community is an important responsibility of our City and is essential to maintaining and enhancing the quality of life in the Lawrence

community. Children who are the victims of child abuse and neglect lack adequate parental support and must rely on the assistance of our community for their safety, education, medical care, and the ultimate goal of a safe, permanent home.

Child abuse is associated with a range of other risks, including juvenile delinquency, suicide, unemployment, lost productivity to society, and poor school performance. By helping to reduce time spent unnecessarily in foster care, reducing recidivism, and increasing safety, CASA programs can reduce child welfare costs and help break the cycle of abuse and neglect in our community. Child advocacy by CASA volunteers ultimately strengthens our community, improves neighborhood quality, and facilitates excellent service delivery.

D. How does the program align with the Community Health Plan (see page one)?

The child advocacy provided by Douglas county CASA directly aligns with the Community Health Plan for our City's most vulnerable children. Our volunteers constantly monitor the child's health and safety in a variety of ways.

Access to Healthy Foods – Many children who enter DCF custody have a history of malnourishment and some have eating disorders due to abuse and neglect. CASA volunteers monitor the child's weight (especially babies who have had "failure to thrive"), and any special dietary needs. CASA volunteers make recommendations in court reports regarding additional services needed to assure a healthy diet and weight for their CASA kids.

Earlier this year, our AmeriCorps Member organized a Healthy Foods program for CASA kids and volunteers, with leadership from a Merc staff member who brought food charts and food samples for the children to enjoy. We provide healthy snacks when children spend time in the CASA office with their volunteer. We serve children with a wide range of dietary concerns, including diabetes, Celiac's disease, lactose intolerance, failure to thrive, food allergies, anorexia, bulimia, and childhood obesity. CASA volunteers make every effort to assure the child's dietary needs are recognized and addressed appropriately by foster parents and other service providers.

Access to Health Services – CASA volunteers monitor their CASA child's KanBeHealthy screenings and report any lapses to the court. CASA volunteers make sure their child is current on dental and vision screenings, physical exams, and immunizations. They also monitor their medications. This medical oversight is crucial as children in foster care change placements frequently, and there can be lapses in treatments, screenings, and medication due to the change in the child's locale, which often brings a change in their primary healthcare provider. CASA volunteers monitor the child's health needs and make recommendations in their court reports regarding related needs and services.

Mental Health – Children served by CASA have suffered the trauma of abuse and neglect, creating a need for individual therapy, play therapy, family therapy, psychotropic medications, and other mental health treatments to help the child cope with these traumas. Our volunteers interact with the child's therapist, and even recommend therapy in their court reports as needed. In addition, our CASA staff and volunteers have participated in the Bert Nash "Mental Health First Aid" classes offered in the Lawrence community. Mental health issues are prevalent in the families of children served by CASA, and in the children themselves. Youth served by CASA have mental health concerns ranging from PTSD, bi-polar disorder, reactive attachment disorder to suicidal and self-harming behaviors. Our CASA volunteers must be trained to be sensitive to these issues and to monitor and respond to related concerns.

Our AmeriCorps Member has just completed a draft of our new Medical Advocacy resource manual for CASA volunteers that addresses physical and mental health concerns, screenings, well-child care, and much more.

Physical Activity – Our CASA program provides summer scholarships for CASA kids and other at-risk children in the community to participate in a variety of summer camps and activities – many of which focus on physical activities. Examples include football, soccer, volleyball, softball and basketball camps. Others include dance, swim lessons, and a variety of activities sponsored by the Lawrence Parks and Rec Department. Without financial assistance from this scholarship fund (major funding provided by the Ethel & Rice foundation), these children in foster care and from other low income, at-risk situations would not be able to participate. These activities are important for a child's physical health and self-esteem.

Poverty and Jobs – CASA volunteers who work with older youth serve as their unofficial - and sometimes official, state certified - educational advocates and do all they can to assure the youth graduate from high school or obtain their GED. CASAs also work with youth on their independent living skills and network with KVC case managers to assure that all efforts are made to help the youth transition to independent living and find employment or continue with higher education. We have utilized the NCASA "Fostering Futures" program to assist with this support for older youth. However, there is still a great need in our community to help former foster youth find housing and employment to help them escape the cycle of poverty and abuse prevalent in many of their families. We support StopGap's efforts to address this need in Lawrence.

SECTION 5. DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM SERVICES

A. Provide a brief description of the service you will provide and explain how it will respond to the need you

identified in Section 4. The description should include how many clients will be served, and should describe as specifically as possible the interaction that will take place between the provider and the user of the service.

Douglas County CASA recruits, screens, trains and supervises volunteers to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children who have been placed in protective custody. Most children served by CASA reside in foster care or with a relative until they are adopted or another safe, permanent home is finalized. These children often have multiple, complex problems resulting from the abuse they have endured. Some have serious medical conditions and physical disabilities that present additional challenges. These children require special attention to ensure that all of their needs are met and they find a safe, permanent home. CASA provides a stable, caring advocate for these vulnerable children to assure their safety and long-term care.

CASA volunteers are assigned to just one child or sibling group at a time, allowing them to focus individual attention on the child's unique situation and needs. A CASA volunteer provides a critical supplement to the efforts of social workers and other professionals with huge case loads and insufficient time to devote to each child.

Our agency will provide advocates for an estimated 100-125 abused and neglected children in 2015. Each child will be assigned a Court Appointed Special Advocate who will provide the following support:

- 1) The volunteer will complete an independent examination or investigation of the child's situation, including relevant history, environment, and needs of the child. The volunteer will network with foster parents, teachers, lawyers, social workers, therapists, doctors, lawyers, biological family members, various professionals, and other adults involved in the child's life. These assessments decrease the likelihood of further abuse or neglect. The CASA volunteer will also develop a one-on-one relationship with the child, spending time with the child on a weekly or monthly basis, serving as a friend, mentor and advocate.
- 2) The volunteer will identify resources and services for the child and facilitate a collaborative relationship between all parties involved in the child's case, helping facilitate a situation in which the child's needs can be met. The CASA volunteer makes sure the social welfare system provides services to meet the child's physical, educational, medical and emotional needs.
- 3) The volunteer will advocate for the child's best interests. This includes relaying important information to the court and making recommendations concerning where the child should live and what the ultimate permanency goal for the child should be. CASA volunteers submit monthly reports to their CASA supervisors, and provide an average of 3-5 official court reports to the Judge each year, with factual information, observations, and recommendations. The volunteer also communicates the child's wishes to the court.
- 4) The volunteer will monitor court-ordered services to the child and family members to ensure progress is being made and services are comprehensive and appropriate. The volunteer reports any observed non-compliance to the judge.

A CASA volunteer brings stability to the life of a child by staying involved with the child until the case is completed, and the child has a stable, safe place to live.

The positive results achieved by providing a Court Appointed Special Advocate are affirmed via the National CASA Association. Children served by a CASA volunteer are less likely (9%) to reenter the child welfare system compared to those not served by a CASA (16%). In addition, children with a CASA volunteer are less likely to spend time in long-term foster care (13.3%) than those without a CASA (27%). Children with CASA volunteers may receive more court-ordered services because of the volunteer's detailed knowledge of the child's circumstances. These services can be more carefully targeted so that service dollars are used more effectively. (National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association National Statistics 2011)

- B. What other agencies in the community are providing similar types of services. What efforts have you made to avoid duplication or coordinate services with those agencies?

Douglas County CASA is the only agency in our community to provide volunteers to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children in the court system. Collaboration and coordination are ongoing activities and goals of our agency, and our service includes cooperative relationships with KVC, DCF, Citizen Review Board, DCCCA, Bert Nash Mental Health Center, Big Brothers Big Sisters, GaDuGi, Willow Domestic Violence Center, the Lawrence Community Shelter, StopGap, the United Way and the Roger Hill Volunteer Center, Success by Six, the Shelter, USD 497, and other local social service programs and agencies. CASA staff members participate in team meetings involving local court, school and social service professionals to assure our efforts enhance and complement other community efforts and do not duplicate existing services. CASA staff participate in monthly Family Centered System of Care (FCSC) and MultiDisciplinary Team (MDT) meetings to collaborate on issues that affect at-risk youth in our community and to formulate specific response plans for children in crisis. Collaboration via the United Way also includes coordination with other United Way Community Partners under the Health Goal and new community collaboration via the Douglas County Child

Abuse Prevention Task Force. Our leadership role in the task force has included uniting diverse agencies for outreach and awareness efforts on child abuse prevention, utilizing Pinwheels for Prevention and the five protective factors. One of our new collaborative projects under the United Way health goal is a partnership with GaDuGi SafeCenter to provide CASA volunteers to lead "Talking about Touching" presentations in Lawrence elementary schools – sharing information about general safety; safe, appropriate physical contact; and what to do if a child experiences unwanted contact. These programs are done with a school counselor present.

SECTION 6. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Please provide three specific program objectives for 2015. Objectives should demonstrate the purpose of the program and measure the amount of service delivered or the effectiveness of the services delivered. A time frame and numerical goal should also be included. Examples include, "75% of clients receiving job training will retain their job one year after being hired," "increased fundraising efforts will result in a 15% increase in donations in 2015," "credit counseling services will be provided to 600 clients in 2015," etc. **Applicants will be expected to report their progress toward meeting these objectives in their six-month and annual reports to the City.**

1. **Child safety:** 95% of children assigned a CASA volunteer will not experience substantiated abuse or neglect in 2015. - Children should not experience recurrence of abuse or neglect, especially while under court jurisdiction. Safety of children is the primary focus of the Child in Need of Care system. While additional monitoring by the CASA reduces the risk of recurrence of abuse and neglect, it does not eliminate the risk entirely. Safety is defined as no recurrence of abuse or neglect while under the jurisdiction of the court. Abuse or neglect is defined as DCF substantiated cases.
2. **CASA stability:** 90% of children served by Douglas County CASA will remain with the same CASA volunteer throughout 2015. - Stability in CASA assignment: △ Provides a sense of security for the child, especially for those who may change placements repeatedly during their time in the child welfare system. A familiar CASA assigned to the child provides the child with someone they can trust during a very chaotic and challenging time in their life. △ Reduces further losses for the child. △ Ensures the CASA has an understanding of the child's needs and background, allowing the CASA to make quality recommendations to the court and to keep others aware of the child's history and its impact on the present. △ Is vital for the CASA to advocate for the best interest of the child.
3. **Children will remain in safe, permanent homes:** 90% of children whose cases close will not re-enter the local jurisdiction of the Court as a Child in Need of Care (CINC) within two years. - The jurisdiction of the Court should remain in place until children are placed in safe, stable and permanent homes. Recidivism is defined as the re-entry of a child into the jurisdiction of the Court as a Child in Need of Care within two years of the close of their original case. Advocacy by the CASA volunteer helps ensure that children are placed in safe, permanent homes and the court case does not close until the child's situation is stable.