



# Court Appointed Special Advocates of New Hampshire

Striving to protect every abused child's right to grow up in the embrace of a loving family.

CASA

New Hampshire



Since 1989, CASA of New Hampshire has protected the right for our state's abused and neglected children to live, learn, and grow in the embrace of a loving family. Our trained volunteer advocates (Guardians Ad Litem – GALs) speak for children's best interests in 80% of the abuse cases that come to New Hampshire's family court system, providing an invaluable service to the state.

## Better Outcomes

With thousands of children going through the New Hampshire court system every year, the state cannot provide the same quality of advocacy that CASA does. Because CASA volunteer advocates represent just 1 or 2 cases at a time, they can give the sustained, personal attention every abused child deserves. They become experts on each child's best interests and present a unique child-centered perspective to family court judges. Better informed judges can then make better decisions for children, resulting in better outcomes. Studies have shown CASA children are:

- More likely to be adopted.
- Less likely to re-enter foster care.
- More likely to perform better in school.



I was in foster care since I was 8 months old. Many people wanted to help me. People were always coming and going. My CASA, Denise, was the one person who was with me from beginning to end. After eight years I finally got my forever family. I was adopted in August. I am thankful for all the people that helped me, but I am especially thankful for Denise.

– Zachary, age 9

You are laying the groundwork to make life much better for children and families you will never meet. When you help solve one person's problem, you make it possible for us to prevent those problems from affecting countless other people and children. The value of your work is extraordinary.



– Gov. Maggie Hassan

## Cost Effective

Paid attorney Guardians Ad Litem bill the state at a rate of \$60/hour. If New Hampshire were to rely solely on paid GALs as it had before CASA existed, it could not afford to provide the same quality, personalized advocacy. Every year:

- More than 400 citizen GALs volunteer with CASA.
- They provide more than 55,000 advocacy hours.
- New Hampshire saves more than \$3 million.

## Valued By Judges

New Hampshire's judges appreciate and value CASA volunteer Guardians Ad Litem for their consistent, unbiased perspective, but it has not always been that way. When the organization first started in the state, CASA volunteers were not welcome in every courtroom. Many judges believed that non-attorney, citizen advocates could not effectively perform in the emotionally charged and legally complex world of family law. Gradually, case by case, CASA's staff and trained GALs built a reputation of rock-solid dependability. Word spread that volunteer GALs could respectably represent the best interests of vulnerable children. Today NH's Child Protection Statute requires the courts to give preference to CASA GALs over paid GALs.