

Macon County CASA



2024 Annual Report



Macon County CASA advocates for the best interest of children who have been abused and neglected who are in the custody of the state of Illinois and under the protection of the Macon and DeWitt County courts.

Helping our community children who have experienced abuse and neglect find safe, permanent homes

By: Blaine Smith, Executive Director

Over the past year, we have served 505 children in our community. That is 505 children that have the support and advocacy they deserve while they are in the care of the state. We currently have over 600 children in Macon County and 45 children in DeWitt County that have experienced abuse and neglect. At CASA, we are able to give them the reliable consistency that is necessary for a child that is frequently feeling the instability of foster care.

In the past year, we have participated in closing out cases for over 100 of the children in our community. It is our responsibility as a community to step up and be the voice the children we serve need and deserve.

During my first year at Macon County CASA, I was privileged to learn about the staff and the children we serve. We are a team of diverse, unique, and passionate people. During staff meetings, we discuss why CASA is our choice and how important it is to us. To me CASA represents chances, safety, change, support, and more. As a former foster parent that struggled with the constrictions placed upon children in care, I knew that I wanted to be in a position to make change. At CASA, we make change happen for the children we serve. These children deserve to have the support and consistency that CASA provides. I am excited and ready for what the future looks like at CASA and how we can support the children in our community that have been abused and neglected by the people they trust the most.

2023 Nonprofit of the Year Finalist



Macon County CASA was honored to be a finalist at this year's Decatur Chamber of Commerce Awards.

Pictured: Gailan Leeds, Nick Hand, Blaine Smith, CaSandra Blockton, Dave McCroskey, and Gussie Reed.



Executive Director, Blaine Smith, and Program Manager, CaSandra Blockton attended the Metro Decatur Black Chamber of Commerce inaugural Martin Luther King, Jr. Gala.



Thank you to the Decatur Regional Chamber of Commerce for this award!

Change a child's story!

Become a Volunteer Advocate



CASA hosts multiple trainings annually for community members to learn about the needs of the children we serve and how they can help support these children. If you are interested in becoming a CASA volunteer advocate, go to

www.maconcountycasa.org/volunteer.



Macon County CASA proudly recognizes 6 of our amazing CASA Volunteer Advocates on their nomination for the 2023 - 2024 Governor's Volunteer Service Award. Presented by the Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service, these awards recognize individual volunteers through a statewide award program to highlight the importance of volunteerism and community service in the State of Illinois.

Though every one of our advocates is extraordinary and unique in their own right, today we would like you to please help us give a special shout of congratulations to our 2023 - 2024 nominees for their dedication and commitment to their CASA children



and helping them find their way to safe, permanent, loving homes.

- Tracey Albert - 2 year Advocate.
- Nathan Cardinal - 2 year Advocate.
- Sandy Dunn - 5 year Advocate.
- Jodi Lockwood - 4 year Advocate.
- Lenda Munson - 1 year Advocate.
- Melissa Wolfe - 4 year Advocate.

The Children We Serve

404 Children
Served in 2021

493 Children
Served in 2022

505 Children
Served in 2023

247 Children still
NEED an
Advocate

19 New Volunteer
Advocates trained

685 Children in
Care in Macon &
DeWitt Counties

Community Support *& the Impact it has on CASA*





At Macon County CASA, we are blessed to have the support of the community. We want to send a special thank you to all that support us in advocating for the children in our community that have experienced abuse and neglect. Under the direction of the board of directors, Macon County CASA is a responsible steward of all funds that support the work done at CASA in our community. If you would like to donate and support the children we serve, go to:

www.maconcountycasa.org/giving/#donate

Thank you to:

Carol Cooley

Brinkoetter

Realtors

Andreas

Foundation

Heritage

Foundation

Macon County

Mental Health

Board

DeWitt County

Mental Health

Board

DCFS

United Way

Macon County Board of Directors



Pictured above: Matt Jedlicka, Ryan Campbell, Gussie Reed, Blaine Smith, and Eldon Conn

A special thanks to Gussie Reed and Lee Morthland. We acknowledge their unwavering commitment and tireless passion for making a difference in the lives of local foster children over the past 7 years, inspiring hope and optimism for an even brighter future for our community's most vulnerable members.



Pictured above: Lee Morthland, Blaine Smith, and Gussie Reed

Board of Directors

President Eldon Conn

Vice President Matt Jedlicka

Treasurer, Ryan Campbell

Secretary, Temethia Joyner

Compliance, Dave McCroskey

Caryn Eisert

Ret. Judge Thomas Little

Shauna Mays

Patrice Meals

Baily Saulsbery

Dr. Sandy Yockey

How can you help a child find a safe, permanent home? Join us for the upcoming CASA “Home for the Holidays” Gala! Get your tickets at

www.maconcountycasa.org/gala/



YOU'RE INVITED

Home for the Holidays

- G A L A -

Presented by:
Macon County CASA

Will be Held :

BEGINS
6PM

ON DECEMBER 7TH
DECATUR CLUB
158 W PRAIRIE AVE, DECATUR IL

Tickets On Sale NOW!

\$50 PER PERSON OR \$400 FOR A TABLE OF 10



CASA
Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN
MACON COUNTY CASA

How CASA change's a child's story:

Jennifer Born, a CASA advocate since June of 2019, has been working with a non-verbal and non-mobile, medically complex youth placed in a care facility since February of 2020. This child is aged 17 years old and while he is non-verbal, he is always in good spirits, making sure his feelings are made aware of by his facial expressions and grunting noises. His CASA advocate describes him as a typical teenage boy. Jennifer and the youth in care have a great relationship of support and care. The care facility where he is placed have active communication with Jennifer, who is able to be his voice and advocate for things to improve his quality of life. Jennifer has recently helped to advocate for a continuous glucose monitor for his new diagnosis of type 1 diabetes, continued passive motion physical therapy to assist in

reducing overall injury, a new wheel chair to accommodate his growth, and stable placement in his care facility past the age of 18.

Macon County CASA has aided and assisted with 19-year-old Abby, in various ways. Initially, when this case was opened in 2019, Abby was frustrated with life as it was her call to 911 when she witnessed her parents fighting that led to her and her 8 siblings being removed from the home. She would fight a lot and had no desire to attend school regularly. Abby continued to meet with CASA twice a month and was able to help her to understand the importance of not taking her anger out on people. In addition, CASA encouraged her to attend school on a consistent basis and to strive for good grades. As a result of Abby's relationship with being compliant with scheduled meetings with CASA, not only has she graduated high school, but she is now in her second year of college at Millikin University. Abby continues to make time to meet with CASA and share her successes as a student.*

**all names of children served have been changed to protect privacy*

“If you can help a child, you don't have to spend years repairing an adult.”

For more information, contact us!

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Blaine Smith

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