



CASA of Mercer was established in 2000, and merged with Burlington County in 2011, enabling more children to receive support. Our mission is to train and supervise community volunteers, appointed by the Family Court, to advocate for the best interest of children who have been removed from their homes due to abuse and neglect. Our dedicated volunteers strive to ensure the emotional, physical and educational well-being of these children while they reside in foster homes or residential treatment facilities. The ultimate goal of our volunteers is to help establish a safe, stable and permanent home for each child we serve.

In the fiscal year that concluded in June 2019, CASA of Mercer and Burlington Counties served 448 children, recruited, trained and supported 278 volunteers, participated in 77 speaking engagements and held 57 information and training sessions for those interested in learning more about becoming a CASA volunteer. In the last 12 months, 47% of the new cases referred to us for support are for children infant to 5 years old.

We are the *only* organization that advocates directly with and for children in each county who have been taken away from their homes due to abuse and neglect. Children who are referred to our organization for a CASA volunteer have often experienced trauma. Our highly trained volunteers ensure that our children do not fall through the cracks of an overburdened court and child protective system. Because our volunteers stay with their child until the child is in a safe and permanent home, the volunteer is often the single consistent adult throughout the child's foster care experience. We take our mission very seriously and have the expertise to recruit, train, screen and supervise volunteers who pay close attention to each child's unique situation and needs, to see that appropriate services and care are delivered.

Support of our work allows CASA to provide vital services to the growing number of children in foster care who very much need the voice, the advocacy and support that our volunteers provide.