



Fact Sheet

What is the condition of child abuse & neglect in Georgia and in Hall and Dawson Counties?

- ◆ 132 children died from abuse and neglect in 2014: 30 in Hall County and 5 in Dawson County
- ◆ Everyday, 33 children are the victims of confirmed abuse or neglect.
- ◆ Over 220 incidents of child abuse and neglect are reported daily.
- ◆ Over 12,700 children are in the legal custody of the state at any one time.
- ◆ In 2016, Hall-Dawson CASA Program served 644 Abused and Neglected children, of that number, over 200 of these children remain in foster care.

What is federal and state law concerning CASA?

- ◆ Federal law requires that a Guardian ad Litem (GAL) or a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) or both be appointed in all cases of child abuse or neglect.
- ◆ Georgia law includes “Court Appointed Special Advocates” and/or attorneys as Guardians ad Litem for children in Juvenile Court dependency proceedings.

Why is CASA so important?

- ◆ Many workers in the child welfare system, including lawyers, social workers and judges, are often too overburdened to give urgent attention to each child who enters the massive system. A CASA Volunteer is an independent advocate and provides individualized attention for each child.

What is the CASA Volunteer's role?

- ◆ A CASA Volunteer gathers information about the child's situation, attends court proceedings, and makes a recommendation to the judge so that the judge has the information to make a decision about the child's future.
- ◆ The CASA Volunteer advocates for the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child.
- ◆ In 2016, Hall-Dawson CASA had 95 Volunteers who spent over 26,000 hours and drove over 103,000 miles to advocate for the abused and neglected children in our community

How many CASA programs exist?

- ◆ 46 CASA programs exist in Georgia, serving 148 counties in 48 of the 49 judicial circuits.
- ◆ Hall and Dawson Counties make up the Northeastern Judicial Circuit.
- ◆ Over 900 CASA programs exist throughout the United States.

How successful is CASA?

- ◆ In Georgia during 2016, 2,312 CASA Volunteers served 10,248 children.
- ◆ Nationwide, there are over 689,000 CASA Volunteers.
- ◆ Since CASA was founded in the nation in 1977, over 2 million children have been served.
- ◆ About 65% more children are in need of a CASA Volunteer

How effective is CASA?

- ◆ Research findings indicate that judges often accept the recommendations of CASA Volunteers.
- ◆ Research suggests that children with CASA Volunteers, and their parents, receive the most services.

How does CASA help society?

- ◆ Research demonstrates that abused and neglected children can overcome their trauma if they rapidly find a safe, permanent home in which to heal. Those who do not often experience school failure, joblessness, welfare dependency, criminality, mental illness, and often become abusers themselves. **You** can make a difference in the life of a child by volunteering.