

CASA IMPACT REPORT

FISCAL YEAR
2024-2025



the voice of a child



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA FOR DOUGLAS COUNTY



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



DEAR FRIENDS OF CASA,

This past year has been one of both challenge and resilience. Across our community, we have all felt the ripple effects of economic uncertainty and federal budget cuts that have impacted many vital services—including those supporting children and families. Yet, through it all, one truth has remained constant: **the unwavering commitment of this community to stand up for children who need us most.**

At CASA for Douglas County, we have navigated these challenges together. Despite funding shifts, our volunteers, partners, and supporters have ensured that every child with a CASA Volunteer Advocate continued to receive consistent care, attention, and hope for a better future. Your belief in our mission has sustained us. It has allowed us not only to meet needs, but to find new ways to innovate, collaborate, and grow.

Our Volunteer Advocates have stood strong for children navigating complex systems and uncertain paths. Judges, social workers, and families have continued to rely on the **steady voice of CASA Volunteer Advocates** to make sure each child's story is heard and their best interests remain at the center. Together, we've shown what it means to lead with compassion, no matter the challenge.

While we know the hurdles ahead are real, so is our collective strength. We see it in the Volunteer Advocates who give their time week after week. We see it in the donors and funders who continue to give so generously. We see it in our community partners who lean in to collaborate for the good of every child in Douglas County who needs an amplified voice.

To each of you—thank you. Your steadfast support fuels our work and reminds us that hope is stronger than hardship. Because of you, children in Douglas County are seen and heard through some of life's most difficult moments. Together, we will continue to advocate fiercely, adapt boldly, and stand firm for children in Douglas County. **This work is not transactional; it is transformational,** shaping lives and futures in ways that last a lifetime.

With gratitude and hope,

Kimberly C. Barnes

Executive Director, CASA for Douglas County

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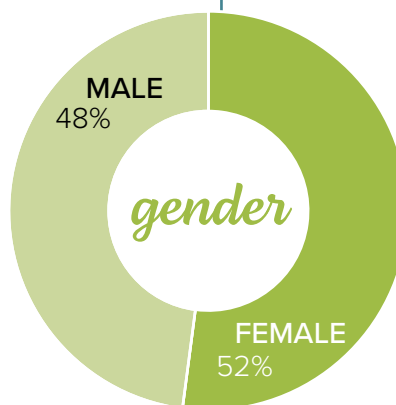
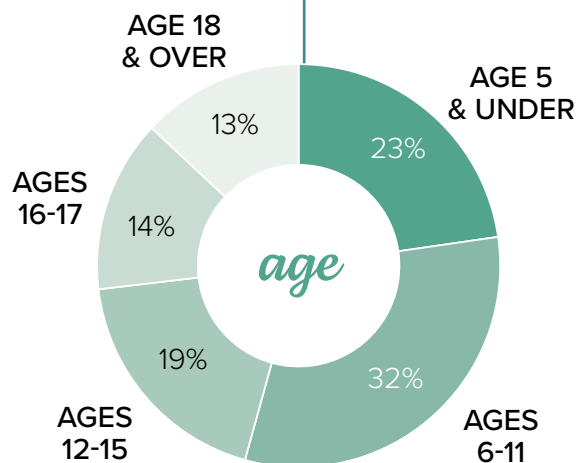
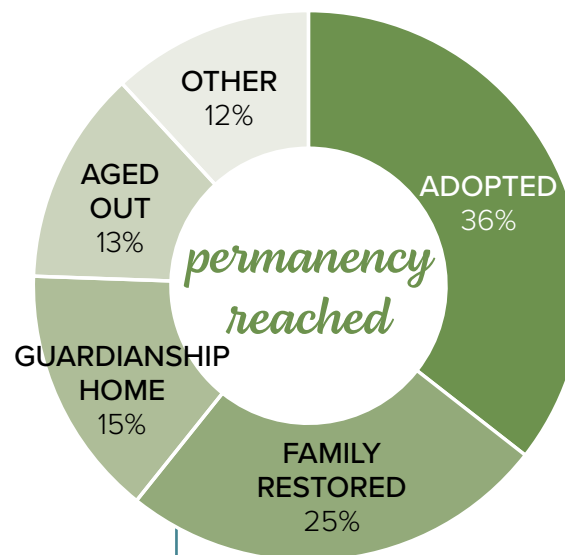
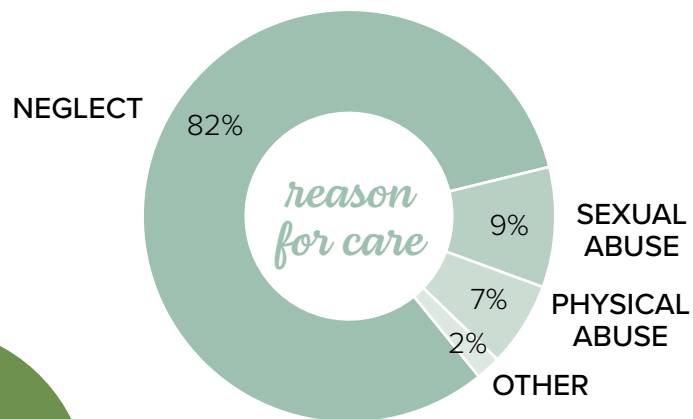
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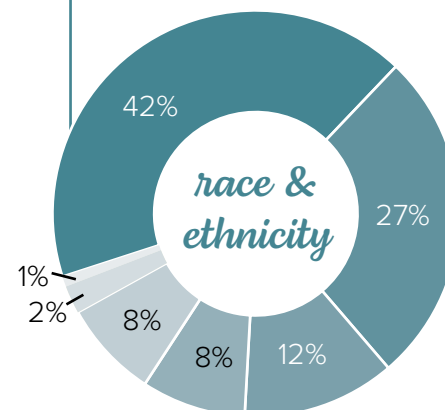
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children



by the numbers

- AFRICAN AMERICAN 42%
- CAUCASIAN 27%
- MULTI-RACIAL 12%
- HISPANIC/LATINO 8%
- NATIVE AMERICAN/ALASKAN 8%
- ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER 2%
- OTHER/NOT SPECIFIED 1%



WHO
WE SERVE

361
CHILDREN

SERVED BY

164
VOLUNTEER
ADVOCATES

A PICTURE OF IMPACT

Meet Jayde*—a resilient, determined young woman and a graduate of Omaha Public Schools. In May of 2025, Jayde walked across the stage with her classmates, an incredible milestone

made even more meaningful by the path she took to get there.

Just a year and a half prior, Jayde experienced a traumatic event. The aftermath left her struggling, both emotionally and academically. She stopped attending her mainstream school and was failing all her classes. **It was clear that Jayde needed more than the traditional educational path could offer.**

Recognizing this, Andrea Kemp (Jayde's CASA Volunteer Advocate) and the CASA Volunteer Coordinator worked persistently for her to enroll in a school that could better meet her emotional and academic needs. **With the right environment and support, she began to thrive.** Jayde was able to get caught up with her coursework and graduated on time.

Jayde is naturally reserved and initially declined to take senior photos, but then she shared that she

wanted to step outside her comfort zone and take part in the tradition. Andrea was there every step of the way, even picking her up from school to ensure she was ready. When Jayde needed a new outfit for pictures, Andrea didn't hesitate.

That small act of care made a big difference. Jayde was glowing with confidence and pride during the shoot, which was generously donated by Dave Uhlig of PhotoOmaha. The photos turned out beautifully, but more importantly, Jayde said it was "the best day." Her joy and pride in herself were unmistakable and were a powerful reminder of why CASA does this work.

Jayde's journey is a testament to the power of advocacy, community, and believing in a young person's potential—even when they can't yet see it themselves. We are so proud of Jayde and can't wait to see what she does next!



Photo ©
Dave Uhlig

connection

CASA YEAR IN REVIEW

5
VOLUNTEER
ADVOCATES
SWORN IN

4TH
ANNUAL CASA
CLASSIC GOLF
TOURNAMENT

6
VOLUNTEER
ADVOCATES
SWORN IN

24TH
ANNUAL
NATIONAL
ADOPTION DAY

100s
OF HOLIDAY
GIFTS GIVEN TO
CASA KIDS

Q1

Q2

AMPLIFY CHANGE

When Tyler Blaser accepted his CASA case in 2025, he stepped into the life of Anthony*. Anthony was a teenager facing profound instability. This young person had experienced multiple foster home placements, parental relinquishment, and the emotional weight of depression and anxiety. By the time Tyler met him, the teen rarely left his room and often withdrew from those around him.

From the beginning, Tyler showed unwavering patience and commitment. **Each month, he invited Anthony to go out to eat—offering a simple outing as an opportunity to build trust.** Each time, the teen said yes, only to retreat back into his room when Tyler arrived. Instead of expressing frustration, Tyler adapted. He sat with him, talked with him, and remained a steady, judgment-free presence.

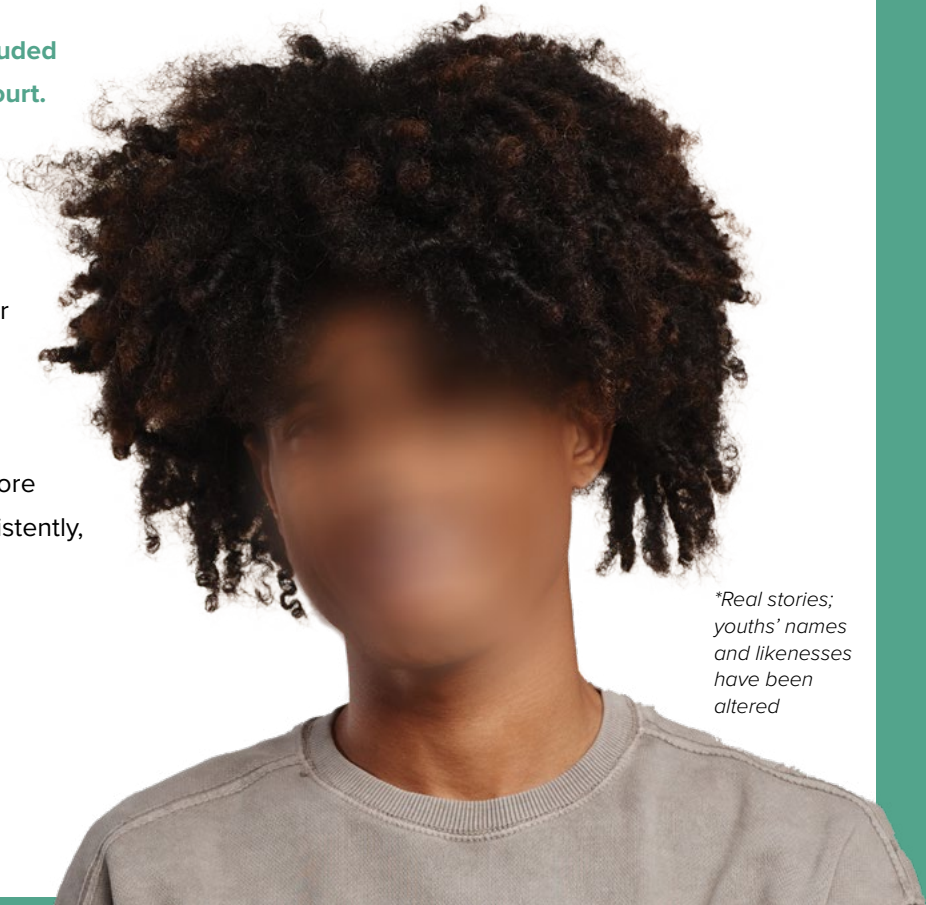
After months of quiet persistence, something shifted. Anthony finally agreed to join Tyler for lunch. He picked a local sandwich shop, and for the first time, the two shared a meal outside the home. It was a small moment with enormous meaning: a step toward connection and confidence.

Tyler’s advocacy also included amplifying the youth’s voice in court.

In a multidisciplinary team meeting concerning abuse that Anthony had endured, they discussed the teen’s mental health needs and identified a potential therapist. Tyler immediately reached out to the therapist, and they were able to meet the very next day. Since then, the teen has begun leaving his room more often, taking his medication consistently,

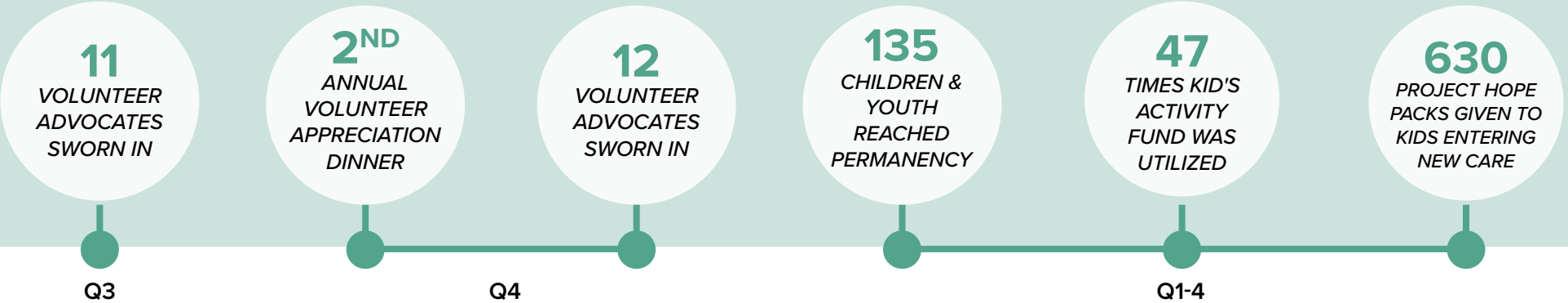
and engaging in daily routines he had previously struggled with.

Thanks to Tyler’s persistence, compassion, and advocacy, this young person is beginning to reclaim stability, hope, and a sense of self.



**Real stories; youths’ names and likenesses have been altered*

connection



volunteer

advocates

34

New Volunteer Advocates who completed training and were sworn in

164

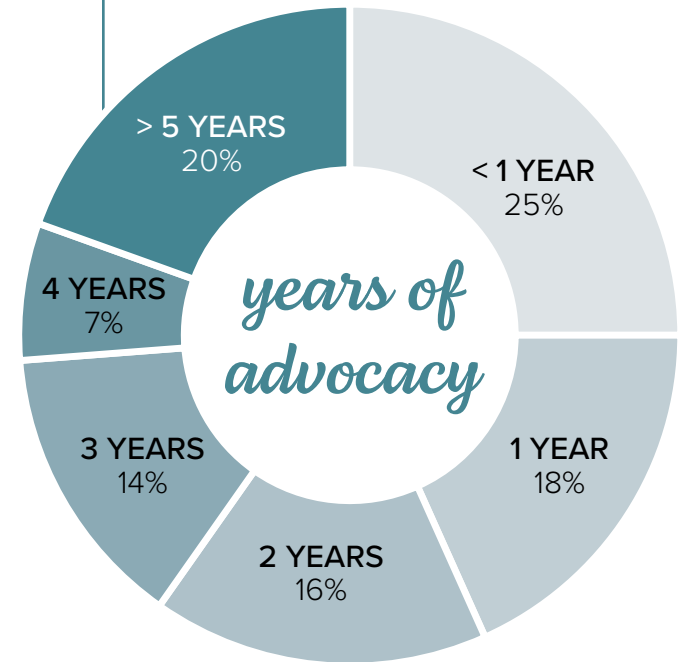
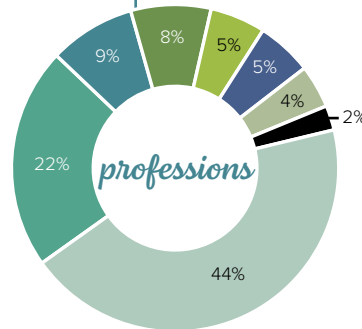
Total number of active Volunteer Advocates at CASA for Douglas County

972

Hearings attended by Volunteer Advocates to amplify the voice of a child

AMPLIFY
VOICES

- BUSINESS PROFESSIONALS 22%
- MEDICAL PROVIDERS 9%
- EDUCATORS 8%
- SOCIAL WORKERS 5%
- LEGAL PROFESSIONALS 5%
- GOVERNMENT OR MILITARY 4%
- MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS 2%
- OTHER OR UNKNOWN 44%



CASA OF THE YEAR
Tim Nissen



TEAMWORK AWARD
Nicole Rosenau



10 YEARS OF SERVICE
Mary Lynn Schwietz



CASA OF THE YEAR
Anna Wastell



15 YEARS OF SERVICE
Barb Shoemaker



20 YEARS OF SERVICE
Michaela Skogerboe

Our success is built on the compassion and dedication of people—community members—who are willing to step up and advocate for a child when it matters most.

53

COMMUNITY
EVENTS ATTENDED
& PRESENTATIONS
GIVEN

3

OMAHA
COMMUNITY
PARADES
WALKED IN

340

PROJECT
HOPE PACK
VOLUNTEERS

10

ONEWORLD
SMILES MOBILE
VISITS

23

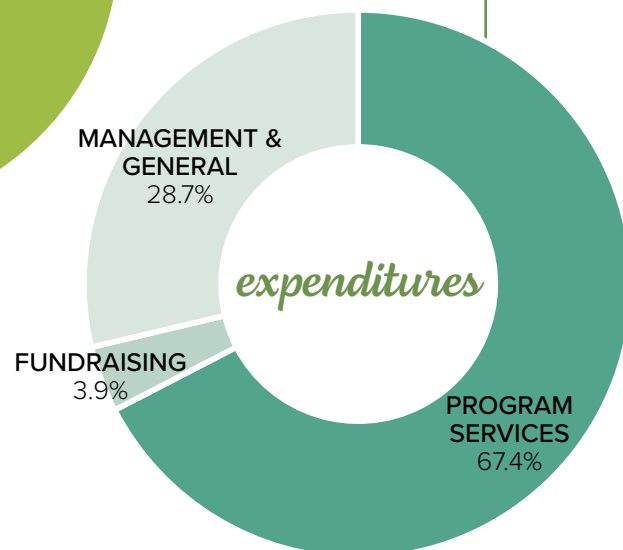
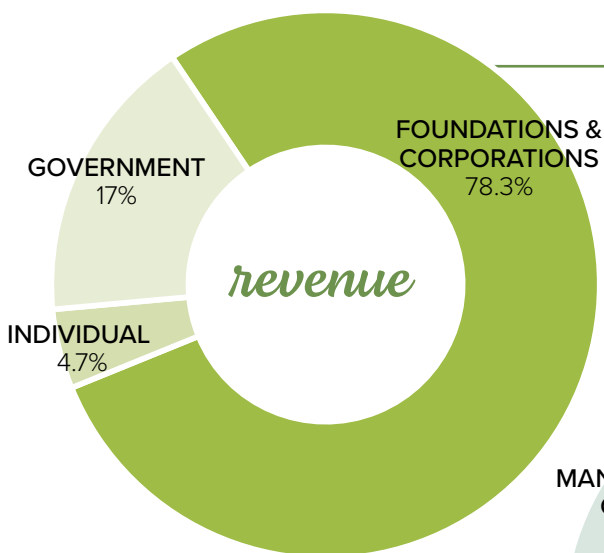
VISION EXAMS
OVER 3 DAYS WITH
THE CHILDREN'S
NEBRASKA
VISIONMOBILE



PARTNER OF THE YEAR

 **Children's**
NEBRASKA

community & funds



"COST OF A CASA:

\$1,509

PER YEAR TO PROVIDE A
CASA VOLUNTEER TO HELP A
CHILD NAVIGATE THEIR WAY
TO A PERMANENT HOME."

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RESOURCES
IN,
IMPACT
OUT



FISCAL YEAR **CASA IMPACT** 2024-2025 **REPORT**

OUR MISSION

Train, empower, and inspire
Volunteer Advocates to make a
lasting difference in the lives of
children impacted by the
child welfare system due to
abuse and/or neglect.

C

A

S



Scan here to find CASA
for Douglas Co. online

OUR VISION

To provide a CASA Volunteer
Advocate to every child in
foster care who needs one.



A



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA FOR DOUGLAS COUNTY

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**AMPLIFYING THE
VOICE OF THE
CHILD SINCE 1998**