



Hello!

My name is Elaine Meeks. I am proud to serve as the Chair of the Board of the Montana CASA/GAL Association.

The mission of Montana CASA/GAL Association is to support, develop, expand and unite local CASA/GAL programs so they can maximize their effectiveness while advocating for Montana's abused and neglected children.

Our vision is to give every abused and neglected child in Montana the opportunity to thrive in a safe, loving permanent home. The Board of Directors is singularly focused on meeting our mission for the children of Montana needing services of a CASA advocate.

A CASA/GAL (Court appointed special advocate/Guardian ad litem) is a highly trained volunteer appointed by a Montana district or tribal judge to advocate for the best interests of a child who has been placed in foster or kinship care due to abuse and/or neglect. The CASA provides the judge with regular reports containing critical information regarding the child's situation.

Although there are 16 local CASA programs in judicial districts across the state, CASA services are still needed in many places throughout Montana. Each local program has many CASA volunteers working for the children. The CASA is often the most stable relationship the child has during the time they are removed from their parents and home. The CASA can bring security and non-judgmental love to the child while working in partnership with parents, social worker, teachers, and physicians to help ensure the best outcomes for the child and ultimately support reuniting the child in a safe and permanent home.

Prior to my election as Board chair, I spent many years as an educator and administrator. In 2014, I became a Court Appointed special advocate and began the work of advocacy for abused and neglected children in my community. I learned first hand how important this work is; in supporting physical and emotional health in children and affecting positive long-term outcomes. I am privileged to lead such an important effort with the MTCASA/GAL Board of Directors - a dedicated team of people working on behalf of Montana's abused and neglected children.

I urge you to visit our website montanacasagal.org or contact our Executive Director April Sommers at april@montanacasagal.org to learn more about our organization and how we are working to meet our mission.