

Judges weigh in

CASA advocates make a difference! New Jersey State Judges weigh in on the CASA of New Jersey program and The National CASA/GAL Association for Children provides significant facts regarding the important role of the CASA advocate.

CASA of New Jersey recently asked CIC (Children in Court) Judges and other judges who have presided over CIC cases in the past 5 years to participate in a survey designed to elicit their satisfaction with the CASA of New Jersey program. According to Glen A. Grant, J.A.D, Acting Administrative Director of the Courts, New Jersey Courts, "judges regard CASA volunteers as playing a positive role in CIC cases and that, overall, judges are satisfied with the CASA programs."

Fifty-five judges participated in this survey. A summary of their results show:

- 83% rated their relationships with CASA advocates "very good" the highest rating
- 82% were "extremely satisfied" the highest rating

Judges listed the following factors as contributing to their overall satisfaction with CASA advocates:

- insight, perspective and a wealth of information not otherwise available
- accessible, knowledgeable
- genuine concern for the children
- dedicated, go above and beyond mere advocacy
- have hearts for service
- are very dedicated and hard working

One judge opined, "I have a great deal of admiration for CASA volunteers." While another judge stated "we need more volunteers. I would like to see every child in placement have a CASA."

In late 2020 The National CASA/GAL Association for Children reviewed a range of independent academic studies to evaluate the effectiveness of best interest advocacy and the CASA/GAL network. Their results indicated that:

- a child with a CASA has significantly less placements than a child without a CASA,
- a child with a CASA is significantly less likely to reenter the child welfare system, in fact, the proportion of reentries is reduced by half,
- when a child is appointed a CASA a higher number of services are ordered , and
- a child with a CASA is more likely to have better outcomes.

These are significant results that solidify our belief that we are making a difference in the lives of children here in the State of New Jersey.

Links to both articles for you to read further:

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226468212>;

<https://bergencasa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Results-of-2020-CASA-of-New-Jersey-Judicial-Survey.pdf>

We are Changing a Child's Story, each and every day.