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# Role of Local Programs



*National Leadership Council Approved April 6, 2018*

Consistent with the National CASA mission and core model, local programs:

In partnership with National CASA, the State CASA/GAL Organization and the local judiciary, provide a sound organizational framework to recruit, screen, train, supervise, support and retain court appointed special advocates (CASAs/GALs). These volunteers advocate for the best interests of children and youth who come into the judicial system as a result of abuse or neglect in their jurisdiction so that every child can be safe, have a permanent home, and the opportunity to thrive.

*To that end, the role of a local program is to deliver the following as related to best-interest child advocacy:*

## **Support Volunteers to Advocate for the Best Interests of Children Who Have Experienced Abuse and Neglect**

- Mandate that child safety is a priority
- Make recommendations for access to culturally-appropriate, therapeutic, age-appropriate, developmental, educational, medical and mental health services for each child to begin healing from their trauma
- Make recommendations to judges in regards to the appropriateness and safety of temporary placements
- Ensure each child has an adequate advocacy plan for normalcy, permanency and the opportunity to thrive
- Advocate for the child's best interests within the judicial system while maintaining confidentiality as prescribed by law
- Know the community resources, understand the children's needs and work to meet those needs
- Ensure that advocacy is provided for all aspects of the child's life

## **Raise Awareness**

- Raise community awareness of child abuse and neglect issues

- Raise community awareness of the program's mission
- Provide education to the community, to include local and Tribal officials and state legislators, regarding CASA/GAL's role
- Create a positive presence in the community served
- Protect the CASA brand

### ***Interact Effectively within the Judicial System and Community***

- Create and maintain positive relationships within the judicial system and community stakeholders
- Educate judges on the role of CASA/GAL volunteers
- Understand and meet the judges' expectations of the CASA/GAL volunteers
- Ensure that all CASA/GAL staff and volunteers are advocating in compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)
- Build a rapport with other local child welfare stakeholders including State and Tribal child welfare agencies

### ***Recruit, Screen, Train and Support Volunteers***

- Train thoroughly screened volunteers according to National CASA/GAL research-informed curriculum and training standards
- Recruit, support, and celebrate diverse volunteer advocates who reflect the community served
- Ensure volunteers are effectively supervised
- Ensure volunteer advocates receive continuing education to expand their knowledge of those issues and practices that impact the children we serve

### ***Ensure a Program with a Strong Foundation***

- Be compliant with National CASA/GAL standards and existing State standards for quality assurance and reporting requirements
- Work actively and collaboratively with National CASA to support and achieve the mission of the CASA/GAL network
- Promote the value of CASA/GAL volunteers by demonstrating the ability for one person to make a tremendous impact in a child's life
- Build, maintain, and grow relationships with funders to secure diversified and sustainable funding

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- Know the trends of child abuse within the jurisdiction and surrounding areas and use this data to inform growth plan and strategies
  - Continuously evaluate the effectiveness and stewardship of the program's efforts and resource
  - Establish a case management system to maintain information and activities for reporting to National CASA/GAL, state and national entities
  - Collaborate and cooperate with other CASA/GAL programs including state programs and National CASA/GAL to increase the number of children served
  - Recruit a diverse and effective board/governing body, volunteers, and staff
  - Generate the necessary resources for program operations and sustainability

**EFFECTIVE DATE: September 25, 2018**

**APPROVED BY: Tara Perry**

**TITLE: Chief Executive Officer**