



ABOUT CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Child victims of abuse and neglect **experience a range of Adverse Childhood Experiences** that lead to physical and emotional traumas. Children served by CASA are ages birth to 18.

Ohio law requires that all child victims of abuse and neglect be appointed a Guardian ad Litem (GAL) – and CASA volunteer **GALs advocate in court for the child's best interests.**

In addition to suffering abuse and neglect, many of the children served by CASA GALs **experience other forms of victimization**, such as child sexual abuse/assault, sex trafficking, homelessness, and domestic and/or family violence.

WHAT DOES A GUARDIAN AD LITEM DO?

GALs work one-on-one with the child – meeting with them at least monthly, supporting and helping the child overcome emotional and physical challenges manifesting from abuse and neglect – **and making a difference!** Upon completing the free new volunteer training, the GAL is equipped with knowledge and skills to:

- **Investigate** the situation, environment and relationships of the child and the reported abuse/neglect.
- **Advocate** and make fact-based recommendations to the court on custody, placement, visitations, and services to further help the child and family.
- **Facilitate** those resources and services to best serve each child's individual needs and circumstances.
- **Monitor** others involved to ensure recommendations, court orders and plans are in place and followed.

REQUIREMENTS TO BE A CASA VOLUNTEER GAL INCLUDE:

- Must be at least 21 years old.
- Pass a screening process and background check.
- Complete 45 hours of volunteer training (over several weeks).
- Take 12 hours continuing education annually.
- Serve an average of 10-15 hours a month.
- A two-year volunteer commitment to maintain continuity for the child served as on average, **GALs spend 25 months with an assigned child** before the case is closed.



A child with a CASA volunteer is less likely to:

- Abuse substances
- Commit child abuse as an adult
- Commit violent crimes
- Repeat grades
- Become incarcerated

A child with a CASA volunteer is more likely to:

- Achieve permanency
- Be adopted
- Perform better academically & behaviorally
- Have significantly higher levels of hope
- Get more help while in the system

CASA and Friends ... together making a positive impact on child victims of abuse and neglect.

<https://casa.franklincountyohio.gov/Volunteer/>

<https://www.friendsofcasafranklincountyohio.com>