

GLENN A. GRANT, J.A.D.
Acting Administrative Director of the Courts

Richard J. Hughes Justice Complex • P.O. Box 037 • Trenton, NJ 08625-0037 njcourts.gov • Tel: 609-376-3000 • Fax: 609-376-3002

September 17, 2020

Ms. April Aaronson
Executive Director
Court Appointed Special Advocates of New Jersey, Inc.
77 Church Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

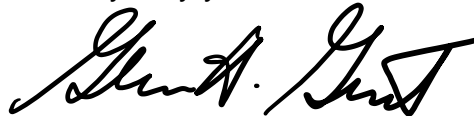
Re: Results of 2020 CASA of New Jersey Judicial Survey

Dear Ms. Aaronson:

Enclosed are the results of the survey that CASA of New Jersey asked us to distribute to all current Children in Court (CIC) judges and any judges that presided over CIC matters within the past five years. The survey was designed to elicit from the CIC judges their level of satisfaction with the CASA program and with the volunteers who serve the family courts throughout the state. Fifty-five judges responded to the survey and the attached results represent the aggregate of the responses. As agreed, no individual judge has been identified in the results. The survey responses indicate that judges regard CASA volunteers as playing a positive role in CIC cases and that, overall, judges are satisfied with the CASA programs. I trust that the information provided in the survey will be of assistance to you.

Thank you for the support your organization continues to provide to the Judiciary. Please contact Family Practice Assistant Director Joanne Dietrich at 609-815-2900, ext. 55350 or Family Practice Chief David Tang at 609-815-2900, ext. 55371 if you have any questions concerning this matter.

Very truly yours,



Glenn A. Grant, J.A.D.

Attachment

cc: Steven D. Bonville, Chief of Staff
Jennifer M. Perez, Director, Trial Court Services
Joanne M. Dietrich, Assistant Director, Family Practice
Special Assistants to the Administrative Director
David Tang, Chief

Questions 1 through 9 ask for demographic information about your service to the Judiciary as a Children-In-Court Judge. Please note these questions are not mandatory. Any responses provided will be aggregated and used solely for the purposes of evaluating and improving CASA’s programming.

1. What is your gender identity?

Answer Choices	Number	Percent
Female	24	44%
Male	28	52%
Gender non-conforming	0	0%
Prefer not to answer	2	4%
Prefer to self-describe:	0	0%
Total Number of Judges that Responded	54	100%
Blanks	1	

2. What is your age? (please skip if you prefer not to answer): _____

Age	Number
44	1
46	2
53	1
54	1
55	3
56	5
57	2
58	4
59	2
60	4
61	4
62	1
63	4
65	1
66	2
67	4
68	1
69	2
70	1
71	1
73	1
74	1
76	1

Total Number of Judges that Responded	49
Blanks	6

3. How do you identify your race? (select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Number
White	46
Black or African American	3
Asian or Pacific Islander	0
Native American or Alaskan Native	0
Prefer not to answer	3
Other (please specify): • Latino	1
Subtotal of Judges that Selected 1 Option	53
Judges that Selected More than 1 Option ('White' and 'Prefer Not to Answer')	1
Grand Total of Judges that Responded	54
Blanks	1

4. Do you identify as Hispanic?

Answer Choices	Number	Percent
Yes	1	2%
No	50	93%
Prefer not to answer	3	6%
Total Number of Judges that Responded	54	100%
Blanks	1	

5. In which counties do you currently (or have you) preside(d) over Children-In-Court matters? (select all that apply)

Answer Choices	Number of Judges that Preside or Have Presided in County	Percent of Judges that Preside or Have Presided in County
Atlantic	3	6%
Bergen	5	9%
Burlington	6	11%
Camden	4	8%
Cape May	2	4%
Cumberland	2	4%
Essex	5	9%
Gloucester	3	6%
Hudson	5	9%
Hunterdon	1	2%
Mercer	4	8%
Middlesex	3	6%
Monmouth	2	4%
Morris	4	8%
Ocean	3	6%
Passaic	2	4%
Salem	3	6%
Somerset	1	2%
Sussex	2	4%
Union	4	8%
Warren	0	0%
Total Number of Judges that Responded	53	
Blanks	2	

6. How long have you been a judge?

Answer Choices	Number	Percent
0 to 1 year	0	0%
1 to 3 years	6	11%
3 to 5 years	9	16%
5 to 10 years	18	33%
More than 10 years	22	40%
Total Number of Judges that Responded	55	100%
Blanks	0	

7. How many years have you been (or were you) a Children in Court Judge?

Answer Choices	Number	Percent
0 to 1 year	10	19%
1 to 3 years	13	24%
3 to 5 years	11	20%
5 to 10 years	14	26%
More than 10 years	6	11%
Total Number of Judges that Responded	54	100%
Blanks	1	

8. In total, how many years have you worked with CASA in your court?

Answer Choices	Number	Percent
0 to 1 year	10	18%
1 to 3 years	13	24%
3 to 5 years	12	22%
5 to 10 years	16	29%
More than 10 years	4	7%
Total Number of Judges that Responded	55	100%
Blanks	0	

9. On average, during the most recent 12-month period that you heard CIC cases, what percentage of your cases had a CASA advocate assigned?

Answer Choices	Number	Percent
0%	3	5%
1%-25%	18	33%
26%-50%	11	20%
51%-75%	14	25%
76%-99%	3	5%
100%	1	2%
Unsure	5	9%
Total Number of Judges that Responded	55	100%
Blanks	0	

Questions 10 through 16 ask for your thoughts on how CASA has played a role in, and how effective they have been with your cases. Please answer these questions based on your general and/or overall experiences with CASA advocates and programs.

10. How often has input from CASA advocates informed your decisions on the following issues?

Issue	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Frequently		Always		Subtotal N	N/A N	Grand Total N
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%			
Placement stability	0	0%	5	9%	12	22%	25	45%	13	24%	55	0	55
Permanency	0	0%	7	13%	13	24%	23	42%	12	22%	55	0	55
Child well-being	0	0%	1	2%	6	11%	25	45%	23	42%	55	0	55
Educational placement and/or services	1	2%	2	4%	13	24%	22	40%	17	31%	55	0	55
Children's mental/behavioral health services	0	0%	6	11%	11	20%	24	44%	14	25%	55	0	55
Children's physical health services	1	2%	5	9%	16	29%	16	29%	17	31%	55	0	55
Safety of children while in placement	0	0%	5	9%	14	25%	16	29%	20	36%	55	0	55
Service provision	0	0%	4	8%	17	32%	22	42%	10	19%	53	2	55
Placement with siblings	0	0%	9	17%	13	25%	18	34%	13	25%	53	1	54
Frequency of visitation with siblings	0	0%	9	17%	15	28%	15	28%	15	28%	54	0	54
Frequency of visitation with family of origin	0	0%	10	18%	14	25%	17	31%	14	25%	55	0	55
Restrictiveness of placement	1	2%	9	18%	18	36%	14	28%	8	16%	50	5	55
Location of placement	5	10%	10	19%	15	29%	12	23%	10	19%	52	2	54
State's written case plan	4	8%	9	18%	21	42%	9	18%	7	14%	50	5	55

11. Please describe any other issues where input from CASA advocates informed your opinions (open-ended):

- Abuse in home of foster parent where children warned not to speak, bitten by resource own vicious dogs causing hospitalization-discovered not by Law Guardian but CASA
- advocates for children within school setting and with school representatives.
- assisting with extra-curricular activities, ESL classes
- Case outline provided to Court.
- Educational issues (Child Study Team ect..)
- Effectiveness of DCPD services
- extra-curricular and summer activities for the child(ren)
- Helping to inform about basic needs
- I consider the input of CASA advocates on all issues in every case.
- I found that CASA worked well with the Division, and all stakeholders - they were an objective voice and their common sense approach assisted me in many cases, in a variety of issues.
- In virtual every instance, I consider the information provided by the CASA in the decisions I am required to make.
- N/A
- n/a
- n/a
- None
- On occasion when the CASA has concerns about a division worker and the service they are providing the family. Also sometimes the CASA will contribute an "outside the box" suggestion which may be very helpful in the case.
- outside services they can refer or provide specific to the needs of the child/children
- Overall compliance ,development and progress with services offered. Relationship building with Casa representative.
- Sometimes the child(ren)'s concerns or wishes expressed to the CASA are somewhat different or more detailed than what the LG relates. This alerts me to ask questions. The same with resource family's circumstances or requests.
- Stability of placement
- Summer programs and assistance with providing lap tops for children. Educational issues are often fleshed out better by CASA than by Division. especially for classified students.
- The CASA volunteers would provide input in every case in which they were involved.
- The child's concerns, fears or adjustment issues.
- They can present an unbiased view of the case. On occasion the law guardian is less informed than the CASA worker about the child's status.
- They were very helpful, particularly when the assigned Law Guardian was not as engaged as they should have been.
- Wide variety of areas depending on the case.

12. How effective are CASA advocates in the following areas? “N/A” means that the option is not applicable because you have not had experience working with CASA on that issue.

Area	Never Effective		Rarely Effective		Sometimes Effective		Usually Effective		Always Effective		Subtotal	N/A	Grand Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	N	
Considering the best interests of children	0	0%	0	0%	2	4%	38	69%	15	27%	55	0	55
Assisting with permanent placement for the child	0	0%	4	8%	12	23%	28	54%	8	15%	52	3	55
Advocacy for educational needs of the child	0	0%	1	2%	3	5%	29	53%	22	40%	55	0	55
Advocacy for physical health/medical needs of the child	0	0%	1	2%	8	15%	24	44%	22	40%	55	0	55
Advocacy for mental/behavioral health of the child	0	0%	2	4%	7	13%	25	45%	21	38%	55	0	55
Advocacy for the safety of the child	0	0%	2	4%	6	11%	23	42%	24	44%	55	0	55
Monitoring the case	0	0%	1	2%	6	11%	25	47%	21	40%	53	2	55
Preparing information for the court (e.g., reports, oral testimony)	0	0%	1	2%	5	9%	18	33%	30	55%	54	1	55
Working with others in the court system	0	0%	0	0%	8	15%	22	42%	22	42%	52	2	54
Working with other stakeholders	0	0%	1	2%	9	17%	25	48%	17	33%	52	3	55
Researching case facts	1	2%	6	12%	7	14%	20	40%	16	32%	50	3	53

13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements

Statement	Strongly disagree		Somewhat disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Somewhat agree		Strongly agree		Subtotal	N/A	Grand Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	N	N
Children and families are better served because of CASA advocate involvement	0	0%	0	0%	1	2%	10	18%	44	80%	55	0	55
The Court is better served because of CASA advocate involvement	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	12	22%	43	78%	55	0	55
The type and quality of information that CASA advocates provide to me is beneficial to my decision making	0	0%	1	2%	2	4%	17	31%	35	64%	55	0	55
The personal knowledge that CASA advocates have about the children on their caseload is beneficial to my decision-making	0	0%	1	2%	1	2%	12	22%	41	75%	55	0	55
CASA advocates make appropriate recommendations	0	0%	0	0%	3	5%	24	44%	28	51%	55	0	55
I assign CASA advocates to the most complex cases	1	2%	1	2%	8	17%	8	17%	29	62%	47	7	54
CASA advocates carry out their work with objectivity	0	0%	0	0%	2	4%	21	40%	30	57%	53	1	54
CASA advocates receive adequate training to prepare them for their advocacy role	0	0%	0	0%	5	11%	18	38%	24	51%	47	6	53
There are sufficient CASA advocates to meet the needs of children in my jurisdiction	4	8%	5	10%	10	20%	13	26%	18	36%	50	5	55

14. Please indicate the extent to which you consider (or have considered) the following factors when assigning a CASA Advocate to a case by selecting the most accurate response for each item.

Factor	Never		Rarely		Somewhat		Usually		Always		Subtotal	N/A	Grand Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%			
Parental incarceration	4	10%	3	7%	13	31%	13	31%	9	21%	42	12	54
Number of siblings	3	7%	4	9%	12	27%	18	41%	7	16%	44	10	54
Instability of current placement	2	4%	0	0%	9	20%	22	48%	13	28%	46	7	53
Number and length of prior placements	2	4%	0	0%	11	24%	17	37%	16	35%	46	8	54
Re-entry after reunification	2	5%	1	2%	9	21%	19	45%	11	26%	42	12	54
Age of the child	3	6%	4	8%	14	29%	13	27%	14	29%	48	5	53
Safety concerns for the child	2	4%	1	2%	9	18%	17	34%	21	42%	50	4	54
Mental/behavioral health concerns for the child	2	4%	0	0%	9	18%	14	28%	25	50%	50	4	54
Physical health concerns for the child	2	4%	1	2%	9	18%	16	32%	22	44%	50	4	54
Educational concerns for the child	2	4%	0	0%	4	8%	16	32%	28	56%	50	4	54
Conflicting case information/highly adversarial parents	3	6%	1	2%	10	20%	10	20%	25	51%	49	5	54
Concerns about implementation of services	2	4%	1	2%	9	19%	17	35%	19	40%	48	6	54
Issues or concerns related to Permanency Plan	2	4%	3	6%	11	23%	20	42%	12	25%	48	6	54
Status of case in relation to Adoption and Safe Families Act	2	5%	5	11%	14	32%	17	39%	6	14%	44	10	54
Case involves extreme neglect	2	4%	3	6%	5	10%	19	39%	20	41%	49	5	54
Case involves severe physical abuse	2	4%	2	4%	5	10%	18	38%	21	44%	48	6	54
Case involves sexual abuse	2	4%	1	2%	9	18%	18	37%	19	38%	49	5	54
Recommendation from child placement review board	6	15%	1	2%	5	12%	15	37%	14	34%	41	12	53
Recommendation from Law Guardian	2	4%	0	0%	3	6%	16	33%	27	56%	48	6	54
Recommendation from DAG	2	4%	0	0%	3	6%	15	32%	27	57%	47	7	54
Recommendation from DCP&P	2	4%	0	0%	5	11%	13	28%	27	57%	47	7	54
Recommendation from Parents' Attorney	2	5%	0	0%	4	9%	15	34%	23	52%	44	9	53

15. What other factors **not** listed above do you consider (or have you considered) a great deal in your decision to assign a CASA advocate to a case (open-ended)?

- ?
- Again, if the LG is not performing satisfactorily. That rarely occurred, except with respect to one particular, LG. As such, the need for CASA volunteers was not as pronounced.
- Age of child, past history with DCPD services/caseworkers
- All out of home children are entitled to a CASA worker
- Any particular needs that I feel CASA could help with.
- Availability of qualified experienced CASAs.
- CASA advocates were assigned in all custody cases.
- CASA volunteer's abilities to assist, evaluate, respond, appear in court and life experience.
- CASA workers were assigned whenever possible, but there is a shortage.
- I always consider the support system the child has in place, as often the CASA is the only stable force who remains with the child from inception to permanency, as caseworkers and law guardians may change over the life of the case.
- I assign CASA to every out of home placement case.
- I think that has covered everything.
- If a child is removed from the home because I have granted the Division Custody, then I always assign a CASA worker.
- List was very comprehensive, I have nothing to add.
- n/a
- n/a
- None
- Our County is fortunate to have a sufficient number of CASA representatives to appoint a CASA in every case when DCPD is granted temporary custody.
- pro se litigants
- Someone to visit and interact with the child. One child in particular has significant medical needs and has been confined to a hospital setting for his whole life. The CASA volunteer has been a godsend - she visits him regularly and consistently and is the only visitor this child has ever had. She also celebrates his birthday and holidays with him, making sure those occasions are marked.
- That covers it.
- The list of factors provided is exhaustive and includes those factors that I typically consider.
- There are more CASA's in [REDACTED] County than cases where the children have been removed from the home. The assignment orders come to me automatically after the main CIC judge or CPRB or the other parties have approved the assignment of a CASA.
- weak caseworker
- What needs will the child have that are not addressed by DCPD or Law Guardian
- when children are potential runaways
- Where case advocate would be a good match for child in hopes a good, strong, possibly mentoring relationship can be established.

16. Please indicate how useful the following activities carried out by CASA advocates are to you as you make (or have made) decisions about cases

Activity	Not at all useful		Slightly useful		Moderately useful		Very useful		Extremely useful		Subtotal	N/A	Grand Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%			
Contact/Interviews with child/youth	0	0%	1	2%	5	9%	17	31%	32	58%	55	0	55
Written reports to the court	0	0%	2	4%	2	4%	20	36%	31	56%	55	0	55
Contact/Interviews with biological parents	0	0%	4	8%	13	25%	20	39%	14	27%	51	3	54
Contact/Interviews with resource parents	0	0%	2	4%	7	13%	23	43%	22	41%	54	1	55
Contact/Interviews with collaterals (e.g., teachers, doctors, neighbors)	0	0%	4	8%	5	9%	20	38%	24	45%	53	2	55
Verbal testimony to the court	1	2%	3	6%	9	18%	20	39%	18	35%	51	3	54
Contact/Interviews with other relatives	1	2%	8	15%	10	19%	21	40%	13	25%	53	2	55
Review of records/documents (e.g., psychiatric evaluations, school reports)	0	0%	4	8%	15	31%	17	35%	12	25%	48	5	53

Questions 17 through 22 ask for information regarding your level of satisfaction with CASA. Please answer these questions based on your general and/or overall experiences with CASA advocates and programs.

17. Overall, how would you rate your relationship with CASA advocates (at present or when you were hearing Children-In-Court cases)?

Answer Choices	Number	Percent
Very Poor	0	0%
Poor	0	0%
Good	9	17%
Very Good	45	83%
Total Number of Judges that Responded	54	100%
Blanks	1	

18. What are some additional ways in which CASA could be useful within the court system? (open-ended)

- Agree to work in neighboring counties where there are not enough CASAs to cover the out-of-home placements.
- Being able to appoint CASA when the child has not been removed but has significant needs. That would be very, very helpful.
- Better continuity of advocates
- Better screening. Although most are good, some are highly opinionated and not objective
- Can provide same type of assistance in juvenile delinquency and family crisis matters.
- CASA are volunteers so it will be hard to expect that they could be more "qualified" and added training would likely be helpful-such as looking for warning signs of danger to the child.
- CASA could be extremely helpful in care & supervision cases but currently they do not have enough volunteers to fill that need in [REDACTED] County.
- CASA workers were very helpful as courtroom volunteers marshaling people and distributing court orders to parties on very busy calendar days. They were essential to keep the calendar moving.
- Engage with the LG
- Expanding CASA utilization to FD and FM cases could be a tremendous value. In CIC there is money and services through DCP. Many FD/FM have neither but independent input is critical to get a better sense of the case.
- FD cases for sure and also assisting with child interviews in FM matters where need be.
- I am unaware of any additional ways that CASA could be more useful than they already are.
- If they could be assigned in care and supervision cases where the child(ren) remain in their homes with services in place.
- Involvement in high conflict cases involving custody, mental/physical health issues.
- it would be helpful to have additional advocates

- It would be very useful if we could appoint CASA on some care & supervision cases (where appropriate and needed) even when the Division has not been granted custody.
- more contact with children in placement updates and written reports, services available
- n/a
- None
- Should be utilized in care and supervision cases. Parents need the additional support that CASA can provide to help navigate the complexities of services.
- Some CASA advocates are reluctant to speak in court. They need to understand that the court wants to hear from them.
- They do what I would like and expect of them.
- To be able to appoint to difficult cases when the child is not in an out of home placement
- To be available when needed for in-home cases
- Transport children, facilitate visitation in community
- we desperately need bi-lingual (Spanish speaking) CASA workers in V [REDACTED].
- We need more volunteers. I would like to see every child in placement have a CASA.

19. How satisfied are (were) you with your local CASA advocates?

Answer Choices	Number	Percent
Extremely dissatisfied	2	4%
Somewhat dissatisfied	0	0%
Somewhat satisfied	8	15%
Extremely satisfied	45	82%
Total Number of Judges that Responded	55	
Blanks	0	

20. Please describe what factors contribute (or contributed) to your level of satisfaction with your local CASA advocates (open-ended):

- Advocates universally provided in depth insight, perspective and a wealth of information not otherwise available.
- always prepared and always invested in the child
- At least one life was dramatically changed for the better by the CASA rep's work in finding the child bitten by the foster parents pit bulls. this particular rep had the ability to carefully extract the truth of the child's injuries as not from a bike fall but from the foster parents dogs. Apparently the Law Guardian had too many cases. This was one case far above the rest which typically confirmed the LG's positions and seemed duplicative adding more confusion sometimes to the child's environment.
- At times, the reports were duplicative of those prepared by the LG and the Division
- attendance at court proceedings, accessible, knowledgeable genuine concern for the children
- CASA advocates are extremely devoted to the children. They take their responsibilities very seriously. This is very evident when they testify and in the reports that are produced.

- CASA's are educated, professional and knowledgeable .
- Dedicated people with life experience. Very patient waiting in court for their case . Casa employees were always present in court, and were very engaged in observing our matters
- Dedicated. Go above and beyond mere advocacy. During pandemic, CASA assisted parents with WIFI information, hook-up to navigate the virtual situation (school, health, services, etc.)
- dedication and professionalism
- Excellent program providing essential guidance to me throughout my time in CIC docket.
- Familiarity with the case and working
- Good reports, interactions with stakeholders.
- In [REDACTED] I have found our CASAs to be very knowledgeable and committed to the children and the families. They often describe a close personal relationship with the child and are fully versed on the child's needs and what steps must be taken. I have also found that over the years CASA and the caseworkers have often developed a healthy respect for each other.
- Most operate independently of the attorneys in the case, they unearth concerns that sometimes the other parties don't, however our DAG's are fair-minded and LG's are thorough, so the CASA's perspective is most helpful when I am getting conflicting information from the other parties.
- None
- Preparation. Hearts for service. Keen interest in fostering the best results for a child/children.
- Professional, have genuine concern for the children.
- Provide a good deal of collateral information to the court. Quite a bit of interaction with children and resource parents.
- reports are very helpful to the court. The assistance regarding education and the children
- The advocates are extremely diligent and take their role very seriously in the interest of the children.
- The CASA advocate is sometime the only constant figure in the child's life. CASA is uniquely and extremely well suited for this job.
- The CASA volunteers are always prepared and very caring - also add an objectivity which is extremely important in this adversarial climate.
- The CASAs in my courtroom were very engaged and helpful.
- The CASAs that have appeared before me have always been well prepared, and have displayed passion for their work.
- the dedication of the advocates and the strong relationships they achieve with the children
- The Division court reports and reports from contracted professional service providers generally provide far and detailed, useful and insightful information.
- the leadership of CASA in [REDACTED] County is outstanding
- The reports are excellent, often times better than the division reports, and the advocates are very well prepared. I have an open invitation for casa to participate in any of my cases.
- The staff are well organized and provide appropriate training for the volunteers. The CASA reports are always comprehensive and relevant.
- Their passion and diligence to their roles.
- Their training and the supervisors were fantastic.
- Their true commitment and dedication to what they do.

- They are very dedicated and hard working. Their ability to think outside the box and provide case unique suggestions is excellent. Their reports are very detailed and helpful. I could go on and on. They are really outstanding.
- they care, they are resourceful and often come with life / professional experiences that greatly add to the case and how it gets resolved.
- They provide invaluable information to the court, are enthusiastic participants, interface with the resource parents, the school and all service providers to ensure the child has all services in place and recently they have generously provided chrome books to the older children which has been fantastic, especially during the pandemic.
- thorough reports, strong support for the children
- Very attentive and helpful.
- Willingness to serve, dedication

21. How would you rate your satisfaction with your local CASA program (at present or when you were hearing Children-In-Court cases)?

Answer Choices	Number	Percent
Extremely dissatisfied	1	2%
Somewhat dissatisfied	0	0%
Somewhat satisfied	12	22%
Extremely satisfied	42	76%
Total Number of Judges that Responded	55	100%
Blanks	0	

22. Please describe what factors contribute(d) to your level of satisfaction with your local CASA program (open-ended):

- ...see # 20 above
- All I have to do is to listen to an advocate's testimony or review the detail in a CASA report to know that the CASA program in this county is excellent which leads to my satisfaction with same.
- CASA is also involved and very helpful with our Aging our Conference and Adoption Day
- Casa's dependability, excellent training program for volunteers
- Dedication and commitment to their task and overall concern and interest in well being of child.
- Good, intelligent people who were genuinely dedicated to the welfare of children
- I thought their insights and communication with the children were invaluable. I tried to have a CASA for each family of children and used their remarks and reports to assist in most determinations as they really had the child's best interests at heart.
- In addition to the above, there has been a real willingness to work with the court on our special projects such as the Aging Out Conference and Adoption Day
- Interaction with CASA volunteers during court appearances and reading their reports.

- My only slight hesitation is that some CASA workers lacked neutrality and always deferred to the Division. Those who did not defer to the Division were the most helpful to me.
- Our CASA representatives are fantastic and caring. They are just overshadowed by other professionals.
- Please see above.
- Please see my prior answer.
- Preparation, concern and commitment to the children
- same CASA management is excellent in [REDACTED] County
- same as above
- Same reasons as in Q20
- See above #20
- See above comments
- See response to #20 above.
- The CASAs are well-trained, their reports are thorough, they attend hearings faithfully, their supervisor is almost always present, and their director is in touch with the CIC judges to discuss any matters of mutual concern.
- The director is very dynamic and engaged with her volunteers and the court. She actively recruits personnel, and also has helped with monetary needs for the children in DCPD care.
- The program is well organized from the top down.
- Their level of training and their backgrounds.
- They are always willing to take on a case. they are extremely helpful when there are a lot of siblings
- They as a group are truly committed to there work
- They do an excellent job.
- they have helped make a difference in a few cases
- Very organized - good communication among stakeholders.
- Very reliable, professional and effective.
- Very responsive. Always willing to help out where possible.
- Very well organized and administered.

Questions 23 through 26 ask for any recommendations you may have related to CASA.

23. In what areas do you feel that additional CASA volunteer training is needed? (open-ended)

- Although few and far between, I have found that volunteers can become biased toward the resource parents, since they interact with them on a regular basis as opposed to biological parents. I have found this especially with younger children where the resource parents hope to adopt. Perhaps additional training in just being aware of that dynamic.
- Better training in selection of CASA advocates.
- bi-lingual Spanish speaking
- CASA should not seek to enter every case as the circumstances of duplicative care (service similar to the LG and DCPD) can be destabilizing itself. But where there is an open question, the court should have CASA as an option.

- Communication with parents.
- Dealing with minority/children and families of color
- Do not feel qualified to answer at this time as I have only been on the CIC bench for a fairly short period of time.
- Further reinforcement of the valuable role they play and appropriate boundaries
- I cannot think of anything.
- I do not believe that additional CASA training is needed.
- I do not know enough about the training program to make any valuable recommendations.
- I found the CASA volunteers to be provided with excellent training and close oversight by the CASA staff.
- In understanding that their role in interacting with the court is to give the court information and offer suggestions--- not to advocate as if they are attorneys
- n/a
- no opinion.
- None
- None
- None
- None that i see.
- not sure what training they get
- Occasionally a CASA doesn't understand the limitations of their role and the limitations of what the court can and should do. I do not appreciate a CASA telling me what must be in my order.
- Our volunteers are well trained.
- Overall training is helpful .
- Particularly in sexual abuse cases
- Report writing and testifying.
- Report writing for some could be better. Consider a standard report form, that could be filled out on line.
- Reviews of procedural requirements to avoid some confusion
- The CASA program in [REDACTED] County is extremely good.
- the limits on the court in ordering the division to accomplish certain things
- Their role during court proceedings. Many workers appear timid and do not voluntarily participate unless called upon by the court.
- They seem adequately trained
- They should be made to realize the court wants to hear from them. They are, at times, intimidated by counsel.

24. Would you or your staff benefit from additional information about the CASA program

Answer Choices	Number	Percent
Yes	14	26%
No	40	74%
Total Number of Judges that Responded	54	100%
Blanks	1	

25. If yes, in what subject area(s)? (open-ended)

- casa's mission statement and personal goals of the organization
- Currently serve in another division.
- General information.
- I suppose training materials being provided to all judges would be helpful.
- If CASA representatives believe that its advocates can offer more assistance than they already do, or that the Court is not using the information provided to the extent representatives believe is appropriate, I would like to hear from them.
- Maybe some "success" stories of CASA's involvement
- n/a - I think our CASA supervisors do an excellent job in keeping us informed of their programs
- services available
- The director contacted me as soon as I went on recall and was assigned to CIC. She met with me, gave me an overview of the program and is always available for questions.
- their training
- Thoughts to expanding CASA as an additional resource to the Court in high conflict cases where there are little , if any, other resources.
- what training do they receive?

26. Please share any other comments you may have about CASA, the advocates, or your decision-making process: (open-ended)

- a very nice and caring group of people
- CASA does a great job for the children.
- CASA plays an essential role in the lives of children in placement. However, I wish advocates were similarly available in other cases where children are not in placement but have dire needs that could be ameliorated by CASA.
- I always appreciated hearing from CASA. They filled in a big gap not covered by the other stakeholders, who by necessity had to focus on legal issues. My biggest concern was the too rapid turnover of the volunteers.
- I am very pleased with our CASA program. They are very helpful to the court in may different areas. I find they are especially helpful in the areas of education.

- I believe CASA executives should have access to e courts. Was difficult during shut down to get information
- I believe it is one of the most difficult and challenging type of volunteerism. It takes special people. They seem to find them! And they fill a unique part of our process where without them there would be a true void.
- I have a great deal of admiration for CASA volunteers, and feel as I am very supportive of the program.
- I have found CASA involvement in cases to provide thorough information not otherwise available, especially with respect to education and information regarding extended family resources. CASA involvement encouraged other professionals involved in cases to do a more comprehensive job with respect to their component of the case.
- I think it is a wonderful program. I am always amazed at the talented volunteers they locate and the level of dedication and commitment these volunteers show. I would assign them more often if I could.
- In some difficult cases, the case worker made the difference in the successful outcome of the case.
- My comments about CASA, the advocates and the information and assistance they provide are as set forth above. The CIC system is very well served by having access to these resources.
- N/A
- None
- None
- nothing else thanks
- see #22
- Some of the PDs are demanding that CASAs not speak with the defendants without the defendant's attorney present. This is becoming a constant issue with those PDs. Perhaps the Family Div. Practice Committee can recommend an Evid. Rule change that will limit the admissibility of admissions by a defendant to a CASA, but allow such admissions to be the basis for further investigation in the health and safety interests of the child(ren) and allow admissibility of resulting evidence for that reason.
- The need exists for CASA to assist in care and supervision matters as well. Many times parents and children are most vulnerable when they are home and they need various services. CASA can assist with the navigation, scheduling, etc.
- The paid CASA officers should not seek to inject a rep in every case, but rather they should look at the files to see if there is some complexity or effort that they could particularly address.
- The volunteers usually excel in giving the children emotional support. These children need to know someone cares about them. Although most caseworkers do a good job ,too many do not give enough attention to the children and /or write skimpy reports. The Casa volunteers are particularly important in these situations.
- There has been an all-out attack mounted against CASA by our local OPR. It is unfortunate and appears to be unjustified.
- Think it is a great program and considered CASA input to be very important.
- Very satisfied.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey.