

# 2022 Annual Impact Report



## Montana CASA/GAL Association



Be the Difference. Be a CASA.

[www.montanacasagal.org](http://www.montanacasagal.org)



## Montana CASA/GAL Mission

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 for 100% of eligible Montana youth to be appointed a CASA advocate.

Our strategic plan outlines strategies and goals to support our mission in 4 core areas.

- Ensure sustainability and build organizational capacity of the state office.
- Develop, expand and promote CASA services statewide.
- Support and unite local CASA programs through services.
- Advocate for dependent/neglect issues and support for MT CASA and local programs on a statewide level.

## Montana's Local Program Statistics



**604 Volunteer  
Advocates served  
these children.**

**There are over 800  
Montana children  
awaiting a CASA.**





## Montana CASA/GAL Impact

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Children who have experienced abuse or neglect fare better with a CASA/GAL.

- They are more likely to find a safe, permanent home.
  - They are more likely to succeed in school, academically and behaviorally.
  - They are half as likely to re-enter the child welfare system.
  - Children and youth assigned a CASA reported significantly higher levels of hope.
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## MTCASA Supporting Local Programs

Having a stable relationship with a supportive adult can help children do well, even when they face significant hardships.

Montana currently has 800+ children waiting for a CASA.

We are leading the continued growth and development of a network of Local Montana CASA Programs.

There are currently 16 local programs across the state of Montana and 1 state program.

Each Local CASA Program recruits, trains, and supports their CASA volunteers.

There are areas in Montana that currently do not have a CASA program.

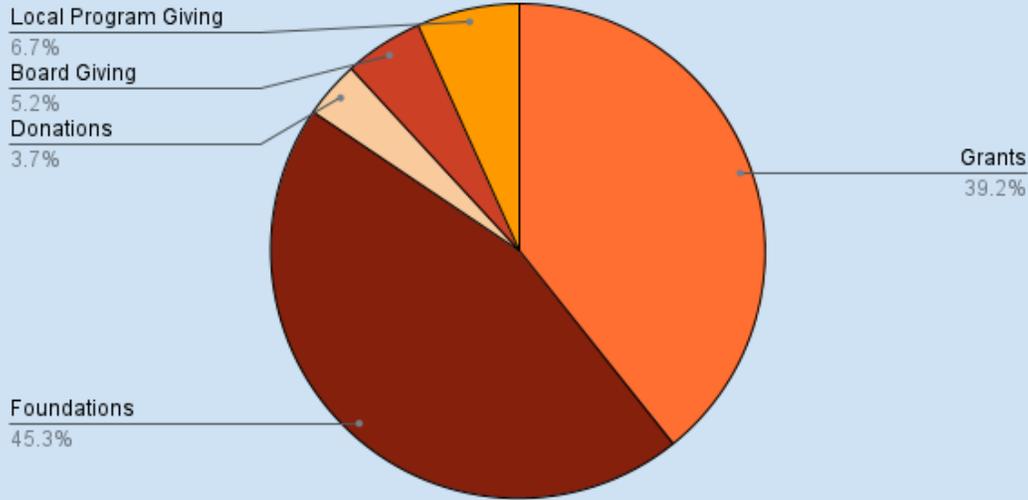
We have created an awareness campaign to bring attention to our cause by increasing CASA programs to help serve all Montana foster children.

If you are considering becoming a supporter, please click the donate button today.

[Donate Here](#)

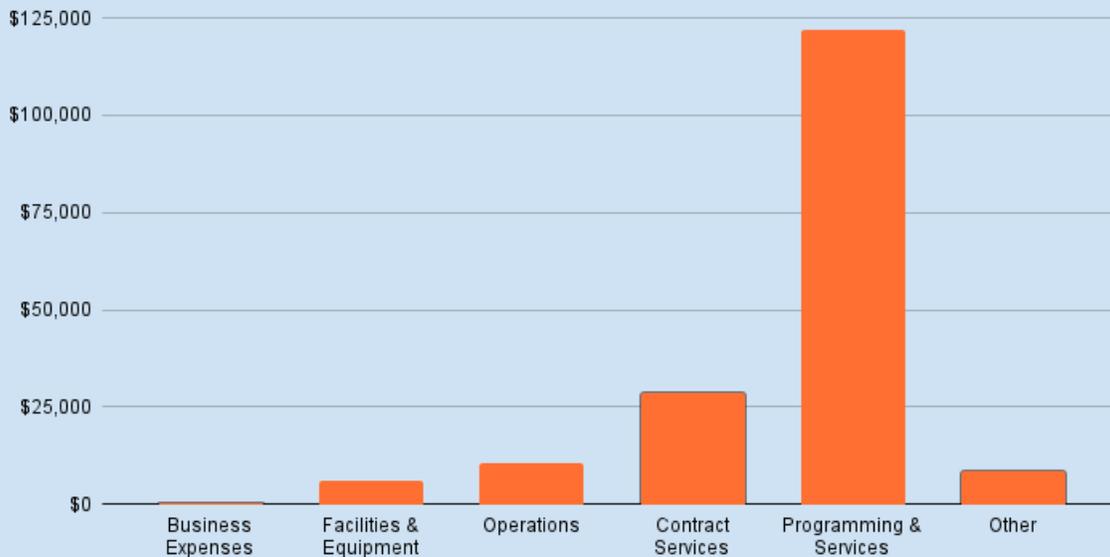
# Fiscal Report by Category & Percentage

**2022 Total Funds Raised: \$204,118.12**



## Expenses by Dollar Amount

**2022 Total Expenses: \$176,190**



## 2022 Montana CASA/GAL Highlights

MTCASA hosted a leadership conference for local program directors and their board chairs. All but one of the Montana local programs are nonprofit organizations, so best practices for nonprofit leadership was a primary focus. We also introduced the concept of Hope Coaching. Instilling hope to children that have experienced trauma is paramount to their long term success. There were in-depth discussions and networking regarding several impactful topics, including establishing a Montana CASA Legislative Action Plan.

In addition to supporting local programs to maintain current capacity to serve all of their children in need, MTCASA supports programs to prepare them for expansion into areas of the state where CASA does not exist. We are currently working on possibilities of expansion with CASA/GAL of Deer Lodge, Powell and Granite Counties into the Butte/Silver Bow area. The CASA for Kids' (located in Kalispell) satellite program in Lincoln County is set to become a stand-alone program by the end of 2023. MTCASA works side by side with the Lincoln County program staff to complete the steps needed to reach this goal.

Along with supporting capacity building for local programs, MTCASA has seen growth in our state organization's capacity to support local programs and the children they serve. The MTCASA board of directors has grown from 9 to 13 members representing areas from all over the state. Board members' expertise and experience include backgrounds in local CASA programs, child welfare, law, nonprofit management, local government, education, insurance, and finance. The knowledge offered by board members permeates throughout the organization and provides direction and direct assistance to the entire Montana CASA network.



# Chairperson's Statement

## Jim Fitzgerald



In an effort to expand public awareness, knowledge, and support of CASA services, our state board will complete the branding, marketing, and communications endeavors that are currently underway. The MT CASA state office is focusing on alignment of our Vision, Mission, Values, brand clarity, communication protocols, and marketing position.

One of MT CASA's main focuses right now is to optimize public understanding, support, and connection to the work of CASA in Montana. The state office will continue to work with local programs to *align strategic arenas* for collaborative, integrated efforts and maximal impact. Our intent is to create new opportunities and combine efforts, resources, and strengths that are common to the state office and each local program. We will also work with local programs to strengthen the state office contributions to local program functioning and success, based upon each program's identified needs.

The state office will provide leadership in working with National CASA and local programs to clarify and shape early intervention and prevention directions that are currently being considered. Additionally, we will work with local programs and Child & Family Services (CFSD) to understand current collaborative needs and opportunities, and their implications for local program execution.

With emerging changes in child welfare practices and law, there is an urgent need to elevate the mission and impact of CASA services. With funding being a crucial need, the state office will invest in a comprehensive, multi-year fund development plan that supports state office functioning, local program operations, and positions the CASA brand for successful impact.

## Local Program Highlights



**Our Local Programs served 1,719 Montana children in 2022.**

**1,636 of these children were served by volunteer advocates,  
the other 83 were served by local program staff.**

**There were 312 children who were reunified with their  
parents. 145 children were given legal guardianship with a  
relative.**

**2/3 of programs serve 90% or more children who are eligible for  
CASAs.**

**70% of our programs achieved or exceeded their Fundraising  
goals for 2022.**

**70% met or exceeded their Volunteer Retention goals for the  
year.**

## Local Program Highlights

**\*Success stories and highlights from a few of our local CASA programs\***

### **5th Judicial Voice for Children**

#### **Annual Father Daughter Dance Fundraiser**

The communities of Beaverhead, Madison, and Jefferson Counties look forward to the Annual Father Daughter Dance hosted by the 5th Judicial Voice for Children program. It is attended by over 100 Fathers and Daughters. The program enjoys watching the families create memories together. Each daughter also gets to take home a stuffed animal donated by Petsmart.

### **CASA of Missoula**

#### **Superhero Movie Night**

In June, CASA of Missoula transformed their previous Superhero Run into their first Superhero Movie Night. In 2022, CASA of Missoula supported 131 active volunteers who dedicated 3,643 hours to support 188 children in Missoula and Mineral Counties. To celebrate both their CASAs and the children they serve, CASA of Missoula and the Missoula Paddleheads partnered to host a movie night, complete with a cape for each child (and some adults!), “Catch the Villain” footraces, family firepits, and a baseball stadium holding 500 neighbors and friends that gathered to watch *The Incredibles* on the big screen. Including sponsorships and donations made at the event itself, they raised \$10,000 in support for their advocates. It was a joyous way to thank the volunteers for the incredible work they do, and a true highlight of 2022.

### **CASA of Yellowstone County**

- First in person Advocate Appreciation Night in two years held at Zoo Montana
- First every CASA Community Night held at the Babcock
- Held Fundraising campaign for the CASA Endowment to provide funding in the future
- Swore in 40 new volunteer advocates



**Superhero Movie Night**



**Annual Father Daughter Dance**

# Thank You to Our Supporters

**Betsy & Bill Bayne**

**BlueCross BlueShield of Montana**

**Brandon Green**

**Brugh Foundation**

**Charlotte Durham and Associates**

**Christian Schaeffer, Mission Accounting**

**Dennis and Phyllis Washington**

**Foundation**

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**Elisabeth Smith**

**Glenda Noyes**

**In Honor of Lisa Kuntz**

**Jan and Pat Munday**

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**Jennifer and Christopher Burke**

**Jim Fitzgerald**

**John and Jody Menyhart**

**Karen and Burke Townsend**

**Kelly Anne Dalton**

**Lael Gray**

**Laura Dever**

**Laura & Larry Brehm**

**Local Montana CASA Programs**

**Mr. and Mrs. John W. Lake**

**National CASA/GAL Association**

**Opportunity Bank**

**Ondrak Family Holdings LLC**

**Oro Y Plata Foundation**

**PayneWest Insurance**

**Police Protective Association Foundation**

**Sandy Black**

**Shea for Justice Campaign**

**Tom and Carol McElwain**

**Tom and Christine McCall**

**Town Pump Charitable Trust**

**Waverly Huston**



\*LISTED IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER

Without support, MTCASA/GAL wouldn't be able to fulfill their mission. Thank you for your generosity in supporting our vision "to give every abused and neglected child in Montana the opportunity to thrive in a safe, loving permanent home"

## MTCASA Staff



April Barnings, Executive Director



Maggie Jensen, Office Assistant

## Executive Director Statement

### April Barnings

The year 2022 offered MTCASA opportunities to further support the work of CASA programs across the state of Montana. It was also a year of leadership transition for both MTCASA and several of the local programs. Helping to ensure that local programs have the capacity to serve is one of our top priorities and a big part of our MTCASA Growth Plan. Part of our work in 2022 included assisting in the orientation and onboarding of six new local program directors. Along with so many other sectors, nonprofits in Montana experienced high turnover and difficulty in hiring during and post pandemic; CASA was no exception. We were able to coach and support new leadership in several of our programs helping to expedite the onboarding process so they could “hit the ground running” faster for their programs.

I traveled the state during the spring and summer months providing information and support to local programs regarding their Volunteer Standards. Adherence to National CASA/GAL Standards for Local Programs is required and ensures that children and judges are receiving services from the highest quality volunteer advocates. Thanks to generous support from the Oro Y Plata Foundation, we were able to provide funding to programs in support of their volunteer recruitment, training and retention projects.

MTCASA is actively engaged as a member of the Montana Supreme Court Improvement Program and the Montana Child and Family Services Advisory Council. This ensures that local CASA programs have a voice in state leadership, statewide agencies, and child welfare partners. Through our Legislative Task Force, MTCASA works year-round to educate and inform the general public and state leadership regarding the importance and role of CASA in Montana’s Dependency and Neglect courtrooms. These advocacy efforts help ensure that every eligible child can receive CASA services wherever available.

## MTCASA Board of Directors



Jim Fitzgerald, Board  
Chair



Elaine Meeks



Allison Dunne



Shyanne Wallace, Board  
Vice President



Jennifer Boyer



Ryan Phelan



John Menyhart, Treasurer



Glenda Noyes



Karen Townsend



Laura Dever, Secretary



Joe Walsh

Kim Casey  
\*Photo unavailable



## Thank You for Your Continued Support

Thank you for supporting MTCASA and the Local CASA Programs we serve. You play an important role in supporting children while they navigate trauma and separation from their families .

If you have any questions or comments

you can reach us at:

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Website: [www.montanacasagal.org](http://www.montanacasagal.org)

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