

VIRGINIA CASA

25  30

25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Passage of  
Court Appointed Special Advocate  
Program Legislation

30<sup>th</sup> Year of  
Court Appointed Special Advocate  
Program Operations in Virginia



“The best part of being a CASA is the knowledge that you have helped ‘save’ a child from further abuse and neglect and maybe have given them a chance to thrive in their life.”

*Patricia McCluskey; CASA Volunteer*



# In 1985, the First CASA Program Began

Judge Phillip Trompeter, newly appointed juvenile court judge in Roanoke, heard about the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program while at a conference in Reno, Nevada. Believing that CASA volunteers would make a tremendous difference in the cases before the court, Judge Trompeter helped shepherd the first CASA program into existence in 1985. Norfolk and Newport News soon followed, and the CASA program movement began in Virginia.

“When a court is faced with the decision to separate a child from his or her family, accurate and complete information is the greatest tool. Each time a CASA is involved in a case the chances for the child to have the best possible outcome are improved. There can be no more noble purpose than to give a voice to those who are unable to speak.”

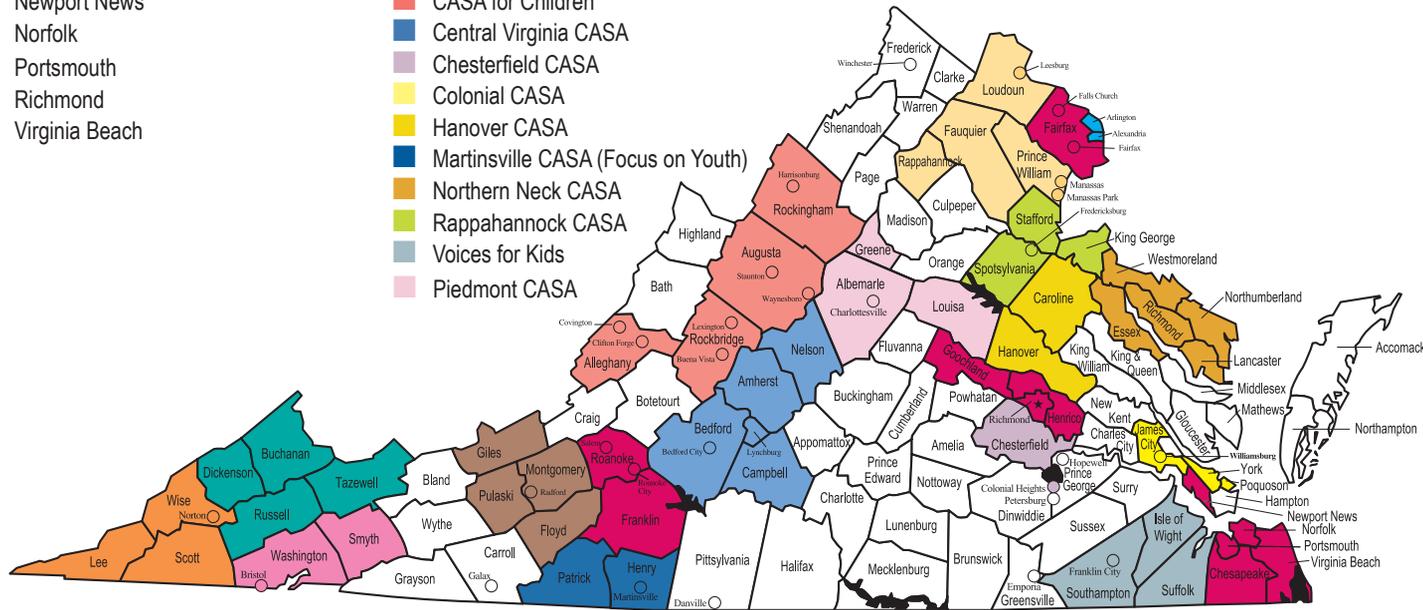
*Judge David Rigler  
Chief Judge, Chesterfield  
Juvenile and Domestic  
Relations Court*

### Single Jurisdiction Programs

- Chesapeake
- Children’s Trust CASA
- Fairfax
- Franklin County
- Goochland
- Henrico
- Newport News
- Norfolk
- Portsmouth
- Richmond
- Virginia Beach

### Multi-Jurisdictional Programs

- 28th Judicial District
- 29th Judicial District
- Alexandria/Arlington CASA
- CASA of the New River Valley
- CASA of Wise, Scott & Lee Counties
- CASA Child Intervention Services of Prince William, Fauquier, Rappahannock County and Loudoun
- CASA for Children
- Central Virginia CASA
- Chesterfield CASA
- Colonial CASA
- Hanover CASA
- Martinsville CASA (Focus on Youth)
- Northern Neck CASA
- Rappahannock CASA
- Voices for Kids
- Piedmont CASA



1985

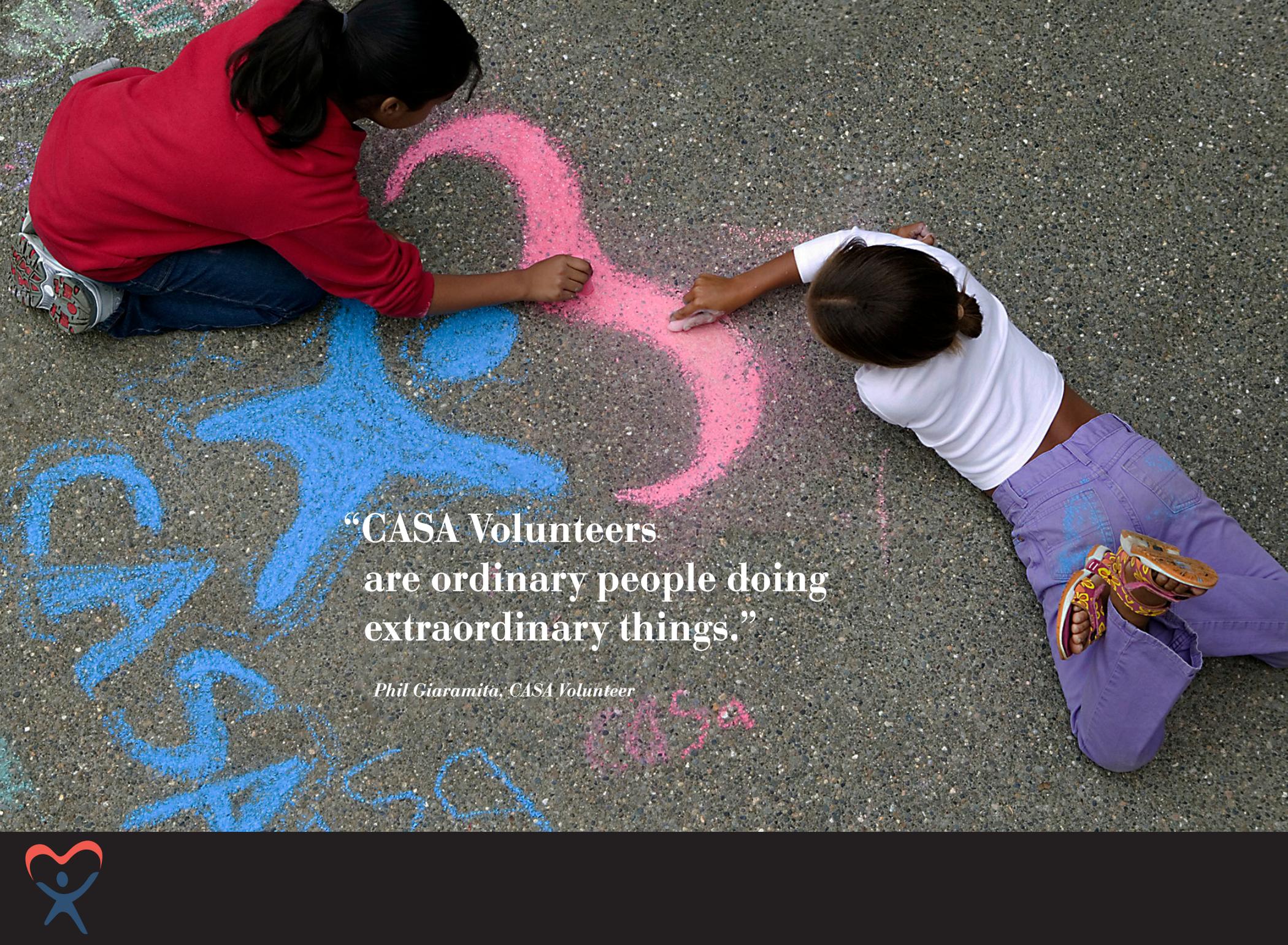
- Newport News CASA
- Norfolk CASA
- Children’s Trust of the Roanoke Valley CASA

1988

- Hanover CASA
- Alexandria/Arlington CASA
- Virginia Beach CASA

1989

- Central Virginia CASA
- Fairfax CASA

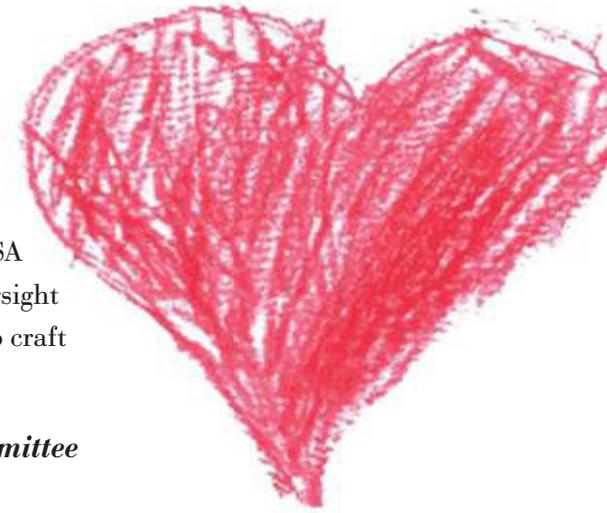
A high-angle photograph of two children sitting on asphalt, drawing with chalk. The child on the left is wearing a red hoodie and blue jeans, drawing a large blue figure. The child on the right is wearing a white t-shirt and purple pants, drawing a large pink figure. The background is a dark asphalt surface with scattered chalk dust.

**“CASA Volunteers  
are ordinary people doing  
extraordinary things.”**

*Phil Giaramita, CASA Volunteer*



# Volunteers are the Heart of CASA Programs



## *Volunteer*

In 1990, then Delegate Jerrauld Jones (89<sup>th</sup> District) sponsored legislation to provide a statutory basis for CASA programs in Virginia. The Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) was identified as the oversight agency for the CASA programs. A statewide CASA Advisory Committee was formed with the first task being to craft CASA regulations.

### *First CASA Advisory Committee*

Russell Allen  
Patrick Dorgan  
The Honorable Larry Elder  
Walter Erwin,  
*Chair*  
Mike Hall  
Lee Harizanoff  
Beth Hayes  
Susan Kirkley Heck  
Rita Katzman  
The Honorable Johnny Morrison  
Lynn Pearson  
Vincent Piccano  
Fran Ecker,  
*DCJS Juvenile Court Programs Specialist*

### *Current CASA/Children's Justice Act Advisory Committee*

Robin Foster  
Julia Fuller-Wilson  
Donna Gilles  
Lelia Hopper  
Rita Katzman  
Malcolm King  
Alicia Lenahan  
Kirk Marlow  
Robin Morgan  
Nancy Oglesby  
James Pope  
Patricia Popp  
Eric Reynolds  
The Honorable Frederick Rockwell,  
*Special Advisor to CJA Program*  
Viola Vaughan-Eden,  
*Chair*  
Melissa O'Neill,  
*DCJS State CASA Program Coordinator*

“The CASA program has a profound impact on assisting children and families who have endured the searing pain of abuse and neglect. These advocates are very special individuals who give freely and unselfishly of their extraordinary talents and time to help those less fortunate to look towards a brighter tomorrow.”

*Judge Rufus A. Banks, Jr.  
Chesapeake Juvenile and  
Domestic Relations Court*

1990

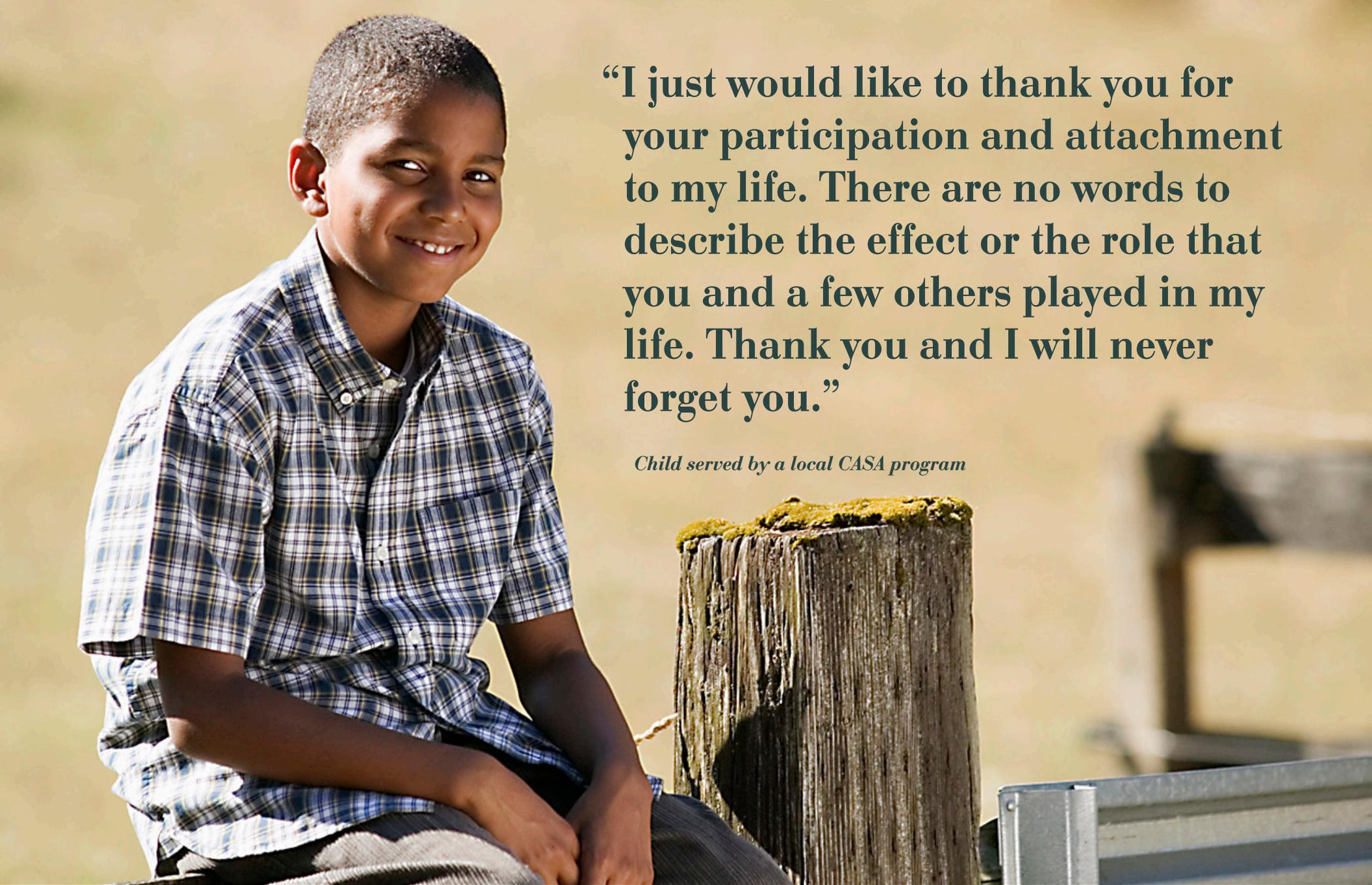
Rappahannock Area CASA  
Richmond CASA

1991

Chesapeake CASA

1992

CASA of Lee, Scott & Wise Counties  
29<sup>th</sup> Judicial District CASA

A young boy with short dark hair, wearing a blue and white plaid short-sleeved shirt, is sitting on a weathered wooden post. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a soft, out-of-focus outdoor setting with warm lighting. To the right of the boy, there is a metal railing.

**“I just would like to thank you for your participation and attachment to my life. There are no words to describe the effect or the role that you and a few others played in my life. Thank you and I will never forget you.”**

*Child served by a local CASA program*



The regulations helped guide new CASA programs, taking great care to establish limited child-to-volunteer caseloads. The limit of no more than two cases per volunteer is the hallmark of CASA programs statewide. The low caseload allows CASA volunteers to devote time and attention to children assigned to their care. CASA volunteers give of their time, resources, life experiences and heart. They come from all walks of life but share one thing in common: an unwavering dedication to zealously advocate for the best interest of abused and neglected children.



“Each time I reach for a CASA report, I know that I will receive a thorough and vivid picture of the child’s current circumstances. The care and concern of the CASA comes through on the pages before me. This information is invaluable in helping me make the best informed decisions. I have confidence that the CASAs trained to work in our court are truly the ‘eyes and ears’ of the judge. I am thankful that we have had such dedicated staff and volunteers in our court for over twenty-five years.”

*Judge Angela E. Roberts  
Richmond Juvenile and  
Domestic Relations Court*

1993

Children’s Intervention Services/Greater Prince William  
Franklin County CASA  
FOCUS/Martinsville CASA

1994

CASA for Children  
Henrico CASA

1995

Piedmont CASA



**“I cannot think  
of anything  
more noble,  
humble and  
selfless than  
the work these  
volunteers do.”**

*Judge Phillip Trompeter,  
Roanoke Juvenile and Domestic  
Relations Court (Retired)*



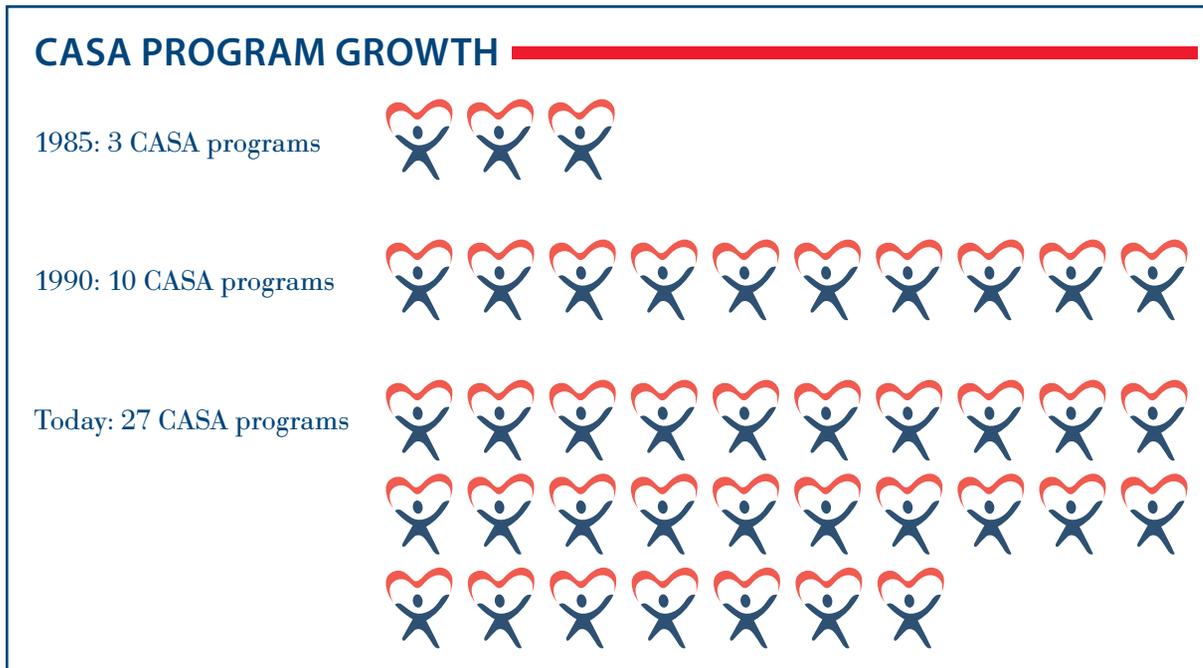
# CASA Volunteers lift up their voices for children to give them hope and a brighter future.

*Since the CASA programs began in 1985:*

**25,791\*** trained citizen volunteers have advocated for abused and neglected children in Virginia.

**2,241,432** hours were donated in advocacy services on behalf of Virginia's most vulnerable citizens.

Those hours are valued at an estimated **\$45 million** dollars\*\*



“When you make a monetary donation to a just cause, you often spend little time thinking about that cause the next day or even expecting that your gift profoundly changed someone’s life. The work you do as a CASA Volunteer does not keep you at a distance. It is personal, very meaningful, highly rewarding and you know from the look reflected in the eyes of the children and families with whom you work that you have changed their lives.”

*Phil Giaramita  
CASA Volunteer*

\* Statistics may include some duplicate numbers since data is reported annually.

\*\*The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) uses the current employment statistics to determine average hourly rate value for all volunteers in Virginia. The rates vary each year between \$18 and \$24. The calculation was based on \$20 per hour.

1996  
Colonial CASA

1997  
Chesterfield CASA

1998  
28th Judicial District CASA  
CASA of the New River Valley

**“I appreciate CASA. My CASA worker has helped me a lot with the situation I am going through. She has come to my home, talked to me and visited me at school. CASA is very helpful and all I can say is Thank You!”**

*Deserae, 16 year old CASA Child*



## CASA Programs Serve Virginia's Most Vulnerable Citizens: Abused and Neglected Children

Since 1985 CASA volunteers have given a voice to 83,550\* abused and neglected children.

### *What Children Say About Their CASA Volunteers:*

*"I could talk to her about scary things and it was okay."*

**"I did not want to talk to anyone at that time; but, I'm glad he never gave up on me."**

*"Because what we talked about was just for me and her."*

"At the end of our meeting, she made me feel like she was going to help me get where I wanted to go."

"I have been extremely gratified by my work as a volunteer. I have made connections with children who will remain in my heart for a lifetime. I know that I have had a positive impact on these children's lives and that alone is worth all the 'money' in the world."

*Alice Marshall  
CASA Volunteer*



\* Statistics may include some duplicate numbers since data is reported annually.

1999  
Portsmouth CASA

2001  
Northern Neck CASA

2004  
Voices for Kids CASA

2005  
Goochland CASA



*For information about the CASA program in Virginia, contact Melissa O'Neill, State CASA Program Coordinator at [melissa.o'neill@dcjs.virginia.gov](mailto:melissa.o'neill@dcjs.virginia.gov), 804-786-6428, or visit the DCJS website at [www.dcjs.virginia.gov/juvenile/casa](http://www.dcjs.virginia.gov/juvenile/casa)*

*Photo credits: National CASA*