Standing with Children & Families during COVID-19

While its impact is universal, there is widespread evidence to show that the COVID-19 pandemic is hitting the most vulnerable among us the hardest. For children who have experienced abuse or neglect or for those who are at-risk of maltreatment, social isolation and economic uncertainty brought on by COVID-19 has had far-reaching consequences. This includes the disruption of support networks, the suspension of critically important services and foster homes in short supply. For children and families inching closer to reunification and those working to avoid removal altogether, many are facing new obstacles like unemployment and homelessness.

At this unprecedented time, court appointed special advocate (CASA) and guardian ad litem (GAL) volunteers have been a critical lifeline for children and families. Having a caring, consistent adult—someone who checks in, follows up, holds the system accountable and puts the child's best interests before all others'—can make all the difference and help change a child's story.

Our volunteers are needed to advocate for children and families now more than ever.

TARA LISA PERRY
Chief Executive Officer
National Court Appointed Special Advocate / Guardian Ad Litem Association For Children
Throughout the pandemic, the National CASA/GAL Association has provided critical support to programs and volunteers so they can practice effective socially distant best-interest advocacy for children and families.

**COVID-19 Impact Snapshot**

$249,350 in emergency grants to 42 programs

$38,376 in PPE grants to 18 programs

$23,754 in technology grants to 111 programs

3,694 staff trained since March

5,246 volunteers trained since March

800% increase in participants per training

**Bright Spot**

When COVID-19 hit, many courts went virtual. Now, parents fighting to restore their families aren’t having to take an entire day off of work, potentially jeopardizing their job, for their 15 minutes in court. That’s progress.

Louise, CASA Volunteer

Vancouver, WA

The situation with COVID-19 has only given us energy to do this work. It has pushed us to use our imagination to continue to advocate for children and families.

nationalcasagal.org/covid-19