What’s an Advocacy Plan?

PAGE 4

ADVOCACY STORY

Yuriko’s Advocacy Journey

PAGE 8
BUILDING TOWARD CONTINUED SUCCESS

As the world began its return to a new normal in Fiscal Year 2022, we successfully navigated the ever changing landscape. Having worked remotely as well as attending virtual Court during the pandemic, we were excited to fully re-open our office. Therefore providing Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Volunteers and their youth the opportunity to visit The Store five days a week, a dedicated room, located at the Child Advocates of Silicon Valley main office, filled with new items for the youth. Returning visitors were pleased to see some positive changes:

- A remodeled office that makes better use of space and natural light.
- Additional, highly skilled and ethnically diverse staff members to support them.
- New Director of Programs, Mary Patterson, galvanizing our staff and working to improve the operational effectiveness of our CASA Program.

During the pandemic we experienced less children entering the Santa Clara County Dependency System. This trend only intensified in FY22. In preparation for the adoption of the Family First Prevention Services Act - an act that focuses child welfare systems toward keeping children safely with their families to avoid the trauma that results when children are placed in foster care - the Santa Clara County Department of Family and Children’s Services is making changes to how it operates. This is leading to:

- A steep decline in the total number of children entering dependency.
- An increase in the number of children entering dependency who have experienced severe trauma and are in dire need of nurturing support and resources.

Despite this trend, there are still hundreds of children in dependency that require more meaningful support. Support that we’re ready and equipped to provide.

As you’ll read in this issue, we tested our Advocacy Plans in FY22, a tool that will help us better understand the children we serve, measure the efficacy of our CASA Program, and more importantly, help us ensure that children heal while in our care. As an expert in early childhood development, I am confident that the assessment tools we’re utilizing in our Advocacy Plans will help us properly identify the social, emotional and developmental needs of the children we serve. Once we identify the trauma, we can offer the right support and services. This tool will be vital as we look to better support the children entering dependency. We have designed these tools to upload directly into our court reports so that our judges can make the most informed decisions based on all the work of our CASA Volunteers and our Child Advocates’ staff.

In FY22, we began formulating our next Three Year Strategic Plan. Some strategies we’re developing will ensure every child who can benefit from a CASA has one. That an intervention is developed to ensure non-minor dependents (NMD’s) thrive before exiting foster care. And that our advocacy is centered on the diverse voices of those we serve. These are just a few examples of the strategies we’re excited to share with you later this fall.

The work we accomplished in FY22 set the stage for what we believe to be a great coming year for Child Advocates and the children and youth we serve. This is only made possible because of the support we receive from our entire community. Major funders, like the government and the Sobrato Family Foundation who support our everyday operations. Individual donors who always answer the call when we ask for financial support. Community agencies who partner with us to provide children and youth with premier services, activities and experiences.

And the 627 community members who served as CASA Volunteers in FY22. Together, in community, we will continue to SHOW UP, STAND UP and LIFT UP foster children and youth.

This is only made possible because of the support we receive from our entire community.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGE

**Frederick J. Ferrer**

CEO

**Cassio Conceicao**

Board Chair FY22

**Cassio Conceicao**

Board Chair FY22

SHOW UP. STAND UP. LIFT UP. FOR FOSTER YOUTH

MISSION

To be there for every foster child in Silicon Valley who has experienced abuse, neglect and/or abandonment.

VISION

A Silicon Valley where every foster child has the nurturing support and resources needed to thrive.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Frederick J. Ferrer

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Cassio Conceicao

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Neta Retter
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Leslie Rodriguez
Michael Schlemmer
Wayne Smith

*The list represents the full roster of board members during FY22.*
In FY21, we partnered with Applied Survey Research (ASR) to develop Advocacy Plans for CASAs to capture and organize information about their advocate youth in a way that helps serve them better. FY22 served as a “beta”, or “test” year for Advocacy Plan implementation and the results are promising.

What’s an Advocacy Plan?
An Advocacy Plan measures a child’s well-being and development, and informs and records the services and resources provided to every child throughout their service history with Child Advocates of Silicon Valley, from Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Volunteer assignment to court case closure.

How Advocacy Plans Work
Once a child is assigned a CASA, the CASA’s role is to get to know the child, to learn about the child’s current wellbeing and experiences. CASAs will then complete the following:
• Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) Survey (all ages)
• Ages & Stages Questionnaire-3 (ASQ-3) (ages 0-5)
• Ages & Stages Questionnaire-SE (ASQ-SE) (ages 0-5)
• Measures of Well-being (all ages 6+)

This will help CASAs create an Advocacy Plan for the child. The information they learn about the child’s well-being and development, informs what activities, resources and services should be utilized to best support the child.

Every 6 months, in preparation for court hearings, the CASA will update and use the information learned to inform their court report and adjust the child’s Advocacy Plan as needed.

Purpose of Advocacy Plans
Advocacy Plans are intended to strengthen the most important aspects of the role of a CASA Volunteer: building a relationship with the youth, advocating for them in the system and voicing their concerns to the Court. They are also intended to:
• Measure youth outcomes and impact.
• Measure successes and pitfalls to improve program design to ensure that all children’s needs are met.
• Enhance CASA training to better support children.
• Document youth strengths and needs for the Court.

Takeaways from “Beta” Year
Throughout FY22, we worked side-by-side with ASR to implement, test and refine our Advocacy Plan processes and procedures. Needless to say, there were a lot of lessons learned and improvements made. Nevertheless, we were able to create an Advocacy Plan for 647 youth in FY22.

The result of this effort is a wealth of data about the children we serve. The data we gathered includes, but is not limited to:
• Types of ACEs experienced by each child and youth.
• Types of Positive Childhood Experiences our CASAs participated in with their child/youth.
• The physical health, emotional health and learning status of all children.
• For kids ages 0-5, developmental scores in areas such as communication, fine motor skills and problem solving.
• For youth ages 6+, wellbeing scores in critical thinking, self-regulation, agency and resiliency skills.

“Things do not grow better; they remain as they are. It is we who grow better, by the changes we make.”
- Swami Vivekananda

What’s Next?
After a year of refining and improving our Advocacy Plans, we’re ready to exit “beta” in FY23. We fully understand that we may encounter issues along the way, but we’re taking steps to minimize potential hurdles.

• Our entire CASA Program staff has been trained on Advocacy Plans: how they work and how to support CASAs when creating and updating their plans.
• We are also enhancing our CASA Pre-Service Training and Continuing Education curriculum by offering workshops for CASAs on how to create an Advocacy Plan for the children they serve.

Statewide Potential
We learned a lot during our “beta” year of Advocacy Plans. No lesson was greater than the potential these plans have in changing the way we serve foster kids. This data is a game changer. As we use this data to grow and improve our service delivery, Child Advocates leadership is also engaged with California CASA to examine the statewide implications of having outcome measures for every foster child. Advocacy Plans may be going statewide. Now that’s a change with some real growth potential.

We cannot change the trauma foster children endure but we can find ways to reduce the impacts of having experienced trauma. That is why we are always seeking ways to grow, to improve our CASA Program to better serve children. We’re confident that we’ve created a tool that will do just that.
Advocacy Plans

Ages & Stages Questionnaire-3 (ASQ-3) & Ages & Stages Questionnaire-SE (ASQ-SE) (ages 0–5)

The Ages & Stages Questionnaire is used to measure the stage of child development (ASQ-3) as well as social emotional competency (ASQ-SE) for children 0-5 years of age. Each questionnaire measures developmental stages that will then allow the CASA to better plan referrals or activities/experiences they will do during their visits.

Measures of Well-being (all ages 6+)

This component measures a child’s wellbeing in the following domains: critical thinking, self-regulation, agency, resiliency/hope. Again, looking at where a young person might be in any of these areas will help the CASA seek relevant resources and activities.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) Survey (all ages)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Kaiser’s Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) Study, identified 10 ACE measures strongly associated with increased health and social risks. The responses to these questions will help the CASA understand how the child’s past may negatively impact them, with planning supportive enrichment activities during visits and with advocating for services.

Advocacy Plans

FY22 OUTCOMES

In FY22, we were able to create an Advocacy Plan for 647 youth. Advocacy Plans are updated at each court hearing date. At the end of FY22 there were 535 cases with more than one Advocacy Plan entry. These 535 cases included 136 children ages 0-5 and 399 ages six and older. Below is the outcome data for these cases.

POSITIVE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (PACES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PACES</th>
<th>Number of Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supportive Relationships</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Activity</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Nature</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mindfulness</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Care</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleep Habits/Practices</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research shows these 7 PACES help in children who have experienced trauma to heal. PACES were added to the Advocacy Plan in late spring; preliminary findings are presented above.

Our Children Have Improved Wellbeing

The ASQ data showed that children supported by CASAs demonstrated improved wellbeing by showing improvement on developmental milestones (ages 0-5). Our youth also improved critical thinking, self-regulation, agency and resiliency skills (ages 6+).

AGES 0-5

- 18% IMPROVED Communication Skills
- 22% IMPROVED Gross Motor Skills
- 24% IMPROVED Fine Motor Skills
- 31% IMPROVED Problem Solving Skills
- 33% IMPROVED Personal-social Skills

AGES 6+

- 27% IMPROVED Critical Thinking Skills
- 31% IMPROVED Agency Skills
- 26% IMPROVED Self-regulation Skills
- 21% IMPROVED Resiliency Skills

Identifying Physical Health, Emotional Health & Learning Needs

Every six months, CASAs identify the physical health, emotional health, and learning needs or resource opportunities to support their children/youth. Unmet needs are reviewed at court hearings to make team connections and resource referrals. These are examples of some of the measures captured in Advocacy Plans:

- 24% of children needed support to become more engaged in healthy physical activities.
- 28% of children needed mental health support.
- 20% of children needed support to increase school attendance.
- 28% needed support to improve their academic standing.
- 12% of preschool-age children needed support to enroll in preschool.
- 38% of older children needed support for career/college planning.
“I was eager to SHOW UP for foster youth. When I finished the volunteer pre-service training, I told my CASA supervisor Marika, ‘I’m ready,’” said Yuriko.

After coordinating an in-person visit with the social worker assigned to her youth, Yuriko didn’t know what to expect but was very excited to meet 11-year-old Ginny. When the day arrived, Yuriko and the social worker pulled up to the foster home where Ginny and her younger sisters, Molly and Luna, were giving each other manicures on the front porch. Having experience with doing nails, Yuriko was able to connect instantly with Ginny.

During their weekly visits, the pair try new food and explore new activities including opportunities provided by Child Advocates. Yuriko brought Ginny to the agency’s scholastic event, Adventures in Bookland Bash, where the youth received free books and participated in enriching activity stations. Additionally, Yuriko coordinated with Molly and Luna’s assigned CASA Volunteers to take the sisters to Happy Hollow Park & Zoo, courtesy of the agency’s partnership with the amusement park.

Besides spending quality time with her youth, Yuriko has made it a point to STAND UP for Ginny in areas where the youth needs more support. After going through distance learning during the pandemic, Ginny developed academic struggles. Yuriko gave her youth flashcards as a study tool and is learning how she can best support Ginny as her CASA. An idea she learned from the agency’s CASA Summit was the power of celebrating small successes. Yuriko partnered with Ginny’s teacher to coordinate academic celebrations for Ginny. Yuriko gave the teacher pre-stamped postcards that the teacher can send to Ginny throughout the school year to celebrate her work and boost her confidence in her academic performance.

“It’s important for these kids to feel special and that someone is rooting for them.”

This coming fall, Ginny and her siblings’ dependency case is having their 18-month court hearing. This is a pivotal court hearing that would determine if the children will be reunified with their mother or enter a placement selection & implementation hearing. A selection & implementation court hearing determines the best permanent placement plan for foster children when reunification is no longer an option. Yuriko is ready to LIFT UP Ginny’s voice in Court.

“As a CASA my role is to advocate for what my youth needs and wants, which is to stay in a supportive environment,” Yuriko explained. “If reunification happens, I’m going to advocate for the best transition possible.”

Although the Court’s ruling isn’t set until the near future, Yuriko has made a personal commitment to always be there for Ginny no matter the outcome of the case.

“From day one Yuriko has been enthusiastic and dedicated to enriching her youth’s life,” said Marika. “In her thoughtfulness, Yuriko has supported her youth in building strong relationships with her siblings and makes her youth feel special, which makes her a truly amazing Advocate.”

Disclaimer: The story is based on Yuriko Shotter’s experience as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Volunteer. Some details about the foster youth she serves have been altered in an effort to keep the youth’s identity anonymous.

Ready to ADVOCATE

Yuriko’s Advocacy Journey

Following the coordination of a successful online fundraiser with her brother that raised over $40,000 for Child Advocates of Silicon Valley, generous Yuriko Shotter was ready to do more. In February 2022, she became a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Volunteer.
**FY22 BY THE NUMBERS**

797 youth were assigned a CASA Volunteer.

**WHO DO WE SERVE**

- **0-5 Years Old:** 216
- **6-12 Years Old:** 247
- **13-17 Years Old:** 187
- **18-21 Years Old:** 147

**GENDER OF YOUTH SERVED**

- Female: 429 (54%)
- Male: 353 (43%)
- Non-binary: 5 (<1%)
- Transgender Male: 7 (<1%)
- Transgender Female: 3 (<1%)

**RACE OF YOUTH SERVED**

- Caucasian: 306 (38%)
- Multi-racial: 109 (14%)
- Native American: 69 (8%)
- Declined to State: 6 (<1%)
- Transgender Female: 3 (<1%)
- Male: 353 (43%)
- Non-binary: 5 (<1%)
- Transgender Male: 7 (<1%)
- Asian American: 32
- African American: 48
- Other: 229
- Declined to State: 6 (<1%)

**ACEs AT INTAKE**

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Roughly half of all foster children experience four or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). This number is considered a warning sign. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, ACEs are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood, such as experiencing violence, abuse, and/or neglect. ACEs have been linked to risky behaviors, chronic health conditions, low life potential and early death.

**NUMBER OF CHILDREN/YOUTH WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED THESE TYPES OF ACES**

- Parent Separated/Divorce: 178
- Substance Abuse: 225
- Mental Health: 106
- Caregiver Treated Violently: 126
- Incarcerated Caregiver: 115
- Sexual Abuse: 47
- Physical Abuse: 63
- Physical Neglect: 190
- Emotional Abuse: 117
- Emotional Neglect: 238

*The data in these tables is partial and does not represent all 797 youth served.
The following listing represents the dedicated individuals who committed to SHOW UP and serve our foster youth in FY22.

**OUR CASA VOLUNTEERS**

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Perihan Abdelbaki</td>
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<td>Juan Luis Acricha</td>
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<td>Paola Acosta</td>
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<td>Maureen Adams</td>
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<td>Supriya Agarwal</td>
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<td>Sofia Agostovallia</td>
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<td>Seema Aghaaggarwal</td>
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<td>Nicholas Aguilal</td>
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<td>Diana (Zucet) Aguilar</td>
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<td>Amaya</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jose (Uay) Aguirre</td>
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<td>Sumon Aherz</td>
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<td>Rebecca Akil</td>
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<td>Carolyn Aker</td>
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<td>Marijke Ann</td>
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**627 active Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Volunteers.**

**66,240 hours were contributed by CASA Volunteers.**

**797 youth were assigned a CASA Volunteer.**

**$1.9 M estimated value of volunteer hours.**

Sandyhia Chandrashakehar
Judy Chang
Annette Chastain
Dorothy Chen
Ginny Chen
Peter Chen
Aileen Cheng
Charleen Cheng
Barry Cheskin
Lisa Cheskin
Yuahsin (Rita) Chang
Grace Chiarlesia Jensen
Jenny Choy
Joo Ho (Nicole) Chung
Heidi Cica
Stephanie Cipresso
Amanda Clark
Jessica Clark
Melissa (Missy) Cochran
Paul Cohen
Tomasine Cole
Susan Colom laka
Defrancesco
Lindsey Colvin
My Doan Cong
Catherine Cork
Renee Commy
Janet Constantinou

Beth Ann Cookman
Benjamin Cooper
Lauren Cooper
Sally Coopermendler
Nicole Corey
Suzanne Cox
Sandy Creighton
Krisiten Cui
Ernest Culp
Carson Cushing
Emily Dadasap
RJ Daly
AnontonettTonii Dano
Gwendolyn (Gwen) Dapper
Benaffier Dastoor
Dinyar Dastoor
Jessica (Jessie) Davidson
Donna Davies
Sylvia De La Garza
Hasanthn De Silva-Penera
Luci Delia-Maggio
Partra Dey
Valerie Diaz de Arce
Vianca DiNapoli
Kelly DiNucci
Neli DiDore
Valorie Dodge
Elizabeth (Lisa) Dodson
Hannah Doman
Paul Dominic
Stephanie Dong
Angela D’Orfani
Tara Dowdell
Olivia Drobny
Allison Druchals
Polina Dudnik
Leonard (Lon) Dulsik
Jullie Dutton
Daniel Ela
Paula Elizondo
Deena Eliaised
Kathleen Elliot
Solange Emsallem
Kathy Emetz
Kathleen Fink
Rebecca Finke
Melissa Fintka
Caroline Finley
Donna Fitch
Vivian Fox
Julieta Frenk
Grace Fritjan
Audrey Fitzgerald
Craig Flaxen

Veronica Flores
Christina (Chris) Flynn
Linda Folks
Taylor Forester
Catherine Crystal Foster
Hannah Fox
Dainela Franco
Catherine Franklin
Celso Frazao
Mariko Fitz-Krecock
Kanna Fuentes
Elaine Gaertner
Heather Galdermez
Joseph (Alex) Galland
Gracy Galvan
Rubi Galvan
Neha Ganjo
Julie Garcia
Juliythaya Garcia
Rosemary Garcia
Pamelia Gardner
Renee Gardner
Patricia (Trisha) Garnett
Amy Garson
Amy Garza
David Garza
Deborah Gates
Susan George
Pavel Georgiev
Anushka Ghosh
Denise Giacominii
Kimberly Gilland Al-Baghy
Anat Giller-Sachs
Joni Gingrich
Katheryn Gioccos
Christina (Tina) Giusto
Carlton Glassford
Sharon (Shem)ie Glain
Hillary Goddard
Aruna Godthi
Inga Goldbord
Maureen Golden
Torra Goldsmith
Leitlin (Leity) Gomez
Stephanie Gonzalez-Barragan
Dorit Goudy
Carrie Gracey
Lynda Graham-Helwig
Laurie Granberry
Marsha Grilli
Sherina Guimmond
Karen Guirard
Sarah Gwu

Barbara Illovsky
Marilou Inzunza
Gautam Iyer
Jill Jackson Gupta
Wendy Jacoby
Patricia (Patti) James
Courtney Jansen
Alliegra Jarvis
Kristin Jazdzewski
Sandra Joe
Christopher Jensen
Kathrina Jessop
Katherine (Katie) Johnson
Leanne Johnson
Tere Johnson
Austin Jones
Janet Jones
Patricia Jones
Karen Jordan
Leslie Justman
Shayna Katic
Jennifer Katzen
Chloe Kaufman
Balbaj Kaur
Simejedd (Simeer) Kaur
Loveleen Kaur
Lana Kawakami
Patrick (Pat) Keating
Justin Kemp
William Kennedy
Emma Kenney
Emma Kerr
Rachel Khatkar
Lachmi Khemlani
Helen Kim
Rebecca (Becca) King
Rachel Kinney

OUR CASAs
Financial Activities

Revenue

Gifts & Contributions ................................................................. $1,902,509
Special Events .............................................................................. $498,320
Government Funding ................................................................... $1,359,765
Net Invest Income ....................................................................... $434,507
Total Revenue $3,326,087*

Expenses

Program ................................................................................. $2,785,700
Management & General .............................................................. $382,400
Fundraising ................................................................................. $463,695
Total Expenses $3,631,795

Financial Position

Assets

Current Assets ............................................................................. $2,023,209
Property & Equipment .................................................................. $43,710
Other Assets ................................................................................. $3,269,448
Total Assets $5,336,367

Liabilities & Net Assets

Current Liabilities ....................................................................... $877,265
Net Assets .................................................................................. $4,469,102
Total Liabilities & Net Assets $5,336,367

*This does not include $503,000 in PPP2 loan that will be converted into a grant in FY23.

Our Donors

The following listing represents the immense community support we receive to LIFT UP the foster children we serve. This list reflects donors who generously gave from July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022. If you find an error, please accept our apologies and contact us at development@childadvocatessv.org so we can correct our records.

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