Space to Thrive

A Campaign for Jackson County CASA



CASA
Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

JACKSON COUNTY CASA

Every child deserves to thrive.

Our mission is straightforward: to serve as a child's voice in court.

Every year, thousands of children in our community experience abuse and neglect. Often, their families are impacted by poverty, substance abuse, and mental health issues. The trauma they experience has far-reaching—often lifelong—consequences.

Jackson County Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) was founded in 1983 to advocate for these children. We partner with the Jackson County Family Court to support children under its protection. Jackson County CASA has two goals: (1) To ensure that every child we serve is placed in a safe and permanent home. (2) To advocate for medical, therapeutic, and educational services while they are under the protection of the Family Court.

We provide each child with a multi-disciplinary case team that includes a staff attorney (Guardian ad Litem), a case supervisor, and—most importantly—a specially trained lay volunteer.

Together, this team works for the best interests of every child we serve so that they may have a safe and thriving childhood.



After years of growth, we face a frustrating constraint: We are simply out of space.

Jackson County CASA has grown rapidly since its founding. What started as a handful of volunteers from the Kansas City chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women has grown into a robust community. Our team of 28 staff members work alongside more than 350 volunteers and countless supporters.

Our current capacity enables us to serve an average of 1,250 children per year—less than half of the over 2,600 children under the protection of the Jackson County Family Court who would benefit from our support.

We will raise $3,000,000 in 2021 to expand our capacity to support more children.

The **Space to Thrive** campaign will enable us to double our physical space. This, in turn, will allow us to recruit more volunteers, expand our programs—and ultimately provide more support to children who have experienced abuse and neglect.

We invite you to join us in investing in our bold vision: to see every child in our community thrive.





Jackson County CASA
Current Site:
2544 Holmes St.

More space, more impact.

The Space to Thrive campaign will provide the solution to our space constraints.

Jackson County CASA is currently based at 2544 Holmes Street, across from the Jackson County Family Justice Center (Family Court). The historic home is an ideal site in an ideal location—that we have simply outgrown.

In 2021, we purchased the building next door to our current site. The two buildings will be merged and renovated—doubling our space from 5,000 to 10,000 square feet.

We will breathe new life into two beautiful historic homes, replacing our current cramped, inefficient rooms with an updated mission focused, child-friendly space.

The new space will:

- Meet the unique psycho-social needs of children in crisis by offering a warm, welcoming and homelike environment
- Offer new amenities for children, especially older youth preparing for independence
- Make our building accessible for the first time
- Create meeting rooms for volunteer trainings and programs
- Create private rooms for case teams' confidential discussions
- Expand office space to accommodate new staff for expanded programs



Building Renderings





More volunteers, more support.

The Space to Thrive campaign will enable us to engage more volunteers—the heart of our mission.

It's hard to overstate the impact of a CASA volunteer.

CASA volunteers are appointed to advocate for a child's best interest. They spend extensive time with each child to understand their history, family situation, and unique needs—and they stay involved in a case until the child is in a safe, permanent home. Their advocacy is driven by the guiding principle that children grow and develop best with their family of origin, if safety can be achieved.

Uniquely, Jackson County CASA's volunteers are part of a multi-disciplinary case team provided to each child that includes:

- The volunteer
- A CASA Case Supervisor with years of experience navigating child welfare systems, who both supports the volunteer and streamlines access to available resources
- A CASA Staff Attorney/Guardian ad Litem with expertise in juvenile law and the Jackson County Family Court system, who provides legal representation for the child.



With more space, we can invest in more volunteers—and more support for children.

The only way to expand our support for children is to engage more volunteers.

To achieve our growth goals, we will need to onboard 100-125 new volunteers each year—in addition to our current 350 active volunteers.

Through the **Space to Thrive** campaign, we will have the physical space to accommodate a larger volunteer corps.

In addition, we will accelerate efforts to recruit, train, engage, and retain volunteers through investments in:

- Expanded training and programs
- New resources that volunteers can utilize to support children
- Staff to support volunteer success
- Additional Case Supervisors and Staff Attorneys to complete case teams for additional children





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Join us in expanding our capacity to support children who have experienced abuse and neglect —so that every child in our community can thrive.

$3,000,000 campaign goal:

$2.5 million

Expand our building

Purchase the building next-door to the current CASA house to double the size of our space from 5,000 square feet to 10,000. Renovate both buildings to create one mission focused, child-friendly space.

$500,000

Support our programs

Create a fund to expand recruitment and training of 100-125 volunteers and to provide children with more therapeutic, educational, and enrichment support. The fund would be used to hire more professional legal staff and case workers, as well as provide seed funding for new programs and resources. Create a $250,000 fund for maintenance and enhancements.

Jackson County CASA President & CEO

Angie Blumel

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