

2016 Annual Report



CHILD **ADVOCATES** OF FORT BEND™

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Our Affiliations:

Child Advocates of Fort Bend partners with 31 agencies and organizations and is accredited with Texas CASA™, National CASA™, Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas, Inc. and the National Children's Alliance®.



2016

marked the 25th Anniversary of Child Advocates of Fort Bend serving children who have been abused or neglected.



We have **Provided a Voice, Healed the Hurt and Broken the Cycle** of abuse for more than 14,000 children and these numbers are growing every year. In 2016, we reached 11% more children from the prior year – by expanding existing programs, adding new services, and piloting new initiatives to reach **every CHILD** with **every SERVICE** by **every EFFORT**. Over the 25 years, we have heard story after story of tragedy and heartbreak. But most importantly, through the work of a dedicated multi-disciplinary team of board, volunteers, staff, partners, and donors, we have built a comprehensive agency and a coordinated public-private response to the tragedy of child abuse – and in so doing, turned heartbreak into triumph and resiliency. Let me share with you how we are doing just that.

Provide a Voice

We were delighted to swear in our 1000th CASA Volunteer in 2016! Volunteers form the core of service delivery in our CASA Program and help us leverage limited staff and financial resources to match 100% of children in foster care in Fort Bend County with a trained CASA Volunteer – an accomplishment that very few programs across the country have achieved. By contrast, in the state of Texas, only 56% of children in foster care have a CASA. We are so pleased that our community has repeatedly stepped up to ensure that no child falls through the cracks.

We introduced an initiative which connects children to extended family members who may have formerly been unknown to them to create a support system while they are in the care of the child welfare system and beyond. Termed *Collaborative Family Engagement*, we have already connected 17 youth with supportive adults, restored their familial identities and, for one child, located a family member who helped his doctors diagnose and treat a life-threatening genetic condition.

In our Children's Advocacy Center, we launched a new statewide initiative in which we review all state reports of child abuse to supplement the work being done by CPS and law enforcement and ensure that no child goes without services. In our first year, we referred 395 children to our Center - for forensic interviews, medical exams and therapy - children who might otherwise have fallen through the cracks and gone without help.

We were also selected by the state of Texas to introduce a new initiative to reach out to foster children from other counties who are placed far away from their homes and may not have regular visits by their CASA Volunteers. Our *Courtesy CASA Coordinator* covered 33 cities in the Eastern and Coastal Regions, daily visiting children in their placements to ensure their "best interests" were being met.

Heal the Hurt

For young children struggling with severe antisocial behavior as a result of trauma from their abuse, we introduced *Parent Child Interaction Therapy* (PCIT) for traumatized children in our CAC. Working with a team at University of California Davis Medical School, our staff were trained and certified, video cameras were installed and earbuds were purchased to coach parents while they interacted with their children. The outcomes have been remarkable as we witnessed children who had severe behavioral issues transform over a few months into calm, responsive children whose parents regained their control and emotional connection with them. We will be expanding this program in the coming year.

Break the Cycle

In WINGS, the program we developed 11 years ago to help foster youth who "age out" of the child welfare system be successful, 100% of our high school seniors graduated from high school, a huge accomplishment from the early days when only 25% of our foster youth graduated! And for the first time, we celebrated our first college graduate!

2016 also recognized the incredible accomplishments achieved 25 years later by our very first child we served in our CASA Program, 6-year-old Larry. This young boy suffered abuse by his mother, was removed and placed in 4 different foster homes and was headed to the 5th in less than 3 months. Fortunately, Larry was one of the lucky ones – he had a CASA Volunteer to advocate for his "best interests". Today, Larry has broken the cycle. After 12 years in the foster care system, Larry went on to fulfill his goals – attended college, is successfully employed and has a wonderful family with two beautiful boys.

Our Challenges

As the demand for services grows, we struggle to have enough staff, resources and space to help all the children who are victims of abuse. Currently, 109 children sit on our therapy waitlist because we don't have enough therapists. Staff is doubled-up in offices as we outgrow our building. And increased state intakes of abuse translate to even more pressure on all our services to ensure no child falls through the cracks.

Our commitment is that we do everything in our power to never turn a child away. Thank you for your continuing support.

For the Children's Sake,
Ruthanne Mefford
CEO



Larry then . . . and now



OUR NUMBERS

14,500⁺

children since 1991

25 years serving children in Fort Bend County

63 volunteers trained in 2016

134 voices for children **tours** and child abuse **presentations**

245 children and family members **received therapy** to help them heal

268 children received **criminal court advocacy** services

300 foster children **had a CASA volunteer (100%)**

365 **Bilingual families** were served

765 children received **forensic interviews**

1,070 volunteers **trained since 1991**

1,754 children and families were served by **Child Advocates of Fort Bend**

3,005 **therapy sessions** were provided free of charge

47,306 **miles** were traveled by volunteers

19,661,283 **media impressions**

All services provided to children and families are free thanks to the generosity of our donors and community support

OUR SUCCESSES

We're leading the way. . .

- 37** children who were victims of sexual abuse [graduated from therapy](#)
- 15** children [were adopted](#)
- 93** children in foster care found their "[forever homes](#)"
- 1st** [college graduate](#) from our WINGS Program
- 3** Children's Advocacy Center [staff members traveled to Guatemala](#) to train staff at a residential facility
- 4** therapists [certified in Parent Child Interaction Therapy \(PCIT\)](#) to help traumatized children with behavioral problems
- 1 of 3** CASA Programs in the state selected to provide visitation services for children placed far away from their homes
- 1 of 8** programs in the state [selected for the PMC Pilot Program](#) to develop guidelines and best practices for recruitment, training and advocacy for children in long-term foster care
- 1 of 9** programs in the state [selected to implement Collaborative Family Engagement](#) to connect extended families with children in CPS care
- Our WINGS Team AND our Collaborative Family Engagement Coach [presented at the Texas CASA Conference](#)
- Launched new website and dramatically increased social media presence - [Facebook following more than tripled](#). Average monthly page engagement grew from 3,700 people/month to 67,000 people/month

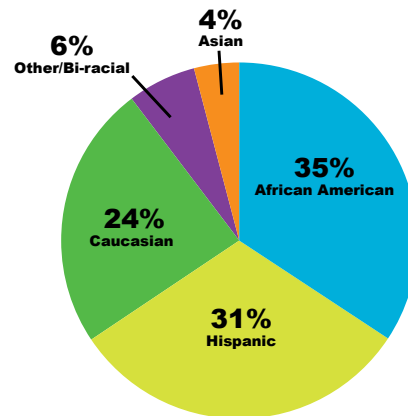
100% of children in foster care [have a CASA volunteer](#)
of seniors in our WINGS program [graduated from High School](#)



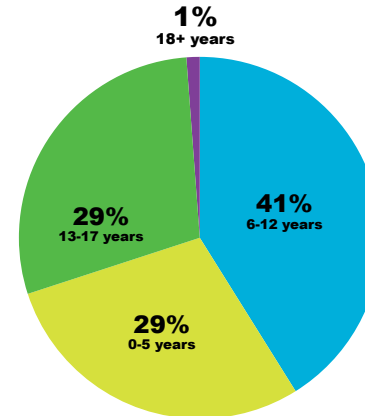
DEMOGRAPHICS



ethnicity



age of children served



QUICK STATS

Reflecting the increasing diversity of Fort Bend County:



Asian children **increased** 2%
Other/Bi-Racial children **increased** 3%

Reflecting the nationwide trend of more younger children being victims of abuse and entering the foster care system:



Children 0-5 **increased** 4%
Children 6-12 **increased** 2%

Types of Abuse:

59% Sexual Abuse

23% Neglect

15% Physical Abuse

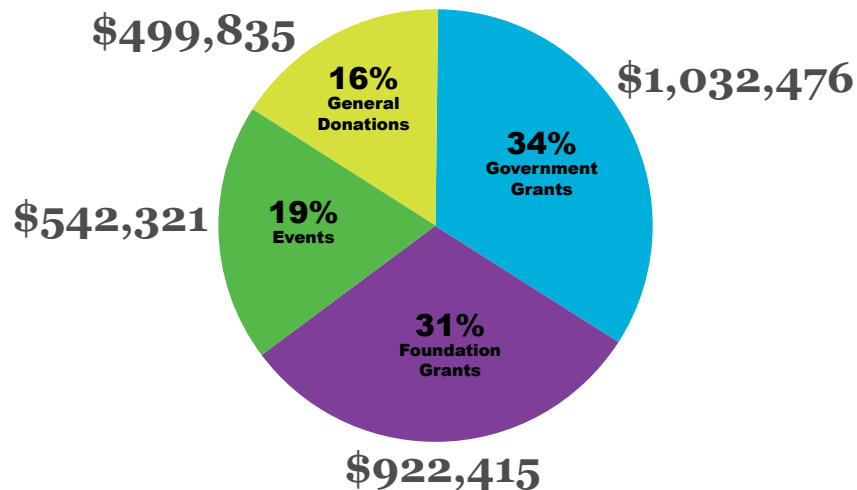
3% Witness to Violence

ETHNICITY AND AGE OF CHILDREN SERVED SHIFTED

FUNDING SOURCES

\$3 MILLION ANNUAL BUDGET IN 2016 PROVIDING DIRECT SERVICES TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WHO ARE VICTIMS OF ABUSE.

revenue sources



Child Advocates of Fort Bend is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization.

Our 990 is available at www.cafb.org.

Copies of our audited financials and annual budget are available upon request.

QUICK STATS

Achieved a balanced funding portfolio despite downturn in the economy



Foundation Grants **increased** 2%

Increased sustainable funding from individuals (Voices for Children Multi-Year Gifts) by 8.5%

Increased total income by \$350,000 (13%)

Increased funding from private foundations by 24%



2016 Exceptional Donors to our operating budget

\$50,000 - \$140,000

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Several years ago when “Jackie” turned 16, she was removed from her home due to severe neglect and abuse. Her father was a drug addict and her mother died unexpectedly, leaving Jackie and her young sister and brother alone. Jackie entered the foster care system and was separated from the only family she had ever known.

Child Advocates of Fort Bend was there to help Jackie navigate these challenges and setbacks. Her CASA helped her push through difficult experiences that no young person should have to face alone. She advocated for Jackie to remain in her home school and found a teacher in the school for Jackie to live with to maintain stability.

In 2016, Jackie received her diploma from Texas State University. Today, Jackie is a first year student in Law School! Her career ambition is to work with children in foster care who are facing unsurmountable obstacles, just like she did. She wants to show them that they can overcome and succeed. In a presentation she made at the state CASA Conference, she credits much of her success to having her CASA Volunteer advocate for her during these tough years.

Child Advocates of Fort Bend gives kids like Jackie more than a glimmer of hope. It provides them a fighting chance. And it is working. Thank you to those who stand by thousands of children like Jackie every day by making it possible for their hopes and dreams to come true.

CHILD ADVOCATES OF FORT BEND™
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