



## Pitching CASA: Crafting a Clear and Compelling Elevator Speech

Key Components of a CASA Elevator Speech:

- Statement of Need
- Impact
- Benefits to the Volunteer
- Call to Action

**Statement of Need:** Hook your audience with a captivating statement that illustrates the problem using compelling facts, statistics, or a descriptive statement conveying the perspective of a child in the system. Avoid jargon, acronyms, and other “system” language that the general public may not understand.

Workshopping Your Pitch: Write one sentence that describes the need for CASA volunteers that you think will “hook” someone who doesn’t know much about us.

Feedback: Share your hook statement with a partner and ask them to consider:

- Did it catch your attention?
- Did it convey a sense of need/urgency (without overwhelming you)?
- Did you hear any jargon?
- What would make it catchier or better illustrate the need?

Note your partner’s feedback and adjust your statement of need.

**Impact:** In a few sentences, explain how CASA volunteers uniquely address the need you described above. Make sure you accurately convey the CASA role and concisely describe the basics of what a volunteer actually does – without overwhelming the listener.

Workshopping Your Pitch: In 2-3 sentences, write your description of the CASA role.

Feedback: Share your impact description with a partner and ask them to consider:

- Did you hear any jargon?
- If you knew nothing about CASA, what would you think a volunteer does?
- Was the CASA volunteer role accurately portrayed?
- Would the average person feel overwhelmed or intimidated by this description of the CASA role?

Note your partner’s feedback and adjust your impact description.

**Storytelling:** Consider a story we can add to further illustrate the impact of CASA volunteers. Make sure you are guarding the confidentiality of the children and/or family. Combining details from different cases is another way to anonymize a story.

Workshopping Your Pitch: Take a moment to reflect upon your experience with CASA. In pairs, discuss an example from a case that helps convey the importance and impact of CASA volunteers.

Jot down the “Cliff’s Notes” version of this story so you don’t forget to add it to your pitch. (You can come back to this later and fully flesh it out.)

**Benefits to the Volunteer:** Tell the prospective volunteer what they can get out of this experience.

Workshopping Your Pitch: As the presenters give examples, note a few ideas that you might want to add to your pitch.

**Call to Action:** Tell the volunteer how they can learn more and get involved.

Workshopping Your Pitch: As the facilitators review follow-up options you can offer a potential volunteer, make note of a few calls to actions you want to include in your pitch.

**Put it all together:** Put these components together to make your recruitment pitch. If you want a well-polished speech, you can even record yourself giving your pitch to practice! **BONUS:** Upload your recorded pitch for a chance to win a prize! Scan the below QR code to upload a video or audio file!



## Story Bank Template

With your program/team, put together a list of stories that help convey what CASA volunteers do and the impact that they have.

Remember:

- Guard the child and/or family’s confidentiality. This may mean changing up details. Consider whether the facts of the case would reveal a family’s identity.
- Include “big impact stories” as well as “small wins” - and pull from them appropriately to not overwhelm a potential volunteer who might not be able to envision them making life-altering impacts on a case.

“Small win” stories:

“Big impact” stories:

## Frequently Asked Questions

What are the qualifications to become a CASA volunteer?

- CASA volunteers must be 21 years old, pass screening requirements including a background check, and complete necessary training provided by the program.

How much time does it take to be a CASA volunteer?

- Volunteers typically commit a few hours each month – sometimes more at the beginning of a case – and we ask volunteers to volunteer for the duration of a case. Cases vary in length, but last on average 1-2 years.

What training is provided?

- CASA volunteers are provided with 30 hours of training led by the local CASA program. The training covers topics such as child development, trauma, mental health, substance abuse, and other topics commonly impacted child welfare cases. Training may be in-person, virtual, or a combination of both.

Do I need legal experience to be a CASA volunteer?

- No, legal experience is not necessary. Children already have attorneys assigned to their cases. CASA volunteers are not legal representatives but instead are trained to gather information and advocate for the child's best interest in court.

What support and guidance do CASA volunteers receive?

- All CASA volunteers are supervised by CASA program staff who work closely with them. Supervisors assist volunteers, answer questions, provide resources and suggestions, and accompany volunteers to court hearings and, where needed, visits with the child/ren.

What is the difference between a CASA volunteer and a social worker?

- CASA volunteers focus specifically on advocating for the child's best interests, while social workers have broader responsibilities in managing cases and services for the family and/or caregivers.

What is the difference between a CASA volunteer and an attorney (or Guardian Ad Litem)?

- A CASA volunteer gathers information and reports information and recommendations to the court, while an attorney or Guardian Ad Litem represents the legal interests of the child.