



# Kentucky CASA Network – Annual Meeting

October 29, 2024

## Summary of KCN Local Program Services and Projects, 2023-2024

### 2023 State Conference: “Advocacy at the Core – Empowering Advocates, Empowering Children”

- Included keynote speaker Ashley Rhodes-Courter, and awards luncheon and mini-plenary with Cameron Galloway, both former foster youth and child welfare advocates. Judges panel featured 4 active and 1 retired dependency, neglect, and abuse docket judges from across Kentucky. Total attendance at conference: 336.
- 10 breakout sessions focused on the components of the CASA Core Model. Session topics included best practices for substance use disorder, DCBS policies and resources, provider relationships, the court process, and home visiting. Two sessions focused on board governance.

### Training

- New Volunteer Coordinator Training:
  - August 2023 Volunteer Coordinator training
  - Volunteer Coordinator Training Cohort: New training program in January 2024 for newly hired local program staff which better meets the need of the network, training staff sooner and more comprehensively. The 12-week, 5-module training includes self-paced assignments in Google Classroom, live webinars, recorded webinars, and a one-day in-person training.
- Training of Facilitators: “Train the trainer” for staff leading the 30-hour volunteer pre-service training (3 sessions offered in both 2023 and 2024, with an additional TOF Refresher for seasoned staff offered in 2024)
- Staff webinars: Pre-Service Facilitators Webinars (twice annually); DCBS Safety Model webinar, June 2023
- Advocate webinars (staff and volunteers): CASA Home Visiting Safety, May 2024; Best Practices for Serving LGBTQ+ Youth, June 2024
- Financial trainings:
  - State CASA Grant training offered 2023 and 2024
  - New Treasurer Trainings offered twice annually
  - New bookkeeper trainings – 4 programs
  - Financial training for new EDs – 4 local programs

### Support for Executive Directors

- New ED Connection and Training Opportunities:
  - Three virtual Executive Director Lunch & Connect opportunities held in 2024
  - Executive directors hosted and led ED retreat in Lexington, March 2024
  - Two virtual and 1 in-person Executive Director Skill Shares, including topics such as resource development, integrating DEI throughout the organization, policy work, and effective systems to work with stakeholders
- New Executive Director Support: Beginning summer 2023, more targeted one-on-one support for new EDs, 4 programs have been involved with this process to date
- HR Support and Resources: KCN contracted with HR Affiliates for human resources support for local programs; Support includes quarterly webinars, HR tips for EDs, and HR Q&A chats

### Board Governance & Strategic Planning Project

- On-site board governance training for 3 local programs
- Board Governance Strategic Planning with Greg Nielsen: 15 programs completed initiative to develop a strategic plan or obtain assistance in the further development of an existing strategic plan.

## Statewide Marketing, Outreach, and Volunteer Recruitment

- 2024 Outreach events: KAGE Annual Conference (Lexington), Inaugural KY Young Professionals Summit (Louisville), KY Bar Association's Annual Convention (Covington), NCSL Legislative Summit (Louisville), PCAK Kids Are Worth It Conference (Lexington)
- CASA specialty license plate: In production and can be purchased for \$44 at local clerk's office
- Volunteer Recruitment Workgroup: Local program staff and volunteers participated throughout 2024 to generate ideas for recruiting volunteers statewide
  - Subgroups focused on: recruiting men, recruiting People of Color, recruiting in rural areas, recruiting in faith communities, working with businesses, and using tools to analyze recruitment strategies. Strategies and tools to be unveiled at Volunteer Recruitment Summit in October 2024
- Statewide Virtual CASA 101: Two virtual CASA 101 sessions held September 2024 – 25 total attendees; KCN to conduct similar sessions quarterly
- Commissioner's Farm to Fork Dinner: Partnership with KY Commissioner of Agriculture to host Farm to Fork Dinner, August 2024. Impact from proceeds on CASA children and families: 739 admission tickets and meal vouchers for KY State Fair, 732 ride wristbands, 39 gas cards (\$15) and 15 gas cards (\$30); 390 children and 139 families impacted over 7 local programs, 1 additional individual family request.
- 2024 State Fair: KCN exhibit booth at 2024 State Fair – assistance from local programs to staff the booth, received total of 98 direct volunteer inquiries while on-site
- Digital ad placement at Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport (April – December 2024)

## Expansion, Growth, and Map Coverage

- CASA of Clay, Knox and Laurel Counties – Expansion into Jackson County
- CASA of the Heartland – Expansion into LaRue, Breckinridge, Grayson, and Meade Counties
- CASA of the Wilderness Trail – Expansion into Estill, Lee, and Owsley Counties
- CASA of the Lincoln Trail – Expansion into Marion and Washington Counties
- CASA of the Gateway Region – New program developed in Bath, Menifee, Montgomery, and Rowan Counties
- CASA of Ohio Valley – Expansion into Hancock and Ohio Counties
- CASA of the Northern Bluegrass Region – Expansion into Boone and Gallatin Counties
- CASA of South Central KY – Expansion into Allen and Simpson Counties
- CASA of the Appalachian Mountains – Expansion into Floyd, Magoffin, and Pike Counties

## Grant and Funding Resources

- State CASA Grant increase: One-time allocation of \$905,800 in FY 2025 and \$1,596,800 in FY 2026 appropriated to support loss of federal funds for local programs. FY 2025 total \$3,905,800 and FY 2026 total \$4,596,800.
- Seventeen State CASA financial monitoring visits completed
- Kosair Grant: \$74,340 awarded with \$62,700 passed through to eligible programs for volunteer appreciation, volunteer training, and marketing within the community.

## New Background Check Resources

- Created a list of sources for requesting Child Abuse and Neglect Checks, Sex Offender Registry Checks, and State and Local Criminal Records Checks in all fifty states.
- KCN began a project to run background checks for all local programs late summer 2024, with all programs onboarded by the end of the year.

## Quality Assurance Project Summary

- On-site and follow-up visits to local programs: 23
- Final QA reports issued to local programs: 9
- Final follow-up reports issued and action plan follow-ups completed: 11
- All current reports (including follow-up reviews) expected to be completed by June 2025