

SPECIAL STATE PROJECT SUPPLEMENT 2018-2020

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The Special State Project for the 2018-2020 administration is Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of New Jersey. Inc. CASA was founded in Seattle in 1977 by Judge David W. Soukup. He saw neglected children being re-victimized by overworked staff in the governmental agencies. CASA advocates to provide children with a “safe and healthy environment in permanent homes”.

Established in January 2000, CASA of NJ is headquartered in New Brunswick and is an independent non-profit organization that ensures the services of a CASA volunteer advocate – trained and supervised by a local CASA program – are available to every child in out-of-home placement throughout the State of NJ. The statistics for children living in foster care are 11,916 because of neglect or abuse. CASA of NJ reaches 3,866 children with only 1,897 advocates. There are 14 local CASA of NJ programs which serve all 21 counties.

GOAL

The Goal of the Special State Project is to raise funds to enable CASA of NJ to educate, support, advocate and provide public awareness programs to strengthen families and to protect children from any harm or neglect for all children in New Jersey. In addition to fundraising, NJSFWC members can support local affiliates with hands-on volunteer opportunities.

CASA of NJ will train advocates to walk with neglected children and be their voice in court and listen to teachers, family, and therapists to help the court to decide what is best for the children. CASA of NJ's effective programs find a safe permanent home, 96% of the children do not return to foster care and the courts accept 91% of the recommendations by volunteers.

ACTIVITIES

Together, NJSFWC and CASA of NJ can help advocate for children in many different ways:

DONATE

- Donate duffel bags for children of all ages up to 17 years old
- Donate new children's books to CASA of NJ
- Older children would love to have gift cards to, for example, Dunkin', Target or Starbucks.
- Birthday or holiday gifts
- Sponsor a summertime adventure or camp for a child in foster care

CREATE

- Make CASA of NJ bookmarks to distribute at libraries
- Crochet or knit scarfs, hats or blankets for children
- Recycle fabrics to make lap quilts
- Host a planting project for children
- Host an art project in school to promote what it means to feel safe in your home.

EDUCATE

- Participate in CASA of NJ 's training to be an Ambassador
- Become a CASA of NJ Court Appointed Special Advocate
- Arrange for a CASA of NJ speaker to make a presentation at your local library or at a club meeting. Call the number below to arrange a speaker.
- Attend and volunteer at CASA's Annual Advocacy Conference

- View a video, provided by CASA of NJ with club members and have a discussion afterwards

SPREAD AWARENESS

- Distribute CASA of NJ literature to your local Superintendent of Schools and School Boards; to your local pre-schools and day care centers.
- Partner with your local PTA to sponsor an awareness of being an advocate volunteer workshop in your town
- Submit a proclamation to your Mayor and Council to be signed in November for Adoption Month
- Submit a proclamation to your Mayor and Council to be signed in May for National Foster Care
Send a picture of the signing of this proclamation to your local papers and web sites. Post it on your club's Facebook page and website.
- Submit newspaper articles about various CASA-NJ services to your local papers and websites.
- Arrange a video presentation at your local library followed by a discussion
- In Facebook check out: Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of New Jersey and click "Like".
- Connect CASA of NJ with local faith, social service and youth organizations to form partnerships.

FUNDRAISE

- Plan a club fundraiser of your choice to support our State Project
- Purchase a State Project pin
- Support Federation fundraisers for CASA of NJ
- Volunteer at your local CASA of NJ affiliate fundraiser

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