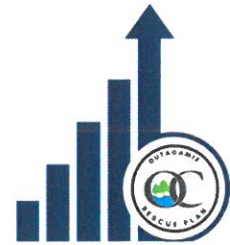


OUTAGAMIE RESCUE PLAN
PHASE ONE NONPROFIT GRANT APPLICATION
YOUTH ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS



GENERAL NONPROFIT APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Nonprofit Organization: CASA of the Fox Cities

Address: 1500 N. Casaloma Dr., Ste 200 Appleton, WI 54913

Primary Contact Person: Dawn M. Gohlke

Title: Executive Director

Phone: 920.257.4733

E-mail: dawn@casafc.org

Federal Employee Identification Number (Attach [IRS Form W-9](#) to Application): 46-0740362

DUNS Number (to look up or register for, click [here](#)): 079142331

Mission Statement:

CASA of the Fox Cities' mission is to advocate in our local courts, with community volunteers, to achieve placement in safe and permanent homes for children who have experienced abuse and neglect.

Primary Service/Program: Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs)

Current Program/Service Eligibility Criteria

- Income (Please specify criteria)**
- Employment Status**
- Housing Status**
- Other (Please specify):** Wisconsin Statue 48.236
- None**

Percentage of Households Served Earning less than 60% of Outagamie Median Income (\$20,177 individual/\$39,343 household)?

NA- We are a court ordered service and cannot ask this question. However, we know that 26% of our population is incarcerated without an annual income. We can utilize Outagamie County demographics if needed or AASD free and reduced lunch eligibility statistics.

Percentage of Households Served Below Federal Poverty Line (\$12,760 individual; \$17,240 household of 2; \$21,720 household of 3; \$26,200 household of 4)?

See response above

Number of Clients/Households Served in 2019: 209

Number of Clients/Households Served in 2020: 216

Number of Clients/Households Served Thru June 2021: 191

Percentage of Clients/Households Outagamie County Residents: 100%

Total Annual Expenses in 2019: \$370,884

Total Annual Expenses in 2020: \$453,338

Total Budgeted Expenses in 2021: \$550,812

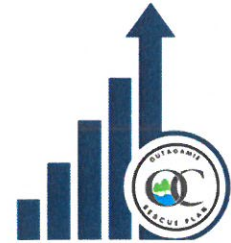
Please briefly describe your nonprofit agency's fiscal oversight/internal controls to minimize opportunities for fraud, waste, and mismanagement.

CASA (the "organization") has an extensive Financial Policies and Procedures Manual that governs both fiscal oversight and internal controls to minimize opportunities for fraud, waste, and mismanagement (copy available upon request). This manual outlines the organization's policy for cash disbursement, and procedures to ensure appropriate segregation of duties. In addition, the organization may not incur expenses that are not accounted for in the organization's Board Approved budget. The Finance Committee reviews internal financial statements monthly, including the cash journal. The organization also contracts with an independent firm to conduct an annual review/audit of the organization's financials to ensure the financial statements are materially correct and that the financials are managed in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

How does your nonprofit agency plan to segregate ARPA funds from other agency funds for purposes of identification, tracking, reporting and auditing?

CASA (the "organization") will utilize QuickBooks and appreciate cost accounting principles for purposes of identification, tracking, reporting, and auditing. The organization's leadership and its Finance Committee will maintain an appropriate schedule (excel format) to ensure that ARPA funds are spent on approved expenditures in accordance with the Grant Agreement and that these costs are not duplicated with other agency fund sources.

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PHASE ONE (IMMEDIATE NEEDS) GRANT PROPOSAL

Please provide a brief project narrative, project budget, and anticipated measurable outcomes of the project your agency would undertake with grant funds awarded through this program. Again, per the Treasury Guidance, the following language details eligible expenses in this category:

“Addressing Educational Disparities. ...school closures and the transition to remote education raised particular challenges for lower-income students, potentially exacerbating educational disparities, while increases in economic hardship among families could have long-lasting impacts on children’s educational and economic prospects. Services under this prong would enhance educational supports to help mitigate impacts of the pandemic. Eligible services include:

- *New, expanded, or enhanced early learning services, including pre-kindergarten, Head Start, or partnerships between pre-kindergarten programs and local educational authorities, or administration of those services;*
- *Providing assistance to high-poverty school districts to advance equitable funding across districts and geographies;*
- *Evidence-based* educational services and practices to address the academic needs of students, including tutoring, summer, afterschool, and other extended learning and enrichment programs; and*
- *Evidence-based* practices to address the social, emotional, and mental health needs of students;”*

Please limit your response to no more than two pages. As previously noted, while the use of grant funds is flexible they must be used in a manner that expands the agency’s capacity to serve those in need, keeping in mind these are one-time funds. **Please note that a project report detailing how grant funds were utilized will be required for federal reporting purposes. Reporting requirements may vary but will be specifically tailored to the grant proposal and use of funds with the intent to streamline and minimize the burden on grant recipients while still complying with federal requirements. More specific reporting requirements will be determined upon execution of the grant agreement.**

NARRATIVE (What’s the current need/demand and target population? How will this project align with the federal requirements as previously stated? How will this project advance our recovery from the pandemic?)

See next Page

Overview

FOR THE PAST NINE YEARS, CASA of the Fox Cities has been positively impacting child victims in your community. CASA of the Fox Cities will provide evidence-based practices (services) to **MORE THAN 216 CHILD VICTIMS** who have experienced abuse and/or neglect in Outagamie County.

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) will do this by meeting with the child regularly and objectively **OBSERVING** what is going on in their life. They will **IDENTIFY** services to meet the child's needs and they will **FACILITATE** collaborative relationships between all parties involved in the case. They will **MONITOR** whether court orders and the plans of the Department of Children, Youth and Family services are carried out. Finally, they will **ADVOCATE** for the child's best interests through a summary of their findings in a written court report.

A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) identifies critical services which address the **SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OF STUDENTS**, with concerted effort on meeting their **ACADEMIC NEEDS** while placed under the protection of the court. Our program will support local children and their families, 37% of whom are historically from **DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES** which have experienced disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 crisis (5% Hispanic, 5% American Indian/Alaska Native, .5% Asian, 15% Black/African American, and 11% two or more races).

The Need

Emergency measures adopted to slow the spread of the virus during the pandemic such as social distancing, school and business closures, lockdown measures, and travel restrictions may have reduced the transmission of virus, but they may have also increased the risk of violence against children and youth due to increased family stressors. More pointedly, stressors from economic instability, such as unanticipated job losses, resulting from COVID-19 related economic downturns.

As of July 31, 2021, screened-in reports of child abuse and/or neglect were up 19% compared to this time last year, and they are up 12% compared to pre-pandemic times (2019).

	2019 Reports	Screened in reports	2020 Reports	Screened in reports	2021 Reports	Screened in reports
January	219	64	338	82	302	73
February	240	58	287	72	316	85
March	233	50	257	50	306	85
April	241	80	148	37	236	89
May	266	92	199	71	229	65
June	154	51	160	53	173	55
July	176	61	180	63	114	59
	1529	456	1569	428	1676	511

The number of children in out-of-home care is already up 7% compared to 2020 end of year numbers, and there are five more months to go in the year.

The Cost/Budget

Funding would be used to expand the organization's capacity to serve current and the increased number of referrals coming into CASA of the Fox Cities under an Outagamie County CHIPS orders. Specifically enhancing services for **EDUCATIONAL SUPPORTS, SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OF STUDENTS**. Services needed because of the increased risk of violence against children during the pandemic. The addition of a CASA advocate will help mitigate impacts of the pandemic for less than it costs the county on an annual basis. It costs CASA of the Fox Cities approximately \$2,100.00 annually per child for services. An increase in services alone from 216-240, children will cost CASA of the fox Cities an additional \$50,400.00 for 24 children.

The Results

(Recovery from the Pandemic)

CASA of the Fox Cities will serve 230-240 children in 2021 who have experienced abuse and/or neglect.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?... BECAUSE CHILDREN NEED STABILITY TO THRIVE.

Without a CASA volunteer, we know that outcomes for youth who age out of foster care are disastrous and cost our community more in the long run when considering the economic ramifications. The recent pandemic only serves to amplify the negative effects.

- 1 in 5 youth who age out of foster care will become homeless after the age of 18.
- Only ½ will be employed at the age of 24
- Less than 1/3 will earn a college degree.

But there is HOPE! We know that children with Court Appointed Special Advocates are more likely to find a safe, permanent home. They are more likely to be adopted, half as likely to reenter foster care, and substantially less likely to spend time in long-term foster care. **WE ALSO KNOW THAT CHILDREN WITH CASA VOLUNTEERS RECEIVE MORE SERVICES WHILE IN THE SYSTEM AND DO BETTER IN SCHOOL.**

In 2020, Advocates made 5,099 visits with their child (24 visits per child) and spent 3,134.60 case hours (14.5 hrs. per child). Plus, an additional 1,104.7 hours connecting with professionals and/or those people directly influencing the child's life.

In 2020, we made nearly 2,000 recommendations for critical services to meet the needs of children who have experienced abuse and neglect in Outagamie County (average of 9 per child).

In 2020, **91%** of school-aged children who had a CASA volunteer maintained or improved their educational rating between January 1st and December 31, 2020.

BUDGET (Please detail using categories below)

Direct assistance to clients/households	
Staffing related costs	\$108,000.00 (Salary/Wages, Benefits, and Taxes)
Supplies	\$2,150.00 (Office Supplies, Postage, Phone/Internet)
Other (describe)	\$10,900.00 (Rent)
TOTAL BUDGET/GRANT AMOUNT REQUESTED	\$121,050.00

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES (Anticipated number of additional clients/households served? What is the health or economic benefit to those served?)

The Outcomes

To ensure that children who have experienced abuse and/or neglect do not fall through the cracks, and have the opportunity to thrive and compete with their peers that are not involved with the Department of Children, Youth and Family Services we will focus our local goals on: 1) Restoring a measure of safety and security to child victims; 2) Assisting child victims in understanding the criminal justice system; 3) Providing recommendations to the court for critical services needed to respond to the emotional, psychological, or physical needs of child victims; and 4) Assisting child victims in stabilizing their lives after a victimization (mental health, education, placement, and social skills).

1. In 2021, we will restore a measure of safety and security to 230-240 children to address the increased need resulting from the pandemic by December 31, 2021.
2. In 2021, CASA of the Fox Cities will assist the child victim in understanding and participating in the criminal justice system by having a CASA advocate or staff person in attendance at more than 275 court hearings.
3. In 2021, we will respond to the emotional, psychological, or physical needs of child crime victims by recommending an average of 9 services per child. For example, in 2020 we identified and recommended 1,941 critical services for the children to best meet their needs (336 counseling services, 198 education services, 106 medical referrals, 978 requests for permanence, 30 requests for placement, 216 visitations with siblings, and 80 other services for the child, and/or parent).
4. In 2021, we will assist child victims in stabilizing their lives after a victimization (education) by ensuring that 80% or more of school age children will maintain or improve their educational rating from 1/1/21 to 12/31/21.

OPTIONAL SECTION: NOT REQUIRED FOR PHASE ONE GRANT CONSIDERATION POTENTIAL PHASE TWO (LONG-TERM NEEDS) GRANT PROPOSAL

While there is no guarantee, the possibility exists of a Phase Two Nonprofit Grant process utilizing this federal funding. Information provided will help inform future county decisions regarding how best to prioritize ARPA funding. Should the Phase One grant funding be insufficient to provide the resources your agency feels are needed to meet the current needs in our community, please provide additional information to justify additional grant funding being allocated in this area. Please limit your response to no more than one page.

BRIEF NARRATIVE

Due to increased stressors caused by the pandemic, we can expect that children and youth will continue to be placed at an increased risk of violence into 2022. Unfortunately, our system cannot keep up with the current need and it is not uncommon for us to receive referrals for cases that entered the system more than a year ago. As this has continued into 2021, it has created a ripple effect that will be felt for years to come. We fully expect that as the backlog of cases are addressed, we will see increased referrals from the pandemic well into 2022 and 2023. To continue to address this need in our community, we will need funding to run expanded operations as the need for CASA continues.

This includes providing a portion of funding for Volunteer Advocate Coordinators who screen, train, and monitor volunteer advocates, a portion of funding would be used for staff to recruit more volunteers to meet this need (our average training class is 15-20 volunteers), funding would be used for training materials for advocates (advocates must complete 30 hrs. of pre-service training plus 12 hours of continuing education on a yearly basis), and general operating supplies that allow us to provide quality case management (staff training, child birthday gifts, internet access, telephone, volunteer recognition, office supplies, printing, postage, copies, educational materials etc.). **For every 10 children we serve it costs our program \$21,000 (\$2,100 yearly per child) in general operating costs.**

AMOUNT NEEDED (No budget detail necessary)

Based upon current trends, an average of 6.5 referrals per month and only 4.5 closures, we can safely assume that new staffing will have to be hired to address this increase in needs. This means that with increased services, going from servicing 240 children to approximately 266 children who have experienced abuse and/or neglect. Our agency will need an additional \$54,600.00 to continue its operations.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Measurable outcomes shown above in phase one will be continued into phase two. Focus our local goals on: 1) Restoring a measure of safety and security to child victims; 2) Assisting child victims in understanding the criminal justice system; 3) Providing recommendations to the court for critical services needed to respond to the emotional, psychological, or physical needs of child victims; and 4) Assisting child victims in stabilizing their lives after a victimization (mental health, education, placement, and social skills).

Continued OPTIONAL Section:

Additionally, per the Treasury Guidance, another potential eligible use of funds is as follows:

“Expenses to Improve the Efficacy of Economic Relief Programs. State, local, and Tribal governments may use payments from the Fiscal Recovery Funds to improve efficacy of programs addressing negative economic impacts, including through the use of data analysis, targeted consumer outreach, improvements to data or technology infrastructure, and impact evaluations.”

Please indicate below how your agency could utilize support in one of the categories listed above to improve the efficacy of your programs. Please limit your response to no more than one page.

Data Analysis/Targeted Consumer Outreach/Data & Technology Improvements/Impact Evaluations

BRIEF NARRATIVE (How will grant funds be used to improve the efficacy of your programs moving forward, to better serve all clients/households into the future?)

Supporting CASA of the Fox Cities in providing a CASA advocate to all children in Outagamie County on CHIPS orders (Children in need of Protection and/or Services) will improve the efficacy of the court system.

The child welfare system is so overloaded that it is nearly impossible for a Guardian ad Litem (WI Mandated Court Appointed Lawyer) to see their child more than once every 6 months. If they ever get to see the child they represent, it has been reported to us that some Guardian ad Litem have never met the child they represent.

Our advocates fill this vital gap by meeting with the child monthly (preferably weekly). They get to know that child, what is going on in their life, and what they need. CASAs do this by meeting with the child regularly and observing their environment and family relationships. CASA advocates identify services and facilitate collaborative relationships between all parties involved in the case. They advocate for the child's best interests in a written court report and monitor whether the orders of the court and the plans of the Children, Youth and Family Services are carried out.

This way the court has the most current, and up-to-date information before them when they need to make life altering decisions regarding where the child should be placed.

AMOUNT NEEDED (No budget detail necessary)

\$54,600.00

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

To ensure that children who have experienced abuse and/or neglect do not fall through the cracks, and have the opportunity to thrive and compete with their peers that are not involved with the Department of Children, Youth and Family Services we will focus our local goals on: 1) Restoring a measure of safety and security to child victims; 2) Assisting child victims in understanding the criminal justice system; 3) Providing recommendations to the court for critical services needed to respond to the emotional, psychological, or physical needs of child victims; and 4) Assisting child victims in stabilizing their lives after a victimization (mental health, education, placement, and social skills).

1. In 2022, we will restore a measure of safety and security to 240-266 children to address the increased need resulting from the pandemic by December 31, 2022.
2. In 2022, CASA of the Fox Cities will assist the child victim in understanding and participating in the criminal justice system by having a CASA advocate or staff person in attendance at more than 300 court hearings.
3. In 2022, we will respond to the emotional, psychological, or physical needs of child crime victims by recommending an average of 9 services per child. For example, in 2020 we identified and recommended 1,941 critical services for the children to best meet their needs (336 counseling services, 198 education services, 106 medical referrals, 978 requests for permanence, 30 requests for placement, 216 visitations with siblings, and 80 other services for the child, and/or parent).
4. In 2022, we will assist child victims in stabilizing their lives after a victimization (education) by ensuring that 80% or more of school age children will maintain or improve their educational rating from 1/1/22 to 12/31/22.