



# 3-5-Year Strategic Plan 2023-2027

## Acknowledgements

### *CASA Board*

Jason Beebe – President  
Cheryl Hecksel- Williams – Vice Presider  
Melanie Bryde – Secretary  
Jon Zamora  
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Ashlee Barker  
Abby Reigler

### *CASA Staff & Volunteers*

Rachel Swedburg - Executive Director  
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Cathy Franklin – Development Coordinator  
Jaimie Singer – Advocate Supervisor  
Trevor Hunt – CASA Volunteer  
Fern Greisbach – CASA Volunteer

*Special thanks to the other numerous CASA volunteers, staff, community partners, stakeholders, and families of children served who supported this strategic planning process. Your feedback and insight were invaluable in creating this strategic plan and will influence CASA for Kids, Inc's growth!*

## Introduction & History

Nationally, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) programming was founded in 1977 by a family court Judge in Washington who recognized the need for independent advocacy to address children's individual needs under court jurisdiction due to abuse and neglect. He developed a pilot program of community volunteers that served as his “eyes and ears” on child abuse and neglect cases. CASA has grown into a network of nearly 1000 local CASA programs in 49 states.

CASA for Kids, Inc. (CASA) was established in Barry County in 1991 and expanded to Eaton County in 1997. CASA then expanded to serve Ingham County children in 2018 under one judge. In 2021, CASA expanded to serving under three Ingham Judges and expanded into a fourth Judge’s courtroom in 2023.

Approximately 500 children are eligible for a CASA volunteer in the three counties served due to entering foster care.

### Mission Statement

The mission of CASA for Kids, Inc. is to provide volunteer advocates to work independently for the best interests of each child of service coming within the jurisdiction of the Michigan Barry, Eaton, and Ingham Counties Courts due to abuse and neglect.

### Statement of Purpose

CASA’s purpose is to provide strong personal advocacy for abused/neglected children within the service area and furnish thorough, in-depth, objective information to the court and system professionals.

### Vision

Our vision is to eradicate the need for CASA volunteers through trauma-informed, strengths-based advocacy that reduces the cycle of neglect.

### Values

Transparency, Collaboration, Equity, & Accountability

*We are committed to serving every child, regardless of race, background, or identity, because we believe every child deserves a safe, supportive, and permanent home where they can thrive.*

## The Planning Process

### STRATEGIC PLANNING OVERVIEW

Nonprofits serve needs within communities that are critical. Demands upon all nonprofit organizations are increasing while resources and funding are decreasing. Creating a thriving and sustainable organization that provides highly trained volunteers to advocate within the court system and the community for the best interest of children under court jurisdiction due to abuse and neglect in Barry, Eaton, and Ingham counties becomes paramount to the future of CASA for Children.

Strategic planning is a critical element of the success of any nonprofit, providing clear and articulate definitions of whom the organization serves, the measures of success, and the means to achieve success. Organizational alignment is the heart of successful strategic planning and the power source behind the timely and effective implementation. The strategic plan and process serve as a framework for key operational and business plans (including budgets) to improve short-term and long-term performance. The Board of Directors is responsible for ensuring a dynamic and purposeful implementation of the strategic plan.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS for CASA for Kids, Inc.

#### Barry, Eaton, and Ingham

A strategic planning process began in September 2022 and culminated in a strategic framework for a five-year 2023-2027 Strategic Plan in March 2023. This ongoing strategic planning process emphasizes a stakeholder-centered approach ensuring the board, members, leaders, and community actively engage in the ownership of the process, the results, and its integration.

The process included participation to ensure all points of view were represented with a widespread commitment to the present and future vision, successes and areas of improvement, and the changing environment it operates in. The process included the identification of risk, data gathering, discussion, and recommendations on short- and long-term issues. The process also addressed challenges, including the organization's culture, mission, vision, competitive strategies, programmatic issues, relationships with the community, and internal needs to move forward effectively.

## STEPS OF STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

- Communication of strategic planning process to internal and external stakeholders
- **Environmental Scan**
  - **Board and Staff Survey w/Internal Assessment and Gap analysis**
  - **Stakeholder Survey w/External Assessment and Gap Analysis**
  - **Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups input**
  - Data Gathering/Review/Analysis
- **Board and Staff Sessions establish a strategic framework**
  - **Review Mission, Vision, and Values**
  - **Identification of Strategic Issues and Priorities for 2023 - 2027**
  - **Goals and Objectives**
  - **Strategies – ongoing development of strategies/work plans with performance metrics/ongoing evaluation process identified for staff and board priorities**
- **Implementation**
  - Realistic, measurable, and **prioritized strategies and action plans** with responsibilities and timelines will be developed by **Staff Leadership and the Board of Directors**
  - The **established goals and objective with strategies directing specific activities and assignments will guide CASA for Kids, Inc. Barry, Eaton, and Ingham staff leadership and board decision and actions for the next three to five years 2023-2027**
  - **Ongoing review process** of strategic plan with **special emphasis in 2025 to prepare for the next five-year plan.**

## 2023-2028 Strategic Plan

Proposed Goals	Proposed Objectives	Target Timing
<b>Engage communities to strengthen relationships and maximize mission impact</b>	<b>Establish ongoing Quality Assurance for Organizational and Community Communication</b>	1 year
	<b>Increase awareness, knowledge, and perception of CASA in the community</b>	1-3 year
	<b>Increase community partnerships</b>	3-5 year
	<b>Lead in equitable outcomes in the community</b>	3-5 year
<b>Ensure organizational sustainability and strategic growth.</b>	<b>Strengthen current revenue streams</b>	1 year
	<b>Cultivate new revenue stream opportunities</b>	1-3 year
	<b>Ensure appropriate planning and resources for stability and sustainability</b>	2-4 year
	<b>Ensure planning and resources for growth</b>	2-4 year
<b>Continue building strong internal systems to maximize mission impact and growth</b>	<b>Increase Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) mechanisms and effective use within all of CASA</b>	1 year
	<b>Increase recruiting and retention mechanisms for staff, board, and volunteers</b>	1-3 year
	<b>Strengthen technology and tools to streamline mission impact</b>	1-3 year
	<b>Ensure DEI values are integrated into all aspects of the organization</b>	1 - 3 year
	<b>Implement and further develop effective training mechanisms</b>	1-3 year

**CASA for Kids is committed to organizational growth that supports our community.**

**CASA is committed to fostering a value, equity, and empowerment culture.**

## Implementation Process

Through the strategic planning process, the board revitalized existing committees and added additional committees in tandem with our values statements. These committees, board members, and staff have been tasked with individual strategies to accomplish each objective. Ensuring the strategic plan is implemented into CASA for Kids, Inc.'s day-to-day activities, guiding current and future decision-making processes.

### Board Committees & Purpose

#### Finance Committee: Meets the Second Tuesday of every other month, 5:30 pm

The Finance Committee provides financial analysis, advice, and oversight of the organization's budget. Their sole responsibility is to ensure the organization operates with the financial resources it needs to provide programs and services to the community.

#### Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee: Meets the 3rd Wednesday of every month, 4 pm

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee provides research, recommendations, event support, and policy guidance to leadership. The committee develops and annually reviews the DEI action plan to ensure it is active and engaged in all aspects of the organization.

#### Fundraising & Event Committee: Meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month, 4 pm

The Fundraising and Event Committee maximizes the fundraising strategies in keeping with the organization's development plan, evaluates current revenue streams, identifies new revenue streams that diversify the organization's income, and engages staff, board, volunteers, and the community in event planning and fundraising strategies.

#### Policy & Program Committee: Meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of every month, 5 pm

The Policy and Program Committee reviews and updates organizational policy annually and supports the development and innovation of program policy.

#### Expectations of Committee Members:

Share the mission of CASA with people in your communities.

Participate in CASA events.

Attend monthly committee meetings.

Participate in committee meeting work.