

## 2014 Economic Impact: CASA of Kern County

CASA volunteers are assigned to the abused children they serve at various stages in the juvenile dependency process. Judges in Kern County typically assign a CASA to a child at one of three stages:

1) **Family Maintenance:** The children are returning home to the parent(s) who initially abused the children, and the parents have completed the majority of their case plan. CASAs are assigned by the judge in these cases on a regular basis. The judge wants extra “eyes and ears” to visit the children weekly, and to ascertain the condition of the house and caregivers, while visiting announced and unannounced into the home.

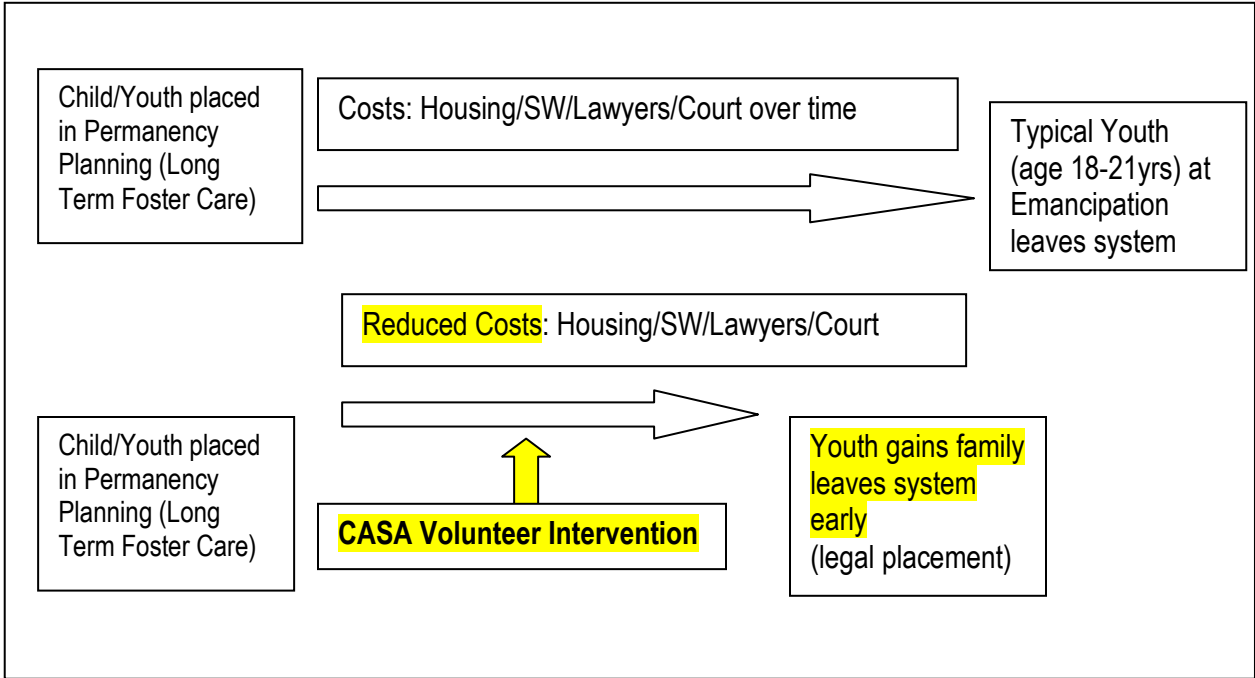
2) **Family Reunification:** The children are hoping to go home in the next six to twelve months, and the judge wants additional information about the services the children need, and the progress of the case plans of the parents, and the children. CASAs are assigned to a large number of these cases, and as we visit weekly, we observe the patterns of the family and how the separation is affecting the parties.

3) **Permanency Plan:** The children are in **long term foster care**, and will be in foster care until they turn 18-21. In these cases, the judge wants the CASA to advocate for any needs identified, and to give annual reports to the court about the child/youth’s progress and status. Although the new term for long term foster care in the State of California has been changed to “planned permanent living arrangement”, we prefer to use the more easily recognizable term of “long term foster care”.

This impact report deals **only** with our service to the last subset – **those children who are already placed in the permanent plan of long term foster care**. The CASA Program of Kern County is committed to finding a permanent, “forever” family for each child we reach. CASA cannot do this work alone, and we rely on our collaborative work with the Department of Human Services. However, we believe that having a CASA work with these children has a direct and identifiable value and a cost savings to our community. When a child or youth finds a family, and leaves this system, there is a huge benefit to the community. Minimally, the community is saved hundreds of thousands of dollars in housing costs.

Once the court orders a child into the Permanent Plan of Long Term Foster Care, the County of Kern, and the community has committed to house this child/youth until their emancipation. The Causal Model below demonstrates the basis of this report. We believe that a CASA volunteer assigned to a child assists in the child leaving the system earlier than the court plan, thus saving housing costs. Children and youth are assigned to one of three types of placements, the Family Foster Home, a Foster Family Agency, or a Group Home. The actual housing costs per child vary according to the age of the child. This 2013 Report documents the current rate of housing, and we have **not** adjusted for the bi-annual housing increases which occur as each child ages. Youth can now stay until the **age of 21**, however the data set we use **stops** at their eighteenth birthday. Truly these are **very conservative** housing costs.

CASA Causal Model



In 2013 year, CASA volunteers served a total of 296 children, of the 2100 dependent children of Kern County. Each year a number of our cases are dismissed from the court. In 2013, 117 cases closed with a CASA assigned. On average, over **87% of these children achieved legal permanency**. Legal permanency for this report is defined as return to safe family, adoption, legal guardianship or “supported” emancipation. Supported emancipation means a youth has a robust plan in place for work/housing/school along with all proper documentation.

CASA can demonstrate that we **saved the county over \$329,000** in housing costs in **this year alone**. Twenty one children\*, were in long term foster care prior to receiving their CASAs and they now are out of the foster care system. These twenty nine children would have cost **over \$2.3 million** to house them during their **174 additional years of foster care**. Truly CASA is worth your support, even in these very challenging economic times.

**CASA Economic Impact Report  
Estimated Cost Savings from CASA Intervention**

Child ID	Age at Dismissal	Placement Type at Closing	Placement Housing Rate at Closing	Prior Placement Type	Prior Placement Housing Rate	Housing Rate Savings	Foster Care Time Saved	Housing Cost Savings
464	15 Yr, 2 Mo	BP	0.00	GH	6,259.00	6,259.00	2 Yr, 10 Mo	212,806.00
1667	17 Yr, 6 Mo	BP	0.00	FHB	820.00	820.00	6 Mo	4,920.00
1781	11 Yr, 10 Mo	G	0.00	FHB	748.00	748.00	6 Yr, 2 Mo	55,352.00
1807	16 Yr, 2 Mo	BP	0.00	FHT	1,977.00	1,944.00	1 Yr, 10 Mo	43,494.00
1928	14 Yr, 9 Mo	G	0.00	FFACH	1,911.00	1,911.00	3 Yr, 3 Mo	74,529.00
1960	9 Yr, 11 Mo	G	0.00	RH	748.00	748.00	8 Yr, 1 Mo	72,556.00
1961	7 Yr, 10 Mo	G	0.00	RH	711.00	711.00	10 Yr, 2 Mo	86,742.00
1962	5 Yr, 2 Mo	G	0.00	RH	711.00	711.00	12 Yr, 10 Mo	109,494.00
1980	6 Yr, 8 Mo	AP	0.00	FFACH	1,789.00	1,789.00	11 Yr, 4 Mo	243,304.00
1981	5 Yr, 5 Mo	AP	0.00	FFACH	1,789.00	1,789.00	12 Yr, 7 Mo	270,139.00
1982	4 Yr, 5 Mo	AP	0.00	FFACH	1,714.00	1,714.00	13 Yr, 7 Mo	279,382.00
2092	6 Yr, 7 Mo	G	0.00	RH	711.00	711.00	11 Yr, 5 Mo	97,407.00
2093	8 Yr, 3 Mo	G	0.00	RH	711.00	711.00	9 Yr, 9 Mo	83,187.00
2129	10 Yr, 2 Mo	AP	0.00	FFACH	1,844.00	1,844.00	7 Yr, 10 Mo	173,336.00
2130	7 Yr	AP	0.00	FHB	711.00	711.00	11 Yr	93,852.00
2131	4 Yr, 4 Mo	AP	0.00	FHB	657.00	657.00	13 Yr, 8 Mo	107,748.00
2132	3 Yr, 2 Mo	AP	0.00	FHB	657.00	657.00	14 Yr, 10 Mo	116,946.00
2157	6 Yr, 3 Mo	G	0.00	RH	711.00	711.00	11 Yr, 9 Mo	100,251.00
2160	13 Yr, 4 Mo	AP	0.00	FHB	783.00	783.00	4 Yr, 8 Mo	43,848.00
2180	13 Yr, 4 Mo	BP	0.00	FHB	783.00	783.00	4 Yr, 8 Mo	43,848.00
2214	10 Yr, 11 Mo	G	0.00	RH	748.00	748.00	7 Yr, 1 Mo	14,960.00

**Total housing costs --**

**Total monthly savings:**

**27,460.00**

**Time in foster care saved:**

**174 Yr, 4 Mo**

**Total Annual Savings: \$329,520.00**

**Total housing cost savings: 2,328,101.00**

AP (Adoptive Placement) -- Housing cost rate: \$0.00/month

G (Guardian) -- Housing cost rate: \$0.00/month

BP (Birth Parent) -- Housing cost rate: \$0.00/month

GH (Group Home) -- Housing cost rate: \$7,795.00/month

CS (Children's Shelter) -- Housing cost rate: \$640.00/month

M (Misc.) -- Housing cost rate: \$0.00/month

FFACH (FFA Certified Home) -- Housing cost rate: \$1,828.00/month

RH (Relative Home) -- Housing cost rate: \$724.00/month

FHB (FH:Basic) -- Housing cost rate: \$724.00/month

FHT (FH:Therapeutic) -- Housing cost rate: \$1,828.00/month