

Summary of Research on CASA/GAL Cases

Studies focused on Court Appointed Special Advocate Programs (CASA) and Guardian Ad Litem Programs (GAL)

Author, Study Site	Publication Year	Study Title	Design/Methodology	Sample Size	Variables Studied	State
Organizational Research Services	2005	Evaluation of CASA/GAL Volunteer Impact: Judicial Survey	Evaluative/satisfaction via survey to judges	564 judicial survey returns	Judicial impressions of volunteers, advocacy, need, case assignment decisions and characteristics	National
McHale, Nancy; Marywood University, Dissertation	2004	Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA): Interpreting the Best Interest of the Child Standard	Evaluative/satisfaction analysis of volunteers, literature review	10 volunteer surveys	Volunteer characteristics, qualitative survey: volunteer impressions of cases, program, judges	New York
Caliber Associates	2004	Evaluation of CASA Effectiveness	quasi-experimental retrospective case file comparison of cases with CASA volunteer and cases without	3,774 Comet data 5,500 NSCAW (with 429 CASA subset)	case and volunteer characteristics CASA vol. activities Outcomes	National (25 programs)
Litzelfelner, Pat University of Kentucky	2003	CASA Consumer Satisfaction Survey	evaluative/satisfaction analysis; questionnaires to judges, attorneys, parents and social workers	742 survey returns	perception of CASA volunteers	National (23 programs)
Weisz , Victoria; Thai , Nghi	2003	The Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program: Bringing Information to Child Abuse & Neglect Cases	case hearing outcome comparison via survey/assessment to judges, volunteers and GALs	41 hearings (20 with a CASA volunteer, 21 without)	qualitative: case involvement, court reports, hearing activities	Nebraska
Siegel, Gene C.	2001	Arizona CASA Effectiveness Study, Report to the Arizona Supreme Court				Arizona
Cook, Michael; University of La Verne, Dissertation	2000	Court Appointed Special Advocates: Administrative Structural Impediments to the Use of the CASA Program by Juvenile Dependency Court	quasi-experimental retrospective case file comparison of cases with and without volunteer; Literature review	248 cases	child and family characteristics; severity of abuse	California

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		Judges				
Berhie, Girmay (Sheba International) Cabell & Wayne Counties West Virginia CASA Program	2000	Evaluation of the CASA Program of Cabell and Wayne Counties, WV	evaluative/satisfaction analysis; questionnaires to CASA volunteers (28) and social service professionals (47)	75 questionnaires	professional and volunteer perception of CASA staff and volunteers, service improvements, volunteer support and training needs; demographic data	West Virginia (Cabell & Wayne Counties)
Calkins, Cynthia A.; Millar, Murray;	1999	The Effectiveness of Court Appointed Special Advocates to Assist in Permanency Planning	quasi-experimental retrospective Ex post facto case file comparison of cases with CASA volunteer and cases without	189 cases reviewed and compared	Case characteristics for child; state of child in permanency plan; CASA vol. characteristics, case severity metrics	Nevada
Dickson, Donald; Morris, Lori; Baer, Judith; Farmer, G. Lawrence New Jersey CASA Program (5 sites)	1999	CASA in New Jersey	process analysis of 5 CASA programs and comparative summary of 2 private and 3 public programs; written surveys to volunteers (154), CPR representatives (79), case workers (34), and judges (5); site visits; interviews with key individuals; case and program records review	273 surveys; interviews N=unknown; records reviews N= unknown	processes: program and volunteer characteristics, case selection and characteristics, training and supervision, services, outcomes, relationships with other agencies, program growth	New Jersey
Proffitt, Susan; Staley-Whitney; Susan, Sanchez, Elizabeth; Craft, Mary; Birch, Sondra Harris County Texas GAL/Attorney Model	1999	Guardian Ad Litem/Attorney Project	quasi-experimental qualitative and quantitative comparison of cases with a GAL/Team (GAL, supervisor and attorney) and those without (non-equivalent groups); interviews; case records review	44 GAL/Team, 21 control; 31 interviews	perceptions of GAL/Attorney Team model: benefits and effectiveness; outcomes: time in out-of-home care, length of case, placement	Texas (Harris County)
Bruce, Brandon Santa Barbara California CASA Program	1998	1998 Outcome Measurement Survey Results for CASA of Santa Barbara County	quantitative/evaluative outcomes analysis; survey to CASA volunteers (57), collaborative agencies (54), parents/caregivers (36), children served (28)	175 surveys	outcomes (# of children served, # of volunteers trained, # of reports and court appearances, etc.)	California (Santa Barbara)
Goddard, Lucy State of Florida GAL Program	1998	Florida's GAL Program	descriptive analysis; telephone interviews with circuit directors and assistant directors; literature review	20 interviews	roles, training and compensation of GAL attorneys, statutory compliance in GAL appointments, volunteer availability	Florida
McRoy, Ruth Gregg County Texas	1998	East Texas CASA: A Program Evaluation	evaluative/satisfaction analysis; quasi-experimental	13 interviews; 27 cases reviewed or	CASA volunteers: roles, effectiveness, impact on	Texas (Gregg County)

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CASA Program			qualitative and quantitative comparison of cases with CASA volunteers (11) and cases without (11) (equivalent demographics); interviews with key participants, case record review (5)	compared	child welfare system, perceptions of involved individuals	
McRoy, Ruth Travis County Texas CASA Program	1998	CASA of Travis County Evaluation	evaluative/satisfaction analysis; quasi-experimental quantitative comparison of cases with CASA volunteers and cases without (equivalent demographics); interviews with key participants; literature and case file review	31 interviews, 7 cases reviewed; 46 CASA, 46 control	CASA program: impact on social service system, roles, benefits, types of cases which benefit most/least, improvements; fiscal impact on social service system	Texas (Travis County)
Berliner, Lucy State of Washington CASA/GAL Programs	1998	CASA for Children in WA State: A Review of Effectiveness	evaluative/satisfaction analysis; surveys of CASA/GAL program managers (19) and volunteers (493); focus group with judges (14); interviews with caseworkers (10), judges/commissioners (9), social service providers (10), attorneys representing parents (11)	512 surveys; 54 interviews	CASA/GAL program assessment; effectiveness of CASA/GAL program in improving outcomes; cost effectiveness	Washington
Litzelfelner, Pat Kansas CASA Program (3 sites)	1998	Evaluating the Impact of CASA on Outcomes for Children in Foster Care: Final Report	quasi-experimental: longitudinal and prospective court and CASA file comparison of cases with CASA volunteers and cases without (equivalent groups); semi-structured interviews with parents and children	150 CASA, 81 control; 14 interviews	impact of CASA on outcomes and processes; activities and case characteristics that predict desired outcomes; perceptions of CASA; beliefs about what leads to positive outcomes	Kansas
Powell, Michael; Speshock, Vernon State of Arizona CASA Program	1996	State of Arizona CASA Program	quasi-experimental retrospective case file comparison of cases with CASA volunteer and cases without (equivalency of groups unknown); case file review; judicial surveys	60 case file reviews; 19 surveys; 130 CASA, 179 control	contacts and recommendations, hearings attended, judicial evaluation of performance, re-entry, time out-of-home	Arizona
Litzelfelner, Pat; Poertner, John	1996	Preliminary Report: CASA Program	quasi-experimental prospective court file	120 CASA 83 control	impact of CASA on outcomes and processes,	Kansas

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Kansas CASA Program (3 sites)		Evaluation	comparison of cases with CASA volunteers and cases without (equivalent demographics); literature review		define what predicts positive outcomes	
Snyder, Karen; Downing, John; Jacobsen, Jill Franklin County Ohio CASA Program	1996	A Report to the Ohio Children’s Foundation on the Effectiveness of the CASA Program of Franklin County	quasi-experimental quantitative comparison of cases with CASA GAL to cases with private attorney GAL (non-equivalent groups); interviews with court personnel; CASA and case file review	30 CASA cases, 24 private attorney cases	program effectiveness; case management, case characteristics; implications of differences on representation/best interest of child	Ohio (Franklin County)
Bogle, Trina State of Virginia CASA Program & 3 sites	1996	Evaluation of the Virginia CASA Program [includes Executive Summary & Final Report]	descriptive/evaluative analysis, qualitative and quantitative; interviews with CASA program directors, and surveys of CASA volunteers (207) , program directors (17), judges (38), social workers (86) and GAL (26); case records review (78)	16 interviews; 374 surveys; 78 cases reviewed	qualitative process evaluation: characteristics roles, effectiveness, relationships; quantitative impact evaluation (3 sites): demographics, case types and length, CASA reports, contacts and recommendations, compliance, placement, re-entry	Virginia
Martin, Jocelyn Douglas County Kansas CASA Program	1995	Court Appointed Special Advocates: The Experiences of the Children and their Families	evaluative/satisfaction naturalistic analysis; qualitative interviews of children and their families	6 families (15 total interviews)	perception of CASA, valuable roles and actions, effective relationships	Kansas (Douglas County)
Nobles, James (Office of Legislative Auditor) State of Minnesota GAL Program	1995	Guardians Ad Litem	evaluative/satisfaction analysis; interviews, surveys, literature review	60 interviews, 1027 surveys	evaluate GAL system and services: in other states, organization and delivery, improvements	Minnesota
Allegheny County Pennsylvania CASA Program	1995	Summary Report of Caseworker Assessments of CASA	evaluative/satisfaction questionnaire to caseworkers	15 questionnaires	role of CASA program, relationship to CASA volunteers, feedback	Pennsylvania (Allegheny County)
Wilson, Vaughn Davidson County Tennessee CASA Program	1995	Evaluation of the CASA Program of Davidson County, Nashville, TN	evaluative/satisfaction analysis; observation and training; interviews of stakeholders: attorneys, judges, court’s referees, child welfare services personnel; survey of CASA staff and volunteers (23); literature and	21 interviews, surveys N=unknown	program evaluation for feedback and planning: roles and duties, case assignment, supervision and training, effectiveness, relationships with other stakeholders,	Tennessee (Davidson County)

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			case file review		improvements,	
Dameron, Samuel; Brown, Margaret Phipps; Orloff, Victor; Roberts, Reta Cabell County West Virginia CASA Program	1995	Evaluation of the CASA Program of Cabell County, WV	evaluative/satisfaction analysis; surveys of court and social service professionals (68), parents (7), CASA volunteers (30)	105 surveys	perceived strengths and weaknesses of CASA program and staff and suggestions for improvement; demographic data	West Virginia (Cabell County)
Erny, Sally Wilson Jefferson County Kentucky CASA Program	1994	Evaluation of the CASA Project of Jefferson County	evaluative/satisfaction analysis; survey of attorneys, foster parents, judges, social workers, mental health professionals/therapists, temporary custodians	103 survey respondents	performance and impact; assessment of roles and responsibilities, identification of strengths and weaknesses	Kentucky (Jefferson County)
Governor’s Task Force on Juvenile Justice, Subcommittee No. 3 State of Oregon	1994	Effective Advocacy for Dependent Children: A Systems Approach	descriptive analysis of advocacy processes; literature review; review of Citizen Review Board records (1,834), telephone interviews and informal surveys	N= unknown	program/system effectiveness; measurements: types of representation (attorney/lay/pro bono), roles and services, time in out-of-home care, costs; recommendations	Oregon
CSR, Inc National GAL Programs, Aitken, Condelli	1993-94	Final Report on the Validation and Effectiveness Study of Legal Representation Through Guardian Ad Litem	comparative analysis of 3 GAL models: private attorney, staff attorney, CASA (non-equivalent groups); interviews with GAL personnel, caseworkers, judges; case file review	23 counties, 259 individuals, 458 cases	effectiveness of GAL representation, roles of GAL, process effectiveness based on performance measures	National
Smith, Stephanie State of Texas CASA Program	1991-92	The Effects of CASA Volunteers on Case Duration and Outcome	quasi-experimental comparison of two groups: those with CASA volunteers and those without (equivalent demographics); case file review	307 children with CASA, 306 without	effectiveness of CASA volunteers; outcome measures: time in system, number of placements, case outcomes	Texas
Cox, Alene State of Arkansas GAL Program	1991	Advocating the Child’s Interests in Abuse and Neglect Cases: Can GAL’s be more Effective?	evaluative analysis; survey of Juvenile Justices	20 surveys	effectiveness of GAL: determining children’s “best interest”, scope of duties, attorneys or lay GAL, training and compensation; recommendations	Arkansas
Abramson, Shareen Fresno California	1991	Use of Court-Appointed Advocates	experimental case file comparison of cases with	60 CASA, 62 Control	reabuse, re-entry, permanency, case goals	California (Fresno)

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CASA Program		to Assist in Permanency Planning for Minority Children	CASA volunteer and cases without (equivalency of groups unknown)			
Sivan, Abigail; Quigley-Rick, Mary State of Iowa GAL Program	1991	Effective Representation of Children by the GAL: An Empirical Investigation	descriptive/evaluative analysis; questionnaires to legal personnel; interviews with GAL volunteers; literature review	86 questionnaires; 48 interviews	compare practices of Iowa GAL with norms, develop guidelines for GAL	Iowa
Leung, Patrick; Mastrini, Charles Denver Colorado CASA Program	1990	An Evaluation of the CASA Program in the Denver Juvenile Court (CO)	quasi-experimental comparison of 3 groups: CASA-waitlist-control (equivalency of groups unknown); questionnaires to judges, case file review, volunteer activity records	66 CASA 131 control	time in each placement, type of moves	Colorado (Denver)
Poertner, John; Press, Alan Midwest (2 programs)	1990	Who Best Represents the Interests of the Child in Court?	quasi-experimental retrospective case file comparison of CASA model and staff attorney model (SAM) (non-equivalent groups)	61 CASA 148 SAM	process (continuances, placement changes, time in-home and out-of-home, services, case length voluntary dismissals) and outcome (time in system, disposition, re-entry) variables, case demographics	Midwest
CSR Inc. National GAL Programs	1990	National Study of Guardian Ad Litem Representation	descriptive analysis and data collection; telephone discussions with knowledgeable contacts	610 individuals representing 555 counties	how states provide GAL representation.; state-by-state summary (attorney or volunteer, support and supervision, appointment process, roles and duties, training, caseloads, recruitment, compensation, demographics, immunity, monitoring)	National
Ellington, Anne; DuBuque, Joan King County Washington , 3 Programs	1990	Report of the Volunteer Programs Review Committee	evaluative/satisfaction analysis; literature review; interviews with program managers	N=unknown	review of CASA/GAL program: policies and procedures; volunteer recruitment, training, evaluation and supervision; recommendations	Washington (King County)

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Partin, Emmett; Shreve, Lynn National CASA/GAL Programs (6 sites)	1989	Final Report on Delaware Family Court Dissemination of Best CASA Models	descriptive and comparative analysis of 6 programs; questionnaires to judges (42) attorneys (143), volunteers (479), social workers (269), program staff (15), child welfare personnel (9); site visits; interviews with key individuals	957 questionnaires; approx. 20 interviews	profile of CASA/GAL volunteer and programs to formulate a CASA model; recruitment, retention and recognition; training and supervision, operations, relationships to other agencies, problems and recommendations	National (6 sites)
Vandiver, Richard; Shaw, Eudora Iowa CASA Program (3 counties)	1988	Report of Evaluation of CASA Program in Iowa (Technical Assistance Report)	descriptive/evaluative analysis; program document review; interviews with CASA personnel	34 interviews	is program meeting goals, potential for expanding program	Iowa (3 counties)
Condelli, Larry, CSR Inc. National GAL models	1988	National Evaluation of the Impact of Guardians Ad Litem in Child Abuse or Neglect Judicial Proceedings	comparative analysis; 5 models: law student, private attorney, volunteer & attorney, staff attorney, volunteer; (non-equivalent groups)	225	achieving permanence, stability, time spent in home & with relatives, number and type of services, case plan goals	National
Duquette, Donald N.; Ramsey, Sarah H. Genesee County Michigan Juvenile Court	1987	Representation of Children in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases: An Empirical Look at What Constitutes Effective Representation	quasi-experimental comparison of 3 trained groups (private attorneys, law students, volunteers under attorney supervision) and 1 untrained attorney control group; interviews, court records review	63 individuals, 91 court cases	effective representation and roles; process (roles and attitudes) and outcome (processing time, placement type, visitation, services, court orders) measures	Michigan (Genesee County)
Wert, E. Sue; Haller, Wendy; Fein, Edith Connecticut CASA Program (2 counties)	1986	"Children in Placement" (CIP): A Model for Citizen-Judicial Review	quasi-experimental case file comparison of 2 counties, one with volunteers, one without (non-equivalent groups)	149 CASA, 140 control	permanency, time in system	Connecticut (2 counties)
Mgt of America State of Florida GAL Program	1983	An Evaluation of the Florida GAL Program	evaluative/satisfaction analysis; interviews with key personnel and volunteers; case records analysis	interviews, N=unknown; 1659 case records analyzed	follow up to 1981 study; adequate financial and volunteer resources, impact on placement, placement cost comparisons; state office management,	Florida

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Kelly, Robert; Ramsey, Sarah North Carolina GAL Attorneys	1982-83	Do Attorney for Children on Protection Proceedings Make a Difference? A Study of the Impact of Representation under Conditions of High Judicial Intervention	empirical analysis; telephone surveys of attorneys; case records review, review of socio-demographic, social service and judicial-administrative literature review	91 surveys, 210 cases reviewed	impact of GAL attorney representation on case disposition; influencing factors	North Carolina
Mgt of America State of Florida GAL Program	1981	An Evaluation of the Volunteer GAL Pilot Program	evaluative/satisfaction analysis; interviews with circuit coordinators (10), volunteers (53), judges (10), court administrators and advisory board members (11), children services leaders (15), directors of GAL programs in other states (7); case records analysis	106 interviews, 2,065 case records analyzed	process: management procedures, expansion needs, alternative cost estimates, satisfaction with program, outcomes: impact on placement, placement cost comparisons	Florida