

**CITY OF RAPID CITY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM
APPLICATION FOR FUNDING**

A. GENERAL INFORMATION:

Agency Name: 7th Circuit Court CASA Program
Address: 3820 Jackson Blvd Suite 4
Rapid City, SD 57702

Agency Director: Sheila Troxel Snyder Phone: 605-394-2203
Board President: Jean Cline

B. PURPOSE OF THE ORGANIZATION:

The Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program, trains and supervises community volunteers who are appointed by the Juvenile Judge to represent the “best interest” of abused and neglected children in the court system.

CASA is based on the belief that every child has a right to a safe, permanent home. Each year hundreds of abused and neglected children in Rapid City are thrust into the court system through no fault of their own. In many cases, these children also become victims of an overburdened legal system where a complex legal network of lawyers, social workers, and judges frequently do not have the time to give individual attention to each child who comes before them.

The CASA Program recruits, trains, and supervises volunteers from the community to become the “eyes and ears” of the court and the “voice” of the child. After completing a thorough screening process, participating in 32-40 hours of training and being sworn in as an “Officer of the Court”, the CASA volunteer is expected to research the case by reviewing records, and by discussing the child’s background with teachers, doctors, natural parents, foster parents, school officials, and most importantly, the child.

On the basis of this research, the CASA volunteer is expected to submit a report to the court with specific recommendations as to what the volunteer feels is now “in the best interest” of the children. CASA volunteers also advocate for the child to ensure that the child receives the services they need and deserve, monitor the process to make certain that court orders involving the children are being followed, and strives to keep the case moving through the system as quickly as possible. Volunteers stay on the same case from the beginning until permanent placement for the children is secured, so that children do not fall through the cracks or languish in the foster care system longer than necessary.

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Currently CASA has 93 volunteers. As of September 30, 2003, CASA has served 447 children on 217 cases. The CASA Program is the only agency providing this service in our community. (Please see attached Demographics Data sheet for more information).

C. HISTORY OF THE ORGANIZATION:

The 7th Circuit CASA Program was founded in Rapid City in August of 1986. The CASA concept was brought to our community by Judge Marshall Young. Judge Young was a past president of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, and had heard about CASA Programs springing up all over the nation. Most importantly, Judge Young also heard the positive testimony of programs making a great deal of difference in a child's life, and that CASA Programs were being successful in communities where the program had been instituted. Working together with members of the community, a grant was written through Health and Human Services, and thus the program began. Within a few years the program was picked up as a United Way Agency. In 1990, the CASA Program had grown to 18 volunteers serving 35 children. After being chosen as the Black Hills Advertising Federation Public Service Project for 1991 the program expanded at a tremendous rate. Each year the program strives to serve more children.

D. AGENCY/ORGANIZATION GOALS:

The focus of the CASA Program is to continue to strive towards our goal of "a voice in court for every child that needs one". Since 1990, the CASA Program has increased advocacy services to abused and neglected children by 1200%. Unfortunately, at this time approximately 180 children have been assigned to CASA and are awaiting a volunteer. Awareness and support for the CASA Program continues at a very high rate in Rapid City, and the community is continuing to accept the challenge that abuse of children is not tolerable in our community. Our greatest challenge now is to continue with planned growth to meet the needs of the children who don't have a "voice in court". Without the support of the CDGB Program we will not be able to continue to meet the current needs or the expanded needs of these child victims. Although CASA volunteers save the community money each year, the program still must struggle to meet financial operating goals. As the Program struggles to meet the need of the expansion, an increase in funding is inevitable. Funds are needed in order to expand services to more children. In order to do this another volunteer coordinator will be hired.

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E. PROGRAM/PROJECT BENEFIT:

1. Number of clients served during the last twelve (12) months: 520 children
2. Number of children served in Rapid City: 520
Outside Rapid City: 0
3. Maximum number of clients your agency can serve at any one point in time:

Without expanding our current staff and in order to stay in compliance with National CASA's standards and guidelines, we can adequately supervise approximately 90 volunteers.

4. Does the agency have income eligibility requirements which limit services or activities exclusively to low/moderate income persons:

Yes, as all the clients we serve are children referred through the court and social services and whose parents are almost always appointed court appointed attorneys due to their income levels.

5. Does your agency serve any of the following specific groups of clientele?
(if "no" go to #6)

Abused and/or neglected children

6. Does your agency require information on the following? (if "no" go to #7)

N/A – Family size and income

N/A – Very low income (income below 30% of area median income)

N/A – Low income (income between 31-50% of area median income)

N/A – Above 80% of median income

7. If the benefits or service that your agency provides is open to all persons in the area regardless of income, list the boundaries of the entire area served. This can be census tracts, block groups, street boundaries, or other officially recognized boundaries:

All cases court ordered by the judge to have a CASA volunteer.

8. If the project or activity for which CDGB funds are requested will create new or be used to improve permanent residential structures that will be occupied

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by low and moderate income households upon completion, please state how many will be:

N/A - Completed

N/A – New

N/A – Improved

Will the rental amounts remain affordable as per HUD guidelines?

N/A – Yes

N/A – No

Will the program beneficiaries or participants be limited to low and moderate income households?

N/A – Yes

N/A – No

F. FEE SCHEDULE FOR SERVICES, IF APPLICABLE:

N/A

G. PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM/PROJECT FOR WHICH FUNDS ARE REQUESTED:

The continuing work of advocating for abused and neglected children in Rapid City.

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H. DESCRIBE HOW FUNDS WILL BE USED:

Funds will be used to help recruit, train, and supervise additional volunteers.
(Please see detailed budget for specific funding items).

Recruiting and training of volunteers	\$ 6,000
Partial wages of two volunteer coordinators (One coordinator supervises 30-35 volunteers)	18,000
Office supplies (For all staff members, letter head, envelopes, computer paper, copy paper, brochures, etc.)	2,500
Partial rent (rent is \$1,725 a month)	5,500
Telephone	1,500
Mileage Reimbursements	<u>1,500</u>
Total requested of Community Development Block Grant	\$35,000

**I. PLEASE STATE PROGRAM/PROJECT START AND COMPLETION
DATES:**

On-going

J. If funds requested are for building expansion, renovation or a new facility, please complete the following information:

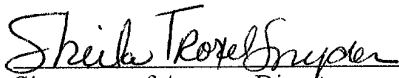
Existing Liabilities Against the Property: \$ _____
Appraised Value: \$ _____
Property Insurance Agent: _____
Amount of Insurance Coverage: \$ _____
Project Cost Breakdown: _____
N/A _____ \$ _____
_____ \$ _____
_____ \$ _____
Cost Estimate Prepared By: _____
Architect (if applicable): _____

K. Funding sources for the program/project:

Community Development Block Grant Funds Requested \$ 35,000
Other Funding Sources:
UNITED WAY \$ 84,000
VOCA \$ 19,348
NATIONAL CASA ASSOCIATION \$ 12,250

L. Financial Information:

Please attach financial statement.


Signature of Agency Director

Date: 10/15/03


Signature of Board President

Date: 10/16/03

*Deadline for Applications:
Friday, November 14, 2003
4:00 p.m.*

Attachments: List of Board Members
Financial Statements
Articles of Incorporation and By-laws