

November 10, 2022

Ms. Nicole Hoyt
Town of Boscawen
116 N Main St
Boscawen, NH 03303



Dear Ms. Hoyt,

The children of **Boscawen** need your help, now more than ever.

I am writing today to ask the Town of Boscawen to consider an appropriation of \$500 during your next funding cycle to advocate for Boscawen's most vulnerable children. With this support, CASA of New Hampshire will be able to recruit, train and support additional CASA volunteer advocates to provide a voice for the children of Boscawen who have experienced abuse or neglect. Last year, CASA of New Hampshire advocated for more than 1,500 children throughout the state. Unfortunately, due to the unavailability of trained CASA volunteer advocates, 93 children did not have the benefit of a CASA by their side, 13 children came from Merrimack County. This year, please help us reach our goal of having trained advocates available for 100% of the children who need them most.

Our children are in crisis.

Each year, one million American children are confirmed victims of abuse and neglect and more than half a million are in foster care.

In New Hampshire, hundreds of these children come to the attention of the courts every year. Our children need someone to tell their stories, to be a strong advocate, to get to know them and make their voices heard in a complex, confusing and often overburdened child protection system.

Founded in 1989, Court Appointed Special Advocates of New Hampshire is the only nonprofit organization in the state that protects the rights of our state's abused and neglected children to live, learn and grow in the embrace of a loving family. Our trained volunteer advocates speak for our children's best interests in the New Hampshire Family court system. In recent years, the need for our services has increased dramatically.

The ongoing substance misuse crisis and now the ever changing COVID-19 pandemic have led to a scarcity of resources available to support children in need. Without someone to focus on these children and ensure that their needs and best interests are being met, the futures of many abused and neglected children are threatened by a lack of help, stability, and support. Parents are facing increased stress regarding care for their child while working, confronting economic instability and job loss, and feeling even more food and housing-insecure.

While we are still anticipating an increase in cases due to the long-reaching effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have begun to see an increase in the severity of the cases being brought to our attention. We are seeing some of the most severe neglect of children ever witnessed. Children and families have clearly struggled during these seemingly endless months of isolation.

However, the bright light during this challenging time is that CASA of NH has an incredibly strong team of staff, board of directors, and more than 600 volunteer advocates completely committed to this difficult but life changing work. Support from the Town of Boscawen will help us to further this mission

by providing neglected and abused children in your community with a caring and compassionate advocate to help see them through their most difficult days.

In addition to all of the good work they do for our children, our CASA volunteers also save the state more than \$3.5M in legal fees – fees that would otherwise be paid for by state tax dollars. If CASA of NH cannot provide a volunteer, the state will then hire a paid GAL (Guardian ad Litem) at \$60 per hour plus travel costs.

Below are our most recent fiscal-year-end statistics specific to your county and the state:

FY 2022 BY THE NUMBERS		<u>Statewide</u>	<u>In Merrimack County</u>
	Children Served	1,536	236*
	Volunteers	628	107
	Miles Traveled	339,166	47,576
	Hours of Volunteer Time	88,859	14,223
	Value of Volunteer Advocacy	\$3.5M	

**This number includes children may use your towns' schools and resources and live with foster parents or extended family members in your community.*

New Hampshire's abused and neglected children are a part of every community within our state and range in age from birth to 21. National studies show that children with a CASA volunteer benefit in countless ways -- they are more likely to be placed in safe, permanent homes, likely to receive better mental, emotional and physical health services, and more likely to have fewer placement changes than children without a focused advocate. With the support of a CASA advocate, neglected and abused children have access to a brighter future.

Thank you so much for your consideration of this request for your next funding cycle. Should you require additional materials to support this letter, please contact Tarah Bergeron, Development Associate at (603) 626-4600 x2113 or by emailing tbergeron@casanh.org.

I look forward to updating you with our progress and the impact that your support will have on New Hampshire's victimized children.

All my best,



Marcia R. Sink

President & CEO