

# California CASA Programs 2008 Report



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE  
OF THE COURTS  
CENTER FOR FAMILIES, CHILDREN  
& THE COURTS

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## California CASA Programs 2008 Report

A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) is a trained volunteer who is appointed by a judge, commissioner, referee, or other bench officer to provide one-on-one advocacy for a child who is under the jurisdiction of the courts owing to abuse, neglect, or abandonment. These volunteers spend time with children, ensure that court-ordered services are provided, attend court hearings for children to which they are assigned, and provide child-focused recommendations to the court based on the best interest of the children they serve.

CASA programs were first implemented in 1977 in Washington State; the following year the first CASA program in California began providing services to children. In 1988, legislation amended California's Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 100 et seq., to require the Judicial Council to establish guidelines for local CASA programs and a CASA grant program. As a result, the council adopted rule 5.655 of the California Rules of Court, which contains mandated requirements that CASA programs must follow. The council works closely with the California CASA Association to ensure that programs are in compliance with both rule 5.655 and the National CASA Association standards. The council also established the CASA grant program to ensure funding for a paid administrator for each local CASA program serving the superior courts.

California CASA programs vary by size, number of children served, and services offered. There are 40 local CASA programs providing services in 43 of California's 58 counties, as well as one tribal CASA program<sup>i</sup>, and two new programs currently in development.

### Program Highlights

The findings reported here are from the California respondents to the 2008 Local Program Survey administered by the National CASA Association (NCASAA).

- **100 percent** of the CASA programs in California responded to the survey ( $n = 41$ ).
- About **6,070 volunteers** served children in 2008, compared to 5,360 volunteers in 2007.
- Approximately **8,875 children** were served by CASA volunteers in 2008; a median of 159 children were served per program.
- In 2008, the median cost per child was about **\$2,400**, a decrease of about 5 percent from 2007.<sup>ii</sup>
- Programs statewide reported about **446,300 donated hours** in service to California children, an average of 63 hours per volunteer annually.<sup>iii</sup> Donated volunteer hours represent a monetary value of about **\$10,171,000**.<sup>iv</sup>
- In 2008, statewide actual total program revenue was about **\$20,765,000**; approximately 10 percent more than 2007.

## Program Resources

### Program Revenue

CASA program receive funding from a mixture of public and private sources. Respondents to the local program survey for calendar year 2008 were asked to report program revenue for their most recent fiscal year, typically July 2007 – June 2008. Therefore much of the financial data reported in the 2008 local program survey preceded the economic recession that began late in 2008. The full effect of the financial crisis on CASA programs is unknown at the time of this report.

In 2008, a total of 61 percent ( $n = 25$ ) of responding programs reported revenue increases from 2007, and 37 percent ( $n = 15$ ) reported decreased revenue. Statewide, the median total revenue was \$297,318, a 12 percent increase from 2007 (\$264,313). The total revenue for all programs statewide (\$20,764,622) was about 10 percent higher than 2007.

Figure 1 details the major revenue sources in 2008; the total amount contributed by these major sources (\$19,611,057) represents about 94 percent of total program funding, and “other” sources account for the rest.

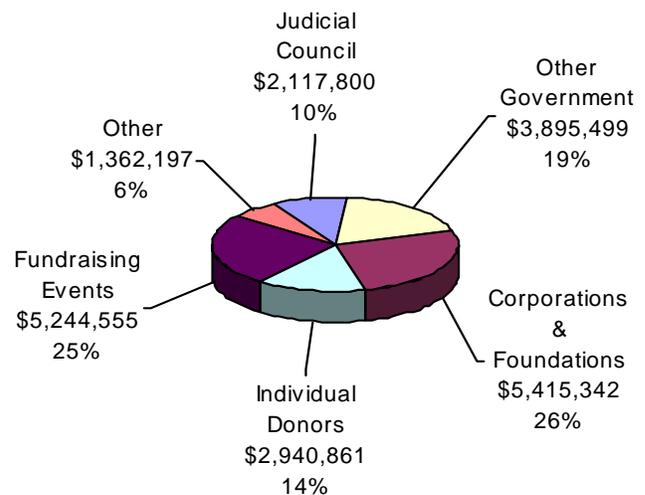
### Public Funding Sources

Public funding sources accounted for about 29 percent of the total statewide funding in 2008. The California Judicial Council grant remained the largest single source of public funding. Forty CASA programs received over \$2.1 million in 2008, accounting for 10 percent of the total statewide revenue. Although county funding decreased by 15 percent in 2008, local counties remained the second largest source of public funds for CASA programs. Nineteen CASA programs received over \$1.1 million from local counties. The number of programs receiving funds from local courts grew from 13 programs in 2007 to 16 programs in 2008. Statewide program revenue from local courts also increased almost 19 percent to \$950,710. Although more than half of the programs continued to receive federal funding, the total aggregate funding from federal sources decreased significantly by almost 24 percent in 2008. CASA programs received over \$1.1 million in federal funds in 2007, but received \$869,404 in 2008.

### Private Funding Sources

In 2008, foundation grants, corporate contributions, individual donors, and fundraising events accounted for 65 percent of the total statewide funding for CASA programs. The total statewide funding received from foundations in 2008 increased sharply by almost 42 percent to over \$4.2 million. In addition, individual donors contributed over \$2.9 million statewide in 2008, an increase of almost 14 percent from the previous year. Thirty-three programs reported funding from individual donors in 2008 compared to 29 programs the previous year.

Figure 1. Sources of revenue in 2008



The number of programs reporting revenue from fundraisers has steadily increased from 28 programs in 2004 to 35 programs in 2008. The total statewide revenue reported from fundraisers in 2008 was over \$5.2 million, an increase of 7 percent from the previous year.

Many CASA programs (63 percent) also reported receiving in-kind donations in 2008. Examples of these donations include bookkeeping services, furniture, office supplies, and office space donated by the local court or county. While these donations do not produce program revenue, they are an important resource for programs. Total in-kind donations increased statewide by 13 percent in 2008.

### Cost Per Child

The cost to provide a CASA volunteer to a foster child or teen decreased in 2008 by 5 percent. In 2008, the median cost per child was \$2,395 compared to \$2,522 in 2007.

### CASA Staff

#### Number of Positions

During 2008, CASA programs reported a median of 4 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions and an FTE range of 0.7 to 34.7 positions total. The average program was staffed by a full-time executive director and at least one full-time volunteer coordinator. The range of volunteer coordinators per program was 0 to 16 FTE positions. Most programs (58 percent) reported a change in the number of staff positions in 2008, with 29 percent adding to staff capacity. The number of programs that lost staff positions almost tripled in 2008 compared to the previous year. Twenty-nine percent of programs lost staff positions, compared to 10 percent in 2007. In 2008, the staff to volunteer ratio ranged from 10 to 55, with the median being 30 volunteers per staff member.

#### Executive Director Position

The median executive director's salary in 2008, when adjusted for full-time equivalent status, was \$64,636 annually, a slight increase from 2007 (1.2 percent). The changes in executive director salaries occurred at different rates in each region.<sup>v</sup> The median salary increased by 8.4 percent in the Northern/Central region. Meanwhile, the median salary in the Southern region increased slightly by 3

Table 1. Detail of funding sources for 2008

Funding source	No. of receiving programs (n=41)	Median funding	Total aggregate funding	Percent of total statewide funding
<b>Public</b>				
Court	16	\$50,000	\$950,710	5%
State: Judicial Council	40	\$55,250	\$2,117,800	10%
State: Other*	10	N/A	\$509,935	2%
County	19	\$50,000	\$1,177,546	6%
City	9	\$10,500	\$384,904	2%
Federal **	22	\$21,336	\$869,404	4%
<b>Private</b>				
Foundation grants	28	\$83,893	\$4,285,172	21%
Corporate contributions	26	\$19,750	\$1,130,170	5%
Individual donors	33	\$30,161	\$2,940,861	14%
United Way	15	\$9,360	\$291,435	1%
Community service	18	\$8,750	\$161,708	<1%
Kappa Alpha Theta	6	\$5,441	\$39,323	<1%
Church donations	9	\$1,263	\$17,477	<1%
<b>Fundraising</b>				
Fundraising events	35	\$65,000	\$5,244,555	25%
Product sales	10	\$1,383	\$89,126	<1%
Other sources	21	\$8,038	\$520,128	3%
<b>Statewide revenue</b>		<b>\$297,318</b>	<b>\$20,764,622</b>	
In-Kind Donations	26	\$47,997	\$2,588,963	N/A

\*Programs report state funding in aggregate and do not report sources for non-Judicial Council funding received from the state.

\*\*Federal sources include the National CASA Association, Community development block grants (CDBG), and title IV-E.

percent and the median salary in the Bay Area/Northern Coastal region remained steady. Ninety percent of responding programs provided benefits to the executive director and 10 percent did not.

Table 2. Annual 2008 executive director median salaries (FTE) and benefits, statewide and by region

Executive Director Salary and Benefits	Bay Area/ Northern Coastal (n = 14)	Northern/ Central (n = 17)	Southern (n = 10)	All programs (n = 41)
Median salary	\$69,500	\$58,511	\$69,101	<b>\$64,636</b>
Health	11	13	10	<b>34</b>
Dental	10	10	4	<b>24</b>
Retirement	5	5	2	<b>12</b>
Other	4	6	3	<b>13</b>
None	1	3	0	<b>4</b>

### Volunteer Coordinator Position

In 2008, 90 percent of programs had a volunteer coordinator position. Statewide, the median volunteer coordinator’s FTE salary remained relatively steady in 2008 (\$34,440). However, median salary levels across the regions varied differently, with the biggest increase seen in the Southern region (11 percent). During 2008, the number of programs offering health and dental benefits to volunteer coordinators increased slightly by 3 percent. However, 16 percent of programs still did not provide any type of benefit package to volunteer coordinators.

Table 3. Annual 2008 volunteer coordinator median salaries (FTE) and benefits, statewide and by region

Volunteer Coordinator Salary and Benefits	Bay Area/ Northern Coastal (n = 14)	Northern/ Central (n = 14)*	Southern (n = 10)	All programs (n = 37)
Median salary	\$41,000	\$35,000	\$39,000	<b>\$37,440</b>
Health	11	11	10	<b>32</b>
Dental	9	8	4	<b>21</b>
Retirement	5	2	2	<b>9</b>
Other	4	5	3	<b>12</b>
None	1	5	0	<b>6</b>

\*Four of the 16 Northern/Central counties did not have a volunteer coordinator position at the time of this survey.

## CASA Volunteers

### Number of Volunteers

The number of CASA advocates in California increased by 13 percent in 2008, with about 6,070 volunteers serving approximately 8,875 children. CASA programs reported an overall median of 124 volunteers actively serving children. Regionally, a median of 45 volunteers served in Northern/Central programs, 127 volunteers served in Bay Area/Northern Coastal programs, and 207 volunteers served in Southern programs. Many of the programs in the Northern/Central Region are located in small rural counties with low populations and, therefore, lower dependency populations than in the other two regions. Conversely, Southern California also accounts for more than half the state’s dependency population.

More than 446,290 hours were donated by volunteers to serve children in 2008, a slight decrease from 2007. Each volunteer contributed a median of 63 hours in 2008, a decrease of 6 percent from 2007.

In 2008, California programs trained 2,093 new volunteers, who were sworn in by California courts. This was an increase of almost 17 percent from the prior year (1,793).

### Demographics

CASA volunteers continued to be primarily women (82 percent), non-Hispanic white (66 percent), and over 40 years old (72 percent.) For more details on the demographics of volunteers in comparison to the children they serve, see table 5 on page 6.

### Children Served

#### Number Served

Approximately 8,875 children were served by volunteers throughout 2008. This represents almost a 10 percent increase in the total number of children served by volunteers over 2007 (8,100). The median number of children served by a CASA program increased about 13 percent to 159 children in 2008. Meanwhile, CASA programs served 3,613 new children in 2008, an increase of 6 percent over 2007.

Point in time data collected by the Administrative Office of the Courts found that CASA programs served almost 8 percent of the children in California’s dependency system in February 2009. One-fourth of programs served fewer than 10 percent of their county’s foster children, while one-fourth served more than 40 percent of their county’s foster children.

CASA programs in California typically follow a “one child, one advocate” program model. However, volunteers may choose to serve more than one child at a time or to serve a sibling group. Similar to the previous year, the median number of children served by one volunteer in 2008 was about 1.5.

### Case Types Served

In addition to child abuse and neglect cases, 22 programs served children in other types of cases: 2 programs served children in divorce custody cases, 2 programs served probate/guardianship cases and 18 programs served delinquency cases. Many CASA advocates follow their assigned child if the case is transferred from dependency court to delinquency court.

### Outcomes at Case Closure

CASA programs reported closing 2,746 cases in 2008, 5 percent more than in the previous year (2,612). Table 4 describes the most common outcomes for children at court case closure or CASA program case closure in 2008. More than half of case closures (61 percent) resulted in reunification, adoption, guardianship, or long-term kinship care.

Table 4. Most common outcomes at case closure in 2008 (n=2,746)

Outcome at case closure	Percent of children whose cases closed
Reunification	33%
Adoption	15%
Child aged out of system/Emancipation	13%
Guardianship	9%
Long Term Foster Care	6%
Long Term Kinship Care (non-guardianship)	4%
Transferred out of County or State	4%
Removed from Docket	4%
Delinquency	2%
Other	11%

## Children’s Demographics

In 2008, as reported by the survey, almost 65 percent of children served by volunteers were children of color, predominantly Hispanic (34 percent) and African American (16 percent). The percentage of African American and Hispanic children served was fairly stable compared to the previous years. As seen in table 5, racial/ethnic disparities between staff, volunteers, and children continue—particularly for African American and Hispanic children.

Available point-in-time child welfare data for California as of January 1, 2009, provides a rough comparison to the CASA children served (see table 5).<sup>vi</sup> This data also suggests that the race/ethnicity of CASA children served in 2008 did not reflect the general child welfare population in that African-American and Hispanic children, in particular, were underrepresented and white (non-Hispanic) children were overrepresented. At the same time, the data reported by programs in the National CASA *Annual Survey* also included more than 1,300 children (14 percent) who could not be compared with state child welfare data because of their vague categorization as either “Multiracial,” “Other,” or “Unknown.”<sup>vii</sup>

The gender (table 5) and age (table 6) of CASA children served in 2008 remained constant from the previous year. In comparison to the state’s child welfare population, CASA programs served a higher proportion of school age children and teenagers.

Table 5. Percentage of all staff, volunteers, children served, and California children in foster care in each gender and racial/ethnic group in 2008.<sup>vi</sup> Figures include about 300 children served by CASA program staff.

Demographics	Staff	Volunteers	Children served	Children in foster care
<b>Gender</b>				
Female	88%	82%	51%	50%
Male	12%	18%	49%	50%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>				
African American	8%	5%	16%	26%
Asian/Pacific Islander	4%	4%	2%	3%
White (non-Hispanic)	64%	65%	31%	25%
Hispanic	19%	13%	34%	45%
Native American	2%	1%	2%	1%
Multiracial	1%	4%	7%	N/A
Other	1%	3%	3%	N/A
Unknown	1%	5%	5%	N/A
<b>Statewide Totals</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>6,068</b>	<b>9,179</b>	<b>64,838</b>

Table 6. Age of children served compared to children in foster care in 2008

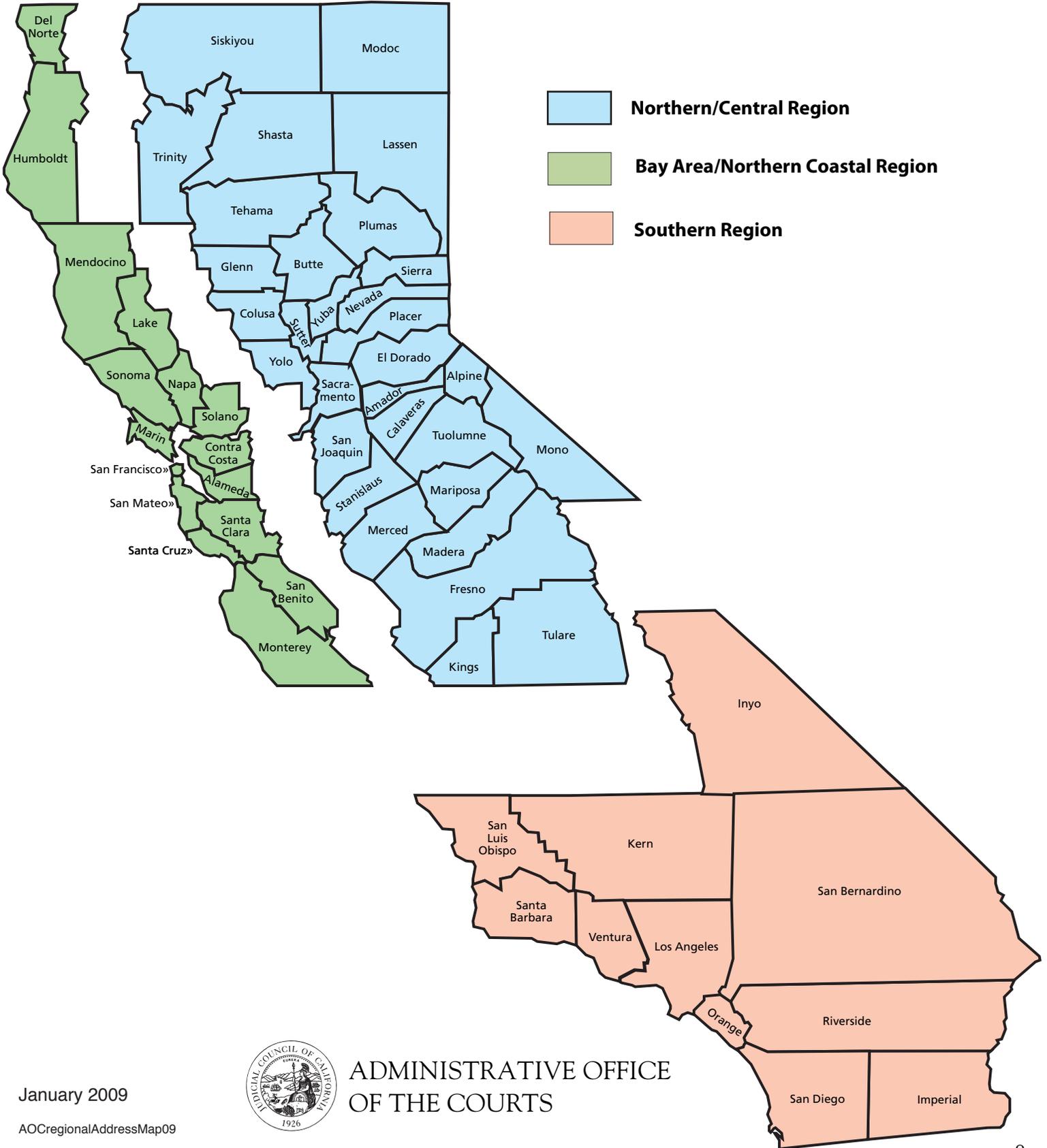
Age	Percent of Children Served (n = 9,179)	Percent of Children in Foster Care (n = 64,838)
Birth–5 years	20%	32%
6–11 years	27%	21%
12–15 years	32%	28%
16-17 years	16%	15%
18+ years	4%	4%
Unknown	1%	0%

Appendix 1

**Program respondents included in data set in 2008 (n = 41)**

<b>County</b>	<b>Program Name</b>
<b>Alameda</b>	Health Care Agency of Alameda County, Alameda County CASA Program
<b>Amador</b>	Amador-Tuolumne Community Actions Agency/Amador County CASA Program
<b>Butte/Glenn</b>	Northern Valley Catholic Social Services, Inc./CASA of Butte & Glenn Counties
<b>Contra Costa</b>	CASA of Contra Costa County
<b>Del Norte</b>	CASA of Del Norte
<b>El Dorado</b>	CASA of El Dorado County
<b>Fresno/Madera</b>	CASA of Fresno & Madera Counties
<b>Humboldt</b>	CASA of Humboldt
<b>Imperial</b>	CASA of Imperial County
<b>Karuk</b>	Karuk Tribe – Tribal CASA Program
<b>Kern</b>	CASA of Kern County
<b>Lassen</b>	Lassen Family Services/Lassen County CASA Program
<b>Los Angeles</b>	CASA of Los Angeles
<b>Marin</b>	Marin Advocates/Marin CASA Program
<b>Mariposa</b>	CASA of Mariposa County
<b>Mendocino</b>	CASA of Mendocino County
<b>Modoc</b>	T.E.A.C.H./Modoc CASA Program
<b>Monterey/San Benito</b>	CASA of Monterey County
<b>Napa</b>	CASA of Napa County
<b>Nevada</b>	Child Advocates of Nevada County/CASA of Nevada County
<b>Orange</b>	CASA of Orange County, Inc.
<b>Placer</b>	Child Advocates of Placer County
<b>Plumas</b>	Plumas Crisis Intervention and Resource Center/Plumas County CASA
<b>Riverside</b>	CASA for Riverside County, Inc.
<b>Sacramento</b>	Sacramento CASA Program, Inc.
<b>San Bernardino</b>	Child Advocates of San Bernardino County
<b>San Diego</b>	Voices for Children, Inc./San Diego CASA
<b>San Francisco</b>	San Francisco CASA Program
<b>San Joaquin</b>	Child Abuse Prevention Council/San Joaquin CASA Program
<b>San Luis Obispo</b>	Voices for Children, Inc./CASA of San Luis Obispo County
<b>San Mateo</b>	Advocates for Children/San Mateo County CASA Program
<b>Santa Barbara</b>	CASA of Santa Barbara County
<b>Santa Clara</b>	Child Advocates of Silicon Valley
<b>Santa Cruz</b>	CASA of Santa Cruz County
<b>Siskiyou</b>	CASA of Siskiyou County
<b>Solano</b>	Solano County CASA
<b>Sonoma</b>	CASA of Sonoma County
<b>Stanislaus</b>	CASA of Stanislaus County
<b>Tulare</b>	CASA of Tulare County
<b>Ventura</b>	Interface Children Family Services/CASA of Ventura County
<b>Yolo</b>	Yolo County CASA

# Administrative Office of the Courts Regional Map



## Methodology

This report summarizes data submitted by all of California's 41 local CASA programs as part of the National CASA Association's 2008 annual survey; the data discussed represents all 41 programs that responded to the survey, unless otherwise noted. All tables and charts note the number of respondents ( $n = xx$ ) for the data represented. The data in this report may vary from the data submitted to National CASA because of follow-up efforts regarding erroneous or missing data; in these instances, data errors were largely corrected and the corrected data is reflected in this report.

### Production of This Report

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*The views in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official positions or policies of the Judicial Council of California.*

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<sup>i</sup> In 2004, the Karuk Tribal CASA program was established in Northern California, the first tribal CASA program in the state.

<sup>ii</sup> Cost per child is calculated by dividing the total budgeted expenses by the total number of children served.

<sup>iii</sup> The number of volunteer hours should be viewed cautiously as there is no standardized method for collecting such data.

<sup>iv</sup> Total number of hours multiplied by \$22.79 (Independent Sector's California 2008 rate for the value of a volunteer hour).

<sup>v</sup> Program regions are aligned with the California Administrative Office of the Courts' designated regions (see Appendix 2).

<sup>vi</sup> Needell, B., et al. (2009), *Child Welfare Services Reports for California*. Accessed September 10, 2009, at [http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb\\_childwelfare](http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare).

<sup>vii</sup> The Administrative Office of the Courts' report *Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) and the Courts: An Assessment* (2008) executed a detailed multi-categorical methodology and found that when multiracial African American children are included with children identified solely as African American, the disparity of CASA service for African American children lessened significantly. However, the study continued to find that Hispanic children were underserved by CASA.