



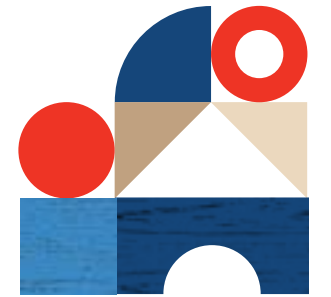
CASA OF SAN MATEO COUNTY
FY 2022 - 2023 Impact Report

Building a Strong Foundation



**“If you can imagine
it, you can create it.
If you dream it, you
can become it.”**

- William Arthur Ward



Dear Friends,

Fiscal Year 2022-2023 was a year of growth and change for CASA of San Mateo County.

We kicked off the year with a strategic planning process that involved community listening sessions, stakeholder interviews, and staff brainstorming. With the guidance and approval of our Board of Directors, we identified three focus areas to guide our work over the next three years:

1. Evaluate, improve, and increase supports for youth through enhanced training and resources, stronger community partnerships, and a more diverse pool of volunteers.
2. Sustain our impact by training CASA staff and Board members, building our capacity for data evaluation, and increasing communication to local stakeholders.
3. Extend our support to young people past the age of 21 to ease their transition out of the foster system and into adulthood.

To gear up for these exciting plans, we welcomed several new staff this year. These team members are allowing us to provide a deeper level of service to our youth by forging new community partnerships that provide access to artistic and educational enrichment, outdoor activities, school supplies, clothing, scholarships, and more. They are also leading the charge in communicating our impact and recruiting volunteers who can meet our young people where they are—culturally, linguistically, geographically, and emotionally. Finally, they are adding much needed administrative capacity to improve our office operations and data management.

In January 2023, we finalized a standing order with the San Mateo County juvenile courts to automatically refer all juvenile justice cases to us for potential CASA pairings. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to advocate for more young people in our community who need a caring, stable mentor and we are ramping up training and recruiting to meet this new need.

None of this would be possible without your help. I am grateful for our dedicated volunteers who will go to any length needed to ensure our youth are seen, heard, and have what they need to thrive. I also want to thank our staff and Board for their daily work keeping our volunteers supported and our organization running smoothly. Finally, thank you to all of our generous donors whose financial support allows us to empower our youth to reach their fullest potential.

With gratitude,

Nkia Richardson, Executive Director

CASA: A Foundation of Advocacy A Beacon of Hope

A Court Appointed Special Advocate (“CASA”) is a trained community volunteer who dedicates 10 hours a month to a child navigating the foster care or juvenile justice systems. CASAs mentor and advocate for children and youth aged 0-21 who have experienced abuse, neglect, or other trauma. After rigorous screening and training, CASAs are assigned to one child at a time, allowing them to thoroughly focus on that child’s safety and overall well-being.

While a child’s foster home, caregivers, schools, and other situations may change during this tumultuous time, CASAs remain with their child throughout their court case to provide a sense of stability. They commit to serving as that child’s advocate and mentor for a minimum of 18 months or until the case closes. They work with the child’s family, foster family, social workers, probation officers, attorneys, therapists, teachers, and CASA program staff to build a strong, long-term support network.

In addition to advocating for their child, CASAs provide mentorship, comfort, a listening ear, and fun and educational activities. By spending regular quality time with their youth, they form a relationship that allows them to identify unmet medical, educational, emotional, or physical needs and advocate for their youth to receive crucial resources. They also provide positive experiences that allow their child to just be a kid, such as visits to a theme park, a game of basketball, or a trip to the mall.

Through it all, CASA volunteers help kids build the foundation for a future that is more hopeful than their past. It costs \$5,000 a year to recruit, train, and support a trained CASA volunteer and their child – a small investment in what could be a lifetime of impact.

“I never had someone stand for me like he did. He became not only an advocate but a friend.”

-CASA Youth



CASA VOLUNTEERS:

SPEAK UP for the best interests of the child.

BUILD RESILIENCY and reduce the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) by providing support and stability.

LISTEN TO WHAT A CHILD SAYS about their education, mental and physical health, and home environment.

TAKE ACTION to ensure the safety and well-being of the child, now and in the future.

SHARE THE NEEDS OF THE CHILD with other caregivers and the court.

Every child needs a champion to appreciate them, support them, build up their confidence, and encourage them to pursue their dreams. Every CASA can be that champion.

Mission Statement And Values

This year, we updated our mission and vision statements to acknowledge our volunteers' important and growing work with young people involved in the San Mateo County juvenile justice system. We also established core values to guide our organizational strategy and decision making. We are excited to share them with you!

MISSION STATEMENT

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of San Mateo County ensures children and youth in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems have a caring and consistent adult who mentors them and advocates for needed resources. Our volunteers provide life-affirming connection and empower young people to reach their fullest potential.

VISION STATEMENT

All children and youth impacted by the child welfare and juvenile justice systems have equitable access to supportive adults and the resources they need to thrive.

“The kids I have gotten to know have been loving, joyful, willing to trust and amazingly resilient, forgiving and strong. I know I have learned more from them than they have from me, and I am so grateful for the opportunity to be part of their journey and humbled by the ways the experience has helped me see the world in a more thoughtful way.”

- CASA VOLUNTEER MAUREEN MURPHY



CASA OF SAN MATEO COUNTY VALUES:

EQUITY AND JUSTICE

We work to support youth as they navigate systems, and we seek improvement of those systems to increase access to equity and justice.

MEANINGFUL AND INTENTIONAL ADVOCACY

We are action-oriented and recognize that our young people deserve our ongoing dedication and intentional action.

CONNECTION AND TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS

We consistently support our youth, recognizing that the cultivation of healthy relationships serves as a strong foundation for effective advocacy and will have positive ripple effects in all areas of their lives.

EMBRACE THE WHOLE CHILD

We meet each child where they are, tailoring our approach as needed to support our young people in their health, safety, and well-being.

CASA Establishes New Volunteer Award



Cristal Waldrop, FY22-23 Board Chair, Devon Gold, Nkia Richardson, Executive Director.
Photos by: Rachel Podlishevsky, Pro Brono Photos.

This year, CASA of San Mateo County announced the creation of the Mark Lazar Outstanding Volunteer Award.

The award is named in memory of Mark Lazar, a long-time volunteer who mentored five young men during his 13 years with CASA. When Mark passed away in 2020, he left CASA a generous gift in his will, continuing his legacy of service.

In March 2023, CASA presented the inaugural Mark Lazar Outstanding Volunteer Award to Devon Gold, who has supported two teenagers during her time with CASA.

Here is one of their stories.

Read Devon and Lucas's story:

Lucas became involved in the child welfare system after experiencing gang-related violence in his home country of Brazil. He moved to the U.S. at 13, only to be physically abused at the hands of his father.

Devon was assigned as Lucas's CASA just a few months into the pandemic, when Lucas was attending high school via Zoom. Devon quickly uncovered Lucas's goal of attending a four-year college, but unbeknownst to Lucas, his foster parents, and even his guidance counselor, he did not have enough credits to attend a UC or CSU school.

Devon helped enroll Lucas in a summer English class to get back on track. She also found a pro bono college admissions coach to help him with his applications and financial aid. Thanks to Devon's intervention, Lucas was accepted to the University of California, Merced.

When Lucas had to testify against his father in court, Devon attended the trial and provided essential emotional support. She also found an immigration attorney to help

Lucas get the proper documents to visit his mother and siblings in Brazil for his 18th birthday. Lucas is now attending college and is on the path to becoming a U.S. citizen. This past summer he worked as an intern for CASA of San Mateo County.

Through the tough times, Devon brought joy and levity to her time with Lucas by connecting over soccer games, attending the musical *Hamilton*, and bravely allowing Lucas to drive her car home from the DMV after he received his driver's license.

Lucas and his family said:

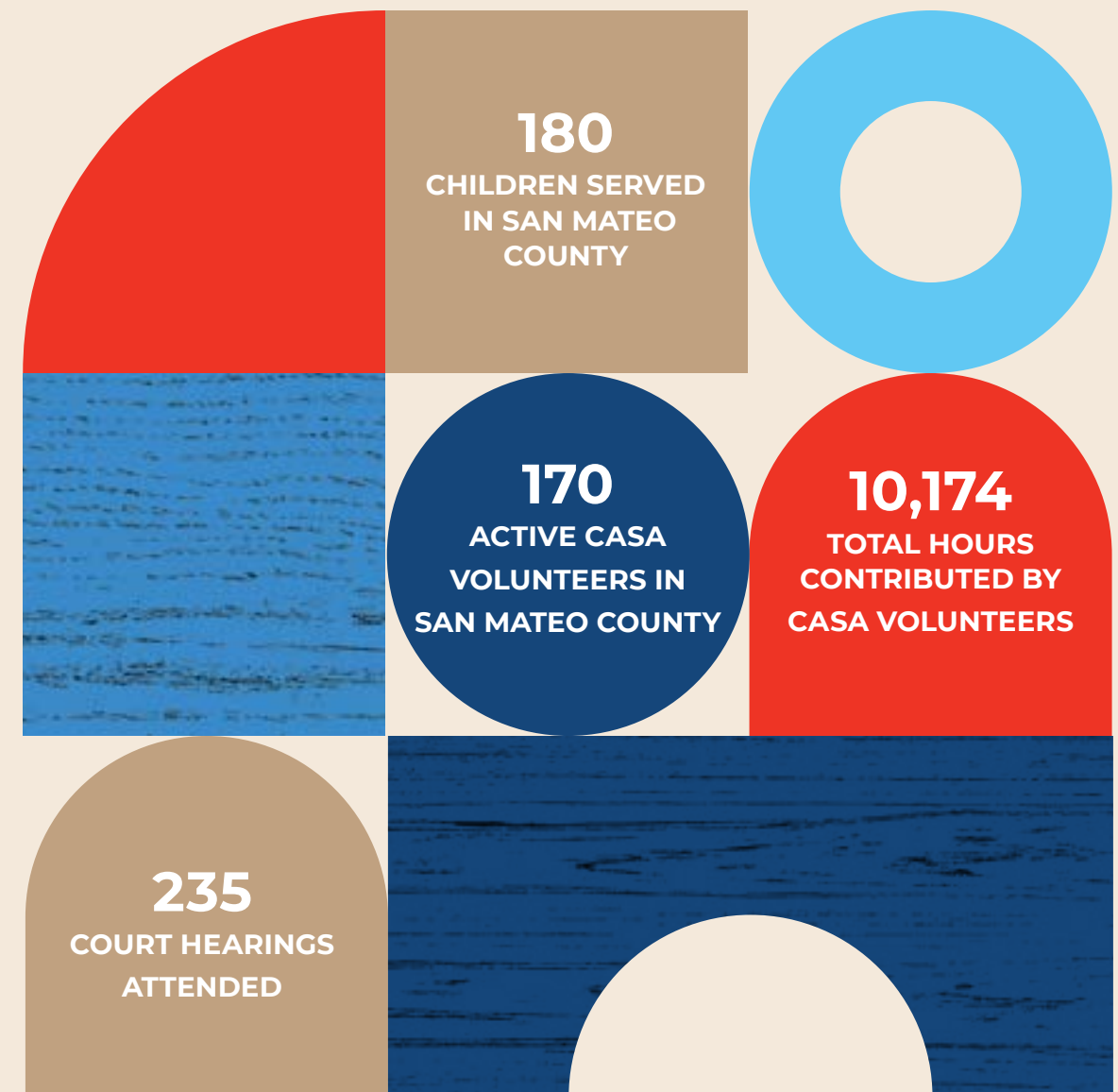
"When we think about what's expected of a CASA, or what we'd all be satisfied with, and then we see the absolute MAGIC that Devon is able to wield in the role, we're thrilled that Devon's accomplishments are being recognized."

Building a Stable Future

A child in the foster care and/or juvenile justice systems needs someone to look up to, someone to count on. Having a stable relationship with a supportive adult can help children thrive, even when they have faced significant trauma and hardship.

In San Mateo County, CASA volunteers advocate one-on-one for the hundreds of children and youth who are in the foster care and juvenile justice systems. Often from an early age, these children face unimaginable trauma and are forced to deal with complex emotions that should not be part of childhood. CASA volunteers are devoted to giving consistency and connectedness to children in foster care and on probation.

BY THE NUMBERS



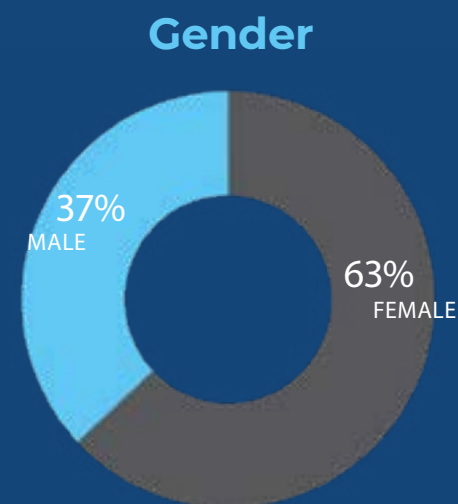
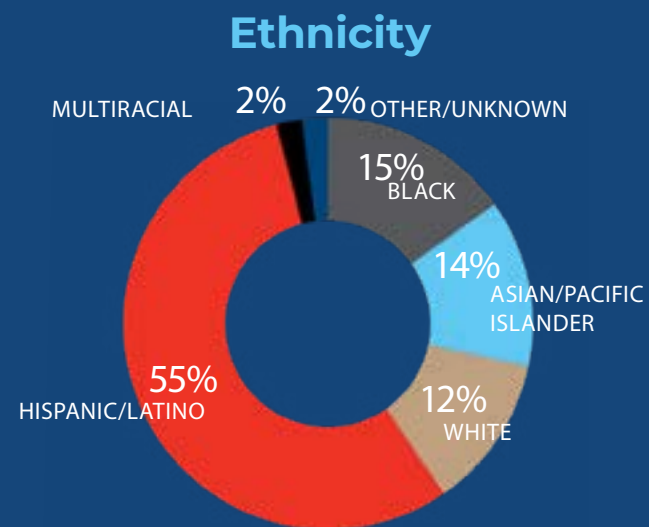
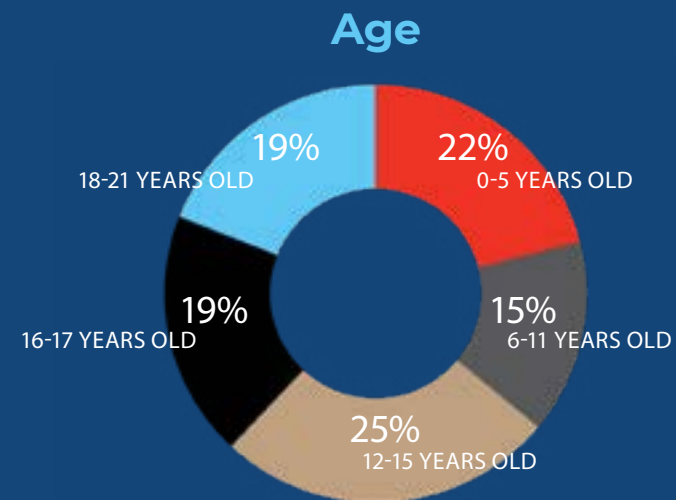
The Need

Children across the state of California entering the child welfare and juvenile justice systems have endured trauma and hardship, and face additional challenges as they move through complicated and confusing court processes. Their experiences navigating these systems have far-reaching impacts on their overall well-being, affecting their family relationships, mental health, educational opportunities, physical health, housing security, and ability to transition to adulthood with the resources they need to thrive. Most importantly, ongoing encounters with the foster care and juvenile justice systems can lead to a lack of stability during the most formative years of their lives. Amid all this change, CASA volunteers provide a consistent and stable presence, meeting weekly with their assigned child for the duration of their case.

Every child deserves to have a caring adult advocate for them. This year, we have seen an increased need for volunteers willing to work with youth in the juvenile justice system and male-identifying volunteers for youth who request a male role model. Additional needs include more volunteers able to serve children and youth who have been forced to move out of county due to a shortage of foster homes in San Mateo County and Spanish speaking volunteers who can mentor and work with monolingual children and/or caregivers. We are working hard to recruit more volunteers who can meet these needs.



WHO WE SERVE



How to Help

You can support CASA and the children and youth we serve in a variety of ways. From volunteering to donating, every bit helps. Find out more:

MAKE A DIRECT TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION, a stock transfer, a gift through your employer's matching gift program, or an estate gift.

ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO SUPPORT CASA with charitable donations.

BECOME A CASA VOLUNTEER! Find more information about volunteering at our website: www.casaofsanmateo.org

SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT CASA to your colleagues, friends, and family.

JOIN OUR ONLINE SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORK on Instagram, Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and LinkedIn.

CASA of San Mateo County is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (IRS Tax I.D. #04-3849393) and all donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Financial Summary

FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023

CASA of San Mateo's financial health continues to be strong, thanks to a diverse mix of revenue sources, sound financial planning, and, most importantly, the generosity of our donors. The following summarizes CASA's financial activities and position for the fiscal year July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023.

Statement of Audited Financials

FY2022-2023

| REVENUES | FY2022-2023 |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Individuals | \$608,101 |
| Foundations | \$837,470 |
| Government | \$415,679 |
| Corporate Giving | \$32,174 |
| Donated Goods & Services | \$174,128 |
| Special Events | \$306,223 |
| Community Organizations | \$21,965 |
| Cy Pres | \$250,827 |
| Interest/Other Revenue | \$108,029 |
| Total Revenue: | \$2,754,596 |

| EXPENSES | FY2022-2023 |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Program Expenses | \$1,324,090 |
| Management & General | \$269,560 |
| Fundraising | \$455,494 |
| Total Expenses: | \$2,049,144 |

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Change in Net Assets: | \$705,454 |
| Net Assets at Beginning of Year: | \$3,111,263 |
| Net Assets at Year End: | \$3,816,717 |

Statement of Financial Position

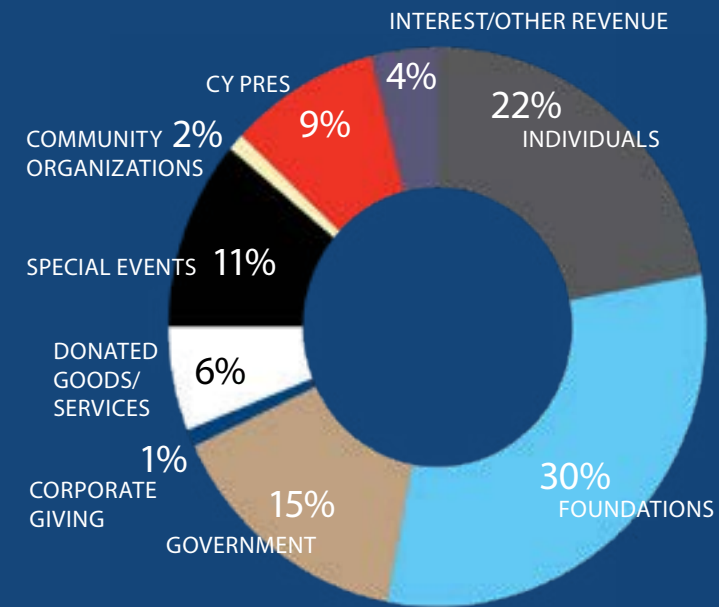
FY2022-2023

| ASSETS | FY2022-2023 |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Current Assets | \$3,972,627 |
| Other Assets | \$87,600 |
| Total Assets | \$4,060,227 |

| LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS | FY2022-2023 |
|---|--------------------|
| Current Liabilities | \$243,510 |
| Total Net Assets | \$3,816,717 |
| Restricted Net Assets | \$336,953 |
| Total Liabilities & Net Assets | \$4,060,227 |

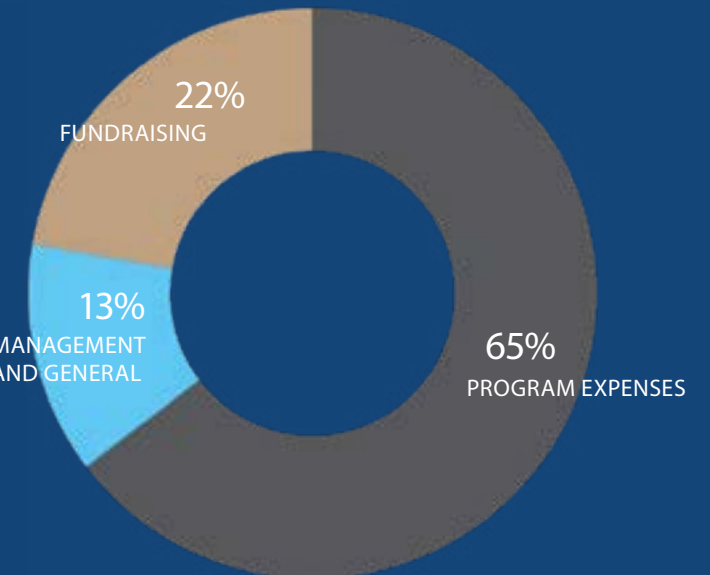
REVENUES & SUPPORT

FY2022-2023



EXPENSES

FY2022-2023



“For my first CASA youth, it was realizing that she wasn’t doing well in school because she couldn’t see more than five feet in front of her, yet no one had noticed. Through CASA SEEK grants with Lenscrafters, we got her glasses and her schoolwork turned around, as well as her confidence.”

-CASA Volunteer Hannah Livianu



With Thanks

CASA of San Mateo County is a private, nonprofit organization that depends on the generosity of individuals, foundations, corporations, and government agencies. The following gifts were received in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.

\$100,000 +

Anonymous
California CASA Association
County of San Mateo
Mark Lazar
Phoenix Settlement Administrators (cy pres award)
Sumir Chadha
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\$2,500 - \$4,999

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\$50,000 - \$99,999

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\$20,000 - \$49,999

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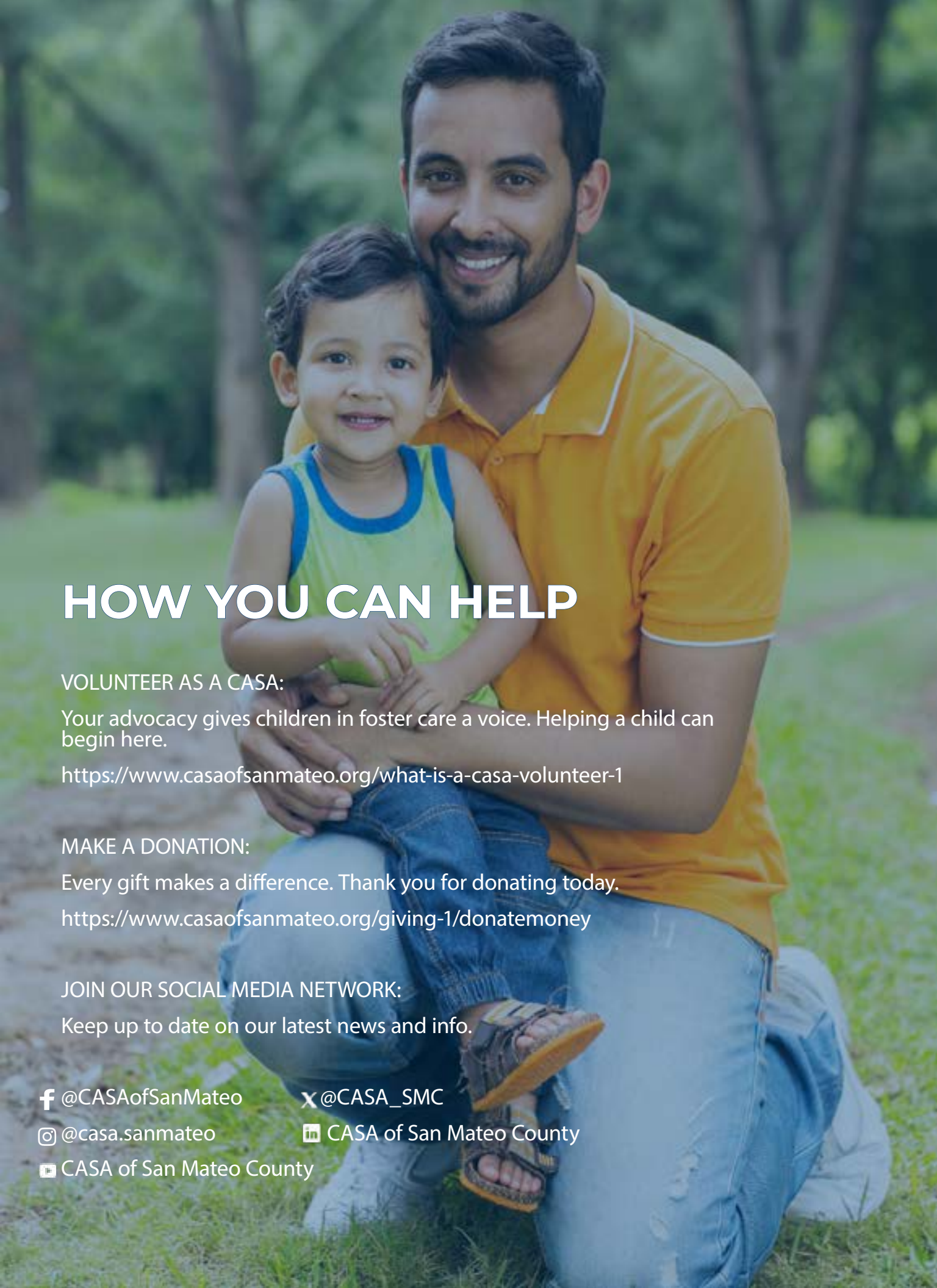
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