

## OUR MISSION

The mission of the BRIDGES Program at CASA for Children of DC is to provide advocates to ALL court-involved-youth who have past or present involvement in the juvenile legal system.

The aim of the BRIDGES program is to do everything in our power to prevent youth from becoming multi-system involved, decrease instances of recidivism, and to promote diversion opportunities.

Based on a report from The Children's Partnership, Approximately 80% of youth in the juvenile justice system have experienced trauma, an experience similar to their counterparts in the child welfare system.

National Foster Youth Alumni Policy Council, "the barriers faced by crossover youth are compounded by the barriers they faced while in the foster care system, making this population especially at-risk for falling through the cracks"

Youth who participate in the BRIDGES program are court-involved youth in District of Columbia who have come in contact with the juvenile legal system. these youth were referred go casa dc by family court and juvenile judges. Typical age range is 13-18.

# BRIDGES

A Program of CASA DC



**Be Resilient, be Individuals,  
be Determined, be Great!,  
be Educated and be Safe.**

## VOLUNTEERS

BRIDGES Juvenile Advocates (BJA's) apply the basic principles of working with a team of professionals to advocate for the best interest of the child, as well as providing that child with a consistent relationship with a trusted adult. BJA CASA volunteers undergo specialized training regarding the juvenile legal system to address the unique needs of this population.

By capitalizing on the experience and expertise of CASAs in advocating for the best-interest of the child, CASAs can actualize a best-interest approach for the youth already encountering the juvenile justice system, and even prevent crossover, by receiving explicit training to advocate around this issue. As The Center for Juvenile Justice Reform notes the, "experience offered by CASA volunteers presents an excellent opportunity for partnership in jurisdictions seeking to transform the way in which they serve crossover youth."

WANT TO LEARN MORE?  
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