

## VOLUNTEER

# SPOTLIGHT

## MEET BILL WEBSTER

In the last five years, as a CASA volunteer, Bill has served seven families, advocating for 13 children. He is retired but his law license is still active. The CASA staff members describe Bill as compassionate, reliable, and well organize. He is committed to advocating for the best interests of the CASA child. Bill is a stellar volunteer!

In his free time, Bill enjoys traveling, bicycling, taking spinning classes, and working out at the YMCA. He particularly loves spending time with his granddaughter.

The Lucas County CASA program is blessed to have Bill on our team. Here is what he told us about his volunteer work.

**How has being a CASA volunteer impacted your life?** I find it rewarding to possibly have a positive impact on the life of a child who has been placed in a difficult situation. I often find myself wondering how the children in my closed cases are doing now.

**Why did you decide to become a CASA volunteer?** When I retired from my full-time law practice, I was looking for a way to do something positive and helpful in which my legal background would be useful. The CASA program was suggested to me by a friend, who was already in the program.



Meet Bill's granddaughter.

**In your time as a CASA volunteer, has there been an experience that impacted you the most?** Each experience has impacted me in some way. Cases where a child has been physically abused, and there is a need to keep the child safe have a particular impact. Seeing a child adopted by a loving family is a particularly happy experience. I was able to attend the adoption hearing and witness this joyful occasion.

**How did you collaborate and coordinate your investigation efforts with the other professionals on your case?** The CASA staff is wonderful to work with. They provide the initial information and support volunteers along the way. I conduct an independent investigation while working with caseworkers and gathering information from medical providers, police departments, teachers, and others who may have information.

**Which three qualities or skills should a prospective CASA volunteer possess?** Three important qualities should be objectivity, persistence, and willingness to learn. I am always learning new things with these cases. It is important to pursue different ways to obtain information when obstacles are presented. It is also important to approach cases with an open mind.



**In your opinion, why is it essential for children who are child abuse and neglect victims to have a CASA Volunteer?** It is important to have a CASA volunteer who will do an independent investigation to provide to the court in addition to the other information the court receives. Often, the CASA volunteer is the only constant voice during the case due to turnover in Children Services staff and changes where the child is placed. The CASA volunteer is the only person whose primary responsibility is to be the voice of a child.

**If you were speaking with people considering becoming a CASA volunteer, what would you tell them?** I would say the CASA staff provides excellent training and support. I have never worked with a better group. The cases present difficult situations, but a CASA volunteer can play an important role in keeping a vulnerable child safe and secure. You do the best you can to help achieve a positive result.