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Guardians Ad Litem in Idaho: 2022 Program Evaluation

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This is an infographic. For the more extensive report please see: https://scholarworks.boisestate.edu/ipi_reports/59/
GUARDIANS AD LITEM SERVE A CRITICAL ROLE IN THE LIVES OF IDAHO’S CHILDREN AND YOUTH.

Each of Idaho’s seven judicial districts has a nonprofit organization providing representation to children and youth in child protection cases. These Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Programs support the state’s guardians ad litem (GALs) who are appointed by the courts to represent children and their best interests in child protection cases. These programs are making concerted efforts to align with national best practices for child advocacy and key provisions of Idaho Code §§ 16-1632-33 and Idaho Juvenile Rule 35, enabling Idaho’s GALs to adequately advocate for the best interests of the child. Additional GALs in the state would enable CASA Programs to serve all of Idaho’s children and youth in child protection services (CPS). This is critical in child protection cases, as the children and youth are in especially vulnerable positions.

BY THE NUMBERS

- **93%** of CPS cases associated with a GAL 2015-2021
- **9,498** children/youth in CPS 2015-2021
- **98** average number of GALs per CASA program in 2021
- **369** average number of children/youth served per CASA program in 2021

PERCEPTIONS OF ADVOCACY

- **93%** of Guardians Ad Litem believe GALs adequately advocate for the best interests of the child/youth
- **100%** of CASA Program Executive Directors
- **89%** of Magistrate Judges

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GUARDIANS AD LITEM IN IDAHO 2022 PROGRAM EVALUATION

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Idaho’s CASA Programs serve children and youth across the state in child protection cases. These programs are making concerted efforts to align with national best practices for child advocacy and Idaho Code §§ 16-1632-33 and Idaho Juvenile Rule 35. However, there are not enough GALs in Idaho necessary to serve all children and youth in child protective cases. By building off the GAL program’s strengths, Idaho can increase coordination among CASA Programs, increase support systems for GALs, and actively work to improve GALs’ stakeholder partnerships. Doing so would support CASA Programs’ retention and recruitment efforts, thereby helping increase statewide GAL numbers and enabling the state to better serve all children and youth in child protective cases.

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