

Advocating for Children in Crisis: Supporting Youth Impacted by Opioids

*2024 Montana Opioid Abatement Trust
Grants - 4th Quarter*

Yellowstone CASA, Inc. BDA: CASA of Yellowstone County

Drew MacLeod
1201 Grand Ave. Suite 5
Billings, MT 59102

drew@yellowstonecasa.org
O: 406-259-1233

Emily Gaudreau

1201 Grand Ave. Suite 5
Billings, MT 59102

emily@yellowstonecasa.org
O: 406-259-1233

Application Form

Region Selection

To collaborate with someone else on this request, click the blue "Collaborate" button in the top-right corner.

Project Name*

Advocating for Children in Crisis: Supporting Youth Impacted by Opioids

Select Abatement Region and/or Metro Region*

Select the Multi-County Abatement Region **and/or** the Metro Region you are requesting grant funds from. Select all regions that apply, for example if you are collaborating with multiple Counties **and/or** Abatement Regions select each region the program/project will serve. Click [HERE](#) for a detailed map of Multi-County Abatement Regions and Metro Abatement Regions

Yellowstone County Metro Region

Application Overview

About the Organization/Program*

Give a brief description of the Organization/Program/Project. Include the mission statement and the services provided.

CASA of Yellowstone County is a nonprofit organization, providing courtroom and community advocacy to children in foster care and ensuring their voices are heard and their needs are met. The organization's mission is to advocate for safe, permanent homes for children who have experienced abuse or neglect. Court Appointed Special Advocates focus on every aspect of a child's well-being—physical, medical, psychological, educational, and developmental—supporting the unique needs of each child. At the heart of this mission, Court Appointed Special Advocates are appointed by judges to represent the best interests of children in foster care. In Yellowstone County, around 600 children are in foster care at any given time. CASA of Yellowstone County currently has 145 volunteers and one staff Program Advocate serving 200 children. However, hundreds of children remain unserved, driving the organization's efforts to expand its reach.

While Montana is facing an overall crisis of children entering foster care, Yellowstone County is impacted at higher levels than other Montana counties, accounting for approximately 25% of all statewide removals, annually, according to the Child and Family Services Division. Children in foster care are one of the most vulnerable populations in the nation, with statistically high disparities in all areas of their lives. They are particularly at risk for detrimental outcomes due to their experiences of complex trauma from an early age. Annually, approximately 95% of cases in Yellowstone County involve parental substance use, which either directly led to or contributed to the removal of children due to imminent risk of harm. Among these cases, opioid use continues to rise, with many children entering foster care having experienced significant exposure to opioids. Addressing this crisis requires a multi-generational approach, as the impact of opioid use transcends generations, affecting both parents and children in profound and lasting ways.

What category does the program fit into*

Check the category/categories the program fits into. You may select more than one option.

Click [HERE](#) for a list of approved opioid remediation uses

Prevention

Exhibit E List of Opioid Remediation Uses

Schedule A - select all that apply

G. PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Exhibit E List of Opioid Remediation Uses

Schedule B - select all that apply

G. PREVENT MISUSE OF OPIOIDS

How does the program meet the Opioid Remediation Guidelines*

In detail, describe how the program fits into the approved Opioid Remediation Guidelines selected in the above question.

Please be specific

Studies show a strong correlation between the rise in opioid misuse and an increase in the number of children entering foster care. Parents struggling with opioid addiction often face challenges that compromise their ability to provide safe and stable homes, leading to higher rates of child removals. In many cases, children exposed to this crisis experience neglect, trauma, and instability that require specialized intervention and support. This growing crisis places an immense burden on the child welfare system, emphasizing the need for innovative programs like CASA to ensure these vulnerable children receive the advocacy and care they deserve. CASA of Yellowstone County's work directly aligns with the Opioid Remediation priority areas of service through the preventative program of working with children and youth directly impacted by the use of opioids. By prioritizing protective factors and forming meaningful relationships with the children and families on their cases, Advocates provide vital support, mentorship, and guidance throughout the complexities of the foster care system. By equipping children with tools to create better futures for themselves and their own children, the organization hopes to contribute to a culture where families can thrive and break the cycles of addiction and trauma.

CASA of Yellowstone County focuses on building up a child's resilience and protective factors and providing children in foster care with hope. Several factors contribute to resilience for children: when they are in nurturing, supportive relationships; when they can grow and live in safe, stable, and equitable environments; when they have a sense of social connectedness; and when they have opportunities to learn social and emotional competencies. If at least one of these factors is present in the life of a child, the outcomes for that child are much more positive than for a child lacking any of these resilience factors.

New Program or Existing*

Is the funding intended for a new program or to expand an existing program?

A proposed supplement or expansion to a program.

Fiscal Information

Requested Amount*

\$163,234.00

Program Budget*

How will the funds be allocated? Attach a detailed line item budget breakdown for the program. If the funds are intended for a multi-year program please specify the amount budgeted for each year.

Program Advocate CY 25 & 26 Budget (2).xlsx

Multi-Region funding

If funding is being requested from multiple abatement regions attach a detailed breakdown of amount requested from each region.

Multi-Region approval/denial

Does the application need to be approved by all regions to effectively accomplish it's goals?

No

Source of Funding*

Does the program currently receive funding from another source? If yes, please explain in detail. (i.e. amount, funding source, etc.)

Grant funding is intended for the creation or expansion of opioid prevention, treatment, and recovery projects. The money is **NOT** meant to replace or supplant existing funding.

Over the past year, CASA of Yellowstone County implemented a pilot project to provide service to unserved children through a paid advocate (referred to in this application as the Program Advocate). The aim of the Program Advocate position is to serve cases that might otherwise go without a volunteer Advocate. At this time, CASA of Yellowstone County has a grant through the National CASA/GAL Association through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to support one full-time Program Advocate position through the Fall of 2025. CASA of Yellowstone County is requesting funding from the Montana Opioid Abatement Trust to fund the Program Advocate position for another year (October 2025 - November 2026) as well as funding the addition of another full-time Program Advocate for the next two years (March 2025 - April 2027). Funding from the Montana Opioid Abatement Trust will enable the organization to increase

service to approximately 75 new children in the Yellowstone County foster care system in the next two years, increasing the organization's reach from 33% to 45% of children served annually.

The impact of this funding will be long-lasting as it provides two Program Advocates to numerous children and families in local foster care. To sustain and expand the pilot project, the organization aims to secure long-term funding by applying for federal grants that span multiple years, providing stability and resources for the project's continued operation and growth. CASA of Yellowstone County also plans to diversify funding streams by working with local business partners and ensuring sustained support for the initiative. By leveraging federal grants, business partnerships, and collaborative partners, CASA of Yellowstone County is strategically positioning itself to sustain and scale its Program Advocates pilot project, thereby enhancing its impact on the community over time.

Do you have a Fiscal Agent*

No

Multi-Region request funding additional information

Regional Funding

Please explain in detail the effectiveness of the program, for each region, if not every region approves the application.

Program Abstract

Program Description*

Describe the objectives of this project. Provide a detailed overview of the program, including its purpose, priorities & objectives, and intended results.

While the organization has made great strides to bridge the gap between children in foster care and available volunteer Advocates, the disproportionality continues, with many of the complex cases going unserved. These complex cases create a backlog and delay the support that children need. The Program Advocate will have specialized training in three specific focus areas: cases involving domestic violence, large sibling groups, and American Indian children. All of these populations of children are directly impacted by substance use. The organization has prioritized these populations as highly vulnerable groups in need of an Advocate as they navigate the foster care system.

Children exposed to domestic violence endure profound impacts on their physical, emotional, and psychological well-being. Exposure to domestic violence disrupts the formation of secure attachments with caregivers, impeding healthy social and emotional development. The toxic environment of domestic violence can also undermine a child's sense of safety and security, perpetuating a cycle of trauma that can extend into adulthood. Large sibling groups are a particularly challenging population to appoint to a volunteer Advocate. The complexities involved in managing such cases are significant, as each child in the family group may have unique needs and circumstances that require individual attention yet must also be coordinated within the context of the entire family unit. The Program Advocate position would also expand services to American Indian children. The disproportionate representation of Indigenous children in local foster care is striking, with approximately 35% or 210 out of the 600 children in the Yellowstone County foster care system

belonging to this demographic. This significant overrepresentation underscores the urgent need for targeted support and advocacy for American Indian children within the foster care system.

Research shows that exposure to drugs in the home—whether through direct access to substances, environmental toxins from parental use, or prenatal exposure—can severely harm a child's physical, cognitive, and emotional development. Prenatal drug exposure has been linked to developmental delays, impaired brain function, and behavioral disorders. Environmental exposure to substances, such as secondhand smoke from methamphetamine or opioids, can result in toxic buildup in a child's system, further jeopardizing their health. Additionally, teens in these environments may begin using substances themselves, increasing their risk of addiction and further perpetuating the cycle of harm. Without timely intervention, these children are more likely to experience long-term consequences, including chronic health issues, academic struggles, mental health disorders, and difficulty forming stable relationships.

Program Reach

If you are requesting funds from multiple Abatement Regions please specify how your program serves each region. **Be specific.**

This project would be specific to Yellowstone County.

Specific Goals*

What are the specific goals of the program? List several goals the program hopes to accomplish and how the program intends to meet these goals.

Expand Service Capacity:

- 1) Through the work of two staff Program Advocates, CASA of Yellowstone County will increase its service capacity by 12% over the next two years, providing advocacy to an additional 75 children in the Yellowstone County foster care system who might otherwise go unserved.
- 2) Enhance the Safety, Stability, and Well-Being of Children Served by Program Advocates
 - a) Achieve a 90% rate of children served living in safe conditions, assessed through regular evaluations of housing stability, family contact, and behavior patterns.
 - b) Ensure that at least 95% of children served have their safety, medical, educational, and psychological needs either directly addressed or brought to the court's attention for resolution.
 - c) Conduct monthly visits with all children served, documenting interactions at their school, daycare, or foster placement to assess and address well-being.
- 3) Achieve Permanency Goals: Support children assigned to the Program Advocates in achieving permanency, with the Advocate remaining engaged until permanency is achieved through reunification, adoption, guardianship, or aging out of foster care.
- 4) Evaluate Program Effectiveness: Collect and analyze data on key program outcomes, including child safety, service access, and permanency timelines, to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Program Advocate model and secure future funding opportunities.
- 5) Contribute to Opioid Impact Mitigation: Assist in addressing the effects of the opioid crisis on children in foster care by providing tailored advocacy that connects children and families to necessary therapies, addiction recovery resources, and community services.

The organization acknowledges the profound impact of generational addiction and trauma on the lives of children and families. By empowering children with the tools and support needed to build brighter futures, the organization aims to foster a culture of resilience and healing, breaking cycles of abuse, neglect, and trauma to help families and communities thrive.

Evaluation Method*

Describe how you plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and what the method for evaluation will be.

CASA of Yellowstone County has crafted the project with consideration to community needs, the welfare of children and families, and the organization's strategic growth.

Goals for Evaluation:

1) To measure the program's effectiveness in meeting the comprehensive needs of children served, including:

- Safety and stability
- Medical and educational support
- Connection to family, culture, and community
- Access to essential services and resources
- Number of cases where children achieve permanency

2) Gather input from:

- Child Protective Services and other community agencies
- Judges or court representatives to evaluate CASA's impact on case outcomes

3) Narrative Review

- Use case stories to highlight qualitative successes, emphasizing CASA's role in achieving positive outcomes

4) Transparent Communication

- Regularly share evaluation results with funders, partners, and the public to build trust and maintain accountability
- Highlight successes, identify areas for growth, and recommend adjustments to enhance impact

Data Source*

What information are you going to collect or use to demonstrate you have accomplished your goals?

Data collection will involve maintaining detailed case files using the case management system to ensure comprehensive documentation. These files will track the Program Advocates' work on each case, including monthly child interactions, reports submitted to the court, and communication with the parties of the case. These files will track initial and subsequent placements, case demographics, and drug exposure. Additionally, the organization tracks child medical and educational assessments, interactions with family members, siblings, and the extended community, as well as services accessed, such as therapies, counseling, and community programs. This systematic approach will provide a clear and organized record of each child's progress and needs.

Awareness*

How do you plan to create awareness of this program? Briefly describe what action the program plans to take to create awareness in the community.

The program aims to raise awareness of the risks of opioids and their impact on drug-endangered children. A significant portion of the pre-service training required for all volunteer Advocates is dedicated to understanding substance abuse and its effects on children and families. The organization provides ongoing training to around 145 active volunteer Advocates and pre-service training to 35-45 incoming community volunteers, annually. In addition, the program will engage community stakeholders, resource partners, and families within the CASA network through collaborative discussions, resource-sharing, and awareness campaigns to amplify the message and foster a community-wide understanding of the critical issue of opioid use and the dangerous impact it has on families for generations. The organization will also promote the impact of the Program Advocates' role in the lives of children and families as a direct result of the Montana Opioid Abatement grant funding.

Additional Documents

Tax Exempt Organization*

By clicking this box you are confirming the applying organization is a tax exempt organization.

Yes

Tax Exempt Determination Letter*

Please upload a copy of the Organization 501(C)(3) Tax Exempt Determination Letter.

CASA 501c3 letter 2010.pdf

Use this section to upload or explain any additional information regarding the program/organization. ie. a detailed budget projection, program/organization history, etc.

Upload #1

Upload #2

Upload #3

Additional Information

[Unanswered]

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- Program Advocate CY 25 & 26 Budget (2).xlsx
- CASA 501c3 letter 2010.pdf

Position	Time Frame	Pay (Gross)	hourly	FICA (Annual Pay X 7.65%) Based on 2025 Rate
Program Advocate #1	October 2025-September 2026 (12 Months)	\$ 39,520.00	\$ 19.00	\$ 3,023.28
Program Advocate #2	March 2025-April 2026 (24 Months)	\$ 76,960.00	\$ 18.50	\$ 5,887.44
Total		\$ 116,480.00		\$ 8,910.72

Workers Comp (Annual Pay X.171%)	SUTA (Annual Pay up to \$40,500 X 1.2%)	Health Insurance Estimate for monthly premium	Health Insurance-x month in grant cycle	Retirement 3% compnay contribution	Total Taxes & Benefits
\$ 675.79	\$ 474.24	\$ 400.00	\$ 4,800.00	\$ 1,185.60	\$ 10,158.91
\$ 1,316.02	\$ 923.52	\$ 400.00	\$ 9,600.00	\$ 2,308.80	\$ 20,035.78
\$ 1,991.81	\$ 1,397.76		\$ 14,400.00	\$ 3,494.40	\$ 30,194.69

Total Compensation	Technology Stipend \$60 month	Mileage Budget \$400 month	TOTAL Cost
\$ 49,678.91	\$ 720.00	\$ 4,800.00	\$ 55,198.91
\$ 96,995.78	\$ 1,440.00	\$ 9,600.00	\$ 108,035.78
\$ 146,674.69	\$ 2,160.00	\$ 14,400.00	\$ 163,234.69



IRS Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

P.O. Box 2508
Cincinnati OH 45201

RECEIVED APR 20 2010

In reply refer to: 0248667581
Apr. 21, 2010 LTR 4168C E0
48-1301287 000000 00

00015256

BODC: TE

YELLOWSTONE CASA INC
% SHIRLEY FOLKWEIN
PO BOX 688
BILLINGS MT 59103-0688

Employer Identification Number: **-***1287
Person to Contact: Mr. McCain
Toll Free Telephone Number: 1-877-829-5500

Dear Taxpayer:

This is in response to your Apr. 12, 2010, request for information regarding your tax-exempt status.

Our records indicate that your organization was recognized as exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code in a determination letter issued in March 2003.

Our records also indicate that you are not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code because you are described in section(s) 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Donors may deduct contributions to you as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to you or for your use are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code.

Beginning with the organization's sixth taxable year and all succeeding years, it must meet one of the public support tests under section 170(b)(1)(A)(vi) or section 509(a)(2) as reported on Schedule A of the Form 990. If your organization does not meet the public support test for two consecutive years, it is required to file Form 990-PF, Return of Private Foundation, for the second tax year that the organization failed to meet the support test and will be reclassified as a private foundation.

If you have any questions, please call us at the telephone number shown in the heading of this letter.

0248667581
Apr. 21, 2010 LTR 4168C E0
48-1301287 000000 00
00015257

YELLOWSTONE CASA INC
% SHIRLEY FOLKWEIN
PO BOX 688
BILLINGS MT 59103-0688

Sincerely yours,

Michele M. Sullivan

Michele M. Sullivan, Oper. Mgr.
Accounts Management Operations I

Program Advocate budget: 1 FTE for 9 months, 1 FTE for 12 months

[illegible]