



the difference

CHILD ADVOCATES, INC. 2007 ANNUAL REPORT

We're no strangers to being the difference.




In fact, we consider it our specialty. Our court appointed advocate volunteers were assigned to the cases of 1,705 abused and neglected children in 2007 – making a marked difference not only in the outcome of the cases, but ultimately in each one of those children's lives.

They were the difference between tearful good-byes and much-anticipated hellos; between four separate placements and inseparable siblings; between a mother who throws her hands up and one learning to be hands-on.

Although the size and shape of each difference may vary, one thing does not: our commitment to one day saying that our volunteers are able to be the difference for every child in Harris County who needs us.



potential ga
exc



Mark's mother didn't know what else to do. At 14, he had completely shut her out and was skipping school to run around with known gang members. After he physically hit her during a confrontation, she checked him into a hospital psychological unit, only to have them call her a few days later to say he was being discharged.

Refusing to pick him up, she called Child Protective Services (CPS) for help. The agency took custody of Mark and placed him in a group foster home.

When Mark met Adrian, the court appointed advocate volunteer assigned to his case, he could best be described as angry. Mad at his parents and at CPS, he repeatedly threatened to run away from the placement, which he said he “hated.”

Adrian's first move was to call Mark's mother to get her side of the story. After several frustrating months, both parents had become completely exasperated by CPS and had stopped working towards completing the required services, resulting in the agency no longer considering family reunification as a goal for the case.

But, according to Mark's mother, Adrian's phone call made all the difference. It was her first glimpse of hope — since Mark was taken into custody — that someone cared about her family.

On Adrian's urging, Mark's parents resumed their services. They willingly entered family therapy and began visiting Mark regularly. Adrian continued to visit Mark as well — sometimes several times each month — encouraging him to work hard at school and improve his behavior at the group home. He also worked closely with CPS to ensure that a homestudy was conducted to determine that Mark's parents' physical home was appropriate — as the goal for the case had been changed back to reunification.

Adrian testified to the judge that this family was ready for another chance, and 11 months from the day he'd struck his mother, Mark was returned home. Although the case is now closed, he keeps in touch with Adrian, who he “still can't believe is a volunteer,” often sending pictures, copies of his report cards and newspaper clippings on his football and track success.

the difference between
gang member
and
ceeding his potential

statistics

2007

CHILD ADVOCATES, INC. 2007 STATS

- Provided advocacy for 1,705 abused and neglected children in Harris County
- Trained 206 new volunteers
- Worked on 889 cases – 534 volunteers collectively worked more than 47,000 hours
- Raised \$3.2 million
- The cost to Child Advocates to serve one child in 2007 was \$1,750

CHILD ADVOCATES, INC. GENERAL STATS

- Served more than 14,000 children since our inception in 1984
- Family judges agreed with the recommendations of the Child Advocates *guardian ad litem* 87% of the time
- Member of the National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association (NCASAA), and is one of the largest of 900 member programs across the country
- Member of the Texas Court Appointed Special Advocate (TCASA) program

LOCAL FACTS ON CHILD ABUSE

- 6,315 confirmed victims of child abuse in Harris County in 2007*
- 4,714 children in foster care in Harris County in 2007*
- A CPS worker's caseload averages 50 cases*

NATIONAL FACTS ON CHILD ABUSE

- An average of 4 children die every day in our nation as a result of abuse and neglect**
- Children under the age of four account for 81% of those fatalities**
- Each year, more than 2.7 million children are reported as abused and/or neglected**
- An estimated \$93 billion accounts for the direct and indirect annual costs of child abuse***

* source: Harris County Department of Family and Protective Services, *2007 Data Book*

** source: National Child Abuse and Neglect Data Systems (NCANDS), *Child Maltreatment 2004*

*** source: www.cdc.gov, Child Maltreatment Fact Sheet





the difference between



Five-year-old Isaiah and three-year-old Mercedes' mother had left them in the care of a stranger for the last time. Her erratic behavior upon leaving them at a neighbor's door prompted the woman to call the police.

The responding officers noted the stench first. The windows were covered with plywood and the power was turned off. There were dirty diapers, soiled laundry, rotting food and piled trash strewn throughout the apartment. Most concerning, was that the children's mother didn't notice. She sat staring blankly, unable to focus and babbled about voices in her head calling her stupid and a bad mother. Her unprovoked emotional outbursts terrified the children.

With their fathers nowhere to be found — Isaiah's fled to Indonesia two years prior and Mercedes' had been deported to Mexico — the children were placed in a foster home. A few weeks later, in walked the man who would be their difference — their court appointed advocate volunteer, Mark.

The case had all the makings of long-term CPS involvement — termination seemed impossible with both dads missing and the caseworker giving up on tracking down their mother as she bounced between shelters and local hospital psychological wards. But Mark wouldn't accept a fate of endless foster care for the children. He worked diligently with the attorneys appointed for the fathers to locate both men and made it his mission to find the mother via hospital records and service providers.

Mark maintained close contact with the court appointed therapist, who had serious concern over the mother's ability to parent long-term. Without individualized and careful monitoring, she wouldn't stay on her medication and without her medication, she had migraines, psychotic episodes and fits of explosive rage. Mark sat down with the mother on every occasion he could and tried to explain the situation.

When it came down to the trial, Mom looked to Mark for guidance. Not to the CPS caseworker, who'd passed her off months earlier as crazy; not to her attorney, who she'd met only once, but Mark — who had shown her patience and compassion and kept her focused on doing the right thing for her children. She relinquished all parental rights to both children, in her own words: "because she wanted what was best for them."

Today, Isaiah and Mercedes are thriving in their adoptive family. Although the case is long-closed, Mark was recently invited to dinner when Isaiah asked "if Mr. Mark was coming to see him again." While they may have been too young to really know the difference he was in their lives, seeing them interact with their loving, consistent new parents was reward enough.

volatility and stability



highlights

2007

- We recorded the greatest number of active court appointed volunteers in our organization's history — 534. We recruited and trained 206 new court appointed volunteers and maintained a 71% retention rate, which exceeded all of our 2007 projections.
- Our 534 court appointed volunteers worked 889 cases. They spent 38,964 hours working on those cases and an additional 8,054 hours volunteering in Grad Schools, trainings and other areas of the organization. This brings our total volunteer hours contributed by court appointed advocates to 47,018. That is the equivalent of 23 full-time employees!
- 1,705 children were blessed with a compassionate court appointed volunteer that dedicated their time and energy to ensure them a brighter future without abuse.
- Just for Now: Kids and the People of the Court was officially published in April 2007 in conjunction with Child Abuse Prevention Month. We have printed and distributed copies to CASA chapters and industry professionals nationwide, made the book accessible to all of the Harris County court appointed volunteers, and integrated the book into our Advocacy University (AU) training.
- A certified resolution was adopted by the Senate of Texas to recognize Jackie Crowley and Barbara Abell for spearheading the book, Just for Now: Kids and the People of the Court, because of the “immeasurable benefits it has to many abandoned and abused children in Texas.”
- Zack Coapland was named the 2007 James A. Gwinn Outstanding Volunteer of the Year at the annual Volunteer Appreciation Event sponsored by BP. In 8 years, Zack has gone above and beyond by completing 13 cases, in which he has served 30 children.
- From August through October, we conducted our 2007 Heroes Society Campaign with a goal of 100% participation from the Child Advocates “family”: Board, staff and court appointed advocates. 36 percent of our court appointed advocates made unrestricted financial donations and 100% of our staff and Board of Directors made an unrestricted financial donation directly, or had a gift made in their honor. This played a role in our ability to exceed our revenue goal by more than 10%.
- This year, Child Advocates launched the new “Part-Time Hero” recruitment-driven advertising campaign, which utilizes real-life advocate volunteers. The campaign, which features Direct Mail, TV, Radio, Outdoor, and Print ads was not launched until September of 2007, but we have already received a terrific response as many of the newest Advocacy University participants have said our ads motivated their interest in our mission.

At 13, Ashley knew the drill. While her mother bounced from man to man — several of whom sexually abused her and her seven younger sisters — she was the caregiver for the family. She ensured the little ones got to the bus stop, figured out what they'd have for dinner and tried to keep the laundry caught up so there were clean clothes for school.

Even when the house they were living in burned down and the entire family moved into a hotel, she continued to play the part of the parent. But when the police came to investigate a report of little girls wandering the premises, CPS was notified and all of them were taken into custody.

When Marsha, the court appointed advocate volunteer, was assigned to the case, she could tell right away that Ashley was struggling to fit in to her new role — child. After years of taking care of her sisters, she had no idea how to look at her life in terms of “what Ashley wanted.”

Marsha took a few minutes alone with Ashley at each visit, encouraging her to focus on herself. Weeks later, when Ashley casually mentioned modeling, Marsha jumped at the chance to fan the tiny flame. When she contacted a modeling and acting agency in the area and told them about Ashley, the agency enrolled Ashley in a class.

The change was gradual, but far beyond skin-deep. The coaching Ashley received not only left her with makeup application tricks and improved posture, it left her with two much greater gifts: a leap in her self-esteem and — for the first time in her life — the glimpse of an actual future.

Marsha provided solid testimony at the termination trial and strongly recommended Ashley remain with her foster mother, who was planning to adopt her. Although she knew better than to expect too many words from the shy teen, the wink Ashley sneaked her at their goodbye visit was all she needed to know that she had indeed been the difference in this young girl's life.

the difference
between
dreamless and
a dream come true





programs and services

FOR THE CHILDREN WE SERVE

CAMERON CHILDSPREE

Thanks to sponsors Cameron, Target, Morgan Stanley and the Hoglund Foundation, 400 children received a \$100 voucher and a personal shopper to help select back-to-school clothing, shoes and necessities.

COURT SERVICES PROGRAM

Child Advocates provides mission-critical support and supervision to court appointed advocate volunteers. The court services program includes diligent search, educational advocacy, reunification services and support to the family. Through the court program, volunteers guide abused and neglected children into safe, loving environments where they can thrive.

GILBERT AND RACHEL'S CLOSET - SPECIAL NEEDS ROOM

Diapers, school uniforms, prom dresses, backpacks, eyeglasses, dance or karate lessons, tutoring, bunk beds, baby formula—everyday items that may easily be taken for granted by some. Named after two of the first children served by Child Advocates, Gilbert and Rachel's Closet opens the door to a host of items that make a huge difference in the lives of our children.

HOLIDAY PARTY

"It's the most wonderful time of the year." Nearly 700 children served by Child Advocates and their foster siblings were treated to several hours of holiday bliss at the annual Holiday Party, generously sponsored by Target. Dozens of volunteers helped produce contests, crafts, food and fun to help make this event memorable.

SANTA'S WISH LIST

Fueled by the spirit of good will of individuals and corporations, along with lots of hard work, planning and organization by Child Advocates staff members and volunteers, the Santa's Wish List program ensured that over 1,000 children served by Child Advocates received gifts during the holiday season.

YPC CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

Committed members of Child Advocates' Young Professionals for Children group provide exciting afternoon activities to help enrich the lives of children served by Child Advocates. 2007 events included the *Rodeo Round-Up*, the *Roller Rink Revelry* and the annual *Great Pumpkin Party*.



community outreach

ADVOCACY UNIVERSITY (AU)

We like to think of it as “heroes in training.” Our volunteers learn about everything from the psychology of abuse to writing important court documents. Our 30-hour training program has become a model for CASA programs across the country. All seven of our AU training sessions in 2007 were generously sponsored by BP America.

AU GRAD SCHOOL

Knowledge never ends where we’re concerned. We empower our volunteers, even after they’ve completed training and have begun their roles as guardians *ad litem*. AU grad school covers a range of topics that speak directly to the experiences our volunteers encounter during the course of their volunteer work.

FRIENDS OF CHILD ADVOCATES

Whether they are producing their signature Angels of Hope Luncheon, recruiting new members to join the Friends, coordinating logistics for the annual ChildSpree or making the holidays memorable for girls who visit their “Ginger’s Spa” booth at the annual Holiday Party, the Friends of Child Advocates is a treasured group of volunteers who support Child Advocates’ mission.

ORIENTATION

Our one-hour orientations help individuals learn about different volunteer opportunities at Child Advocates, and determine how they best fit within our organization.

RECRUITMENT

We find our volunteers in both obvious and unique places. We recognize that volunteers are at the core of fulfilling our mission, and will do what we can to help get them involved.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION EVENT

Generously sponsored by BP America, this much-anticipated annual event allows us to pay special tribute to our volunteers who are on the front lines everyday in the fight against child abuse.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS FOR CHILDREN

Volunteer manpower at its best! A group of young professionals who are dedicated to breaking the cycle of child abuse produce enriching activities for the children served by Child Advocates, provides critical volunteer support for special events benefiting Child Advocates, and holds a fundraiser to help support the organization’s mission.

fundraising and special events

ANGELS OF HOPE LUNCHEON AND FASHION PRESENTATION

Each November, this annual luncheon and fashion presentation is the kickoff to Houston's holiday social season. Produced by the Friends of Child Advocates in conjunction with Neiman Marcus, our 2007 event honored philanthropic Houstonian, Mary Bratton. The runway show — a preview of Escada's 2008 Spring collection — put the luncheon on the Houston social crowd's "must-attend" list.

CAR PROS FOR KIDS

Participating auto service providers helped raise funds for Child Advocates during the month of February by offering two free oil changes to individuals who visited their shop and made a \$25 donation to Child Advocates. One hundred percent of the proceeds benefited Child Advocates.

GIVING

Child Advocates cannot operate without the support of individuals, corporations and foundations. Year after year, we rely upon the benevolence of the entire community to help us fulfill our mission. Child Advocates has a host of giving opportunities ranging from supporting us through our direct mail campaign to becoming a sponsor of one of our special events. Every contribution helps us continue to provide critical services for abused children — as we are not a United Way agency and over 75% of our funds are raised through philanthropic gifts each year.

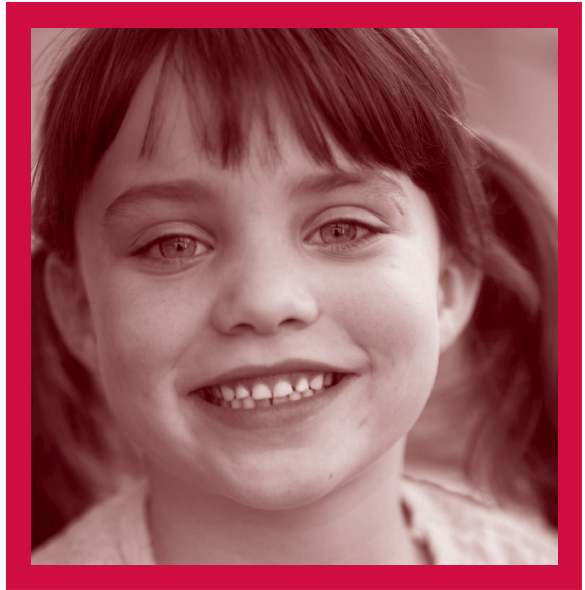
H-E-B HOUSTON CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL

The annual Houston Children's Festival — deemed "the Mayor's official event" — offers several city blocks of entertainment, complete with games, activities, crafts, exhibits, rides and more to tens of thousands of children and their families. The 2007 Festival — sponsored by H-E-B and presented by Baker Hughes — featured Kyle Masse, star of Disney's "That's So Raven".

PULL FOR KIDS CLASSIC

This annual event — the largest of our fundraisers — honors individuals and corporations who have had a pivotal impact in the lives of abused children. The 2007 Pull for Kids Classic, honored Accenture for their support of Child Advocates' mission. The event kicked-off on Saturday morning with a daytime sporting clays tournament and concluded on Saturday evening with a festive party in the Methodist practice facility that offered food, fun and live musical entertainment for more than 700.

It may be
the difference between
low grades and
high expectations.



Or the
difference between **no future**
and **future architect.**

Regardless of the specifics, it comes down to the difference between the outcome for a child who does not have a court appointed advocate assigned to their case and the outcome for a child who does.

And for the more than 3,000 children we aren't currently able to serve — it's painfully clear how big that difference is.

CHILD ADVOCATES, INC. OF
HARRIS COUNTY MOBILIZES
COURT APPOINTED VOLUNTEERS
TO BREAK THE VICIOUS CYCLE
OF CHILD ABUSE. WE SPEAK UP
FOR ABUSED CHILDREN WHO ARE
LOST IN THE SYSTEM AND GUIDE
THEM INTO SAFE ENVIRONMENTS
WHERE THEY CAN THRIVE.

childadvocates®

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WWW.CHILDADVOCATES.ORG

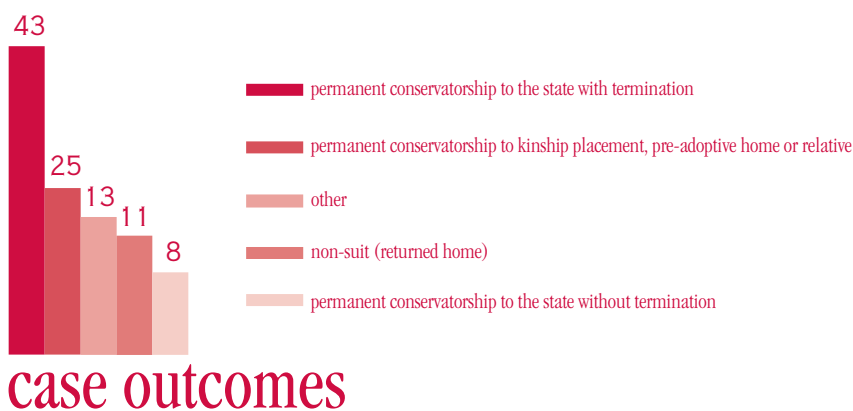
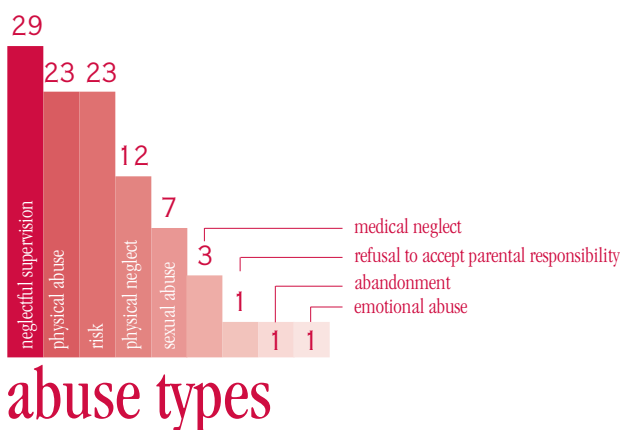
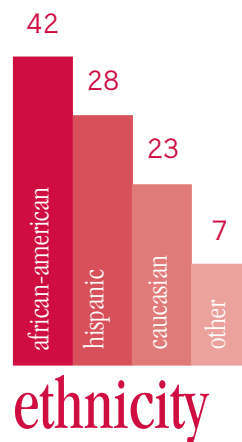
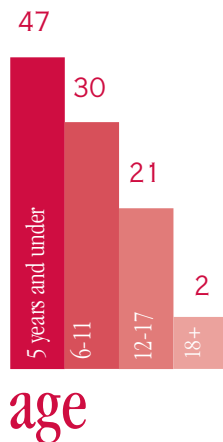
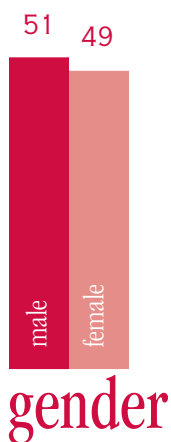
board of directors 2008

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children served 2007



*ALL DATA AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2007.

**ALL FIGURES ARE IN PERCENTAGES.

financial information 2007

REVENUE, GAINS AND PUBLIC SUPPORT

Contributions	\$1,619,152
Financial Assistance	\$512,777
Memberships	\$25,427
Special Events (Net of \$162,956 in event expenses)	
Houston Children's Festival	\$179,721
Pull for Kids Classic	\$454,631
Angels of Hope Luncheon	\$263,146
Other Events	\$162,827
Interest	\$8,028
Other / In-kind	\$92,465

TOTAL REVENUE, GAINS AND PUBLIC SUPPORT **\$3,318,174**

EXPENSES

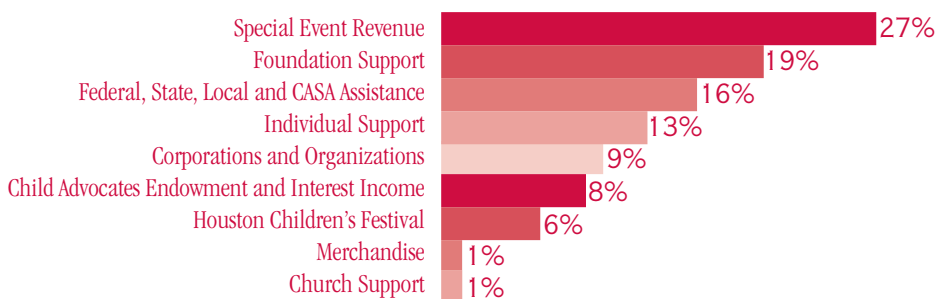
Community Services	\$1,757,795
Professional Education and Training	\$713,553
Management and General	\$295,450
Fundraising	\$316,006
Contribution to Child Advocates Endowment	0

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$3,082,804**

NET SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) **\$235,370**

ENDING NET ASSETS** **\$1,105,819**

SOURCES OF REVENUE



*ALL DATA AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2007 UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**EXCLUDES CHILD ADVOCATES ENDOWMENT, INC.