

# YOUR EXPERIENCE CAN SUPPORT LGBTQ+ YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE



“Too many LGBTQ youth come out to family members **only to face rejection, hatred, and violence**. Those facing the most extreme levels... are often forced out of their homes, or will run away, becoming homeless or entering the foster care system.”

– THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

**30%** of youth in the foster care system identify as LGBTQ+... that's **THREE TIMES** the overall LGBTQ+ youth population percentage.

“When I was first placed in a group home, my biggest worry was, ‘Will people accept me? Will I have to fight?’ **I’ve had to fight every day of my life.**”

– JESSIE



**ONCE IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM,** LGBTQ+ youth also experience worse outcomes:

- Intensified bias, discrimination and harassment
- Increased physical and sexual violence
- Poorer school functioning
- Heightened health risks
- Elevated probability of depression and substance use
- Greater likelihood of being placed in a group home or unaffirming foster home, leading to a higher risk of running away and homelessness

# HOW YOU CAN HELP

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**BECOME A CASA VOLUNTEER.** When a family is in crisis and becomes involved in the child welfare system, a CASA volunteer may be appointed by a judge to advocate for the youth. CASA volunteers provide a consistent presence in a youth's life while working collaboratively with everyone involved in the case. CASA volunteers stay by the youth's side, advocating for their voice to be heard and for their safety, well-being and permanency while in foster care.

**AS A CASA VOLUNTEER,** you will advocate for youth in foster care by:

- **SUPPORTING** them through tough moments and challenging experiences
- **SUGGESTING** safe and affirming foster placements
- **MAKING** sure their physical and mental health assessments are completed and any healthcare needs are understood and met
- **ESTABLISHING** supportive connections including family, friends and community organizations
- **INCREASING** their sense of safety and belonging by recognizing their whole self and validating their experiences
- **VERIFYING** educational supports are in place

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## VOLUNTEER

Are you ready to be a CASA volunteer? Take the first step to making a difference in the life of a youth in foster care by visiting [WWW.BECOMEACASA.ORG](http://WWW.BECOMEACASA.ORG).

## NOMINATE

Do you know someone who you think would make a great CASA volunteer? Nominate them at [WWW.NOMINATEACASA.ORG](http://WWW.NOMINATEACASA.ORG).



EVERY CHILD HAS A CHANCE – **IT'S YOU**®