


These stories
are real.



An 11-year-old calls
911. She doesn't want
to tell on her parents,
but she's terrified that
they're dying.

“There are four children in all. The oldest was the one who called the police. I'm there to look out for them. I talk with them honestly and get their input. When you gain their trust, children will tell you what's happening and what they need. Caseworkers generally don't have time to build those relationships.”

CASA VOLUNTEER

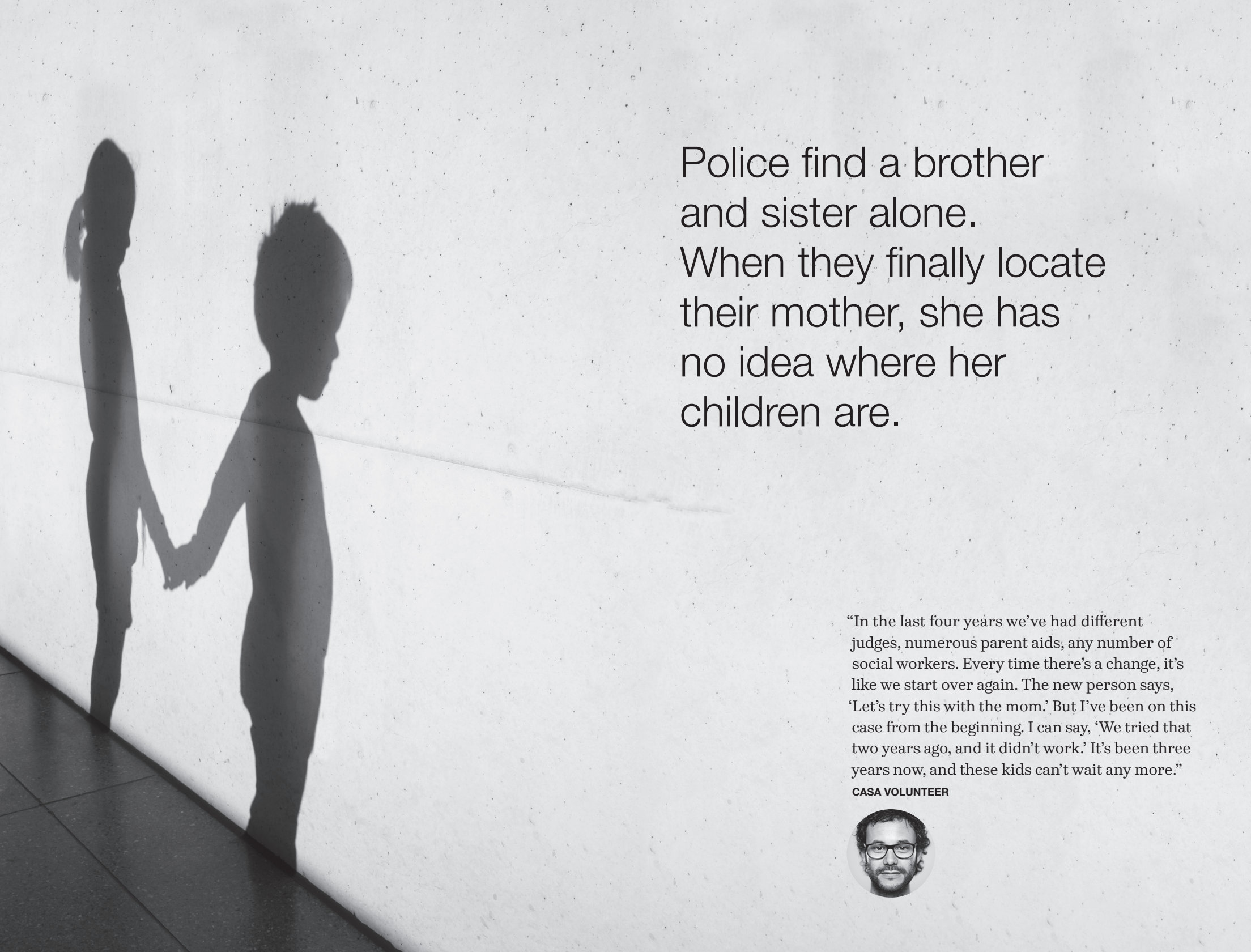


A woman sprawls
unconscious in a parking
lot. In the stroller at her
side are needles,
alcohol, and a baby.

“The state recommended putting my kiddo in a van to visit her father for 30 minutes a week. All the attorneys, everybody agreed. Well, she’s been in foster care since they found her in the stroller. She’s only two years old, and it’s a five-hour drive to the jail. So that’s ten hours, round trip, for a 30-minute visit. I had to say, ‘No, this just doesn’t make sense.’ The court listened to me.”

CASA VOLUNTEER





Police find a brother
and sister alone.
When they finally locate
their mother, she has
no idea where her
children are.

“In the last four years we’ve had different judges, numerous parent aids, any number of social workers. Every time there’s a change, it’s like we start over again. The new person says, ‘Let’s try this with the mom.’ But I’ve been on this case from the beginning. I can say, ‘We tried that two years ago, and it didn’t work.’ It’s been three years now, and these kids can’t wait any more.”

CASA VOLUNTEER



These stories are real.

Child victims of the opioid crisis like them live in small towns and in big cities. They come from every state. Some were born in poverty. Most were not.

All are victims of America's opioid epidemic.


It's an epidemic that in 2015 alone struck more than 100,000 children across the country, casting them into foster care and court systems already staggering under record high caseloads and budget shortfalls.

Law enforcement, public health officials, and policy makers are scrambling to understand and manage the epidemic. Their job is to find—and finance—a way to contain and treat it.

Courts are struggling to cope with the influx of cases—children coming into the system because of the abuse or neglect set in motion by addiction.

Our job is simpler, but equally important.

Our job is to stand for these children.

A young boy with dark hair is shown in profile, looking out of a window. The background outside the window is blurred, showing greenery and a building. The boy is wearing a dark blue jacket. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

It doesn't take much to
throw a lifeline to a child
set adrift by a parent's
addiction.

It takes time.

Right now, more than 86,000 volunteers spend six million-plus hours a year speaking out for the best interests of the 267,000 children they serve. That's about 40 percent of the children who have experienced abuse or neglect in America.

To give every child one caring, constant adult in their lives, we need to more than double the number of CASA volunteers.

We know we can do it.

It takes money.

The six million-plus hours our volunteers donate each year in communities all across the country is a bargain, but it's not free. What makes our volunteers so effective is the investment that we make in their ongoing training and supervision.

The issues surrounding opioid addiction are complex. We need to create new trainings and new materials on those issues for all our volunteers. And before we can add new volunteers, we need more supervisors: experienced child welfare professionals who can support those volunteers with advice, expertise, and resources.

Given the return—to the half a million children in foster care and to our society—we're committed to partnering with donors and investors who can help us make that investment.

It takes heart.

It takes heart to see a child in need and stop to help. It takes heart to stay for as long as you are needed—for that child and every child—day after day, year after year, in good times and bad.

Those who do this work, whether they are volunteers, staff members, or donors, have the heart to see, to stop, and to stay.

Perhaps you do, too. And if you do, this is an invitation to join us, in whatever capacity you can.

Not a single one of us has the power to change these children's past—what they have seen, what they have done, what they have suffered.

Every one of us has the power to change their future. All it takes is the heart to do so.

casaofmonmouth.org/opioid-crisis

