

2025 Impact100 East Bay Finalist Executive Summary

PROJECT NAME: Trauma-Informed Tutoring Program Expansion

Project Need:

Children and youth in Contra Costa County's foster care and juvenile justice systems face overwhelming educational barriers due to trauma, instability, and frequent school changes. These barriers lead to striking disparities in academic outcomes: only 50% of youth in these systems graduate from high school, and just 3–4% earn a bachelor's degree by age 26.

In 2023, we launched our Trauma-Informed Tutoring Program to confront this crisis. The program pairs system-involved youth with highly trained volunteer tutors who provide consistent, one-on-one academic support. These trust-based relationships help students rebuild confidence, catch up in school, and reimagine what's possible for their futures.

Currently, the program serves 28 youth annually who are matched with court-appointed CASA volunteers. With funding from Impact100, we will triple our reach to 100 youth. This expansion will include foster and justice-involved youth referred by our partners in Children and Family Services, county school districts, the Contra Costa County Office of Education, and community-based organizations. Many of these youth face the same academic and emotional hardships but are not formally appointed a CASA. This broader reach strengthens equity and ensures more young people receive the trauma-informed support they need to thrive.

Organization:

Founded in 1981, Child Advocates of Contra Costa County (formerly CASA) provides court-appointed special advocates and specialized programs for children and youth from birth through age 21 who are involved with the foster care and juvenile justice systems. Our mission is to ensure that every child we serve finds a permanent home and completes their education. We are the only organization in the county offering this level of trauma-informed, volunteer-led academic mentoring. With strong partnerships, an experienced team, a rigorous training program, and robust data systems, we are well-positioned to scale this model quickly and responsibly.

Transformational Impact:

This project will triple the number of youth receiving personalized, trauma-informed tutoring each year—from 28 to 100. While we will continue serving youth with CASAs, the true growth comes from reaching a new population: foster and justice-involved youth referred by our county, school, and community partners.

Expected outcomes include improved grades, increased attendance, and higher graduation rates. Just as important, the program fosters emotional resilience, self-advocacy, and belief in academic potential. This expansion not only transforms individual lives—it also improves our community's long-term economic, social, and public health outcomes.

Our model is replicable. No other organization provides trauma-informed tutoring at this level. CASA programs across California have asked for our help to create similar efforts, recognizing school districts alone cannot meet the need. Impact100's support will grow our local reach and help seed a scalable statewide solution.

Project Finances:

Total project cost: \$100,000. Impact100 funds will support a full-time Program Manager (\$70,000), benefits (\$7,700), volunteer training, evaluation tools, and overhead. Expansion will begin in FY 2025–2026, with planning, hiring, and launch in Q1, and evaluations at six and twelve months. We have secured funding to sustain current services; this grant is essential for growth. Long-term sustainability will come through expanded foundation and donor support, partnerships, and multi-year funding strategies.