



*It took a Village to bring this family back together and help them to heal. CASA was instrumental in changing Richie's story.*



**Richie has a bright future ahead of him.**

## Richie, Carly and the Albens say, "Thank You!"

Carly Simpson had long struggled with a substance use disorder. Sadly, she lost custody of her son, Richie, in 2018 due to neglect. There were serious educational neglect complaints and she was not complying with mandated services for her or her son. Richie was placed with his uncle and then in a non-relative resource home with the Alben family. He lived for almost three years with the Albens, and during that time, he thrived academically and socially. Unfortunately, Carly came extremely close to having her parental rights terminated. The Albens were prepared to adopt Richie if need be. Richie was torn between his loyalty to his mother and the growing love, connection, and stability he found with the Alben family.

Miraculously, Carly did not give up. She prioritized reunification with Richie. Carly sought help and completely turned her life around, achieving sobriety, and training to be a certified alcohol and drug counselor. The court and every party involved in this case were in awe of Carly's commitment, plan, energy, and effort! She was reunified with Richie in December 2021.

This extraordinary outcome was not the end of their story. Carly knew Richie had found success academically, athletically, and socially at the school in the Alben's home town. She wished for him to continue there, and sought to establish residency in the town. Carly reached out to the Albens for help, and through their mutual love for Richie, they found a solution. The Albens offered to have Richie and Carly both live with them while she sorted out her housing issues and searched for a place to live. This unselfish act was a 'game changer' for Richie and his mom. "Richie loves his mom, so we love his mom," Rebecca Alben said to the caseworker. Richie is thrilled to be continuing at the school he loves, and is elated to have the continuing love and support of both his mother and the Alben family.

It was Sandra, the CASA volunteer assigned as Richie's advocate, who was by his side throughout his time in foster care, when he was so traumatized that he would not leave his uncle's house to go to school, when representation was needed at school IEP meetings, and when Richie was moved to a new resource family who were complete strangers to him. Sandra was the consistent, positive adult guiding him and reassuring him. When Richie was reunified with his mom, the CASA Case Supervisor was the one to assist Carly with the school personnel, resources for Richie, and encouragement.



After months of searching, we finally found our forever home in Cedar Knolls. The close proximity to the Morris County Courthouse, just six minutes away, is ideal for staff to be in court for our children's hearings. The parking lot is plentiful and best of all, our volunteers and other visitors no longer have to pay for parking when they visit. We have a large training room with new technology -- all donated. Best of all, our increased storage space allows us to accept larger quantities of in kind donations, which, in the past, would have been turned away due to lack of storage. All our furniture and decor were donated to us so we can dedicate your donations to our children. We would love to have you visit so we can give you the "Royal Tour." We are very proud of CASA's new home and are excited about the ability to expand our programs to serve vulnerable children.

222 Ridgedale Avenue, Suite 300, Cedar Knolls, NJ 07927

**Join us for a fun evening at the zoo as  
we raise funds for children in foster care.**



**Saturday, June 11th from 6-10 pm**  
**Turtle Back Zoo, West Orange**  
For more info and tickets,  
visit [www.casamsc.org](http://www.casamsc.org)