



Member of the National
CASA Association

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- ⌘ The CASA Board of Directors meets on the 3rd Tuesday each month at 11:30am at the CASA office.
- ⌘ The Mendocino Co. Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission meets monthly on the 3rd Friday noon to 2 p.m. at the Probation Dept. conference room, 589 Low Gap Road, Ukiah.
- ⌘ The Lake Co. Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission meets monthly on the 3rd Thursday at noon, conference room C, on the 3rd floor of the Lake County Courthouse, 255 N. Forbes St., Lakeport.

April is National
Child Abuse Prevention Month.
Make meaningful connections
with children and families.



"Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me..." Artist Rich Johnson dispels the old saying with a powerful collection of images.

What do you see?

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) announce the release of "**The California Guidelines for the Use of Psychotropic Medication with Children and Youth in Foster Care**". This inter-departmental effort has produced a guide to best practices for the treatment of mental health conditions affecting children and youth in out-of-home care.

While these guidelines are not codified mandates for providers of mental health and/or social services, they have been developed for use in conjunction with existing mandatory State regulations related to the provision of Medi-Cal funded mental health services and community care licensing (CCL) regulations related to foster homes, group homes, and residential treatment centers. The Guidelines outline:



- * Basic principles and values;
- * Expectations regarding the development and monitoring of treatment plans; the principles for emotional and behavioral health care, psychosocial services, and non-pharmacological treatments;
- * Principles for informed consent to medications; and
- * Principles governing medication safety.

It is expected that the Guidelines will evolve over time in response to updated research and the evolution of best practices, and in response to feedback from youth, families, prescribers, other providers, and additional community stakeholders. For these reasons, **these guidelines** will be reviewed annually.

CASA helps to provide information to our Juvenile Judges by using trained community volunteers to investigate the background of a foster care case and make recommendations to the Judge that will best help to move the child to permanency as quickly as possible. Whether the plan is reunification with the parents, placement with relatives/kin or adoption, a CASA volunteer remains diligently focused on the child's need for permanency until the goal is accomplished. CASA volunteers come from all walks of life and all kinds of educational, ethnic and social backgrounds. Most work full time and no special prior experience is required. Objectivity and good communication skills are essential since a CASA volunteer must be able to work with a variety of people from child welfare professionals to birth parents. The amount of time spent working on a case varies depending on the stage of the proceedings. Each CASA volunteer is partnered with a Case Supervisor and they work together as a team on a case. Supervisors communicate and determine the steps to take on the case. All reports to the agencies are average, CASAs work on a sense of responsibility important for volunteers are at least 21 years of age and know that when they take on a child's future!



A written application, personal interview, three references, criminal background check, fingerprinting and 30+ hours of in-class training is required to become a CASA volunteer. Training topics include: Dependency and Delinquency Law, The Child Protection System and the Courts; Children and Family Systems; The Impact of Child Abuse and Neglect; Exploring Our Cultural Sensitivity; Educational Advocacy; Healthcare Advocacy; Communication/Interviewing Skills; Information Gathering and Report Writing. Following the completion of training, volunteers are sworn in by a Juvenile Court Judge. Post-training, CASA volunteers are required to participate in 12 hours of additional training each year. CASA offers monthly continuing education to meet this requirement. For more information about becoming a CASA volunteer, contact Sheryn Hildebrand at 707-463-6503, ext. 13 or email Sheryn at shildebrand@mendocinocasa.org.

