



February 2014- Vol 3, Issue 2

## Court Appointed Special Advocates of Mendocino & Lake Counties

**"I am for the child."**



Member of the National  
CASA Association

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### Dos & Don'ts of CASA Advocacy Tips from Seasoned CASA Volunteers

From Nicole:

- ♥ Understand the role of a CASA Advocate.
- ♥ Accept that there is always more to learn especially within the system; get to know the system.
- ♥ Remember having fun with your CASA child is important too; it helps strengthen a trusting relationship.
- ♥ Use CASA staff to vent when the need arises.
- ♥ Keep your sense of humor!

From Fred:

- ♥ Read and re-read your CASA child's file at various times throughout the case; you never know what you will find that may have slipped through the cracks or might not have mattered before.
- ♥ Get to know everyone who knows the child and stay in touch; they won't seek YOU out!
- ♥ Keep good notes and a contact log. This is extremely important as you prepare your reports on continue monitoring your case.
- ♥ Stay focused on your PRIMARY role – ADVOCATE.
- ♥ Always have a plan to work from in working on your case & be prepared with copies of your order, your badge and your business cards.

From Horace:

- ♥ Use CASA staff as a resource and support
- ♥ Be persistent; when a "door" is locked, look for an "open window".
- ♥ Attend as many of the meetings relating to your case as you can; if you can't make sure CASA staff know about the meeting – they may be able to sit in for you.
- ♥ Remember that sometimes what is "best interest" is NOT a child "want".

⌚ 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.

**Call 463-6503, visit us at [www.mendocinocasa.org](http://www.mendocinocasa.org) or find us on Facebook for more information about the many ways to VOLUNTEER with CASA of Mendocino & Lake Counties.**

## California Fails To Make the Honor Role in its Treatment of Children...Again

Children Now has released the *2014 California Children's Report Card: How Kids are Doing in Our State and What Needs to Be Done About It*, a comprehensive evaluation of the current status of California's children based on the advancements made in 2013, and including policy recommendations that make children a priority in 2014 and beyond. The report provides a grade of A to F in 27 areas. According to the report, California falls short in the major child welfare issue areas: a D- in the education of foster youth, a D+ in the health of foster youth, a C in the stability and permanency of foster youth, and a D+ in the family preservation and reunification of foster youth.



# The Marvel of Children

No wonder CASA's  
love children.

There is something so...

Marvelously whole  
about them.

When they welcome,

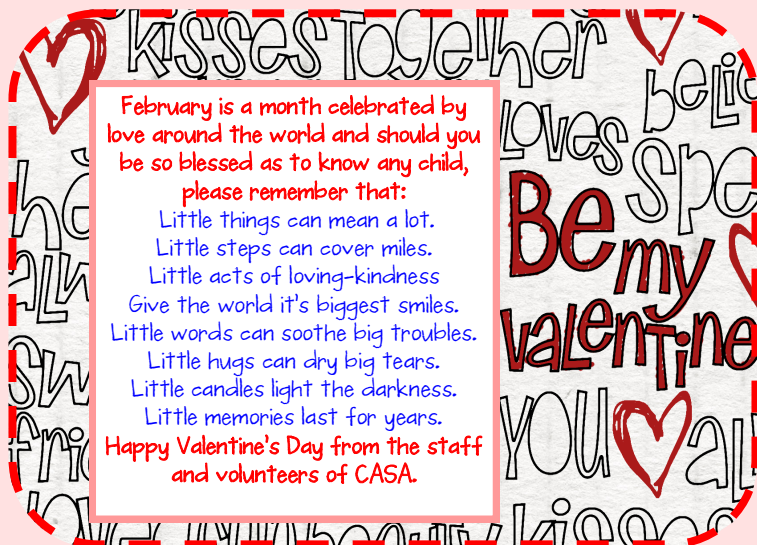
They welcome  
with all their heart.

And they love  
as they trust,

Without stint or limit.

That is always a gift  
to be treasured.

by CASA Volunteer David, 81



February is a month celebrated by love around the world and should you be so blessed as to know any child, please remember that:  
Little things can mean a lot.  
Little steps can cover miles.  
Little acts of loving-kindness  
Give the world it's biggest smiles.  
Little words can soothe big troubles.  
Little hugs can dry big tears.  
Little candles light the darkness.  
Little memories last for years.  
Happy Valentine's Day from the staff and volunteers of CASA.

## An Open Letter To Moms from Kid President

**MOMS**



## Welcome to our newest CASA Raleigh Page-Russell

So Raleigh, why did you decide to become a CASA Advocate? My husband was a criminal defense lawyer and I was a pediatric physical therapist. After my husband's passing and my own retirement, this opportunity to work with youth seemed a good fit.

Now that you've completed the CASA training, what did you like best about the experience? I enjoy learning anyway and even with a pediatric background, my database on teens was low, so I was particularly attentive to this information.

What are your concerns about volunteering with at-risk youth? Do I have enough experience with young people? I know I will be naïve as I tend to take people at their face value, not looking for other agendas.

What would you say to others trying to choose a volunteer opportunity in the Mendocino/Lake County corridor? CASA is a good choice for people who are nurturing or good at mentoring. Thus far, I don't see this as a "fun" volunteer job but one requiring a certain commitment.

Is there anything else you would like to share? One fulfilling aspect of CASA are the people who inhabit it. Positive energy, humor, and loving their work. That's the "fun."