
ADVOCATE ALLEY

Volume 3, Issue 5

May 2009

Those who can, do. Those who can do more, volunteer. ~Author Unknown

CASA Corner

Greetings Advocates,

Don't be confused when you visit the office, as we've been making a lot of exciting changes around the place. Drop in to see some new faces, such as Sheri Jefferis, our new Advocate Supervisor, who'll be working Mondays-Wednesdays. Say hello to Joe Marasco, our seasoned advocate and new Waitlist Supervisor extraordinaire (he's in on Mondays).

You will also notice that the desk arrangement has changed, so don't be surprised to see old faces at new desks.

And last but certainly not least, we have a brand new kitchen! Thanks to the efforts of amazing Advocate Wendy Grim, the CASA office now boasts a fully functional kitchen (complete with stove and oven) for you to utilize with your CASA child. The educational possibilities are almost as endless as the possibilities for fun... We can't wait to see what you all cook up!

Thank you for all you do,
Michelle Arnold
Recruitment & Training
Coordinator

Traffic School: Extended Education Opportunities

Group Home Liaison Training

Dates: Tuesday, May 12 & Thursday, May 14

Time:

Location: CASA Office

Join us next week as we begin training for our Group Home Liaisons. Open to all advocates, this two day learning session will be valuable for all! See the next page for details!

Peer Review

Date: Wednesday, May 20th

Time: 12:00pm to 2:00pm

Location: CASA Office

RSVP: to Michelle at 455-6800 or michelle@casamonterey.org

Event Expressway

- **Skate Fest- May 9**

A free event from 11am to 2pm at Natividad Creek Skate Park (1395 Nogal Drive). For more info, call Mark Bruszer at 755-4231.

- **Heart of CASA- May 22**

"A Night in Paris" Fundraiser for CASA of San Benito County
Contact Esther to reserve your spot today at
Esther@casamonterey.org.

- **CASA Info Session- May 28**

Tell your friends... to join us at our next info session. Held at the CASA office at 12pm, it's a great way for them to learn more about becoming an advocate. Remember, our advocates are our BEST recruiters! Please RSVP to Michelle.

- **Pesante Ranch Outing- June 5**

Bring your CASA kids and welcome the summer with an afternoon of fun at Pesante Ranch in Prunedale. We'll have a BBQ and lots of activities for all ages. A great opportunity to get sibling groups together, connect with new CASAs and have some good old-fashioned fun!

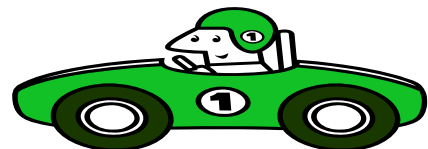
A Day at the Races!

CASA kids and their Advocates are invited out to the races during the Verizon Festival of Speed featuring the Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series May 15-17.

If you would like to attend on either Friday, May 15 or Sunday, May 17, please let us know!

Here is a link with information about the race event:

http://www.mazdaraceway.com/pages/Monterey_Festival_of_Speed



Did You Know (How Great You Are).....

-Children with a CASA volunteer are substantially less likely to spend time in long-term foster care, defined as more than 3 years in care: 13.3% for CASA cases versus 27.0% of all children in foster care.

-When a CASA volunteer was involved, both children and their parents were ordered by the courts to receive more services. The audit concluded that this was an indication that "CASA is effective in identifying the needs of children and parents."

-Cases involving a CASA volunteer are more likely to be "permanently closed" (i.e., the children are less likely to reenter the CWS) than cases where a CASA volunteer is not involved.

-Children with a CASA volunteer are more likely to be adopted than children not assigned a CASA volunteer.

-CASA volunteers are highly effective in getting their recommendations accepted in court. In four out of five cases, all or almost all CASA volunteer recommendations are accepted.

Group Home Liaison Project

We have a wonderful new program being launched in May to help facilitate better communication and understanding for youth placed in group homes.

As you probably know, life in a group home is dramatically different than life in a family home. The young people are faced with having to deal with a lot of personalities, group dynamics, and regulations. One of the challenges for advocates working with youth in group homes is that they often see only the young person individually and do not have a strong sense of the group dynamics going on around that young person.

For this reason, we have developed a program whereby we will have an individual advocate assigned to be the Group Home Liaison. This person will not replace the 1:1 advocate relationship, but will rather be the bridge to information and communication between the advocates, CASA staff, and the group homes.

Several advocates have volunteered to serve in this role. We currently have opening for 2 - 3 additional Group Home Liaisons for seasoned advocates. We are hosting a comprehensive 2-day training on May 12th & 14th and have decided to open it up to all of our advocates who would like to be better versed in the dynamics of group home. Those agreeing to serve as a Group Home Liaison will work together following the training to be fully oriented on this role and take their assignments for their specific homes.

If you would like to join this training you must RSVP to Yolonda ASAP in order for us to have time to prepare manuals and materials. Based on availability, you may request to attend segments of the training.

Advocate Avenue



We would like to wish the following advocates a very happy birthday during the month of May...

Mary Goodby	5/2
Larry Diaz	5/3
Nikki Greco	5/6
Amy Roberts	5/6
Michelle Arnold	5/9
Linda Overman	5/9
Sangeetha Waltz	5/9
Jackie Fancher	5/18
Martha Froke	5/19
Toni Nicklaus	5/20
Christie D'Amico	5/21
Siobhan Greene	5/22
Roelof Wijbrandus	5/22
Susan Horcajo	5/23
Paula Arnold	5/27
Tomi Burgess	5/27
Mike Cullinan	5/27
Stacey Montoya	5/28
Linda Prowse Fosler	5/29
Juli Valdez-Moreno	5/30

Upcoming Events

Heart of CASA (San Benito's Major Fundraiser) - May 22nd

Pesante Ranch Outing- June 5th

CASA Golf Classic at Pasadera - June 15th

Contact Edna for more information!
455-6800 or edna@casamonterey.org

Summer Youth Employment Program 2009!

The One Stop Career Center of Monterey County is operating a **Summer Youth Employment Program** for youth ages 14-24, as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 "Recovery Act".

The **Summer Youth Employment Program** provides youth with an eight-week paid work experience in a wide range of community organizations and businesses, starting on June 15, 2009.

The program supports organizations and businesses during peak summer months, and encourage service among students viewed as community leaders of tomorrow.

We are seeking employers who are interested in becoming worksites to provide meaningful employment opportunities to full and part-time students. The One Stop Career Center will pay the employment wages and provide workers compensation coverage to the youth who qualify.

Sign up today!

- **For Employers** Employers interested in becoming work sites that would offer employment to youth need to complete the worksite request form and submit it to the nearest One Stop Career Center located at the addresses noted below. Click [here](#) to download the worksite request form.
- **For Youth** Youth interested in receiving "hands-on" paid work experience need to complete the youth application and submit it to the nearest One Stop Career Center located at the addresses noted below. Click [here](#) to download the application.
- **Deadline to Apply** The Summer Youth Employment Program starts on June 15, 2009! The youth application deadline ends on **May 15, 2009**. Please note: all applications received will be considered on a first come first served basis. Fax your completed application to (831) 755-3246 or visit your local One Stop Career Center located at the address noted below.

For more information, please contact the One Stop Career Centers at (831) 796-3600 or visit:

Salinas One Stop

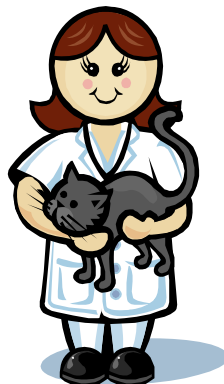
Salinas Airport Business Park
730 La Guardia Street
Salinas, CA 93905
(831) 796-3600

Seaside One Stop

University Plaza Shopping Center
1760 Fremont Blvd, Ste. D-2
Seaside, CA 93955
(831) 899-8236

King City One Stop

Towne Square Shopping Center
200 Broadway Street, Ste. 62
King City, CA 93930
(831) 386-6801



Educational Surveys!!!

We all need to complete the following form before the end of this school year, and that's right around the corner! Please contact your supervisor with any questions you may have.

CASA Educational Survey

CASA:

PLEASE REVIEW THE CHILD'S EDUCATIONAL RECORDS TO ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS, WHETHER OR NOT YOU WERE NOT IN THE CHILD AT THE BEGINNING OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR. PLEASE RETURN TO CASA OF MONTEREY COUNTY AT ONSET OF SCHOOL YEAR, SCHOOL YEAR, OR COMPLETION OF CASE ASSIGNMENT. PLEASE ATTACH ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON BACK OF FORM OR ON ANOTHER DOCUMENT.

Child: _____ Sex of Child: M F

School Year: _____ Grade Level: _____ Child's Age: _____ - if age 3 - 5, has Head Start referral been made? Yes No

Current School: _____ Prior School (if applicable): _____

Date of CASA Appointment: ____/____/____ Ed Specialist Review: (Initial and date) _____

Performance Grades/Indicators:

Describe grade performance for the current school year. High School credits earned (if applicable)

1. How many schools has this student attended in current academic year? _____
2. Have you seen improvement or decline in this student's school performance? If so, explain below.
3. Has this student struggled with behavioral issues during the school year? Yes No. If yes, please explain:

4. Does this child receive special education services? Yes No N/A

Priority Issues/Needs:

5. As a CASA did you participate in an IEP meeting? Yes No
6. Have you participated in any other type of educational planning or assessment meeting? Yes No N/A If yes, describe:

7. Does the child/youth participate in extracurricular activities? (either school or community based) Describe:

Youth's Rights: Has the youth's rights under AB 490 been upheld, based on your knowledge of the case?

- Yes No N/A **School Stability:** remain in their original school when they enter foster care or move (if in the child's best interest)
- Yes No N/A **Immediate Enrollment:** be immediately enrolled in a new school (even without health/education records)
- Yes No N/A **Partial Credit:** receive partial or full credit for work completed at other schools (all students have this right)
- Yes No N/A **Fairness:** Youth may not be penalized for court-related absences