



Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA Program Newsletter Summer 2013

"I always wondered
why somebody doesn't
do something about
that. Then I realized
I was somebody."
- Lily Tomlin



Aloha!

My name is Tara Buckley and I'm the CASA Program Volunteer Coordinator, as well as the Secretary of the Friends of CASA Board of Directors! Some of you may also know me from my time as a CASA Program Social Worker, and now as a Volunteer CASA. This, along with my full-time job as the Oahu Program Director of the non-profit PARENTS, Inc. keeps me VERY busy, as I'm sure you can imagine!

My role as the Volunteer Coordinator is to help with the CASA Program Evaluations, CASA Trainings and Conferences, this newsletter and to be a resource for all of you should you have any questions or concerns about the CASA Program. Besides the safety and welfare of Oahu's children, the most important thing to me in this role is to make sure that you have all the tools you need to do your job as a CASA. You can help me to do that by filling out the CASA Program Evaluations I send out to each of you annually, and by making suggestions for our newsletter, which comes out once per quarter. If there are topics that you're interested in learning more about, I can include information and articles on those topics in this newsletter, or we can let you all know about upcoming trainings that might address that topic.



I would also like to encourage all of you to reach out to your family, friends, church groups and all of the other groups that you're involved in, and talk to them about becoming a CASA. Let them know how vital it is for all children to have a CASA to advocate for them, share your experiences and give them the information that they need to volunteer. They can print out an application at www.casahawaii.org and you can put them in contact with CASA Program Manager, Amphay Champathong, as well as your CASA Program Social Worker, or myself, if they need more information. Our next CASA Volunteer Training starts on Saturday, June 8th, and there's still time for volunteers to sign up!

Most importantly, I want to thank all of you for all of the time, energy and heart that you put into being a CASA. The youth that you advocate for may not always say thank you, but your role is **SO** important and every single one of you should know just how valuable you are! Please don't hesitate to contact me if any of you ever need anything!

Tara Buckley, MSW, LSW
CASA Program Volunteer Coordinator
Secretary, Friends of CASA - Hawaii
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Thank you for joining us at the 1st Annual CASA Conference & Luncheon on Saturday, May 18th!

Topics Included:

- Cultural Practices Working with People in Hawaii by Communities in Schools with Aunty Fay Ueda
- Social Capitol by HI HOPES
- The Importance of Self-Care & Strategies of Self-Care by Tammy Martin

We hope to see all of you again next year as we continue to improve the training opportunities we provide to all of you!

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Helpful Hints & Practical Pointers

Working with DHS Social Workers

Some, or all, of you may have noticed that it isn't always easy to get things done when you have to depend on another service provider to do what you need, and this includes DHS Social Workers. Many of the CASA Program Evaluations have asked for some tips for working with DHS, so here they are, straight from a current DHS Social Worker!

◇ **Contact Information**: When you first meet, ask the social worker for all of their contact information, including their office number, work cell, email and assistant's contact information. Also ask them what the phone number is for the main desk in their unit. Then, ask them which of these is generally the best way to get into contact with them. Explain your communication style as well, (i.e., "If I leave you multiple voicemails, it's just because I want to remind you of something, or because I need your help with something, not because I'm angry with you or impatient").

◇ **"What Should I Do If..."**: Go through some scenarios with your DHS worker and ask them what you should do if you need a phone number or contact information for a parent, resource home, etc. Also, ask what you should do if you need a referral, have an emergency with a child/parent and need to contact them, and if you've tried to contact them multiple times but haven't been able to get ahold of them. Much of what we often need we can get from the DHS worker's assistant or by calling the main line at the social worker's unit and having the person on-call look it up. The person sitting at the main desk of the unit can also contact your social worker, or their supervisor, in an emergency, as can the person answering the phone at the CPS Reporting Hotline.

◇ **Establish Rapport**: Establish rapport with your DHS worker and spend some time sitting and talking with them while you wait for court hearings. There's so much down-time while waiting for court and this is an excellent time to ask your social worker how they're doing, how many cases they have, or talk about other things that have nothing to do with your jobs at all. Your only contact with your DHS worker should NOT be when you need something because they may eventually learn to dread contact with you and they may avoid you.

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After-Hours Hotline

In an effort to make sure that CASAs and our clients receive the best assistance possible, the After-Hours Hotline was created. Should you need support or advice from CASA Program Staff during the hours of 4:30pm-7:45am during the week, or anytime on the weekends, please call 285-4186. An on-call staff member will be available to assist you.

Reviewing the Laws

587A-15B-2-2: Duties, Rights and Liability of Authorized Agencies

What the Law Says:

DHS may return a child to the family from which the child was removed, unless otherwise ordered by the court. The child's return may occur only if no party objects to such placement and prior written notice is given to the court, and to all parties, stating that there is no objection by any party to the child's return. Upon the child's return to the family, temporary foster custody, or foster custody, shall be automatically revoked, and the child should be placed under temporary family supervision.

What Does this Mean for CASAs?

This means that DHS cannot return the child to parents under family supervision, without informing all of the parties to the case, in writing (GAL/CASA, mother, father, Family Court, etc.) **and** making sure that none of the parties object to the move. If anyone objects, DHS must either wait until the next scheduled court hearing to bring the issue up with everyone present, or file a motion with the court for an expedited court hearing to address the reunification issue.

If the DHS Social Worker reunifies the child to one or both parents, without informing the GAL/CASA, or the other parties, and without getting the consent of all of the parties, the DHS Social Worker is breaking the law! Should this happen, you as CASAs should be talking with your CASA Program Social Worker about filing a motion with Family Court to stop, or reverse the unauthorized reunification. Parents and other parties are also free to file a motion in this situation.

Please keep in mind that this law refers to reunification with one, or both, parents ONLY, and does not include situations where the DHS moves a child to a different resource caregiver. The DHS has placement responsibility and is allowed to move a child to a different resource caregiver if they choose. However, GALs, CASAs, parents and other parties, may file a motion with the court to try and reverse a placement change if they do not agree with it. Even if the DHS and the GAL/CASA agree on a placement change, if parents or other parties disagree, they may still file a motion with the Family Court for a hearing to reverse the placement change.

News and Upcoming Events

May 2013

- 5/18/13: Thank you to all of you who attended the 1st Annual CASA Conference and Luncheon at Treetops Restaurant!

June 2013

- Summer CASA Training, June 8th-July 6th

July 2013

- Sex Abuse 101 Training
- Annual Child Welfare Law Update Conference
- Paniolo Fair

August 2013

- Follow-up on the Child Welfare Law Update: Court Practices & the Law for CASAs

September 2013

- 0-3 Workshop on Working with Non-Verbal Children

October 2013

- Breaking Down the Service Plan: Exactly What Parents are Obligated to Do

November 2013

- Workshop on Substance Abuse Treatment Programs

Check out the New Hawaii Youth Services Directory!

<http://hawaiiyouthdirectory.com/>

This online directory provides easy access to information about youth programs in Hawaii. The searchable database contains listings of government, private and non-profit organizations that offer services or activities for youth in Hawaii.

Help Us Plan a Fun CASA Event/Mixer!

The CASA Program would really like to create an environment that allows CASAs to come together, do something fun, and get to know one another. We want everyone to be able to feel like they have a network of other CASA volunteers that they can lean on and share experiences with. This work can be difficult and everyone needs support!

If anyone has any ideas, please email Tara Buckley at tara.anjuli@gmail.com!

Community Resources

Name of the Organization	Services Provided by the Organization	Contact Information	Address
PATCH	Free referrals to child care providers, pre-schools, before and after school care and day care centers. Also, free resources on how to choose quality child care, child care subsidies, and early child development.	patch@patchhawaii.org Office: (808) 839-1988 www.patchhawaii.org	560 N. Nimitz Hwy. Suite 218 Honolulu, HI 96817
Parents and Children Together (PACT)	Early Head Start/Head Start is a free or low-cost child development program for low-income families. Family Centers: Kuhio Park Terrace Family Center provides opportunities to prevent homelessness and build employment. The Kaneohe Community Family Center offers after school programs and substance abuse prevention programs.	Office: (808) 842-5996 Office Hours: M-F, 8:00am-4:30pm www.pacthawaii.org	Early Head Start: Birth – 3 Years: <u>Locations:</u> Kuhio Park Terrace, Leilehua High School, Nuuanu, Punaluu, Helemano, Pearl City, Waimanalo Head Start: 3-5 Years <u>Locations:</u> Kuhio Park Terrace, Kalihi-Waena Elementary, Fern Elementary, Kalihi Elementary.
Domestic Violence Action Center	Services provided include: client advocacy, crisis support, safety planning, risk assessment, legal representation, referrals and accompaniment to court hearings.	dvac@stoptheviolence.org Office: (808) 531-3771 www.stoptheviolence.org	

Attention CASAs!

This newsletter will be coming out at the beginning of each quarter. If you have questions, comments or suggestions for topics to cover in the next newsletter, please contact Tara Buckley at 225-7887, or by email at tara.anjuli@gmail.com. All feedback is welcomed!