

TRAINING OF CASA VOLUNTEERS

The CASA of San Benito County program has adopted and adheres to both the National and local criteria for the initial training of Court Appointed Special Advocates.

- A. Through a comprehensive 36-hour training program volunteers are equipped with the necessary skills and information to serve as a voice for the child. The areas covered in the training include:
 1. Advocacy
 2. An Introduction to Discovery and Evidence
 3. Child Development and Family Systems
 4. Community Resources for Children
 5. Court Appearances and Testimony
 6. Court Report Writing
 7. Cross-Cultural Issues
 8. Dependency Law and Procedure
 9. Dynamics of Child Abuse and Neglect
 10. Ethics, Confidentiality of Information and Mandated Reporting
 11. Interviewing
 12. Investigation
 13. Permanency Planning
 14. The CASA Concept
 15. The County CASA Program
 16. The Role and Responsibilities of the CASA Volunteer
 17. The Role of the Child Welfare Agency (Department of Social & Employment Services - DSES)
 18. The Role of the Juvenile Court and Key Participants
 19. The Role of the Law Enforcement Agencies
 20. Any other subject deemed appropriate by the Executive Director of the CASA of Monterey County program or the juvenile court judge.
- B. Each trainee will observe at least one (four hour) morning or afternoon session of juvenile court.
- C. A CASA training manual will be provided to each trainee. The manual will incorporate basic materials from the National CASA training manual with supplemental material specific to California and San Benito County.
- D. It is required that trainees attend all training sessions. Missed sessions must be made up by attendance at a subsequent session or by viewing videos of prior training if available. Trainees who have missed no more than three sessions may be sworn in with their class but may not be assigned a case until all missed sessions have been made up.
- E. Upon completion of training, candidates will participate in a final interview. The purpose of this interview is to allow trainees to evaluate the training to make suggestions to strengthen future training, to allow the program staff to identify the types of cases appropriate for a volunteer, or to allow the program staff to terminate a trainee who has not successfully completed this screening process.