

CASA Do's and Don'ts

Here is a list of reminders about what a CASA does and should do:

- Be consistent with the child
- Always be on time
- Be clear about setting appointments for visits
- Confirm appointments with foster parents/ guardians/caregivers and review the details: where, how long you will be gone, type of activity, etc.
- Honor the house rules where the child lives- take time to find out what they are
- Be open minded
- Be ready for the unexpected
- Be honest, straightforward and genuine
- Listen more than talk
- Be sure to plan activities to which the child agrees and is within the child's comfort zone
- Dress modestly
- Remember the difference between being a responsible adult and a "buddy"
- Establish rules for how the child can contact you- for example, can they call you on your cell phone, if so, what hours of the day; can they email you, or simply contact you through the CASA office
- Talk with your supervisor at least monthly
- Communicate regularly with the professionals; especially prior to writing a court report
- Submit monthly logs of your activities, meetings, contacts to your Advocate Supervisor
- Write and submit your court reports to arrive at the CASA office three weeks prior to the court hearing date
- Carry your appointment order and wear your photo ID/nametag during official business (do not wear nametag on visits with the child, but have it available to show a caregiver if needed)
- Thank yourself regularly for doing a wonderful job

Do tell your CASA child the guidelines for sharing information: for example...

"My roll is to talk to you, and find out how you feel, and what you need and want, and tell that to the judge. It is also my job to read everything and talk to everyone I can to decide what I think is good for you, I'm going to scream it from the rooftops."

Here is a list of reminders about what a CASA cannot do:

- Don't take your child to your home or your work
- Do not give your child your home phone number or address

- Don't introduce your child to your family or other children
- Do not leave the child alone; always make sure the arrangements to bring a child home are clear
- Never consume alcohol or drugs prior to or during the visit with the child. This is grounds for immediate removal.
- Do not smoke cigarettes in the presence of the child
- Don't make promises for things over which you have no control
- Do not take children out of the county without permission from the guardian and social services department
- Do not keep the child over night
- Don't take the child out for a main meal without checking on the meal schedule in the home; always be aware of the child's dietary issues before buying food
- Don't buy the children expensive gifts
- Don't initiate participation in religious activities or encourage religious beliefs
- Don't criticize the child's parents or caregivers, no matter what the circumstances. Address those concerns with your supervisors and/or the social worker.