



Prohibited Activities

The following program policies have no exceptions (except #2 where noted). In the course of an advocate's CASA-related activities and responsibilities an advocate **SHALL NOT EVER**:

1. Take the CASA child to the advocate's place of residence. There are several reasons for this prohibition. First, it undermines the maintenance of personal boundaries so critical for the healthy perspective a CASA must maintain in order to serve the child's best interests. Second, and no less important, it suggests to the child the possibility of a personal relationship not appropriate to the work we do for this child. We do not want to set this child up for the loss of another significant adult in his/her life. The final reason is to ensure that the program's insurance coverage is not jeopardized by activities that might be alleged to fall outside the scope of our policy;
2. Spend the night with an assigned child (or any member of an assigned child's family) at any time or anywhere, regardless of (a) who else may be present, (b) who has said it is okay, and/or (c) any other circumstances. **NOTE:** Camp Programs, CASA child family vacations, etc. are possible exceptions. **Written approval** from both the CASA child's attorney and social worker must be submitted to the San Benito County CASA Executive Director before any written approval is forthcoming from the San Benito County CASA Program;
3. Break any laws or disregard court orders;
4. Facilitate the breaking of any laws or court orders by any other person;
5. Use alcohol or any other controlled substances before or during any case-related activities;
6. Leave a dependent minor (even very briefly) with an unauthorized and/or unscreened person (including but not limited to family members, friends, and neighbors of the child or advocate);
7. Supervise court-ordered visitation;





8. Remove the child from the county for any type of outing or reason, other than court ordered services, without the county social worker and San Benito County CASA case supervisor's permission;
9. Accept personal responsibility for the child (i.e. to find a place to live, etc.)
10. Give legal advice or provide therapeutic counseling;
11. Make placement arrangements for the child.

Case-Related Guidelines

Case-related guidelines are offered throughout training and supervision, and are too numerous to list here. However, several stand out among the experiences of CASAs who do a particularly good job:

1. Do not assume any situation is so unique that a policy can or should be broken. (People are unique, situations are not.)
2. If your instincts or a voice in the back of your head says something you are doing or not doing is probably going to get you or someone else in trouble, your instincts or voice is probably correct. Contact your case supervisor right away.
3. When interacting with anyone under the age of eighteen (even a 17-and-a-half year old) remember that you are the adult and must set and stick to limits and boundaries.
4. If a CASA has planned to participate with the child in some permissible social activity, the CASA should not expand the scope of that activity to include bringing the child's friends, other children in the CASA child's foster home, the CASA's family members, etc. The reasons for this limitation are:
 - Keep us focused on our role in the child's life
 - To protect the child from unnecessary pain when the CASA later separates from the child's life
 - To preserve the child and his/her family's right to privacy
 - To avoid exposure of the CASA and the CASA program to increased risk of liability and from uninsured risk





5. In public: if you are in a public place with your CASA child and someone you know comes up to you, it is not appropriate to introduce your child as a CASA child. It is always appropriate to introduce them as a “friend.” DO NOT BREAK YOUR OATH OF CONFIDENTIALITY.
6. Tell your case supervisor immediately if you are thinking about becoming a foster parent, guardian, or adoptive parent to your assigned child or any other child currently or previously served by the San Benito County CASA program.
7. Read, understand, and comply with the policies, procedures, and practices described by your supervisor.

MEDIA/PUBLIC RELATIONS

All public relations activities, speaking engagements, and media contacts (including but not limited to interviews) must be pre-approved by the Executive Director. Names, addresses, telephone numbers, employment information, school information, and/or confidential and/or identifying information about clients and/or their families are not to be disclosed at any time.

