

CASA of Cochise County

News & Views

Abby Dodge—CASA Coordinator • Joan Hansen—P/T Coordinator • Lissete Borbon—Support Staff



[Photo by SV Herald](#)

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Coordinator's Comments



Since this is my first Coordinator's Comments since I became the Coordinator for CASA of Cochise County, I thought I would use this time to introduce myself to all of you. Many of you already know me, but for those of you that do not, I thought this would be beneficial.

A few years after I graduated from high school, I realized my life wasn't heading in the direction I wanted it to. To fix that, I decided to enlist in the Army. I swore in to the Army Reserve on April 29, 2004, and left for Basic Training on May 14, 2004. I didn't give myself any time to change my mind. I enlisted to be a Human Intelligence Collector (Interrogator) and I spent 1.5 years studying Arabic at the Defense Language Institute. I also spent 3 years teaching Interrogation at Fort Devens, Massachusetts. Although I enlisted in the Army Reserve, I spent the first 6 years of my

time on active duty. In October 2009, I moved to Sierra Vista, AZ. I got a job on Fort Huachuca at the Intelligence Electronic Warfare Test Directorate (IEWTD) and remained a member of an Army Reserve unit on Fort Huachuca. I worked at IEWTD as a scenario developer for almost 5 years, when I decided to make the change to working for the CASA Program full-time.

I first learned of the CASA Program when my best friend was able to finalize the adoption of her sister's child in 2009. It was a lengthy process for everyone. My best friend was the one who stepped in when her sister gave birth to a substance-exposed newborn who was going through the withdrawal process. Her sister was willing to sign over her parental rights but the father of the child was not.

I stood by my friend throughout this process and even flew from where I was stationed in Massachusetts back to Wisconsin to attend some of the more important court hearings as moral support. Throughout this experience, I spent a lot of time thinking about how each adult had an attorney to help them through this process, but who was looking out for this baby? The baby did have a Guardian Ad Litem, so it is not as if she was unrepresented. However, I wondered if that was really enough. Unfortunately, I was not at a position in my life at that point to act on these concerns.

I didn't become involved with the CASA Program until early 2010. I was new to Sierra Vista and didn't have a lot of friends or activities to keep me busy. I remembered the questions I had asked myself when I was supporting my friend as she adopted her niece, so I did some research. I came upon CASA of Cochise County and decided it was something I wanted to do. I attended the CASA Advocacy Academy in Tucson in April 2010 and accepted my first case in May of the same year.

Since I accepted my first case, I don't think there has been a time when I wasn't actively assigned to a case. Whenever a case was about to end, I would get that phone call from Joan asking if I could take another. I'm not going to say it was always easy, because it wasn't. I planned a wedding, got married, went TDY for work for 8 weeks, and had a baby all while I was active as a volunteer. At times, I wasn't as active on my cases as I wanted to be, but I stuck with them because I had committed myself to these children. I understand that sometimes life can get in the way. I know that things come up that can distract us from our commitments, and that's okay. I just ask that if you agree to take a case, that you see it through until the case closes. If something comes up that causes you to not be as active as you were, let me know.

I really appreciate each of you and what you are doing for the children of our community. Thank you for stepping up and agreeing to be that someone for the child/children you represent. I know it can get frustrating at times, and you may feel like you are not making any progress. I've been there. If you are actively involved in your case, then you are making a difference, even if it does not always seem that way.

As your new CASA Coordinator, I want you to know that you have my support. You can contact me whenever you need, even if it is just to voice your frustrations with your case. I ask that you please keep me informed of what is going on with your case, and with you. I can better support you if I am aware of what is going on. In addition, I am always interested in improving the program. If you have suggestions on how we can do this, please call me or email me.

I look forward to getting to know each of you better. Thank you for all that you do, and please continue to bear with me while I am learning what it takes to be a good CASA Coordinator.



Cochise County Council for CASA

Is a nonprofit organization that raises funds to the unmet needs of abused neglected and abandoned children in the CASA of Cochise County Program. The primary focus is to ensure that educational progress of CASA children through tutoring and scholarships. In addition the council provides clothing, toys and personal items.

If your CASA child/youth has an unmet need, consider the Cochise County Council for CASA to help!!

Call your CASA Coordinator at 432-7521 OR

Send an email to ADodge@courts.az.gov



****Training Opportunity****

Save the date for March: Our goal this year is to provide more trainings to help you achieve the required hours. We thought we'd show a movie and see how it goes. We will be providing snacks and drinks during the showing. Abby will be sending an e-mail.

Gimme Shelter— A pregnant teenager flees her abusive mother in search of her father, only to be rejected by her dad and forced to survive on the streets until a compassionate stranger offers a hopeful alternative.

March 20th, 2015

6:00 PM — 8:00 PM

SVJPO Conference Room



CASA Headliner



Thomas Moe

Everyone piles into the court room for the Thursday afternoon hearings. That is how I happened to be in court when Thomas Moe made a short, but impassioned speech as the advocate for his child. Tom is a skilled speaker, and his arguments are sound, researched, and to the point. I stayed alert the whole rest of the afternoon.

Tom remembers his mother's stories about how she was raised going from house-to-house as a child. His cousin was raised the same way until Tom's mother decided to adopt him.

mother decided to adopt him. Now Tom's biological cousin is his legal brother. Their mother died shortly thereafter, and Tom's father found himself raising four boys. There was never much money, and the four boys were a handful, but everyone made it. Tom grew up with the realization that life could be challenging, and he considered himself lucky to have his family, especially when he watched his older cousin and his wife Lucy spend their lives raising foster kids and always doing their best to make life better for these children.

These experiences contributed to Tom's decision that someday he would help others. When he was 40, Tom decided he wanted to be a CASA volunteer. The fact that they had three children caused Tom's wife to talk him out of this. Later, when he was divorced, he regrouped, drove from Benson to Bisbee, got the paperwork, and volunteered.

Twelve years later he says, "I still love doing it."

Tom says he is a more court-ordered CASA volunteer rather than a hands-on kind of CASA. He visits his kids of course, but his focus is to familiarize himself with all the paperwork and then conduct an independent investigation. He contacts every person pertinent at that time --- detectives, foster parents, teachers --- who can contribute to his knowledge of the case.

His advice to fellow volunteers is

Check out what's going on and keep current as best you can. Be knowledgeable about your case and kids. If you discover that something is going in the wrong direction (services, transportation, school, parents, anything) do not be shy. Stand up and tell the judge.

CASA Headliner (Continued)

Tom also feels it is important to include the parents. He will ask, "Your honor, may I speak to the parent?" He may say to the parents, "Do you see what's going on here? You need to make some changes." He tells them, "I have seen some cases where good things happen; others where parental rights are terminated. Remember, in your case, you have six months to turn it around before severance proceedings can begin."

Tom has a simple set of rules that guide his actions as a CASA volunteer.

- Tell the truth and you can't go wrong.
- You are there to see justice done.
- You are there for the children.
- You are not there for DCS, the parents, or the lawyers.
- Because you are there for the

children, you had better speak up.

- **It is your responsibility.**

Tom told me, "When I first started as a CASA volunteer, I wasn't very proactive, but over time I've learned I have to be there for the kids, and I'm not afraid. I used to be rather quiet in the courtroom, but no longer!!"

He tells us all to remember, "First and foremost, we have the responsibility for the children's welfare, and because we are representatives of the Arizona Supreme Court, we have the obligation to exercise the responsibility the Supreme Court has given us."

Tom firmly believes that an effective CASA volunteer is passionate, but he understands that expending emotional energy is frequently exhausting, so it is equally important that the volunteer

cultivate outside interests and take time to relax and chill. He says, "Don't spread yourself too thin."

Tom limits himself to one or two cases at a time. Actually this is quite a heavy load as his cases frequently involve multiple children, more than one father, and kids who are really hurting.

Tom starts his day around six by walking half a mile to the mailbox and back to get the paper. Then he has breakfast and starts his day. He does daily chores and his to-do list. He quits when he feels like it usually around 1:30, 2:30 or 3:30. Then, he will read a bit, watch the news, drink a beer, and turn in between 8:30 and 10.

Tom claims he lives a simple life on his four and a half acres of land. He can't imagine living any place other than out in the country. His neighbors have 20, 10, and 5 acres of land, so he feels he

CASA Headliner (Continued)

has a small place. The neighbors socialize and help each other out. Tom has the only tractor, so he is the go-to man for any neighbor who needs a tractor. The tractor has four implements, a blade, a rototiller, a brush-hog mower and a heavy drag. Tom has three different trailers that fasten to the tractor, a flatbed, a heavy duty ton-and-a-half, and a small wooden unit. He is ready to handle just about any task.

With all this serious equipment, you can imagine that Tom can do heavy duty chores. He also collects antiques and finishes them himself. He heats his house with his own firewood. He enjoys camping (his camper attaches to the bed of his truck), fishing and roaming around such places as Happy Valley and the San Pedro. Tom has a Yamaha Rhino, which is a little bitty 4 wheel drive side-by-side.

Translation: He has a small all-terrain vehicle with a passenger seat. It sits high off the ground, so Tom and his passenger can drive up and down the San Pedro and explore except during the monsoon season.

We were wrapping up this interview when Tom casually told me he has written **over 400 books**. These are all technical books, published by the University of Arizona Press, the Southwestern Regional Library Association, the Southwestern Regional Forests Services out of Albuquerque (the parent of the local National Forests, such as the Tonto, or the Coronado), and books for IBM (technical computer stuff) while he was a software engineer.

Every CASA volunteer brings all the special talents and experiences he or she has acquired to help make a

difference in the life of a child. Every volunteer also uses the energy, passion, dedication and capacity to care about others that caused him or her to make the decision to become a CASA volunteer. Tom made that decision 12 years ago, and he's been making a difference in the life of his CASA kids ever since.

By Mary Blanchard, CASA of Cochise County Volunteer.

"The interior joy we feel when we have done a good deed is the nourishment the soul requires."

—Albert Schweitzer

Need a little extra motivation to submit your contact logs on time?

INTRODUCING THE 2015 LOGS FOR GAS GIVEAWAY

- **1 lucky winner each month will receive a \$25 gas card!**
- **Drawings will be held on or around the 11th of each month.**
- **1 entry awarded per on-time submission of contact logs***

*limit one entry per CASA Volunteer each month



CASA of Cochise County
PO Box 4219
Bisbee, AZ 85603
(520) 432-7521

Each of you signed a contract agreeing to complete monthly contact logs. Why not get some of your monthly gas expenses paid for by getting your contact logs turned in on time?

**Program sponsored by the Cochise County Council for CASA, Inc.

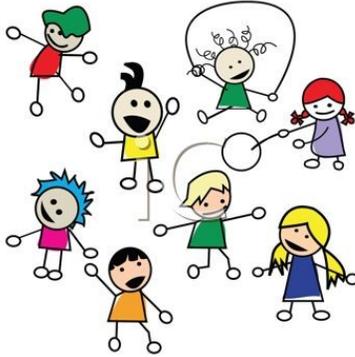
MARCH 2015

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2 <u>Mary J</u> : Court Report Due DD	3	4	5	6 Dentist's Day	7
8	9 Tom M. 	10	11	12 Plant a Flower Day	13	14 National Pi Day
15 Incredible Kid Day	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19 <u>Patti</u> : Court Report due for IH <u>Susan</u> : Court Report due for Y case	20 TRAINING! See Below ↓	21
22 Zanetta B. 	23	24	25 Waffle Day	26	27	28
29	30 Take a walk in the park day	31	→ 3/20/15 Gimme Shelter (Movie) 6—8 PM at SV Conference Room (Please look for Abby's E-mail for more information!)			

APRIL 2015

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 One of Abby's Cases will finally come to a close!	→ 4/03/15 ***ADOPTION***		1 Janet D. ↓ 	2 Manny V. 	3 Patti H.  ←	4 Tell a Lie Day
5 Easter Day	6	7 World Health Day	8 <u>Chris</u> : Court Report due for LM	9 <u>Juanita A</u> : Court Report due for B case	10 Abby D. 	11
12 Big Wind Day (This day blows me away!)	13	14 <u>Ned</u> : Court Report due for NB	15	16	17 Blah, Blah, Blah Day	18
19	20 Volunteer Recognition Day	21	22	23	24 Ned L. 	25
26 National Pretzel Day	27	28	29 <u>Jordyn P</u> : Court Report due for JY	30 National Honesty Day	→ 4/01/15 <u>Dragoo's</u> : Court Report Due for SB <u>Krista</u> : Court Report Due for KT	

CASA Kudos



Chris Charles-Hall

FCRB hearing 1/14/15

The Board looks forward to the additional support and insight the Court Appointed Special Advocate will bring to the case.

Mary Blanchard

FCRB hearing 2/11/15

The board acknowledges the Court Appointed Special Advocate for her time invested in working with H and C and her commitment to ensuring their all around best interest.

Welcome New Volunteers!

Cathy & Darcy—Completed the Academy!

Chris & Jordan—They are currently working on their first case!



Leadership Changes

Ed Gilligan is the new Director of Cochise County Juvenile Court Services. Ed Gilligan, who is the Chief Adult Probation Officer, had been the Interim Director since fall last year but earlier this year accepted to take on the additional responsibility. We look forward in working closer with him and for him to get to know more about how CASA serves the children of Cochise County.

We will also be under Marie (Chrissy) Knudtson who is a Probation Supervisor. She will overlook CASA and Dependency Coordinator as well as Community Probation Officers.

The importance of Court Appointed Special Advocates—Published by SV Herald

Children in Cochise and surrounding counties who are removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect often travel a difficult road.

The road might be even rockier were it not for the efforts of CASAs, volunteer angels who look after the children's interests.

CASAs are Court Appointed Special Advocates, adult volunteers who advocate for these children.

Joan Hansen, former program coordinator of the CASA program serving Cochise County, explained how the program works to members of the National Alliance on Mental Illness Southeastern Arizona board of directors at its recent meeting.

The two agencies, CASA and NAMI, have a shared interest: both serve families affected by behavioral health issues.

Abby Dodge, who accompanied Hansen, noted that behavioral health services have been involved in every case she has been on since she joined the CASA program as a volunteer in 2010.

Dodge, as the new CASA program coordinator, is working intensively with Hansen while the transition in leadership is accomplished. The positions of coordinator and part-time coordinator and program specialist are the only paid positions in the otherwise all-volunteer organization locally. Dodge was a CASA volunteer for four years before assuming the position of coordinator.

Hansen currently has cut her hours to 10 per week, while Dodge is working full time.

In Arizona, the program is funded with 30 percent of unclaimed lottery winnings and grants from the National CASA Association.

Hansen said more than 300 children are in foster care in Cochise County and the number has swelled dramatically in recent years. As high as 25 percent of them are CASA cases, representing children who have been removed from their homes or are under Child Protective Services oversight. The 25 active CASAs often handle more than one case. Some are assigned to cases involving several children in the same family.

Hansen said more volunteers are needed. She noted that recently more young people, who are working, ages 25 to 40, are becoming involved in the program, including active and retired military personnel. In the past, volunteers most often came from the pool of retirees, including retired teachers.

And more foster parents are need, Hansen stressed.

The volunteers undergo 30 hours of training before the court assigns them to a case. Half of the training takes place in Tucson at the CASA Advocacy Academy. The volunteers read and discuss training manuals and learn what is expected of them as well as what they cannot do.

The importance of Court Appointed Special Advocates—Continued

They cannot supervise visits between parent and child, they cannot take the child to their home, they cannot take their husband or children with them on visits and they must honor confidentiality. Also, they must remain a neutral party in the case. Their insights are valued by social workers, attorneys and courts who labor under heavy case loads, Hansen said. Attorneys, for example, may have 40, 60 or even 70 cases, and, therefore, cannot spend as much time investigating a case as a CASA, who has only one or two cases to follow.

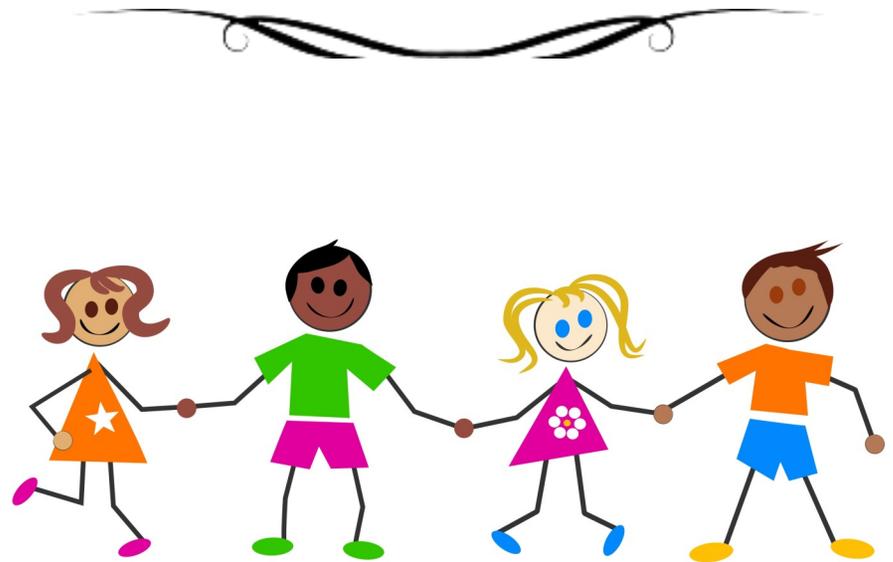
Once the court appoints a seasoned CASA volunteer to a case, the volunteer's job is to meet the child as well as all the players in the case — judge, attorneys, parents or foster parents, Child Protective Services, case managers and mental health agencies - establish a rapport with all of them and learn what would be in the child's best interests.

The volunteer is required to visit with the child once a month. Most see their child twice a month and plan visits so as not to be invasive in the child's routine. One CASA transports a child to therapy, for example. On average, the CASAs spend 15-20 hours a month on their assignment, including visits, research and writing reports.

The volunteer works to ensure the case is moving along smoothly and writes reports for the court hearings. Volunteers are asked to commit to a case until the case is resolved.

Hansen said one CASA volunteer is working on a case that has been open since 2002. That volunteer “makes such a difference” and “is constantly being asked for,” Hansen said.

Hansen shares a wide view of the program, having worked in the CASA program for 12 ½ years, roughly half of the CASA program's 25-year tenure in Cochise County. Although all parties work diligently to return a child to its home, unfortunately that doesn't always occur. Hansen said a large number of the children end up being removed permanently from their homes.



Articles by **Mary Blanchard, CASA of Cochise County Volunteer**

Goodbye Jennifer and Thank You for all that you did for CASA

Before our funding was cut, Jennifer Rein coordinated all the community events where CASA participated. We had a booth with information about CASA and activities for the children at various events throughout the county. Jennifer did all the work involved to prepare for these events. She would send out a flyer asking for volunteers and then she would collect everything that was needed for the event, and then she would load everything in her van, drive to the site, set up, and our volunteers would spread the word about CASA and socialize. It was a wonderful chance to tell the community all about our mission, and it gave us a chance to chat whenever there was a lull in the action.

Jennifer was very active on her case, and the case ended in adoption. She also was one of the volunteers who volunteered regularly to help out with the filing in the office. The volume of documents that comes into the office is overwhelming, and everyone in the office is hoping that someday soon all the paperwork will be stored on computer. This will be much less work and will be more efficient than dealing with the stacks of mail and documents. The file cabinets are overflowing!

Jennifer's husband was working overseas for much of last year. She kept the home fires burning. Both she and her husband

are very active parents, so she made an extra special effort to be involved in all of their son's activities. Somehow she also found time to host our support group. The major focus of our meetings was to provide a place where we could meet and be there for each other. But the meeting also provided a forum to discuss general concerns.

As I am writing this, I am picturing Jennifer packing up their house and preparing to move to Maryland. Jennifer had told all of us that she was going to take a break from CASA, but somehow in the midst of packing boxes, she contacted the CASA organization that is close to their new home and signed up to run their events. If you move to Maryland any time soon, look for her flyer and sign up for a shift with the other CASA volunteers.



Update on my Former CASA Kid

Joy and I have been connected for thirteen years. She has shared her story with our readers several times over the years. She called me last week to report the latest news.

Her stepson, Mikey, is now a senior in high school and is applying to colleges. He is currently leaning towards the University of Maryland because of in-state tuition and the option of living at home, but he is definitely going to interview with Yale because he was one of three students from his high school

Articles by **Mary Blanchard, CASA of Cochise County Volunteer**

selected for an interview. Wherever he decides to go, he knows he wants to become a lawyer.

When Mikey first came to live with Joy and her husband, Richard, he had not attended school on a regular basis and he was several years below grade level in his academic achievement. Joy took it upon herself to bring Mikey up to speed. She visited the school and found out that he needed help in just about every subject, so she set up a home tutoring program. Joy had never taught, but she is blessed with a phenomenal work ethic, so she started working with him every day. At first, things were a bit rocky, and Mikey resisted her efforts, but Joy persisted, and eventually Mikey realized that it was in his best interest to buckle down and learn the material. The happy ending finally came when Mikey was at grade level in every subject, and he was now willing to keep working to improve his skills and eventually he became an "A" student. He now includes AP courses in his schedule. He is the role model for his sister, Brooke, and they both strive to be straight "A" students.

Joy never was a child. She never did the things every mother and daughter do together, and she is determined that she and her daughter, Brooke, will share these experiences. Their most recent bonding activity was making lipstick. Joy researched how to make lipstick using Crayola colors and went out and bought the materials to do this.

Brooke told me about making lipstick and was thrilled she could choose from all the colors that she had (knowing Joy, there were probably many, many shades to choose from). The melted crayons are poured into a tube, and once they harden, the lipstick is ready. Brooke is sending me my own lipstick, and I fully intend to wear it to bridge because this is more than likely the most colorful lipstick I will ever wear in my life. This is a statement that Joy and her daughter are not caught up in the cycle of abuse that is so often repeated in the next generation. Brooke enjoys all the normal activities that are shared by all her friends, and Joy experiences these normal activities for the very first time. THE CYCLE IS BROKEN.





Comprehensive Medical and Dental Program (CMDP) for Children in Foster Care

The Comprehensive Medical and Dental Program (CMDP) is the health plan responsible for ensuring, in partnership with foster care providers, the provision of appropriate and quality health care services for the well-being of Arizona's children in foster care. It was formed in July 1970 by state law ([A.R.S. 8-512](#)). Eligible membership is defined in state law

Q. What is CMDP?

A. CMDP is the Comprehensive Medical and Dental Program. CMDP is the AHCCCS (Medicaid) health plan for children in foster care.

Q. What services are covered by CMDP?

A. CMDP provides coverage for Preventative Care such as Well Child Checks, Shots, Medical, Dental, Vision and Drugs. Co-pays are not required for any CMDP covered services.

Q. Are there health care services that a child in my care is required to receive?

A. Children are required to have a full Physical Exam (Medical and Dental) within the first 30 days of being placed in your care and regularly scheduled Preventative Care visits.

Q. Why are these services required for a child in my care?

A. CMDP required services help keep your child healthy. Children who receive regular preventative healthcare such as routine medical and dental exams are healthier than children who do not. Routine exams can prevent diseases from developing in your child and/or identifies illnesses at the earliest stages.

Q. How do I locate a CMDP provider?

A. You can find a Provider by calling CMDP at 602-351-2245 press 1, then 3 or accessing the CMDP Provider Directory feature on the CMDP website: <https://app.azdes.gov/dcyf/CMDPe/provider/provdirectory.aspx>

Comprehensive Medical and Dental Program (CMDP) for Children in Foster Care — Continued

Q. What information do I need to bring with me when I take a child in my care to an appointment?

A. You will need the "Notice to Provider Form" (given by your CPS Case Manager), CMDP Member ID Card, and your identification (ID Card).

Q. How can I ask future questions if I have any?

A. Please contact CMDP Member Services @ 602-351-2245 option 3.

CMDP Members FAQs

How do foster caregivers get the CMDP Identification Cards?

CMDP sends a set of two identification cards to the case manager or to the assigned worker that enrolled the child into our health plan. They are instructed to deliver one card to the child's placement and keep one in the case file.

How long should it take to get the card?

The cards are mailed to workers about one week after enrollment. Call the worker and request the card. If it has not been delivered to your home within two weeks. If you cannot reach the worker, contact the unit supervisor.

How do I find out the medical conditions of my foster child?

Ask the case manager or assigned worker for all the medical information on children in your care. Ask for medical information in the child's file and any available information from health care providers.

What pharmacy do I go to?

In the Provider Directory, located on the Provider Services Home Page Menu, we have a list of pharmacies that will fill your prescription. Walgreens is the most common as it will accept the CMDP ID card at its stores nationwide.

Comprehensive Medical and Dental Program (CMDP) for Children in Foster Care — Continued

Do Foster Caregivers pay anything?

NO! There are no payments, fees or co-payments for foster children or their caregivers. Members and foster caregivers should not be billed for any services that CMDP covers. CMDP's payment to the provider is considered payment in full. CMDP should be listed as the responsible party. Do not list your home address, phone number or social security number on any bills or claims. Do not agree to pay for a member's medical treatment unless you have contacted CMDP first. If you have to sign any forms please write: "(foster parent's name) for DES/CMDP." Also write on the forms to send all bills to DES/CMDP's billing address.

Can I take my child to a specialist or do I need a referral?

A referral is not needed for a consultation with a specialist.

How do I find a doctor out of state?

Please contact CMDP for assistance.

Arizona Department of Child Safety

<https://www.azdes.gov/dcyf/cmdps/>



A Guide to Department of Child Safety (DCS)

When the Court becomes involved in a DCS Case

What happens When an In-Home Intervention is Considered?

If the outcome of the Team Decision Making (TDM) meeting was an In-Home Intervention (IHI), the Department of Child Safety (DCS) Specialist will be filing a petition with the Juvenile Dependency Court. With an In-Home Intervention, the child will continue to reside with the parent, guardian or custodian; however, DCS has temporary legal custody of the child. A court date will be scheduled, usually within 21 days. The Judge may make some legal rulings, and confirm the IHI and the services.

An IHI usually lasts about one year. The DCS Specialist will make a recommendation to the Judge to dismiss the case when they have assessed that DCS and the Court no longer need to be involved.

DCS Specialists are required to continually assess if the child can safely remain with the parent. The DCS Specialist, along with their supervisor, will formally evaluate child safety at least every six months; however, as family circumstances change, DCS will evaluate if the child can remain safely with the parent, guardian or custodian.

What Happens When an In-Home Dependency is Considered?

If the outcome of the Team Decision Making (TDM) meeting was an In-Home Dependency, the Department of Child Safety (DCS) Specialist will be filing a petition with the Juvenile Court. With an In-Home Dependency, the child will continue to reside with the parent, guardian or custodian; however, DCS has legal custody of your children for the entire time your family is being monitored by the Court. A court date will be scheduled; usually the court date is within five to seven days.

DCS Specialists are required to continually assess if the child can safely remain with the parent. The DCS Specialist, along with their supervisor, will formally evaluate child safety at least every six months; however, as family circumstances change, DCS will evaluate if the child can remain safely with the parent, guardian or custodian.

What happens When an Out of Home Dependency is Considered?

When the outcome of the TDM Meeting is for a child to be removed from home for protection from immediate harm, he/she is placed in a licensed foster home, shelter, other licensed facility or with a parent or relative and a petition is filed with the Juvenile Court. Verbal or written notices of the child's removal are provided. A written notice, called a Temporary Custody Notice (TCN), CPS-1000A, states the reason for removal and the circumstances that placed the child at imminent risk of harm. The TCN will also inform the parent, guardian or custodian to immediately provide any and all information about relatives or other people who have a significant relationship with the child. The parent, guardian or custodian is requested to sign the TCN acknowledging receipt of the notice. The Temporary Custody Notice will include information about a Preliminary Protective Hearing, obtaining an attorney, a meeting to be held if a dependency petition is filed with the juvenile court, rights and responsibilities, services available and agencies to contact for assistance.

If a hearing date is not known when the Temporary Custody Notice is served, DCS will give the parent, guardian or custodian notice of the date and time of the Preliminary Protective Hearing within 24 hours of the petition being filed. This hearing will be held within 5 to 7 days of the removal.

Department of Child Safety is required by law to make every effort to identify and notify all adult relatives of the child within 30 days of the child's removal, of the relatives' options to become a placement resource for the child. The notice includes the following:

- Options available to the relative to participate in the child's care and placement.
- Describes the requirements to become a licensed foster home and the additional services and supports available for the child in a licensed foster care home.

This notice is not required when the relative or person having a significant relationship with the child has a history of family or domestic violence.

DCS Specialists are required to continually assess if the child can safely remain with the parent. The DCS Specialist, along with their supervisor, will formally evaluate child safety at least every six months; however, as family circumstances change, DCS will evaluate if the child can remain safely with the parent, guardian or custodian.

<https://www.azdes.gov/landing.aspx?id=9670>

Training Key Points by **Abby Dodge, CASA Coordinator**

During the 1st Academy hosted in Cochise County, the following points were brought up and we would like to share with you all:

Court Reports:

- The State recommends to use “I” instead of “this CASA” as we do not need to constantly remind the Judge who we are, and it makes the report more personal and gives it that community feeling.
- When making recommendations, use bullets rather than numbers. Numbers usually indicate priority. Unless you are ordering your recommendations by importance, use bullets.
- The Court Report Editing Checklist is a great tool to use when preparing your court reports. You should have received this checklist in your email.

Contact Logs:

- Contact Logs are how we get the numbers that we are required to report to the State, who in turn must report to the National CASA Program. These are extremely important!
- Remember to include ALL things related to your case on your Contact Log. This can include, but is not limited to: contacts with all parties on the case, any contact with the Program Coordinator discussing the case, reading the case file and updates you receive in the mail, time spent writing court reports or preparing for court and other meetings. Also, remember that your travel time counts. Your time begins when you get into your vehicle to travel to a visit/CFT/hearing and ends when you return to your house.

The following information was presented on the Behavioral Health Training that we provided:

These are the elements that comprise the CFT process. It does not have to occur in this order, but all of these things should occur:

- Welcome and introductions – Each person should include their name, title, and relationship to the child/case.
- Explain the ground rules for the CFT.
- Explain the role of the CFT Facilitator.
- Review the agenda for the meeting.
- Review: Individual Treatment Plan and progress towards goals.
- Brainstorm solutions for services or supports: Focus on the NEEDS, not the services – The team may have to think outside the box to determine ways to address the needs of the child.
- Review CASII and Crisis Plan – For more information about a CASII Plan, see http://www.azdhs.gov/bhs/guidance/CASII_FAQs.pdf.
- Celebrate successes – Successes are meant to be goals that are being met and needs that are being addressed, not that the child had a birthday or got to go on a field trip.
- Assignments and follow up for the next meeting – Each person should leave the CFT knowing what tasks they have been assigned and the timeline for completion.

Remember that therapy occurring only once a month is NOT really therapy. Therapy needs to occur at least twice a month. If this isn't happening and the team is unwilling to address this, you can contact Brad Thayer, Behavioral Health Clinical Coordinator, at 520-224-5970.

Comments from a Foster Mother, submitted by **Mary Blanchard, CASA Volunteer**

Walmart is a fantastic place to renew acquaintances because sooner or later you run into all the old friends you haven't seen for a while. It was hugs all around when I ran into two of my former foster parents. Abby was the CASA for their five year old foster boy at the same time one of my boys was placed with them.

Almost every time I visited my boy, they told me about the wonderful the CASA who was working with the five year old. Abby was able to help them obtain services and was the person they turned to whenever they needed advice. The boy blossomed under their care, and eventually they adopted the boy.

During the Walmart reunion, I asked them if they had heard about Abby's new job. They were clueless, so I told them that Abigail Dodge is our new CASA Coordinator. They were overjoyed and also impressed. "She is so young," they said. "She will bring all her youth and energy to the job. Please give her our congratulations and tell her we are soooooo happy for her. And tell her we are so grateful for all the help she gave us. SHE IS THE BEST!"



Mule Mountain Academy



We hosted our first CASA Academy. We had new applicants as well as seasoned CASA's who took the training as a refresher. Here are a few details about the 2 day training:

Guest Speakers were:

Sharon Travis, Assistant Program Manager for DCS

Richard Dault, Assistant Attorney General

Kris Sullivan, Drug Court Program Manager

Lori Heredia, Training Specialist from CASA of Arizona



Attendees:

2 brand new volunteers from Cochise County

1 new volunteer from Graham County

8 attended as refreshers (including Joan and Abby)

