

Welcome CASA Volunteers

Spring 2017 has brought many new CASA volunteers to the Coconino County CASA Family. A big Coconino County CASA welcome to . . .

Diane McClure
Joey Hodges
Sharon Baudelaire
Elise Eastburn
Frank Osuji
Wendy Gilbert

Richard Vihel
Terry Crites
Connie Ball
Miriam Offner
Gwen Nenne
Carrie Derr

These Advocates attended the CASA Training Academy in March, April or June, and many are already hard at work on their first case. Nine more new volunteers are registered for the July Academy! We are growing thanks to YOU.

“CASA volunteers are among the most important contributors to the dependency process in Coconino County and we are so grateful for the work of the CASA. You are the eyes and ears of the court and the voice for the child.”

*Judge McCullough
May 15, 2017*

CASA ACADEMY

CASA of Coconino County Academy
Friday, July 14 and Saturday, July 15
Juvenile Court Multipurpose Room
8:30 am—5:00 pm

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MAY 2017 OATH CEREMONY with Presiding Judge Margaret A. McCullough



Members of Coconino CASA for Kids with the Juvenile Court Judges

May 15, 2017 Oath Ceremony

The ceremony took place at 5:30 p.m. at 1001 East Sawmill Road in the Coconino County Juvenile Court and marked the end of 30 hours of training the individuals completed to take on this new role.

"This was a big day for our advocates," said Amber Martin, coordinator for CASA of Coconino County. "They've been through a lot of training and they are excited to get started working on their first case. This was our chance to say thank you to them for being willing to speak on behalf of a child in need and this was their chance to promise to do so." This was the first oath ceremony in Coconino County so all CASA volunteers, including those who have worked with us for many years, participated in this event. There were forty-three active CASA volunteers recognized at the Oath and Recognition Ceremony in addition to eight members of Coconino CASA for Kids, Inc.

Court personnel participated

Director of Coconino County Juvenile Court Services Director Bryon Matsuda was on hand to share remarks and thank volunteers for their service. Judge Elaine Fridlund-Horne and Judge Margaret McCullough both spoke about the importance of the CASA volunteer as the voice for the children in the dependency process. Coordinator Amber Martin shared statistics on the number of families we impact each year. CASA volunteers are truly appreciated.

Social time for building relationships

After the official ceremony participants shared stories over delicious food and drink.



Celebrating 24 years with Lina

Thanks to everyone who participated. This will become an annual event to recognize and thank CASA volunteers.

Why stable relationships are 'poison control' in fighting trauma and stress in kids

Melissa Bright, University of Florida

Parents are often reminded to keep harmful substances out of their child's reach. But what if a child's experiences at home were as toxic to their health as household solvents and cleaners? On a basic level, toxins are poisonous substances that lead to disease. Although not stored in a bottle or on a shelf, stress in childhood meets the criteria.

The phrase "toxic stress" describes the body's reaction to negative experiences that are not only intense and chronic but also caused by the absence of safe, stable and nurturing adult relationships. Toxic stress "gets under our skin" to change the way we respond to our environment and can lead to disease and disability across the lifespan. We're making progress in uncovering which health conditions are related to childhood stress and how we can prevent this stress.

When you are in a stressful situation, your brain prepares your body for one of three general responses: fight, flee or freeze. If you are attacked, for example, your body slows down processes that are not as important in that moment – like digestion – and speeds up processes that are important – like blood flow to muscles – so that you can either escape or defend yourself. When the crisis is over, your body goes back to its normal state. This ability to respond to and recover from stressful events is important for survival.

When a child experiences toxic stress, however, that child loses the ability to respond and recover appropriately. If a child lives in a household that uses violence to solve problems, for example, then his or her brain might regularly prepare his or her bodies to fight or flee. This situation gives a body very little time to recover and reset. This repeated response to stress also changes the way a body reacts to future events.

Some people who experience repeated stress become hyper-reactive, which might look like a quickness to react to situations and slowness to calm down. Others become hypo-reactive, which might look like a lack of awareness to situations that necessitate a response. Hypo-reactive individuals may fail to identify danger and become at risk for falling victim again.

The effects of toxic stress are also seen "under the skin." Experiencing repeated stress lowers our immune system and makes us more susceptible to illnesses, from the common cold to diabetes to asthma.

Adverse childhood experiences, also called ACEs, can cause toxic stress. Most researchers focus on a dozen or so adverse experiences: physical abuse and neglect, emotional abuse and neglect, sexual abuse, caregiver separation or divorce, caregiver mental illness, caregiver substance use, caregiver incarceration and domestic violence.

(continued on next page)

(continued from page 2 “Why Stable Relationships are...”)

In the first study of ACEs in the 1990s, researchers found that adults who reported experiencing three or more ACEs were more likely to have two of the top three causes of death of adults in the U.S.: heart disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (e.g., emphysema or chronic bronchitis).

Experiencing three or more ACEs was also associated with substance use, depression, liver disease, multiple sexual partners, sexually transmitted infections, unintended pregnancy, suicide attempt and even early death.

Early childhood is a time for significant brain development. Given that brain development is affected by our environment, toxic stress during this time can be particularly problematic.

In a recent study, we examined adverse childhood experiences and health in a national survey of children aged 0-17 years. We included experiences like emotional abuse, financial struggles, caregiver divorce or separation, domestic violence, neighborhood violence and caregiver mental illness. We focused on how these experiences related to not just physical health (e.g., vision and hearing problems, asthma) but also mental health (depression, anxiety) and developmental outcomes like learning and intellectual disability in childhood.

We found that experiencing three or more of these adverse experiences was associated with a two- to five-fold increase in the likelihood of having at least one condition in each of the three health categories above. Adverse experiences weren't just associated with increased likelihood of having one condition. Experiencing multiple forms of adversity was also associated with increased likelihood of having at least one condition in two categories.

Most alarming was that having three or more adverse experiences was associated with nearly a six-fold increase in the likelihood of having at least one physical, at least one mental and at least one developmental condition. These startling findings tell us two things about childhood adversity. First, negative health effects are seen before adulthood, and, second, they affect multiple domains of health and development simultaneously. This means that the effects of childhood adversity and toxic stress can be seen in the pediatrician's clinic, the psychologist's office and the teacher's classroom.

A critical component to toxic stress is that it occurs only in the absence of safe, stable and nurturing adult relationships. If children experience stress but also have a warm, loving adult to support them, then that child will be able to respond to and recover from even the most difficult of circumstances.

Conversations around child safety need to extend beyond helmets and cleaning substances to include toxic stress and its causes. Parents need to be armed with strategies for creating safe, stable and nurturing relationships with their children. Building these relationships can reduce childhood adversity, toxic stress, and subsequent disease and disability.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

July 2—Lynda Ging

July 6—Mari Goodman

July 22—Dawn Tucker

July 30—Diane McClure

July 30—Frank Osuji



July 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10 Dashboard	11	12 Concert	13	14 Academy	15
16	17	18 McCullough	19 Concert	20 Report	21	22
23	24	25 FCRB	26 Dashboard	27 Tour	28 BF Babies	29
30	31					

CASA VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Every CASA volunteer is required to participate in twelve (12) hours of training each calendar year. Here are some July training opportunities. We look forward to seeing you at as many as you can attend. RSVP with session and your name to LPayne@courts.az.gov to reserve your seat.

July 2017 CASA Training (and social) opportunities {RSVP required}

July 10 2:00—4:00 pm CASA AZ Dashboard and E-Mail training, County Health Bldg. Aspen Room, King St. (training)

July 12 5:30—7:30 p.m. Concerts in the Park Picnic at Bushmaster Park Community Ramada, 3150 N. Alta Vista (social) [bring your own picnic food and beverage]

July 14-15 8:00 am—5:00 pm Coconino County CASA Academy, Juvenile Court Multipurpose Room (training)

July 18 1:30-2:45 pm Judge McCullough will lead a discussion on the dependency process components, adoption during dependency and ICWA, Juvenile Court Building Courtroom (training)

July 19 5:30—7:30 p.m. Concerts in the Park Picnic at Bushmaster Park Community Ramada, 3150 N. Alta Vista (social) [bring your own picnic food and beverage]

July 20 11:30 am—1:00 pm Court Report Writing, Juvenile Court Multipurpose Room (training)

July 25 8:30—11:30 am Foster Care Review Board Hearings, Juvenile Court Multipurpose Room (training)

July 26 9:00—11:00 am CASA AZ Dashboard and E-Mail training, County Health Bldg. Aspen Room, King St. (training)

July 27 1:00—2:15 pm Tour of Detention Facility at Juvenile Court (training)

July 28 9:00 am—3:00 pm Best for Babies “The Unique needs of Infants and Toddlers in Foster Care” Location TBA (training)

THESE CASA VOLUNTEERS ARE APPROVED BY THE STATE
OFFICE FOR DASHBOARD TRAINING IN JULY

M. Goodman; M. Harris; K. Jones; C. May; D. Renstrom; J. Rominger; J. Salabye; L. Wallen; W. Gilbert; T. Crites; D. McClure; R. Vihel; F. Osuji; C. Hernandez; S. Sobolewski; C. Porter; S. Sivak; M. Offner; E. Eastburn; J. Hodges; G. Nenne; S. Baudelaire; C. Derr. We hope everyone else can be trained in August/September.

COCONINO CASA FOR KIDS, INC.

Supporting CASAs and abused,
neglected and abandoned
children

www.coconinocasaforkids.org

Becky Lewis, Chair
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Karen Mougín, Member
Andrea Merrihew, Member
Marilyn Harris, Member
Jay Rominger, Member
Amber Martin, Ex Officio

Dear CASA:

- ♦ *I get confused trying to understand each of the different components of the dependency process . Is there a "cheat sheet" for me use in learning the unique differences between each of these?*
- ♦ *Yes, our state CASA office provides us with an abbreviated "cheat sheet" and a detailed appendix. Both of these documents will be sent to every Coconino County CASA for your review and to put into a safe place for future reference. Be sure to print it out or save it to a CASA folder for easy access. Judge McCullough is providing us with a training session on this very topic July 18 at 1:30. You qualify for one hour of training if you read the documents and send Nancy an e-mail telling her something new you learned that you didn't already know !!!*

Dear CASA:

- ♦ *I am super busy with my full-time job, my family and my CASA work. Can you tell me how I can earn some of my training hours when it is hard for me to get to training sessions offered by CASA?*
- ♦ *Yes, articles or books you read that have a direct impact on your work offer up to one hour per article and 30 minutes for each 50 pages up to a maximum of 3 hours for a book. Send Nancy the name of the article or book, the number of pages, and the time allowed. You also get 30 minutes of training credit if you made it this far in this newsletter and tell us!!!! When you do research for your CASA case you may count the amount of time spent in conducting your research.*



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA OF COCONINO COUNTY

CONTACT US

Amber Martin, Coordinator
ammartin@courts.az.gov
(928) 226-5420

Cindy Payne, Recruitment
and Training
lpayne@courts.az.gov
(928) 226-5433

Nancy Guelzow, Associate
nguelzow@courts.az.gov
(928) 226-5422

Marti Martin, NAU Intern
mmartin@courts.az.gov

