

CASA of Coconino County

September 2017

Welcome CASA Volunteer

ELSIE HAYSLIP

Coconino County CASA is hosting a two-day Advocates Academy on October 20-21 at the Juvenile Court. If you would like a refresher course on any components of Academy training you are welcome to join us. Contact LPayne@courts.az.gov for scheduling details.

With this new Academy on the calendar NOW is the PERFECT time to recruit new CASA volunteers. Encourage appropriate colleagues to apply today.

CASA of Coconino County is affiliated with CASA of Arizona and the National CASA Association which is a network of 955 programs that are recruiting, training and supporting volunteers to represent the best interests of abused and neglected children in the courtroom and other settings.



Judge McCullough provides training to CASA volunteers on the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and the pathways through the Dependency Court hearings.

In This Issue

- Welcome
- Training Updates
- Book Review
- ARTICLES
- September Calendar
- Meet CASA



Training Updates

A friendly reminder that each CASA advocate needs a total of twelve (12) training hours per calendar year!

Congratulations to those who already completed their 12 hours this calendar year!

Congrats to the following advocates for completing and documenting their hours!

Brian ... 36.5hours

Lina ... 32 hours

Fred ... 30.50 hours

Chris ... 23.25 hours

Sue S. ... 23 hours

Marilyn ... 22 hours

******ROCK STARS******

KUDOS TO

Sue Michels

Diane McClure

Kirsten Mellinger

For outstanding Court Reports during the month of August.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

September 4 — Jacelyn

September 5 — Kirsten

September 14 — Richard



Will I Ever See You Again?

Elizabeth I. Jacobs, Ph.D.

I just finished reading *Will I Ever See You Again?* It was written by Elizabeth I Jacobs, Ph.D. and discusses attachment challenges for foster children. It's an easy read because it's only 94 pages long and uses plain English. As a CASA, I thought it brought up a lot of the challenges faced by our dependent foster children, especially when they have had multiple placements.

As a former foster child, Dr. Jacobs gives some unique perspective to the issues of attachment. She explores issues that a child faces when entering the foster system and how they can become barriers to attachment. Dr. Jacobs addresses multiple foster placements aka "Foster Cycling". As a foster child, she concluded that "it doesn't really make any difference what I do; I will never see these people again anyway".

Dr. Jacobs also states that training for foster parents is key to helping children cope and attach and that "barring the prevention of the original maltreatment, the quality of care that dependent children receive may be the most important aspect of the child welfare system" (Shlosky and Duer, 2001, p. 60).

I would recommend this book for any CASA with children who are having a difficult time making attachments to foster placement, biological parents or school. There are some great suggestions that may help a CASA understand how hard it can be for a child to build attachments.



**By: Marilyn Harris,
CASA Advocate**

If you would like to read this book or other resource for our newsletter, please contact the CASA office.

Youth Thrive approach encourages closer look at protective factors

By Allison Hurtado, Arizona CASA Office

The Center for the Study of Social Policy's Youth Thrive approach is giving jurisdictions, policy makers and child welfare advocates a clearer path to helping all youth become strong, independent adults.

The Youth Thrive framework is based on research and neuroscience and suggests that brain development plays a large role in outcomes for youth. The framework provides a lens for assessing efforts to help children thrive.

The frame work is based on increasing protective factors and reducing risk factors which leads to positive outcomes. The five protective factors are listed on the CSSP website as:

Youth resilience: Having tools to manage stress.

Social connections: The ability to create healthy, sustained relationships with people and the community and thereby create a greater sense of self.

Knowledge about adolescent development: Understanding brain development and the impact of trauma.

Concrete support in times of need: Asking for help and advocating for oneself.

Cognitive and social-emotional competence: Acquiring skills that are essential for forming an independent identity.

Risk factors include psychological stressors, inadequate or negative relationships with family and community members, insufficient or inadequate opportunities for positive growth, and unsafe or unstable environments.

Youth Thrive is not a program but it is an approach. As Court Appointed Special Advocates, it may be useful to judge if you are helping to build protective factors in the youth you serve. For more information about the practice and systems currently using the approach visit <https://www.cssp.org/reform/child-welfare/youththrive>.

States All Over the Map on Ensuring Educational Stability for Foster Youth

The Chronicle of Social Change

By Daniel Hempel

August 3, 2017

For the roughly 270,000 school-aged children living in America's foster care system, educational success can be elusive. Having suffered the trauma of abuse and neglect, coupled with the uncertainty of foster care, these youngsters have substantially worse educational outcomes than their peers.

For example, in California 58 percent of foster youth will graduate high school as compared with 79 percent of students with low socioeconomic status and 84 percent of students overall.

Frequent school moves are a key factor in these low graduation rates and disproportionately poor academic outcomes. Research has shown that more than one-third of all foster youth will experience five or more school moves by the time they turn 18. Each move can cost four to six months of academic progress.

In 2015, Congress took its most significant step ever towards addressing this problem. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which overhauled federal education policy, included a mandate ordering school districts across the country to make sure foster youth have transportation to their so-called "school of origin," the school they were attending when they entered the system.

Beyond setting up the mandate, the statute also clearly stated that school districts had one year – until December 2016 – to get this done.

The Chronicle recently queried education officials in 16 states and the District of Columbia to determine whether or not they were living up to ESSA's foster care mandates. While a handful of states have complied, others have failed or struggle to do so. This does not take into account the more than 30 states that we are yet to have information on.

We found some examples of states working hard to live up to ESSA's mandates. But we also found that there are likely thousands of foster youth who are still subject to unlawful school moves that narrow their chances at educational success.

Despite being made aware of this inconsistency in implementation, there is little to suggest that the agency with the power to force compliance, the federal Department of Education (ED), is doing much about it.

Known Knowns

In 2008, the landmark Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act required state child welfare agencies to keep foster youth at the school they were attending at the time of their removal, unless it was in their best interest to be in another school.

There was an obvious problem with enforcing this provision. State and local child welfare systems do not have school buses.

School systems are ultimately responsible for transporting students – foster youth or otherwise – to and from school. School districts have their own bureaucracies, with their own rules, and are not beholden to federal child welfare policy.

Sen. Al Franken (D-Minn.) led the effort to make the academic achievement of foster students the responsibility of school districts in 2015, during the rewrite of the No Child Left Behind Act. The final product, ESSA, included the transportation mandate for foster youth.

But even ESSA was ambiguous on the key question of money, compounding issues with compliance. Instead of specifying how local education agencies and their counterparts in child welfare should pay for transporting foster kids to their schools of origin, ESSA simply instructs school districts to come up with plans to share the cost. This sets up a negotiation process between public agencies about money, never an expedient affair.

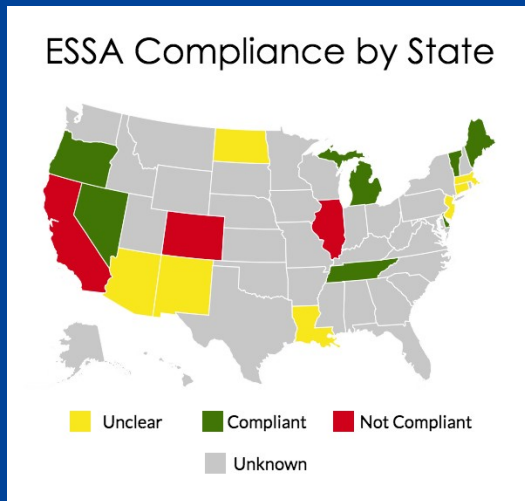
In January, *The Chronicle* revealed California's failure to implement ESSA's transportation mandates. This prompted key members of Congress, notably Sen. Franken, to call on ED to enforce the law.

For a lot of foster kids, school is where they feel safe, secure, and are able to find certainty," Sen. Franken said in an email statement. "The Education Department needs to make sure that states are abiding by the law and providing foster students with these opportunities."

But new evidence suggests that compliance issues extend past the Golden State.

Complying Fully, Partially or Not at All

Since ESSA became the law of the land, a new president has assumed office. By the end of March, Congress had passed a bill, which President Donald Trump signed, rolling back ESSA-related regulations issued by the Obama administration. But the mandates on foster youth were written into the law itself, so school districts and ultimately states are still on the hook for getting it done.



In April of this year, 16 states and the District of Columbia sent letters to the ED describing their plans to comply with the education law. These plans will need to be accompanied by assurances that the school districts in those states are living up to all aspects of ESSA – including those requiring foster youth transportation.

The Chronicle reached out to each of these jurisdictions to see if they were now complying with the law.

Of the 17 jurisdictions that reported to ED, officials from seven – Oregon, Nevada, Delaware, Michigan, Maine, Tennessee and Vermont – said that they had complied with the law's December 2016 deadline instructing "local educational agencies" to "develop

and implement clear written procedures governing how transportation to maintain children in foster care in their school of origin when in their best interest will be provided, arranged, and funded."

All seven states affirmed that they are now transporting foster youth per the ESSA mandate.

A good example is Oregon. Linda Brown, an education specialist with the Oregon Department of Education, said that the state took on implementation from two angles. First her agency entered into an agreement with the state's Department of Human Services, which transferred \$2 million to pay for foster youth transportation. Then, this summer, the legislature modified state law directing the juvenile dependency court to make "school of origin" the default choice for foster youth.

"ESSA pushed us to be more collaborative on the state level," Brown said.

Officials in two states – Colorado and Illinois – either confirmed that their state had not complied with ESSA or submitted a response suggesting it had not.

Colorado, which has devolved much of its power to counties and school districts, has struggled to ensure full implementation of the law. While Kristen Myers, the foster care education coordinator with the state Department of Education, pointed to a robust MOU developed by her counterpart at the Department of Human Services, getting each and every of the state's 178 school districts and 64 counties to comply has been a challenge.

We, as multiple state agencies, are doing everything humanly possible to get these plans going right now," Myers said.

Responses from the remaining eight jurisdictions – North Dakota, Connecticut, Louisiana, New Jersey, Massachusetts, New Mexico, D.C. and Arizona – were insufficient to determine if they were complying fully, partially or not at all. New Mexico’s Public Education Department never responded to a request for information, and a spokesperson for D.C.’s superintendent of education could not definitively say that school districts there had complied.

A spokesman for Arizona’s Department of Education was unable to ensure that all the state’s school districts had come up with and implemented transportation plans. But he pointed out that the department has offered extensive guidance and technical assistance to local school systems to ensure compliance.

“Arizona utilizes a computer-tracking program and an internal system of checks and balances to ensure all Arizona foster care students are receiving the transportation mandated by ESSA,” said spokesman Stefan Swiat in an email.

Not Much of a ‘Hammer’

Experts and history suggest ED is unlikely to do much to enforce the law.

“The Revised State Template for the Consolidated State Plan” issued by the department in March is a good example.

When it comes to the assurances that state and local education agencies must submit to prove that they are living up to ESSA, the department both threatens significant penalties, while simultaneously neglecting to specify when those assurances need to be submitted.

“In order to receive fiscal year (FY) 2017 ESEA funds on July 1, 2017... each SEA [State Education Agency] must also submit a comprehensive set of assurances to the Department at a date and time established by the Secretary,” the template reads. “In the near future, the Department will publish an information collection request that details these assurances.”

This means that all federal education funding streams that flow to state and local school systems could be in jeopardy.

But when it comes to enforcement, Dale Chu with the Collaborative for Student Success said, “there really isn’t a hammer.” Instead, Chu, who has reviewed all the state plans, suggested that the education secretary, Betsy DeVos, could use the “bully pulpit” to cajole state and local education agencies into action.

Philip Lovell, with the Alliance for Excellent Education, which is monitoring ESSA compliance, pointed out the importance of supporting the educational achievement of foster youth.

“The federal government has a disproportionate role in the lives of these kids,” Lovell said. “Unless there is oversight, these provisions won’t be implemented, and not fully delivering for these kids is unacceptable.”

He added that ED could be doing things like monitoring compliance more closely, offering guidance to states or issuing letters reminding state educational agencies of their responsibilities regarding the education of foster youth.

Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), who worked to get the foster care mandates included in ESSA, agreed, according to a spokesman.

“Sen. Grassley encourages dialogue with states to make sure the law is implemented as Congress intended,” said Michael Zona, Grassley’s press secretary.

While the Department of Education, through a spokesperson, said it would monitor the situation it gave no indication of what that means.

“State implementation of the foster care provisions is something that we will monitor as part of implementation of the statute,” an ED spokesperson said in an email. “But we do not have an update at this point while state plans are in the review process.”

Student Transforms Childhood Trauma into Basis of Resilience, Wisdom

Justin Murphy, Published July 13, 2017

Throughout the 2016-17 school year, while I was reading studies and speaking with experts about the effects of toxic stress on children and the importance of trauma-informed education, I was also getting to know a young man with two nicknames.

His name is Wilson Santos, and he's a student at Integrated Arts and Technology High School in Rochester. He just turned 18 years old.

Through the winter and spring, I went every Friday



morning to Wilson's sessions with Chris Brady, a social worker at the school whom he's been seeing regularly for more than two years. Wilson considers Brady a father figure.

When they first met, Brady's nickname for him was Wandering Wilson, because that's what he did.

"I came to school, but I didn't go to school," as Wilson put it. He wandered the halls in a lethargic shuffle, missing massive amounts of instruction.

There is a set of 10 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) that researchers use as a measure of trauma. Studies have shown that having gone through one or two of them greatly increases the likelihood of many negative health and economic outcomes. By a conservative estimate, Wilson has experienced at least six.

In his mind, two stand out. One was a brief event that happened when he was 10 years old, and that he asked

me not to write about. The other is a pattern of physical and emotional abuse from someone in his family. I'm not writing about that one, either, because I never had a chance to speak with the family member in question.

I suggested to Wilson a few times that I meet with that person, and watched as the sweat beaded up on his forehead.

"Maybe not," he mumbled.

That's fine. Most of the writing about trauma, including what I've done this year, centers on the terrible things that happened to a person, and how others can respond helpfully.

Wilson taught me something else. The trauma he suffered did not cripple him — it transformed him. It branded him with fears and flashbacks, and practical deficiencies that will dog him the rest of his life. But it also gave him compassion and perspective, and strength.

As he spoke more often with the social worker and developed trust, Wilson rededicated himself to school, and Chris Brady's nickname for the kid changed. Not Wandering Wilson, but Wise Wilson.

"That's true," Brady told him. "You've got a lot of wisdom inside you. Do you know that?"

"I guess I do," Wilson replied.

If Wilson could get through school, he'd make a great counselor. Right now, it seems unlikely he will get there.

'I'm that person who has caring in him'

When Wilson was a boy, he learned quickly to read body language, tone of voice and facial features. Picking up on the first signs of anger could save him from a physical or emotional bruise.

That experience has imbued him with extraordinary emotional sensitivity. He talks about his classmates' and family members' auras as if they were as plain as the noses on their faces.

"You feel their energy, whether it's positive or negative — just whatever's coming off them," he said. "If they're concerned for you, you feel that concern. If they're happy for you, you're like: 'Damn, I must be doing something good.'"

At the same time, he is hyper-vigilant about victimizing other people in the same ways that someone victimized him. He obsesses over minor offenses he's committed against other people, like not responding to text messages quickly enough. When his friends hurt, he hurts too.

"It made me into someone who cares about people," he said. He was wandering.
"Maybe too much. But I'm that person who has caring in him."

When Wilson first started talking with Brady two years ago, he couldn't articulate his pain. Instead, he punched lockers, windows and people. He started self-medicating – alcohol, marijuana, sex – by age 12. He thought about suicide.

"I was a nobody; just disrespectful to everybody," he said. "I was an empty shell."

Brady helped him recognize his own feelings and face them without fear. Thanks to that painstaking work, Wilson has perspective on himself that would be remarkable for anyone, and for a high school

student in particular.

He told me how he cuts himself sometimes, but gets no release from it. He told me how relationships in his family have shaped the way he treats other people. He told me about his flashbacks to that one traumatic day when he was 10 years old.

"It's like it's on a television screen that's pressed against my face," he said. "It feels like my heart stops. My soul leaves my body. Then it comes back. But I'm frozen. I'm just gone. ... I get tunnel vision, like it's blurry. Then I want to hit something, or cut myself."

Talking with Wilson for several months was one of the most powerful experiences of my career. It significantly changed the way I see the children I write about for a living.

Trauma wrecked Wilson's home, made him unreliable in



romantic relationships and harmed his performance in school, among other things. It also endowed him with incredible gifts — ones he needed help in identifying and nurturing.

'Sometimes he's just lost'

For two years, Wilson had checked in briefly with Chris Brady nearly every day, but in late March he started coming less frequently, and missing their scheduled appointments.

Half teasing, Brady suggested it meant Wilson didn't need him anymore, that he could cope on his own."

"Maybe so," Wilson said, eyes on the ground.

It wasn't so simple, though. For most of the rest of the year, Wilson came to school late or not at all. He told Brady he had a personal commitment outside school on weekday mornings, but demurred when Brady asked if he could reschedule it to the weekend. He wouldn't say what the commitment was.

From mid-April to the end of the school year, I only saw Wilson once. It was in May, and it was becoming clear that he would fail most of his classes. He was about to turn 18 years old, still in 10th grade academically.

He wanted to move out of his house, but didn't have the money and hadn't told his parents. He had broken up with his girlfriend and was back with a previous one. He said he was going to get a job and attend summer school to catch up, but even he didn't sound convinced. He was still using drugs, alcohol and sex in unhealthy ways.

Wilson told Brady he would be at school the last Monday before summer vacation. I hoped to see him there as well. He didn't come.

Brady's office was mostly cleaned out, and he sat in shorts and a T-shirt, the morning sun glinting off the smudged eye-glasses on their usual perch atop his close-cropped, balding head. Students in his therapy groups sometimes do an exercise where they're the social worker, and they signal it by taking his glasses and propping them on their own heads.

Brady grew up poor, one of six children with an alcoholic mother and absent father. He was placed in special education and told he wasn't smart enough to go to college. He believed it, and spent several years working in restaurants before deciding to try community college. He's now one of the best resources in the district for responding to mental health crises.

Wilson's absence, Brady said, could mean a number of things. It could just be the warm weather making him skip school. It could be shame for his stalled progress toward a diploma. It could be something else.

"Sometimes he's brilliant," Brady said. "Sometimes he's just lost."

Trading trauma for resilience

A week before this story was supposed to run, I finally got hold of Wilson, and we made plans to meet one last time. I picked him up at his house the next day and drove to Washington Grove, several acres of deep quiet near Cobbs Hill Park where the city's oldest trees stand.

I chose that spot because of something he told me once. He was saying how, when he's stressed, he likes to go into his bedroom, where he can have some peace. I asked if he ever went to a park, or out in nature.

"I went to Philadelphia once," he said. I don't think he understood what I meant.

Imagine living through 18 years of intense psychological trauma without knowing how to find even a modest patch of green space where you can breathe deeply.

Being in Washington Grove made Wilson nervous at first. It was a new setting, and that made him uncomfortable. His heart raced and his throat constricted.

"I always get anxiety for some reason," he said. "I don't really know what it's from. It's probably one of them locked memories I don't know about."

After a few minutes, he could relax. He talked about how much he wanted to graduate, and how difficult it would be. About what it feels like to sit down to an exam and not know the answers. About proving to people that he's not dumb.

He talked about his emotional sensitivity. Sometimes, he said, if he's very close with someone, he will get a sense they're in distress and call them on the phone, just to see if they're OK.

That attunement is something he and Brady talked about a lot. I asked him: was it a fair exchange, to go through major trauma in return for the resilience it engendered in him?

"If I could have got it another way, that would be amazing," he said. "But how I got it — I don't really like it."

I asked: could you have gotten it another way?

"No," he said. "Most likely not."

At Arizona DCS, the phone keeps ringing, but investigations decline

[Mary Jo Pitzl](#), The Republic | [azcentral.com](#)

August 11, 2017

****Article and video included****

<http://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/arizona-investigations/2017/08/11/arizona-dcs-child-abuse-hotline-calls-not-investigated/518354001/>

Movie Recommendation:

Netflix: "I AM SAM"

Movies in Office:

"Martian Child", "BUCK", or "The Blind Side"

REMINDERS:

- **Please Turn in your most recent auto insurance cards that are effective through September!**
- **Contact Logs Due the first of each month**

September 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 T	2
3	4	5	6	7	8 T/F	9
10	11	12	13 T	14	15 T/F	16
17	18 T	19	20 Film	21	22	23
24	25	26	27 T	28	29	30
		T=Training	F=Film			

SEPTEMBER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES:

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

September 8th: CASA Volunteer Ambassador Training @ 11:30am-1:00pm - Juvenile Court (free CASA Ambassador t-shirts for participants in this workshop) RSVP: LPayne@courts.az.gov

September 13th: 2nd Wednesdays—CASA Training and Support Group - Juvenile Court ("Remembering Trauma, Video and Discussion) RSVP: LPayne@courts.az.gov

September 18th: Adoption and Title 8 Guardianship Training @ 10:00am-12:00pm—Flagstaff Municipal Court, Jury Assembly Room See attached flyer to RSVP

September 27th: Childhood Trauma Training @ 6:15 to 7:45pm in Juvenile Court Courtroom, facilitated by Dr. Angela Keith as an introduction to our fall reading book
RSVP: LPayne@courts.az.gov

October 5th: Workshop For Parents of Children with Special Needs: Positive Behavior Support @ 6:00-8:00pm See attached flyer to RSVP

FREE Education Film Series with panel discussion @ 6:30pm McGee Auditorium @ Flagstaff Medical Center; September 8: Beyond Measure; September 15: Paper Tigers; September 20: Rise Above the Mark

COCONINO CASA FOR KIDS, INC.

Supporting CASAs and abused,
neglected and abandoned
children

www.coconinocasaforkids.org

Becky Lewis, Chair
Victor Hudenko, Vice-Chair
Tammy Laird, Treasurer
Dorothy Renstrom, Secretary
Ann Griffin, Member
Bruce Griffin, Member
Sue Michels, Member
Andrea Merrihew, Member
Jay Rominger, Member
Amber Martin, Ex Officio

Meet CASA Volunteer Lynn Johnson

I was born in New Orleans, Louisiana. I worked as an audiology technician testing the hearing on newborns at FMC until retirement in October of 2015. My favorite dessert to make is cream puffs with French vanilla custard using my grandmother's recipe. One thing on my bucket list which I hope to achieve this coming January on my 75th birthday is to do the zip line at Out of Africa. I have a love for zip lines!

Why a CASA?

I have a real need to make sure that every child has a voice and that they are heard and cared for to the best of my ability.



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

