



CONFIDENTIALITY

CASAs have access to more confidential material than most other adults involved in the child's life. This is not only a wonderful privilege but crucial to understanding and advocating for the needs of an advocate child. With that access, CASAs become responsible for the protection of that information, subject to mandated reporter duties. State CASA standards require that "all information concerning children and families in the juvenile court process is confidential."

What does this mean?

1. CASAs must protect the confidentiality of their child, i.e. **not introduce their advocate children** to others as dependent children who have been abused or neglected. You may introduce them (first name only) as a friend or mentee without mention the court system or any specifics of the case.
2. CASAs should **not discuss their case** with non-approved parties, e.g. your friends, partners, and relatives. You may make informational calls to find out about accessing resources; however, you should not use identifying information.
 - a. Approved parties: Employees of Child Advocates, Mentor CASAs, other CASAs, Social Workers, and Children's Attorneys.
3. In theory, you are **not to divulge information** to caregivers, teachers, therapists, or other people who might have contact with the child – unless it is in the best interests of the child so that better services can be provided and you have received approval to disclose! The best policy is to check with the social worker to find out what information has been disclosed to a given party and ask if you need to be careful with the information you disclose. The role of the advocate is to investigate, i.e. get information from pertinent individuals, not share confidential information unless you know that is okay. It is a delicate balance between sharing information to advocate for your child's school needs and breaching confidentiality.
 - a. Please notify your CASA Supervisor regarding approval received for disclosure.
 - b. Please refer questions from caregivers, teachers, etc. to the social worker or child's attorney.
 - c. Teenage advocate children have greater privacy rights with regards to reproductive health. They can consent to medical examination, treatment, and birth control without notifying or getting permission from the social worker.

Any written reports from social workers, therapists, schools, etc. are to remain at the Child Advocates office. If you are sent or given court or other reports or documents regarding your child, **please send them to the office where they will be placed in your child's file.**

Please see Social Media Policy re confidentiality and social media.

Contact your CASA Supervisor for any clarifying or situational questions!