



MONDAY MORNING MEMO

Monday, September 17, 2007 ☞ Volume 2, Issue 13

CASA Program Directors Gather in East Greenbush



Christine Kiesel, CIP Manager

CASA Program Directors from around the state gathered last week at the Holiday Inn in East Greenbush to share successes and challenges. The meeting, co-sponsored by CASA: Advocates for Children of NYS (CASANYS) and the NYS Unified Court System CASA Assistance Program, was coordinated by CASANYS. Directors displayed both their knowledge of court rules and program standards as well as their creative and competitive spirits during a game of Basics Jeopardy. Christine Kiesel, Statewide Project Manager for the Child Welfare Court Improvement Project, presented on recent changes in child welfare law as well as the upcoming federal review. The next statewide meeting of the CASA Program Directors is slated for March 31-April 2, 2008.



☞☞☞ **NYS UCS Court Rules and Contract Primer** ☞☞☞

CASA Programs Required to Have Access to Legal Consult

§117.2 Program Requirements of the Rules of the Chief Administrator state that each CASA program “shall ensure that an attorney is available to provide its executive director and members of its board with legal consultation in matters regarding administration of the program.” Tight budgets often necessitate this consultation be pro bono, but many programs have had great success in procuring donated services from attorneys in their community.

As with most such requirements, it is good practice to have this service in place before you need it. A crisis is not the time to introduce an attorney to the CASA program’s functioning. Speaking with a few area attorneys, familiarizing them with your program and potential legal needs, assures that you will have support when necessary.



OASAS, OMH Form Task Force on Co-Occurring Disorders

This summer, the NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) Commissioner Karen M. Carpenter-Palumbo and Office of Mental Health (OMH) Commissioner Michael F. Hogan, Ph.D announced the creation of a statewide Task Force on Co-Occurring Disorders to better address the needs of individuals impacted by both chemical dependence and mental health issues.

While strategies for promoting the recovery of individuals with co-occurring mental health and chemical disorders currently do exist, many do not reach the necessary levels to address treatment of this population on a large scale. The Task Force on Co-Occurring Disorders will be charged with making recommendations for a more streamlined system of care for persons suffering from co-occurring disorders, with the goal of improving treatment outcomes and lessening costs due to unnecessary duplication of services. The Task Force's recommendations will be presented in a report this fall.

The Task Force on Co-Occurring Disorders will assist in the promotion of "Science to Practice," through an assessment of the current systems of care within OMH and OASAS and the identification of improvements in the delivery of care and outcomes. The Task Force will focus initially on a wide range of individuals (from adolescents to older adults), and make recommendations on how to better address the particular needs of those with co-occurring disorders.

Resources

National Adoption Month Resources for November

November is National Adoption Month, a time set aside to raise awareness about the need for adoptive parents for children and youth in foster care. The Child Welfare Information Gateway website offers a host of information about adoption, including explanations of different types of adoptions, techniques for preparing and supporting children and youth through the process, and post-adoption services. Go to www.childwelfare.gov/adoption for more information.

Commission Study on Residential Facilities Released

This summer, the NYS Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities released a report on NYS Office of Mental Health (OMH) licensed Residential Treatment Facilities. Their study was undertaken to assess the impact of recent OMH initiatives in expanding appropriate and timely mental health care to every child, both in inpatient care and after discharge.

The study includes recommendations to OMH, and a response from the agency. To view the report, go to www.cqcapd.state.ny.us/OnlineReports/RTFfinal.pdf.



~~~~~ **The A-Train** ~~~~~

***Registration Openings for Individual Donor Appeals Training***

There are still openings to register for the Oct. 2-3 training “Individual Donor Appeals: The Cornerstone of Agency Fundraising.” The UCS-sponsored event, slated to be held in Saratoga Springs, is the second in a series of annual resource development trainings for Community Dispute Resolution Centers, Children’s Centers, Parent Education and CASA Programs by The Office of Alternative Dispute Resolution and Court Improvement Programs. Registration information was emailed to directors in August. For more information, contact Darlene Ward at 518-238-4360 or email [daward@courts.state.ny.us](mailto:daward@courts.state.ny.us).

***MHANYS Conference Focuses on Youth Transition Issues***

On October 26th, the Mental Health Association in NYS will be conducting a conference on Transition Issues of 16-24 year olds. The keynote speaker is David Woodlock, Director of the Bureau of Children’s Services at the NYS Office of Mental Health. For a full conference brochure and on line registration, go to [www.mhanys.org](http://www.mhanys.org).

***NYSDRA Hosts Workplace Conflict Management Conference***

The New York State Dispute Resolution Association is hosting a 2-day training conference for human resource, employee relations and dispute resolution professionals who are responsible for managing conflict in the workplace. Keynote speaker is Rita Mitchell, Director of Global Diversity and Work/Life Initiatives at Kodak. The training will be held Sept. 27-28 in New York City. For more information, go to [www.nysdra.org](http://www.nysdra.org).

***Training on Obtaining Accurate Information from Children***

The Central New York Psychological Association is holding a one-day workshop Friday, Oct. 19 in East Syracuse titled “Interviewing Children: How to Obtain Accurate Information.” The featured presenter is Dr. Stephen J. Ceci, professor of developmental psychology at Cornell University. Online registration is available at [www.cnypa.net/workshop.html](http://www.cnypa.net/workshop.html). More information can be obtained by emailing Dr. Sandy Smith at [drsansmi@twcnny.rrr.com](mailto:drsansmi@twcnny.rrr.com).

***Southern Tier CASA Training Postponed***

A training slated for Sept. 27-28 by CASA of the Southern Tier on “Healthy Beginnings: Creating Positive Attachments in Children” has been postponed to the spring. For more information, contact [casasoutherntier@aol.com](mailto:casasoutherntier@aol.com).



# CASA ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## Successes



*Winning Team:* The **Essex County CASA's** namesake Junior League team won the Ticonderoga Junior League Championship this year, with a 12-7 score in the final game. According to **Wendy Wintle**, CASA of Essex County Program Director, the team raised awareness of the CASA program and provided a fun activity for area 13 to 15 year olds. The program became a sponsor of the team this year, and the team proudly displays its CASA name on its red shirts. Truly a family affair, the director's husband, Larry Wintle, Jr., serves as the team's coach. Larry, by day, is Assistant Plant Manager at Agri-mark/Cabot in Middlebury, Vermont and coaches junior varsity and junior league baseball, in addition to competition body building.

### ***Sullivan County Sponsors Family Fun Day***

Sullivan County CASA raised more than \$2,000 at a Penny Social held at the Elks Lodge in August. A total of 75 children attended along with foster parents, county workers and parents. Every child received a toy, and 21 donated bicycles were given away. The area Foster Parent Association presented an award to Lily Hendrickson, CASA Director, this month in appreciation for her ongoing support of children in foster homes, and for extending the invitation to their children for Family Fun Day.

In addition, last month a child on a CASA case received a laptop from an anonymous donor through the CASA Program.

## Quote of the Week

"We are continually faced with a series of great opportunities brilliantly disguised as insoluble problems."

*- John W. Gardner*

*This is a publication of the*  
**NYS Unified Court System, Office of Court Administration, Division of Court Operations**  
**Court Appointed Special Advocates Assistance Program**  
*For further information, contact:*  
**Darlene Ward, Statewide Program Manager**  
**98 Niver Street, Cohoes, New York 12047**  
**Phone: (518) 238-4360; Fax: (518) 238-2951**  
**Email: [daward@courts.state.ny.us](mailto:daward@courts.state.ny.us) / Website: [www.nycourts.gov/ip/casa/](http://www.nycourts.gov/ip/casa/)**