



CONFIDENTIALITY

CASAs have access to more confidential material than most other adults involved in their 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*. California CASA standards require that "all information concerning children and families in the juvenile court process is confidential." The role of the advocate is to investigate, i.e. gather information from pertinent individuals, not share confidential information; it is a delicate balance between sharing information to advocate for your child's needs and breaching confidentiality.

What does this mean? How should CASAs protect the confidentiality of their child?

1. Do not introduce your advocate child to others as a foster youth. Introduce him or her (first name only) as a friend or mentee without mention the court system or any specifics of the case.
2. Do not post to social media any identifying information, e.g. full name, face photos, photos identifying school name or addresses, etc. *See Social Media Policy for complete guidelines.*
3. Do not discuss your case with non-approved parties, e.g. your friends, partners, relatives.
 - a. Approved Parties: CASV Staff, CASA Mentors, other CASAs, Social Workers, and Child's Attorney.
 - b. Potentially Approved Parties: while you are not to divulge information to caregivers, teachers, therapists, or other people who might have contact with your child, there are situations in which it may be in the best interests of the child so that better services can be provided. You must first get permission from the social worker/attorney to disclose confidential information.
 - i. Please refer case-specific questions from caregivers, teachers, etc. to the social worker/attorney.
 - ii. You may make informational calls to find out about accessing resources, however, you should not use identifying information. Ask generally if they give discounts for foster youth; if yes, get permission from the social worker/attorney to disclose details.
 - iii. The best policy is to check with the social worker/attorney 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.
 - iv. Please keep your supervisor updated decisions to disclose.
4. Do not disclose information regarding your teenage advocate child's reproductive health.
 - a. Teenage advocate children have greater privacy rights with regards to their reproductive health.
 - i. They can consent to medical examination, treatment, and birth control without notifying or getting permission from the social worker.
 - ii. You can take them to Planned Parenthood without needing permission.
5. Do not keep any written reports from social workers, therapists, schools, etc. They are to remain at the CASV office.
 - a. 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 record on CASA Tracker.
6. Do not allow others access to any personal records, such as a journal, log, or other record of your activities and contacts with your advocate child and others involved in the case, please keep it in a locked location or password protected.
 - a. Please ensure that monthly and court reports are never accessible to anyone other than yourself. If you share a computer, password protect the report. If you share an email account, delete the sent email after you've received confirmation that your CASA Supervisor has received it.

Never hesitate to contact your supervisor for any clarifying or situational questions!