



Lynn Klionsky <lklionsky@casamercer.org>

Your CASA Volunteer Newsletter

CASA for Children of Mercer and Burlington Counties <staff@casamercer.org>

Fri, Aug 19, 2016 at 10:00 AM

Reply-To: staff@casamercer.org

To: lklionsky@casamercer.org



CASA FOR CHILDREN OF MERCER AND BURLINGTON COUNTIES VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

August 16, 2016

**CASA for Children of Mercer
and Burlington Counties**

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Mercer County CASA Volunteer Helped Make Hoop Dreams Come True

All David* wanted to do was go to basketball camp. So his CASA Paul* researched and located a great camp for him.

Paul initially met some resistance from DCPD team members but was persistent and continued to advocate for David. He eventually was able to collaborate with other professionals on his case and got the job done!

The basketball camp that David attended, Hoop Group, is over fifty years old and has provided terrific skills training and life experience to countless young people. David has never had a camp experience and seemed genuinely excited about the opportunity to spend five days away from home doing what he loves. And, judging from the glowing letter sent from the Camp Director, they were excited to have him there too. "David was awarded our most improved player for the week. This award goes to the camper who showed and put forth the most effort to become a better basketball player, attended all optional workouts and treated his teammates and coaches with respect. We thoroughly enjoyed having David at camp and hope to have him back for future sessions."

David is a 16 year old young man who, despite enormous challenges (has been in foster care for 5 years), has continued to show strong resilience and a desire to grow and step beyond his history. Prior to moving to his current foster/treatment home environment he was in four or five different foster homes, the last one causing a great disappointment as the foster parent reneged on his promise to adopt him. In the interim period he has rebounded and worked hard



**The heart of a volunteer
is not measured in size, but
by the depth
of the commitment to
make a difference
in the lives of others.**

Ines Ramirez
Farrah Seidler, MSS, LCSW
Teri Triano-Davis

to improve in school and take control of his life. His CASA, Paul, and ultimately, the rest of David's team, believed his hard work should be rewarded and that given his interest in basketball this five day overnight basketball camp would be a terrific indicator to him of how well he is doing. It was an important experience made possible through the tenacity of his caring CASA Volunteer. Thank you Paul!

Like Us on Facebook!



HAPPY AUGUST BIRTHDAY!

Advocates:

- Marlise Bickel
- Linda Blackburn
- Anne Bloomenthal
- Julius Clark
- Kimberly Delmonico
- Alice Eckel
- Kathleen McCaffrey
- Julia Poulos
- Yasmin Qazilbash
- Ellen Radow Sadat
- Ashima Saksena
- Melissa Tedeschi
- Eloise Wilson

Staff:

- Lynn Klionsky



Friday

*This story is true. The name of the child, and his CASA, have been changed slightly to ensure confidentiality.



Burlington County CASA Volunteer Speaks Up and Makes a Difference at School

Maria* (11) was removed from her mother's care when she was 9 years old.

There had been multiple referrals to DCP&P since Maria

was an infant.

Maria was removed from her mother's care in 2014 after her mother had been driving intoxicated with Maria in the car.

When Maria came into care, she had undiagnosed ADHD. Her Burlington County CASA, Terry* noticed her inability to focus and recommended Maria see a psychiatrist for diagnosis. Maria was eventually seen by a neurologist who diagnosed her with ADHD and prescribed Adderall to help her focus.

Additionally, Maria was having difficulty in school with reading and language arts. Terry spoke with the school regarding tutoring options for Maria. Maria then began receiving additional help from the school after school hours and while she remained slightly behind her classmates, she was working towards moving forward with these subjects.

Maria's mother successfully completed her substance abuse program and parenting classes. Maria was reunified with her mother 17 months after her initial placement. During those 17 months, Terry, her Burlington County CASA, was instrumental in gaining the proper mental health evaluations for Maria, and for obtaining assistance with her education. Thank you Terry!

*This story is true. The name of the child, and her CASA, have been changed slightly to ensure confidentiality.

Sept. 9, 2016 AGING OUT SEMINAR

9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Rutgers Eco Complex

Bordentown, NJ

[CLICK HERE FOR
COMPLETE FLYER!](#)

Questions?

Email [Jillian Bonacci](#)

or [Ines Ramirez](#)



Drop By, Let's Meet!

Stop in to see Katherine in your local office every other Friday morning. Exchange ideas and get to know one another over coffee and light refreshments!

Schedule for Mercer Office:

8/19/16: 9:30 am - Noon; 9/2/16: 9:30 am - Noon
And, continuing every other Friday until further notice!

Schedule for Burlington Office:

8/26/16: 9:30 am - Noon; 9/9/16: 9:30 am - Noon
And, continuing every other Friday, until further notice!

In Service Trainings



Burlington County Air and Share Monday, 8/22/16, 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Jury Assembly Room, Burlington County Courthouse

Share tips that have helped you navigate the DCP&P, court and education system.

If numbers allow we will break the group in to areas of focus. Light supper will be served. RSVP to your case supervisor or [CLICK HERE](#).



NJFC Scholars Program Tuesday, 9/20/16, 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Mercer Office, 1450 Parkside Ave., Suite 22, Ewing, NJ

NJFC Scholars will be here to discuss the program and answer questions. Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS), in partnership with the Department of Children and Families (DCF), provides educational assistance for post high school education through the New Jersey Foster Care (NJFC) Scholars Program. RSVP to your case supervisor or [CLICK HERE](#).



Tuesday, October 17, 2016

New Jersey Children's System of Care Statewide Conference

The Impact of Identity: The New Jersey Story

[CLICK HERE](#) to view complete flyer.



Community Outreach Volunteers Needed!

Under the direction of the Mercer and Burlington Advocate Recruiters the "Community Outreach Volunteer" will assist the Advocate Recruiter by bringing the perspective of an active volunteer to the process of recruiting new advocates. The involvement of volunteers in this role extends the ability of the

program to reach more community members and increase community understanding of program needs.

Qualifications:

- Knowledge of CASA mission, program and goals a must
- Must be comfortable staffing community booths and speaking to community groups
- Available to travel locally and attend community events
- Training Required
- Availability: Schedule varies

Responsibilities:

- Receive and circulate or distribute CASA flyers and posters in the community.
- Attend community events and volunteer fairs on weekends or evenings, independently or with CASA staff, to promote CASA and encourage new applicants.
- Accompany the Advocate Recruiter to speaking engagements or information sessions as requested.
- Provide feedback and advice to CASA concerning the recruitment of new volunteers and retention of all volunteers by creating methods, strategies and plans.
- When requested, serve on recruitment committees or focus groups to develop long and short term recruitment goals.
- Assist in the redesign of posters and brochures.
- Help to plan and attend volunteer retention and recruitment events.
- Secure speaking engagements and community event participation for CASA.

Interested? Please email [Jill Duffy](#) or [Harry Cassidy](#) for more information!

**Do you know someone
who would make a
great CASA?**

**Let them know about
our upcoming
Information Sessions!**



MERCER COUNTY INFORMATION SESSIONS:

Wednesday, September 7, 2016: 10:00 am

Tuesday, September 13, 2016: 5:30 pm

RSVP to Jill at 609-434-0050

BURLINGTON COUNTY INFORMATION SESSIONS:

Tuesday, September 20, 2016: 5:00 pm

Wednesday, September 21, 2016: 10:00 am

RSVP to Harry at 609-265-2222

Volunteer Resources



Mercer County Youth Fire-Setter Intervention Program

Curiosity about fire is natural...setting fire is not.

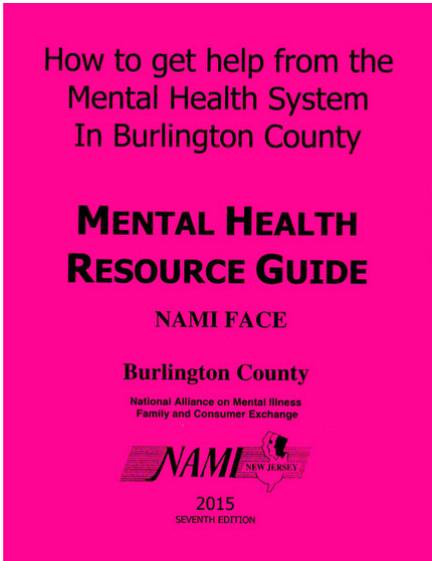
Download the brochure to find out Program Information including: What to do if you suspect your child of setting fire; Definitions of Fire-Setters; and Prevention

To view this important resource, [CLICK HERE!](#)

Burlington County Mental Health Resource Guide

This 56 Page Booklet is available at the Mt. Holly office and is stocked with important information on Mental Health resources in Burlington County.

Contact your case supervisor at 609-265-2222 if you would like to stop in and pick up a copy of this valuable resource.



**Something challenging you?
Something working for you?**



Ask a Question or Share a Successful Tip with fellow CASA Volunteers in this new section of your newsletter. [CLICK HERE](#) to send a tip or ask a question. We'll print responses in next issue!

1. How does an advocate go about putting in a request to One Simple Wish? For children who've experienced abuse, neglect and abandonment,

something as small as a ticket to the movies, a video game or a trip to an amusement park can make the world of a difference. One Simple Wish empowers people to bring joy to foster children in very simple yet meaningful ways. If your CASA child needs or wishes for something, contact your case supervisor and they will put the request through.

2. Ask caseworkers for their work cell. Case workers are often tough to get a hold of in the office because they are in the field. So asking them if they can give their cell is often helpful!

3. New Jersey Youth Resource Spot: There is now a helpful website for CASAs to go to for resources for their youth by county: www.njyrs.org

4. A word of advice about DCP&P: DCP&P workers are often overwhelmed and may only be in the office 1 or 2 days in the course of the week due to court, visits, training etc. It is up to us to set the tone. CASAs should be positive and expect that in return. Don't be demanding, but request information. If you find that you are not getting a response within 72 hours, let your case supervisor know and they will work from their end. Always educate your DCP&P caseworker on who you are, what CASA is, what our court order affords us. Never assume they know this already.

Emergency and Activity Bags Available for CASA Children:

Emergency Bags: To be used when a child is in crisis, removed from the home, enters foster care or enters a homeless or domestic violence shelter. Bags are customized by gender (when appropriate) and for the following age groups: Infant, 3-5, 6-8, 9-11, 12-18.

Activity Bags: Useful as an ice breaker if visiting your child for the first time, or anytime you feel it would benefit him or her. Bags are customized by gender (when appropriate) and for ages 3-5 or 6-8.

The Bag Project Mission: The Bag Project seeks to provide every child in crisis with a high-quality, age-appropriate bag filled with basic necessities and comfort items which they may not otherwise receive.

What's in a Bag: Although children's needs are greater than that which can fit in a bag, a bag filled with necessities and comfort items is a start. It shows them that they matter, and that someone cares. Now they have a few items of their own, and a bag in which to put them. Anupa S. Wijaya, M.S., Executive Director, The Bag Project www.thebagproject.org

We have a complete list of items in each bag.

Please feel free to stop by the Mercer or Burlington County offices to pick one up, or call your case supervisor if you have any questions at all!



Important Reminders

Emails for Advocates:

If you would like a CASA email, please let your case supervisor know. The CASA email is run through Gmail so you can access it on any computer or smart phone. @casamercer.org

Shop AmazonSmile.com!

If you do any shopping via Amazon, please access it via Smile.Amazon.com. It's the same shopping, but by designating Court Appointed Special Advocates of Mercer County, Inc. as your charity, they will donate a percentage of your purchase directly to us. It's a donation everytime you make a purchase!

StandUp
for a child

**StandUp for a Child 2016
Comedy Event
October 15, 2016**

Invitations coming soon!

Moving? Sprucing up for fall?

We're looking for a few furniture items for our offices. If you, your employer, or someone you know has any of the following items they would like to donate, please let us know!

- ◆ Kitchen shelving unit to hold microwave and toaster oven.
- ◆ Small, round table (48" or 60")
- ◆ Large Bookshelf Units

View this newsletter on our website!
www.casamercer.org www.casaofburlingtoncounty.org

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