



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

**THE NATIONAL COURT APPOINTED
SPECIAL ADVOCATE ASSOCIATION**

Flex-Learning Edition

2018 Version 2

Volunteer Manual

SESSION 5: WRAPPING UP—THE REDD CASE

SESSION 4:

Achieving Permanence— The Amarillo Case

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Online Learning

Activity 5.1: The Redd Case

Your pre-service training is nearly complete! In this last chapter you will now have the chance to use all of the information, skills and knowledge you have gained throughout the volunteer training program to complete an online case study.

Step 1: Read through the case file on Redd. The case will take you approximately two hours to complete. As you go, ask questions you may have in the Redd Case Q&A discussion board.

Step 2: Using the local court report template your facilitator provides, prepare a CASA/GAL court report for the Redd case. Spend no more than 60-90 minutes completing the court report. You will then upload your completed court report as a Word document in the Discussion thread titled “Redd Case Peer Review”.

Online Learning

Activity 5.2: The Redd Case Peer Review

Step 1: On Day 5 of the week, upload your completed court report as a Word Document to the Discussion thread titled, “Redd Case Peer Review”. Please upload your review before reading other reviews written by your classmates.

Step 2: Your facilitator will have posted a list indicating which classmate’s court report you are now going to read and review. Please check for that list in the announcements or in the initial discussion post to ensure you are reviewing the correct court report.

Step 3: Download your designated classmate’s court report and read it. By Day 6, reply to their post in the discussion, answering the following questions as it relates to their case that you reviewed:

What did they do well? What did you like about the way they worded a particular section, or included something you may have forgotten?

What are some additional questions could they have posed to some of the key players in the case? How would these questions have helped their information gathering for this case?

What recommendations did they make in this case that you did not make? What are your thoughts on their recommendations? Why do some people make different recommendations?

Remember: stay positive and instructive. We can all learn from the ideas and recommendations of others.

Step 4: During the in-person session, you will have current volunteers speak to your class. What questions do you have for them? They will discuss the following items. Do you have any questions on these topics? Please post them in the parking lot before you leave the online session.

In-Person Training

Activity 5.3: Redd Case Debrief

The Redd case is your opportunity to apply independently what you've learned throughout the course of this training.

Step 1: Having completed the interactive online case study, come together in small groups to talk about your experience. The following questions are designed to assist your small group in structuring conversations around your experiences on the Redd case:

- What were two or three of the top issues that needed to be addressed in the Redd case?
- What were some of the major challenges you faced as you made your way through this case on your own?
- What are some additional questions you might have posed to some of the key players in the case? How would these questions have helped your information gathering for this case?
- What recommendations did you make for this case? Did anyone in your group have recommendations that you didn't make? Why do you think different people looking at the same case might make different recommendations?
- Did anything surprise you about this case?

If you were to go through this case again, what (if anything) might you do differently?

Step 2: In the large group, continue to discuss these questions and address how you applied the skills and knowledge you learned throughout training to the Redd case. Then listen as the facilitator shares information pertinent to working cases in your local area.

Step 3: The facilitator will return your court report for the Redd case with feedback. Take a few moments to review these comments. Then, in the large group, discuss the following questions about court report writing:

- Why is it important to ask the right questions?
- What are some of the key elements of a court report?
- Why is it important to use fact-based statements in a court report?
- What is the difference between concerns/issues and recommendations?
- How do recommendations need to tie back into the body of the report?

In-Person Training

Review and Next Steps

Activity 5.4: General Review

Step 1: On the Post-it notes provided, write one question you have about each of the following topics: the CASA/GAL volunteer role, child welfare laws, cultural competence, working with children and families, communication skills and administrative policies and procedures. Once you've written your questions, post them on the corresponding flipcharts.

Step 2: Walk around the room, visiting each flipchart. If there are questions that you know the answers to based on your experience or based on this training, write the answer down on a Post-it and stick it next to the corresponding question on the flipchart. Continue to walk around the room to see if the question you posted has an answer to it; see what other questions and answers your fellow training participants posted. Then, in the large group, discuss any unanswered questions.

Activity 5.5: Expectations Review

Review the Expectations chart that you created during the first session. The facilitator will cross out each expectation that the class believes was met during the course of this training program. The facilitator will address—or make a plan to address—any remaining expectations.

In-Person Training

Activity 5.6: Guest Speaker—Current Volunteer

Listen as a current CASA/GAL volunteer describes his/her experiences:

- Receiving a court order or assignment
- Meeting a child
- Assessing a child's needs
- Building a relationship with CPS caseworkers
- Building a relationship with attorneys
- Following a case as it progresses
- Making recommendations in court (or, generally, how to act/speak up in court)
- How to persevere when times get tough
- How to organize materials
- How not to get too emotionally attached

Activity 5.7: Finding Support

Step 1: Turn to a partner and describe what kinds of support you think you'll need as a CASA/GAL volunteer.

Step 2: Recall the activity on CASA/GAL Volunteer Competencies Review that you have completed as part of Pre-Work. Recall that you had made plans to strengthen your competencies. You would need support to implement these plans. Share your ideas on what kinds of support you'll need. Then, listen as the facilitator describes the various sources of support you can expect during your work as a CASA/GAL volunteer.

In-Person Training

Support for CASA/GAL Volunteers

As a CASA/GAL volunteer, you need support in the work you do. Your work touches many disciplines—child abuse and neglect, criminal justice, child growth and development, family systems, social services and child welfare law. Few people are experts in all these fields. As CASA/GAL volunteers, you come from all walks of life and have various work and educational backgrounds. You are effective advocates because you work energetically and creatively to improve the lives of abused and neglected children. You need support and encouragement as you make recommendations to the court about what is in the best interests of the children for whom you advocate.

Program Staff Support

A strong relationship with program staff is vital; they will assign cases, monitor case progress, review reports and records and help solve problems. They can offer resources, answer questions and support you in your work.

In-Service Training

In-service training allows you to take advantage of opportunities for additional learning about the many facets of CASA/GAL volunteer work that are introduced in this core training curriculum. National CASA standards require 12 hours per year of in-service training. Local program staff will outline the resources available for in-service training.

Peer Relationships

Within program guidelines, working with other CASA/GAL volunteers is an effective way to strategize, problem-solve and get moral support in this work.

Self-Care/Personal Support Networks

Because of the time demands, stress and frustrations that can be part of CASA/GAL volunteer work, it is important to have social and emotional support and to take care of yourself so you don't burn out.

Following is a list of additional resources you can use to continue your education:

- Local, state and national website/newsletter/e-news
- Local resource lists
- National CASA website
- National CASA Facebook page
- Annual National CASA conference for staff and volunteers

In-Person Training

Activity 5.8: Next Steps

The facilitator and local program staff will explain additional logistical information regarding your program and what to expect as you begin your service as a CASA/GAL volunteer. You'll also find out when and how you'll be sworn in as CASA/GAL volunteers!

Wrap Up

Take a few moments to complete the Session 5 Training Evaluation.

Congratulations! And thanks for participating in this training!