

THE ART OF COACHING FOR VOLUNTEER RETENTION



*CASA volunteers
are ordinary people
who do extraordinary
work for children in the
child welfare system.*



STRENGTHENING THE VOICES OF CASA STATEWIDE

OUR VISION

We envision a safe and positive future for all Texas children.

OUR MISSION

The mission of Texas CASA is to support local CASA volunteer advocacy programs and to advocate for effective public policy for children in the child protection system.

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Dedication

Thank you to Wells Fargo for making this guidebook possible.

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STRENGTHENING THE VOICES OF CASA STATEWIDE

WELCOME

As new and exciting approaches in volunteer retention emerge in the nonprofit field, Texas CASA's goal is to ensure that you have the most up-to-date resources available to retain your program's volunteers. In this guide, you will find best practices and tools that will give you a new outlook on volunteer retention with the aim of shifting the CASA network towards a more volunteer-centered model of supervision.

With this new model, we envision programs that have no shortage of volunteers devoted to longtime service. We envision volunteers who are vibrant, well and full of purpose. We envision children benefitting from advocates who keep CASA work at the center of their lives year after year.

Case coach-supervisor is a term we use throughout this guide to emphasize our move beyond traditional case supervision to coaching, mentoring, supporting and actively cherishing CASA volunteers. We invite local CASA programs to begin using it to describe their staff tasked with this essential role.

This approach is being embraced by the most successful nonprofits around the country. CASA has an opportunity to be a leader and inspire a cultural shift in the case coach-supervisor-advocate model.

We want to see more CASA volunteers take on cases year after year, feel inspired and dedicated to this work, and make it a core part of their lives. I invite you to share this exciting moment of revisiting our approach to volunteer management.

Retention strategies are the practices and approaches that keep volunteers happy, connected and committed. If you're reading this, you are already practicing retention – this guide is designed to help elevate how you and your colleagues do so by delivering information, tools and shared definitions so all of the local CASA programs in Texas can move forward with a similar vision.

The #1 way to increase the CASA volunteer advocate base is to keep the current advocates. We hope as you read this guide that you, too, are excited about the practice of volunteer retention and the opportunity to transform supervision with coaching.

Yours,

Vicki Spriggs
Texas CASA CEO



The #1 way to increase the CASA volunteer advocate base is to keep the current advocates.

WORKGROUP COMMITTEE

Dear Coach Supervisor,

We have been privileged to serve on the committee for The Art of Coaching for Volunteer Retention. Over the course of two years, the committee brainstormed and discussed current retention and recruitment strategies, studied current trends in the volunteer marketplace, analyzed our own programs' retention practices and trends over the past five years, and together with the help of Texas CASA created a usable and practical guide to help us all find, train and retain our most valuable asset – amazing CASA volunteers. We are so excited to share this workbook with you.

Yours,

Workgroup Committee for
The Art of Coaching for Volunteer Retention



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CHAPTER 1

VOLUNTEERS: OUR ESSENTIAL HUMAN RESOURCES

GOALS

- Learn volunteer demographics in the U.S., Texas, and CASA programs
- Learn to connect with new recruits' core personal values
- Know the three core factors that motivate volunteers
- Use individual motivators to recognize advocate efforts

OVERVIEW

A record number of people are volunteering in the United States. Interest and engagement in making contributions to our community wellbeing is robust. This is a great sign.

Across the board, however, a third of those who volunteer at a nonprofit in one year will not return the next year. In order to develop long-term advocates, we need to connect in meaningful, personal ways and learn who is volunteering today, how to know what motivates their service, and ways to recognize and appreciate them.



WHO ARE VOLUNTEERS, AND WHAT MOTIVATES THEM?



A rich culture of volunteerism exists in the United States. People across the age span and in both rural and urban areas volunteer regularly for the benefit of their greater communities. In 2013, a fourth of all Americans volunteered through an organization. 62.6 million Americans volunteered a total of 7.7 billion hours of their time. The estimated value of these service hours is \$173 billion.

However, around the country, more than a third of the people who volunteer at an organization one year do not volunteer again the next year. This staggering rate of turnover is a nationwide issue. We believe we can help reduce that turnover and want to equip all CASA staff with the understanding and skills to do so.

The reality is that we must be strategic and intentional to keep our talent pool strong year after year. Most of all, we must get to know our advocates personally and center our organizations on supporting and coaching them. Strong, caring relationships between volunteers, CASA staff and the organization that strives to meet their needs are the key to sustainable volunteering.

CASA is a premier volunteer opportunity, and CASA is already ahead of the curve. You are doing these things and doing them well! Keep it up, and use this guide to strengthen your practices and principles.

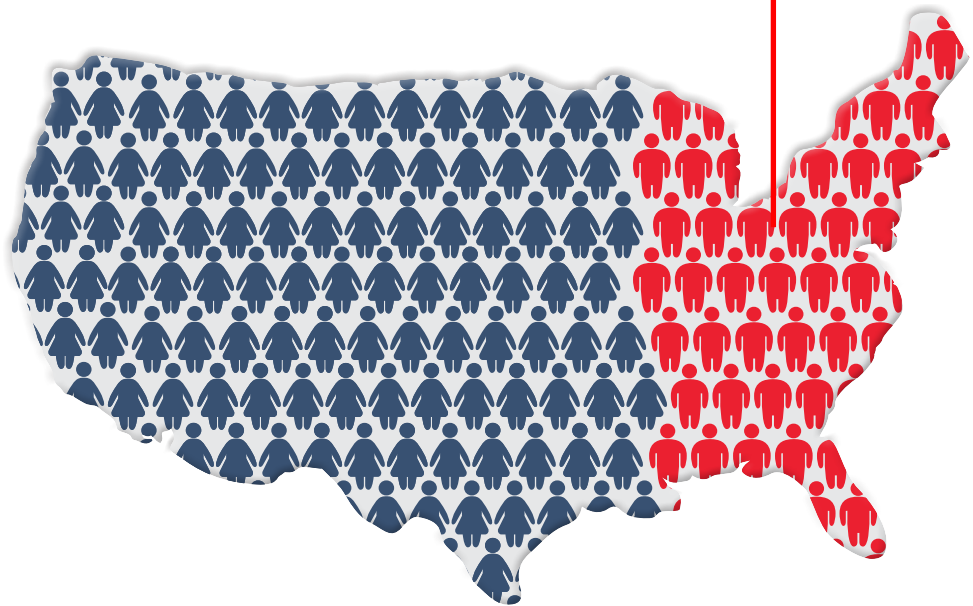
To think broadly about retaining advocates, let's take a look at who, exactly, is volunteering—and what motivates them.

IN THE UNITED STATES

- Women volunteer at a higher rate than men across all age groups.
- Of all age groups, 35- to 44-year-olds are most likely to volunteer (30.6 percent).
- More parents with school-aged children (33 percent) volunteer than their peers without children do (23 percent.)
- Working people volunteer more time than those who are retired.
- White people (27 percent) volunteer at a higher rate than other ethnic groups (between 15 and 19 percent).
- Among African-American, Hispanic, and Asian communities, each group does more than one-third of all their volunteering through religious organizations.

WHO IS VOLUNTEERING?

**In the United States
women volunteer at a
higher rate than men
across all age groups**



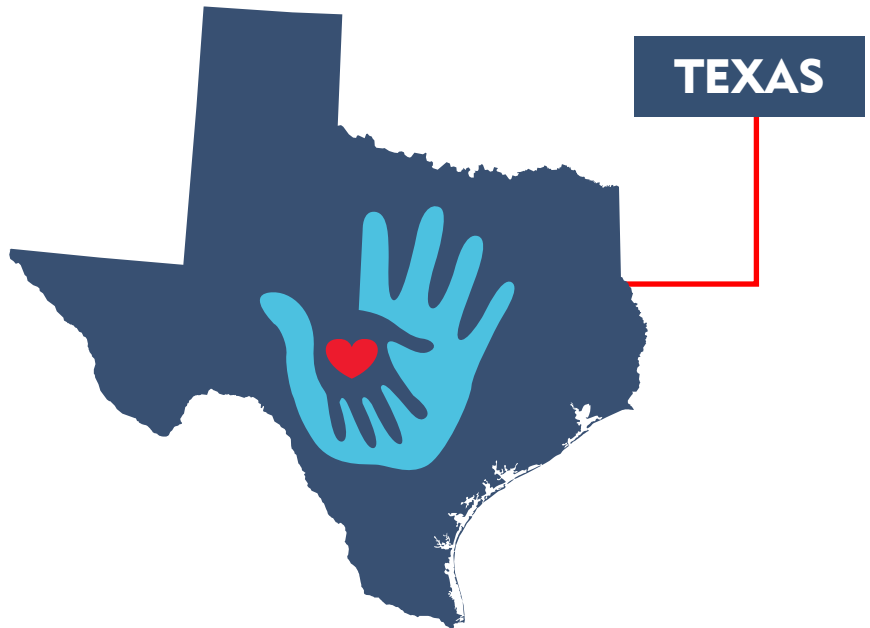
HOW CASA COMPARES NATIONALLY

- In the U.S., only 25 percent of nonprofits provide volunteers with training.
- Only 19 percent have paid staff trained to work with volunteers.
- These are two of the primary factors affecting volunteer satisfaction.
- CASA has both training and paid staff to work with volunteers at every agency.

(Data from Stanford Social Innovation Review, 2009)

VOLUNTEERING IN TEXAS AND IN CASA PROGRAMS

- 23.2 percent of Texas residents volunteered in 2014, ranking us 43rd among the 50 states and Washington, DC.
- 4.63 million people volunteered in 2014.
- Texas residents donated an average of 28.6 volunteer hours per person, per year.
- 572.1 million hours of service were donated, total.
- \$13.2 billion worth of service was contributed by volunteers.



CASA PROGRAMS IN TEXAS

We do not have rates on volunteer retention in CASA programs throughout Texas. We hope this guide will help change that. (In Appendix A, we offer math formulas to help you calculate retention and attrition rates within your program. Knowing when advocates leave and charting these trends can help you change them, as well as prepare for the future.)



- 8,476 total volunteers served with CASA programs in Texas in 2015.
- Of these, 83 percent were female and 17 percent were male.
- Volunteers 60 years of age and older make up the majority of CASA advocates in Texas (29 percent), followed by 50 to 59 years of age (23 percent), 40 to 49 years of age (19 percent), 30 to 39 years of age (15 percent) and 21 to 29 years of age (13 percent).
- The majority of CASA volunteers in Texas are white (74 percent), followed by Latino/a (14 percent), African American (8 percent) and Asian (2 percent).

(Data from the Corporation for National & Community Service and Texas CASA Annual Report)

THE REWARD OF RELATIONSHIPS

The value of a well-trained and effective CASA volunteer cannot be overstated. Keeping tenured advocates ensures that advocacy is high impact and life changing for the children served. Because of this, a volunteer-centered culture is a necessity. What inspires volunteers to do what they do?

Providing a nurturing relationship for a child in need is the number one most rewarding part of being a CASA (and our volunteers do that job admirably, as programs can attest to).

The Office of Survey Research at the University of Texas at Austin conducted a project to identify what CASA volunteers across Texas find rewarding in the work.

Ninety-six percent of CASA volunteers name their relationship with the child as rewarding. The relationship with a coach-supervisor comes in a close second, with 91 percent of our volunteers rating their relationship with the coach-supervisor as rewarding.

It is heartening to learn that the adult relationship is very significant. This is both a high honor and a tall order, to recognize the importance of our relationships as coach-supervisors in volunteers' lives.

“The value of a well-trained and effective CASA volunteer cannot be overstated.”

— Volunteer Retention Workgroup

96%

of volunteers report that their contact and work with the child(ren) is rewarding.



91%

of volunteers said their working relationship with their supervisor is rewarding.



84%

of volunteers report that their impact on court decisions is rewarding.

CONNECT AROUND VALUES

To deepen a potential volunteer's attachment to CASA, invite them to connect their personal values with our vision at the start.

Below, we list a variety of core values. Choose your top three. On the next page, write about your core values. Take the opportunity to do this exercise with your volunteers. Understanding your core values and those of your volunteers is essential for connecting and staying connected.

Use this exercise to guide a positive conversation and to inspire people to bond over what they care about most.



Core Values

Creativity Truth **Trust** **Service**
Compassion Resourcefulness Accountability
Inclusiveness Joyfulness Persistence
Loyalty **Love** Dignity **Wisdom**
Communication Vision **Justice**
GENEROUSITY *Honesty* *Freedom* *Gentleness*
Contribution Purposefulness Unity
RESPECT Honor Initiative *Caring*
Support **COURAGE** Partnership
Leadership FAIRNESS Innovation *Hope*
STRENGTH Cooperation **Integrity** *Gratitude*
Dependability Relationship Humility



What do I stand for?

I stand for _____ ,

_____ ,

and _____ ,

Signature: _____

GET TO KNOW YOUR VOLUNTEERS PERSONALLY

Statistics give us the big picture. But getting up close and personal with individual volunteers is the only way to really know why they stay or go – and to keep them engaged, motivated and energized.

With both new recruits and seasoned advocates, get to know them personally as well as possible. Let them get to know you as a unique person as well, not just as a coach, coach-supervisor or the holder of an organizational role.

Personality

- What makes them feel accomplished?
- What kind of recognition do they like to receive?
- Are they an introvert or an extrovert?
- What do they like most about themselves?
- What do they want to share?

Emotions

- What is most rewarding in their lives right now?
- What is most challenging in their lives right now?
- What brings them happiness, and what brings them sadness?
- What are the main emotions they bring to their CASA work?

Community

- What kind of family, friend or community support do they have?
- What kind of community were they raised in?
- What kind of people do they feel most comfortable with?
- Who can they bring in to join them in volunteering?
- What are they most proud of?

Self-Care

- What are their best self-care strategies?
- What kinds of music, books, movies, TV or sports do they like?
- What are their favorite foods and recreational activities?
- How do they recharge?

Regular, warm conversations that start with check-ins about the volunteer's life and wellbeing make good groundwork for a coaching relationship.



Coach-supervisors should ask volunteers...

- **Is your work interesting?**
- **Do you have the necessary tools to get the job done?**
- **Are there any problems with the work that I can help you with?"**

– Long-term CASA Volunteer

KNOW VOLUNTEERS' MOTIVATIONAL STYLES



Volunteers need to feel like their work is meaningful, of value and making a positive contribution. Beyond that, what factors really influence them to come back year after year?

We can look at volunteer motivation as motivated by three primary desires: the desire to achieve (to do something well), the desire for affiliation (with a group they admire) and the desire to experience power (the ability to influence events and people).

Three key motivators

Achievement: the desire to achieve excellence and to take pride in one's accomplishments.

Affiliation: the drive to fit in to a group and have strong, harmonious relationships.

Power: the desire for influence and control, and to see the impact of one's actions.

Use the chart on the next page to determine which motivational style reflects you best. Then think about your volunteers. Identify the main motivators for each volunteer, so you can match their motivational needs with the kind of recognition you provide.

(Also in Resources, p. 91)

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU

Motivational styles affect behavior, outlook on life, the roles a person would like to have, how they prefer to be recognized and how they work with others. These are guides to understanding others. Although a person may respond differently in a variety of situations, certain tendencies may be prevalent. These can provide some insight into why a person acts or responds as they do.

Types of Motivation	Personal Characteristics	Person Spends Time Thinking About	What Charges the Person's Battery?
Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellence • Aims for personal best • Takes risks • Unique accomplishments • Restless and innovative • Wants concrete feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing job better • Accomplishing the unusual • Advancing career • Attaining goals • Overcoming obstacles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire for excellence • A sense of importance • Accomplishments • Career advancement • Receiving feedback
Affiliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned with being liked and accepted in interpersonal relationships • Generates warm and friendly relationships • Includes others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wanting to be liked and ways to achieve it • Consoling or helping people • Warm and friendly relationships • Everyone's feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likes to be popular and well thought-of • Friendly relations and interaction • Dislikes being alone in work or play • Helping other people
Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upholds reputation • Seeks high position • Gives advice • Wants own ideas to predominate • Needs to influence others • Verbally fluent • Forceful, outspoken, hard-headed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influencing others • Use of influence to win arguments • Changing people • Increasing status and personal and professional authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading and giving advice • Prestige and recognition • Influencing people • Their own ideas • Prominence

(Source: Adapted from National 4-H Youth Development Program, National 4-H Council, Washington, D.C.)

RECOGNIZE VOLUNTEERS BY MOTIVATIONAL STYLE

Genuine appreciation and expressions of gratitude for volunteers is retention fuel.

It makes a program run. But what kind of recognition will motivate your volunteers best?

People's motivational styles generally fall into three main groups: achievement-oriented, affiliation-oriented, and power-oriented. For each group, a distinct type of recognition will inspire the best results. Altruism, compassion, care for children and desire to make a better world underlie most volunteers' motivations. Motivational style, however, describes a feature of personality. Understanding this will help you choose how to express thanks.

For **achievement-oriented volunteers**, ideal recognition:

- could come in the form of additional training or assignment to more challenging cases or tasks
- is best linked to very specific accomplishments that are noticed and celebrated
- uses phrasing such as "Best" or "Most"
- could employ certificates, plaques, pins and other external markers

For **affiliation-oriented volunteers**, recognition:

- might be the opportunity to speak publicly to the media
- might be a request that they represent CASA volunteers in the local region or at state-wide meetings or conferences
- could be given publicly in presence of peers, friends or family
- should come from executive leadership or on behalf of CASA as a whole
- could be a t-shirt, coffee mug, magnetic nametag or other CASA-branded items

For **power-oriented volunteers**, recognition:

- could reflect "promotion" or granting the volunteer greater access to leadership opportunities, authority or information
- should reference specific outcomes that they have helped achieve, such as influence on larger systems like CPS, the courts, residential treatment centers or foster homes
- should be announced to community at large, such as in the newsletter or at an awards ceremony
- is strongest when made by executive leadership or invited celebrity guests

If you are ever in doubt about how to recognize and appreciate a volunteer, ask them. They will give you good ideas. Some people love to talk in front of others and would be thrilled to get an award in public. Some find it embarrassing. An introvert may hate a press conference but love talking to a reporter one-on-one in a quiet environment.

IF YOUR VOLUNTEERS FEEL...

THEY DON'T HAVE THE POWER TO INFLUENCE CHANGE, REMIND THEM...

- Service providers place a great deal of trust in a volunteer's assessment.
- Advocates' points of view are given special attention with donors, the courts and children, because they are motivated by altruism.
- Advocates may be free to speak their minds, be honest, offer critique and problem-solve more than anyone else involved in a case.



“Remind volunteers that they are the only one standing at the bench who isn’t being paid to be there. They are the only ones who absolutely want to be there. The children know this. They know that their CASA is a volunteer who is there because they care, and that they have their full attention. This is an invaluable gift that the child will likely never forget.”

— Volunteer Retention Workgroup

1. Think about advocates that you want to put special effort into retaining for the long term. Write two concrete motivators and recognition methods for each volunteer.
2. Using a rate of \$20/hour, measure the total value of the estimated service hours donated to your organization by volunteers last year.

For example: "Last year, volunteers donated an estimated 550 hours of their time to our program. At an average rate of \$20/hour, that means volunteers donated a total of \$11,000 to our program in labor dollars."

Display this number on the wall so volunteers know the agency sees their work not as "free labor" but as a donation of concrete value.

3. Thank volunteers annually by noting how many hours they've put into their job, in print.
4. Create a photo wall on a bulletin board, to display staff and volunteer photos and names. Invite people to write positive attributes that they see in each person on the paper around their photo.



“We have to practice looking for strengths in our advocates – and in ourselves. We are all trained to look for what’s not working or what’s a problem. We need to truly practice another way.”

– Volunteer Retention Workgroup



CHAPTER 2

WHAT'S RECRUITMENT GOT TO DO WITH IT?

GOALS

- Use current advocates to recruit new candidates
- Recruit people with advocacy core competencies
- Try on different recruitment approaches
- Form a volunteer recruitment and retention committee
- Recruit in culturally diverse communities

OVERVIEW

The groundwork for retention is in recruitment. From initial contact to orientation and training, a warm personal touch and one-on-one connection during recruitment can inspire commitment over the long term.

We are upgrading from traditional recruitment to volunteer-centered recruitment strategies across the board.



WHAT'S RECRUITMENT GOT TO DO WITH RETENTION?

Recruitment is an ongoing, unending group activity that requires creativity, dedication, ingenuity and sheer grit. A recruitment plan aimed at long-term retention needs to have many facets organized in a comprehensive plan. All of these facets should have the warm, personal touch that we are striving for in our shifting approach to volunteer management.

Create a Compelling Verbal Message

Recruitment can, and should, be done by every person in your organization. Prepare people to recruit their friends and community members by helping them to design a short, compelling message that will excite and motivate new prospects to apply. Clear messages maximize the effectiveness of one-on-one recruiting.

The more clearly an advocate understands the benefit of their contribution from the start, the more likely they are to make it all the way through orientation and training to the first case – and the cases to follow.

A compelling message includes 4 elements:

- The statement of need (need of the clients, not agency)
- How the volunteer can uniquely help
- Position requirements
- Benefits to the volunteer

Use the example below to guide your own creation of a simple, compelling message.

Example: Adopt a Grandparent

Statement of need	Many elderly people in our community live lonely stretches without a warm smile or embrace.
How to help	Your family could volunteer to "adopt" one of these senior residents.
Position requirements	Volunteers commit to hosting at least 1 family dinner per month with their adopted senior resident for at least 1 year.
Benefits	The members of your family will experience some rare quality time together while learning from an older generation and giving an elder in our community a real lift.

Example: Become a CASA Volunteer

Statement of need	
How to help	
Position requirements	
Benefits	

WHO SHOULD WE FOCUS ON RECRUITING, AND HOW?

How people get involved has an effect on whether or not they stay involved over the long-term.

Recruit people you know.

About 41 percent of volunteers become involved with an organization after being asked to volunteer by someone they know personally who works in the organization.

Recruit people through your volunteers.

Nonprofits that use volunteers to recruit others one-on-one are best able to retain people over the long-term.

Recruit through faith-based communities.

More people volunteer through religious organizations than any other kind of organization in the United States. Seventy percent of these volunteers continue serving from one year to the next. African-American, Hispanic, and Asian communities do more than one-third of all their volunteering with religious groups.

Recruit in culturally diverse communities.

Build intentional, long-term relationships with culturally diverse communities. Seek to understand what would draw potential advocates to CASA service, and to offer a variety of volunteer opportunities.

Involve Coach-Supervisors in the Process

Case coach-supervisors/volunteer coaches are people, and all people have preferred ways of relating to others. Just as a small business owner with a staff of 20 would hire people with the attributes they could work with best, so too must case coach-supervisors have input on who they can best coach.

Nonprofits that use volunteers to recruit others one-on-one are best able to retain their volunteers over the long term.



TRY ON DIFFERENT RECRUITMENT APPROACHES

As we shift from a traditional recruitment style to a volunteer-centered one, we have a great opportunity to evaluate strategies and methods.

Strategies

Traditional

- Pre-defined roles based on what works for your program
- Recruitment done during regular business hours
- Roles are generic and “one size fits all”
- Agency is passive; volunteers fill out an application at a desk

Volunteer-Centered

- Has the feel of a personal invitation and relationship
- Recruiter delivers a compelling emotional message
- Can happen outside of business hours and office doors
- Targeted message and use of various media, especially social media
- Roles are customized (matched with interests and identities)



Methods

Warm Body Recruitment

Useful to attract the 41 percent of volunteers who will come forward of their own initiative.

- blanket a community with information
- distribute posters, brochures, notices in the media
- spread recruitment graphics via social media

Targeted Recruitment

Useful to approach a small audience such as religious congregation, community groups, and affinity-based meetings.

- fine-tuned speeches and handouts
- based on what would appeal to a particular targeted group
- refers the connection of need to the group, or the group's history of addressing the need in the larger community
- using the language and communication methods the group prefers

Sphere of Influence and Face-to-Face Recruitment

Useful to reach out to populations you are already in direct or indirect contact with. Face-to-face recruitment within the sphere of influence is the most effective method.

- approach friends and colleagues of your current volunteers, staff and board
- approach former clients, adoptive parents, their friends or relatives; former foster youth alumni
- approach people in your program's neighborhood



As we shift from a traditional recruitment style to a volunteer-centered one, we have a great opportunity to evaluate strategies and methods.

USE EVERY MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION – ESPECIALLY THE INTERNET

More and more people are using social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and LinkedIn to reach out to friends and family and to build community. Many Americans use social media differently and may respond to recruitment messaging differently based upon their age and generation. Vary the message and format, and review your recruitment materials with focus groups or surveys to find out which strategies and tones your audiences enjoy most.

What are some ways to reach a multigenerational audience?

Generation X, Y and Millennials:

- Expect invitations through Facebook and Eventbrite, rather than email
- Respond much faster to text messages than phone calls
- Merge the professional with the personal
- See personal information and experiences as news
- Need short, visually engaging messages
- Respond to videos
- Join Facebook groups
- Respond to irony or campy tones
- Want to connect with earlier generations for job opportunities and networking

Silent Generation and Baby Boomers:

- Respond to sincerity more than irony or campy tones
- Use email or phones for event planning and invitations
- Have more privacy concerns about social media than younger generations
- Like a relationship to be built by organizations prior to receiving any pitch



WAYS TO RECRUIT ONLINE



- Establish and maintain a presence on social media, including Facebook and Twitter (trusted volunteers can post on/manage these)
- Circulate cheerful recruitment emails amongst your contacts, encouraging people to forward them to friends and listservs
- Make sure your agency website is modern, clear and up-to-date
- Make sure your website has a clear, easy-to-read recruitment page
- Include a reply form on your website for people to enter their email address and phone numbers
- Follow up on candidates immediately by email, phone and text
- Involve an interested volunteer as quickly as possible, even if the next orientation is months away

“Our biggest challenge with regards to retention is our aging volunteer pool. We are attempting to recruit younger volunteers but in our service area this proves to be challenging. Currently, the largest reason for advocates leaving our program is personal health issues or a spouse with health issues.”

– Hill Country CASA, Kerrville, TX

FORM A VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION COMMITTEE

To keep recruitment and retention strong, form a committee to guide this work. Team members can be leadership, staff, board members and volunteers; a representative from the faith community; media or PR people; and volunteers and people who can't be an advocate but want to contribute. The committee should have both rural and urban representatives, as well as people of different generations.

Recruitment Committee Ideas

- Social media, social media, social media! Get Gen X and Millennial friends or family to create graphics and recruitment posts and share on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and other platforms.
- Determine which nonprofits you might partner with at their community events. Ask for a booth, or ask to present information to their constituents.
- List local religious organizations. Assign who contacts them based upon who has relationships there and ask to speak to congregations and meetings.
- Seek media coverage through letters to the editor, offering reporters invitation to CASA events, and offering press releases and newsworthy articles.
- Explore paid advertising opportunities like newspaper, radio, television, online, billboards, banners, etc. Request that the company who owns the media become a CASA sponsor and donate the space.

Retention Committee Ideas

- Conduct a survey of former and current volunteers to assess retention challenges.
- Use results of the survey to direct retention activities, and provide information to assist program leaders in identifying operational issues.
- Develop an annual calendar of activities. For example, the committee can send birthday cards and notes of appreciation to volunteers; elect a "volunteer of the month" and bring them flowers or cookies; include newsletter congratulations to acknowledge volunteer successes (CASA-related or not)
- Host quarterly appreciation events
- Create a special cozy, decorated "place to be" for volunteers in your office.

“We have a volunteer recognition dinner given by board members where an array of awards are given to volunteers, like:

- **“Falalalala Award” given to the volunteer with the most Christmas cheer;**
- **“Road Warrior Award” given to the volunteer who travels the farthest to see kids;**
- **“Longevity Award” given to the advocate that has been with the same program the longest;**
- **“Rookie of the Year Award” for the volunteer that has only been sworn in a year or less and is making strides on their case.**

We make up awards every year! Everyone leaves the dinner with something. I tell a CASA story to the board about almost everyone there so the board puts names with faces.”

— CASA of Southeast Texas, Beaumont, TX

“We are working on a major mail project with the local post office to target specific mail routes we believe could generate new volunteers.”

— CASA of Trinity Valley, Athens, TX

RECRUIT PEOPLE WHO BRING NEEDED COMPETENCIES AND SKILLS

All agencies need volunteers, and it can be tempting to take anyone who applies and meets our basic criteria. But when recruiting for retention, look hard at the qualities a potential volunteer will bring to the job.

Don't let the pressure to get new volunteers guide you into recruiting people who won't make sturdy long-term volunteers (that is, who advocate on more than two consecutive cases with the agency). Recruits need to bring a few core competencies from the start. Once you determine that they have these, your training and coaching efforts will build more.

Competencies are defined as an individual's demonstrated knowledge, skills, or attributes (KSAs) performed to a specific standard. Competencies are observable, behavioral acts that require a combination of KSAs to execute. Identifying competencies can help determine what questions to ask during an interview, which topics to cover at training, and what performance measures to evaluate annually.

Trying to determine the "right" competencies can be challenging, but is made easier by looking at what we already communicate and practice every day. If we examine our mission and purpose, analyze existing training curricula, review the CASA "job description" and have discussions with each other, they will become apparent without too much effort.



Competencies Chart

The chart below contains details for the six competency categories and the corresponding knowledge, skills and attributes (KSAs) that will assist CASA volunteers in being successful advocates for abused and neglected children. As a program, your goal will be to help each CASA volunteer grow in these competency areas as they work on their cases.

Competency Category	Knowledge, Skills And Attributes
Assertiveness	Voices concerns
	Confidently states position in oral and written communications
	Is persistent in pursuit of information
	Willing to challenge the status quo
Communication	Effectively articulates point of view
	Speaks and writes clearly and concisely
	Manages conflict effectively
	Treats others with dignity, respect and positive regard
	Is an active listener
	Is forthright
	Shares information appropriately
Cultural Competence	Is aware of and challenges own biases
	Is open to and respectful of other cultures, experiences and perspectives
	Is sensitive and responsive to different cultural circumstances
Sound Judgment	Sets own boundaries and respects the boundaries of others
	Maintains objectivity
	Anticipates and recognizes potential problems
	Avoids making assumptions
	Bases decisions on thorough review of all information
	Evaluates alternative decisions
Initiative	Works independently yet realizes the importance of collaboration
	Is action-oriented
	Is resourceful
	Is self-motivated
	Recognizes when to seek guidance and support
	Is innovative
Foundations of Knowledge	Abuse and Neglect
	Child Development
	Roles (CASA, Case Manager, Attorney, Therapist, etc.)
	Systems (CPS, Court, Education, Behavioral Health)

Volunteer Recruitment-to-Date Assessment Sheet

1. Identify (specifically) the last three actions taken to recruit volunteers for your program and answer the questions in the last two columns below:

Action – Describe briefly what was done, by whom, with what materials, etc.	How or why did you select this action?	What were the results?

2. List all the places – online and in the real world – in which you have registered your search for CASA volunteers. Put the date you last refreshed the posting.

Registry, Listing, etc.

Last refreshed on:

- 3.** Describe the ideal candidate for the CASA volunteer position.

4. Are there any special target groups you most want to recruit from (gender, ethnicity, age, education, etc.)? List.

Volunteer Recruitment-to-Date Assessment Sheet page 2

5. Thinking back over the last few years, what have been the most successful ways or places that you have found the types of volunteers you most want?

6. Why do you think people volunteer for CASA?

7. What do you think stops people from volunteering for CASA?

8. What would help you to be more successful in recruiting volunteers for CASA?

Information:

Materials and tools:

Training:



1. Have a gathering for advocates to which each advocate invites one friend. Prepare drinks and snacks. Provide games and enjoyment so that people can get to know each other and the agency.
2. Engage volunteer coach-supervisors about the qualities they are looking for in volunteers. What works? What doesn't? What kind of person do they look for, in particular?
3. Questions for Discussion: How have you laid the groundwork for retention in your recruitment strategies? What strategies does your program use to recruit in religious congregations or communities of color?





CHAPTER 3

NURTURING A VOLUNTEER-CENTERED CULTURE

GOALS

- Learn why a volunteer-centered culture is important
- Learn how to assess your organization
- Create a welcoming environment
- Encourage volunteer diversity

OVERVIEW

The coaching model works hand-in-hand with a volunteer-centered culture to create vibrant, self-sustaining organizations.

If we want an inclusive CASA culture that values volunteers above all, we must examine our organizations from within. Once we take a good look at our current priorities, we can assess our practices. We pay special attention to appreciation, welcome, wellness and how diverse volunteers are integrated across the agency.



WHAT IS A VOLUNTEER-CENTERED CULTURE?

If we place volunteers at the center of our priorities, the organization will be designed to fit the volunteer's needs, which will ultimately benefit everyone.

If we place the organization at the center of our priorities, our practices will benefit the organization's needs, but volunteers will be fit in and around them.

Five principles guide volunteer-centered organizations:

- Volunteers are real staff
- Volunteers are vital and valuable contributors (not free labor)
- Coaching-supervision means forming and maintaining good relationships
- Everyone should be available to help and mentor volunteers
- Support, recognition, evaluation and positive guidance are provided



Assess Your Organization

Many CASA programs already have a welcoming environment and a wide variety of positive practices in place, but there is also plenty of room to grow. Retention occurs when all the pieces are in place – “the result of meaningful volunteer work done by the right volunteer in a welcoming environment.”

To create the best possible environment for volunteer fulfillment, let's start with looking at the organization as a whole.

- How does your agency keep volunteers at the center?
- In addition to case/coach-supervisors, who is supporting volunteers?
- What is your volunteers' level of ownership of the mission and organization as a whole?
- Are volunteers integrated into your agency in roles beyond advocate?
- Are volunteers consulted and involved in big decision-making processes and strategic planning?
- Does your physical environment look and feel welcoming and celebratory of volunteers?

“[S]ome charities may supervise and communicate in a way that volunteer experiences feel too much like the grind of their daily jobs rather than an enjoyable avocation.”

– Volunteer Management

VOLUNTEER-CENTERED CULTURE CHECKLIST FOR PROGRAMS

The following is a list of attributes of a volunteer-centered culture. Take a look and honestly reflect on the questions. Share it with others and display it on a bulletin board as a reminder of the qualities your agency is striving for. If there are areas that need attention, make a plan for how to address them. (*Resources, p. 91*)

Check the box beside the statement(s) that apply to your program.

- ☐ Our mission is volunteer dependent. Staff-provided advocacy is inherently less valuable than advocacy provided by volunteers, and our program reflects this value through our engagement with volunteers, our policies and procedures, regular measures of volunteer satisfaction and adherence to related standards.
- ☐ We create a welcoming and supportive environment for our volunteers through positive interaction with all staff and board members. We have a well-maintained office with space and equipment dedicated to volunteer use. We respect and value the time our volunteers dedicate to our program and offer our assistance wherever and whenever needed.
- ☐ Our recruitment plan is team developed and implemented by many. Recruitment training is incorporated into staff time, board meetings and volunteer in-service. Care and consideration of the needs of prospective volunteers provide the foundation of our recruitment activities.
- ☐ Pre-service training is conducted regularly, and at times and locations convenient to participants. Staff members who work directly with volunteers participate in pre-service training. Our trainers have completed National CASA's Training of Facilitators for the National CASA Pre-Service Curriculum. Volunteers who have completed our pre-service training are prepared for the work of advocacy.
- ☐ Staff members who are competent in advocacy and volunteer management skills coach volunteers. Staff members regularly consult with coach-supervisors regarding their work with volunteers. Coaching includes effective methods of addressing conflict with volunteers, assessing performance and assuming ownership of a volunteer's tenure.
- ☐ Our leaders work proactively with stakeholders to assure volunteers are able to perform their duties without undue interference and are treated with respect.
- ☐ We regularly solicit feedback from our volunteers regarding their experiences with our program. We utilize this feedback to improve practice whenever possible.
- ☐ We understand the dynamics of secondary trauma when working with abused or neglected children and we offer support to our volunteers as appropriate – including periods without a case – when requested.
- ☐ We invest in our volunteers by encouraging them to play an increasing role in the success of our program through legislative advocacy, specialized advocacy service, advisory committees, mentoring roles and other alternative opportunities.
- ☐ We continuously recognize and extend our appreciation for the work of volunteers through our everyday interactions and special celebrations.

As you examine your agency, also take the opportunity to ask volunteers how they feel about these items.

“One day my coach-supervisor said, “You do such a nice job, I know I can trust you.” It was great to know she felt that way.”

— CASA Volunteer

EMBRACE VOLUNTEER DIVERSITY



At CASA, we actively recruit and recognize the value of a culturally diverse volunteer corps.

In order to support and welcome every volunteer equally, staff members should be culturally competent. This includes the ability to:

- value and support volunteers of any race and culture
- value and support volunteers of different age groups and generations
- value and support lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender volunteers
- value and support volunteers of differing political beliefs
- value and support volunteers of all religious and spiritual backgrounds
- have honest, open conversations about privilege and difference

As an organization, we work to address barriers to equity and diversity. Relevant trainings on cultural competency should be a priority for leadership, staff and volunteers. In situations where bias is suspected, take proactive action.

Leadership should first ensure that they, themselves, are as culturally competent as possible. Then, leadership should be confident that staff serve and support all volunteers without bias. Similarly, coach-supervisors should train on the subject and be confident that volunteers serve the children and families assigned to them without bias – or must reassign the case.

It's important not to wait until an incident occurs, but to protect CASA's work by regularly ensuring that everyone is on the same page, and thinking about diversity as a holistic value.

We never want to lose a volunteer because we've sent them into a case where biases impede their effectiveness. We never want to harm a child or family by exposing them to a biased advocate. We would never want to harm staff by allowing prejudicial speech or conduct to go unchecked in our programs.

If biases or negative beliefs about any other group surface from within the CASA community, offer the person education, training and coaching. If the biases and beliefs are persistent, your program should address it as the highest priority, with the potential removal of the volunteer or staff member from service.

Issues of Race, Religion and LGBT Inclusion Might Need Particular Attention

Many volunteers are motivated by moral and religious values. Ensure that staff and volunteers value all religions and people of other faiths equally, and do not prioritize people of their own religious faith or background. Faith-based intolerance is as destructive as any other bias.

Racism and poverty disproportionately impact families of color, leading to a disproportionate number of child welfare cases and removals from communities of color. This reflects a historical denial of resources and safety to these communities. Volunteers and staff should understand the impacts of systemic inequalities on the families they serve.

Equality, dignity and civil rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are values that programs, staff and volunteers should uphold. Demographics from the 2010 US Census show us that of 1.6 million adopted children in the U.S., gay and lesbian parents are raising 65,000, or 4 percent. About 14,000 foster children, or 3 percent of all foster children in the U.S., live with LGBT parents. It is important that CASA staff can welcome and support LGBTQ volunteers, and that volunteers are trained to work well with LGBTQ youth and parents.

The opportunity to learn from those with different life experiences is one of the great benefits of the CASA community.



VOLUNTEER SURVEY ON INCLUSION

This retention tool is getting the pulse and feedback from volunteer's satisfaction about the program. Do they feel like they are a valuable part of the team and helping moving the program's mission forward? What more can the program do to ensure that their volunteers are involved and connected?

These questions might be best asked in one-on-one conversation, or to stimulate conversation in a circle of volunteers.

1. What was the most important factor that motivated you to become a CASA, out of the following?
 - a. Personal achievement through helping others
 - b. Community affiliation of working with CASA organization
 - c. Using your power to make change
2. Do you feel you are included in the decision-making processes about your cases? About the CASA program you represent?
3. Do you feel that people respect, understand and welcome your culture, race, religion, sexual orientation or gender identity at your CASA program?
4. Do you see other people who share your identities when you come in?
5. Do you feel that there are enough celebrations, support and networking opportunities and social gatherings to keep volunteers connected?
6. Are you comfortable going to your coach-supervisor with case conflicts?
7. Do you feel your coach-supervisor supports you in every aspect of your efforts?
8. Does your office offer a comfortable place for volunteers to visit and work?
9. Does your office furnish needed resources and provide a warm welcome?
10. Do you understand the potential impacts of secondary trauma produced from working with abused and abandoned children?
11. Has your CASA coach-supervisor discussed secondary trauma with you, or offered you support? Would more support in this area be beneficial to you?
12. Have you considered leaving your CASA volunteer service?
13. If so, what could CASA do for you to have you reconsider and continue as a volunteer?
14. Has your volunteer experience up to this time been as rewarding and fulfilling as you had anticipated? Please list any issues/suggestions that help your program improve and/or serve better.

STAFF SURVEY ON INCLUSIVITY

Read each statement below. Based on your experience, rate your level of action on each continuum.

1. I advocate in an inclusive manner when I observe other colleagues, advocates or board members of my program engaging in behavior that shows cultural insensitivity, racial bias or prejudice.

5 FREQUENTLY 4 3 OCCASIONALLY 2 1 NOT AT ALL

2. I seek information from individuals, families, or others that will assist me in adapting services to the needs and preferences of culturally and ethnically diverse groups.

5 FREQUENTLY 4 3 OCCASIONALLY 2 1 NOT AT ALL

3. I implement my learning from professional development and workshop opportunities that enhance my knowledge and skills in the provision of services and supports to culturally, ethnically, racially and linguistically diverse groups.

5 FREQUENTLY 4 3 OCCASIONALLY 2 1 NOT AT ALL

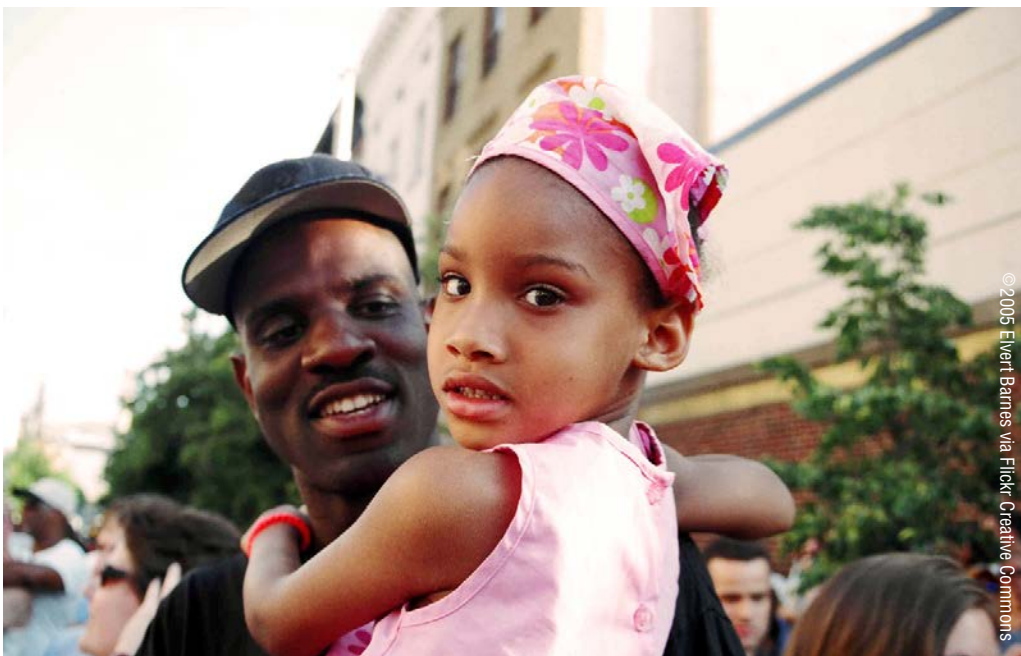
4. The actions I have taken to increase racial equity within my program have resulted in sustainable and measurable change.

5 FREQUENTLY 4 3 OCCASIONALLY 2 1 NOT AT ALL

Source: Austin ISD Cultural Proficiency Alliance, modified by Texas CASA



1. Look around the physical space of your offices. Is it safe, beautiful, warm and welcoming? How are volunteers pictured, reflected and celebrated visually? Are a variety of races, ages and genders depicted?
2. Bring your assessments from this chapter to staff meeting and discuss them.
3. Questions for group discussion: Are coach-supervisors comfortable and enthusiastic about working with people different from themselves? What challenges each person most, along the spectrum of difference?
4. Have a conversation that looks individually at how staff relate to LGBT, African-American, Latino/a, Asian and Native American volunteers. If biases affect supervision, what trainings will be implemented to fix this issue?
5. Research the trainings and materials available on increasing cultural competency and ending bias. For example, visit the website of the Center for the Elimination of Disparities and Disproportionalities at the Texas Health and Human Services Department.







CHAPTER 4

COACHING IS THE NEW SUPERVISION

GOALS

- Coach and encourage your team
- Understand volunteer worth
- Try tips from the leadership playbook
- Use positive language
- Embrace diversity

OVERVIEW

The coaching model is exciting. It's a fresh way of understanding relationships between CASA staff and volunteers – a way that we hope will be empowering for people on all sides of the table.

In a coaching model, the coach and the coachee are equals who bring different skill sets to an issue. The coach is a motivator, and works to help inspire the coachee to understand and use their particular strengths. A coaching model places equal emphasis on process as product. It is grounded in the belief that a positive and enjoyable process will result in the best possible product.

Coaching and supervision are two sides to the same coin. The two have to work together to be successful.

We believe that the coach-supervisor model will result in a greater volunteer retention and less attrition for CASA programs across the state.



COACHING YOUR VOLUNTEER TEAM

A coach-supervisor is a powerful role model who consistently demonstrates confidence in each individual.

- A coach is someone who helps you do something you cannot do by yourself
- The coaching relationship is one of equals, not a hierarchy
- The coach sets standards and assists in creating strategies
- The action and doing are the responsibility of the advocate

As coaches, we can engage volunteers in a dynamic process of growth, find out how they want to develop as human beings and advocates, and direct personalized attention to help fulfill their potential.

As coach-supervisors, we help volunteers stay on track, meet the requirements for service to their case, measure their performance, deal with problems and increase their skills.

The two roles go hand in hand.



Understanding Volunteer Worth

We employ volunteers because of the very special attributes they bring to this unique job:

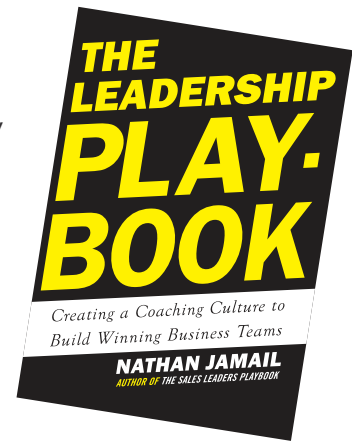
- community perspectives
- a wide range of backgrounds and experience
- professional skills from varied careers
- time and flexibility
- empathy, care and emotional resources

Our employment of volunteers isn't about lack of funds to hire staff, but is a deliberate choice to work with community members as advocates. We invest time, resources, staff, and recognition in cultivating their skills. They do hard work that has real value. This is value they donate to the cause. We embrace a coaching model in order to make the most of this value and to recognize how precious each person's participation really is.

Coaching Tips from the *Leadership Playbook*

We offer these tips from Nathan Jamail, author of the *Leadership Playbook: Creating a Coaching Culture to Build Winning Business Teams*, to stimulate your ideas about coaching.

1. Make the team more important than any individual.
2. Don't avoid conflict – use it!
3. Act before a response is needed.
4. Pay attention to top performers and focus on making more of them.
5. Mandate everybody to practice.



Let's look at these tips one by one and see how they apply to CASA programs.

1. Make the team more important than any individual.

People work most effectively when they are on a team – a team that allows space for individuality, and provides a set of reliable connections.

Find a way to create a team for your volunteers. Keep it human-sized. You could have three teams that comprise your entire coaching group and caseload, or one big team that breaks out into separate cohorts.

A good team helps foster creativity and ideas, share solutions, and maintain wellness. Facilitate a group email advice chain, a private Facebook group, cohorts that meet for coffee once a month, or groups that shares tasks.

CASAs have to process a lot of intense, sad information and upsetting truths. A team can support storytelling and empathetic listening for everyone's wellness. As in a family, team members learn about the other children (cases) and care about them. This breaks isolation and helps pool the resources of knowledge, compassion and skill.

2. Don't avoid conflict – use it!

Many of us are socialized to avoid conflict at all costs. But we give up an essential source of energy, information and forward motion when we do that. In the absence of healthy conflict, we can be pretty sure that not everyone is contributing ideas.

Volunteers need to be challenged. Coach-supervisors need to be challenged. Healthy conflict builds relationships, it doesn't end them.

When it arises, embrace it enthusiastically. Affirm that everyone is coming with good intentions. Appreciate the diversity of viewpoints and responses. Encourage people to share conflicts with the group.

3. Act before a response is needed.

If a coach has established a close and trusting rapport with each volunteer, no problems will come as a surprise. Here are some touchstones:

- Have discussed what you will do if a volunteer falls short of their responsibilities
- Tell the volunteer the amazing things you see them as being capable of
- Tell the volunteer exactly what needs to change and set a timeline
- Always coach, correct and teach, never criticize or punish

Most problems are simply a gap between what is expected and what is happening. Always address behavior and not personality. State clearly what needs to change without making comments about the volunteer's motives or feelings

Ask the volunteer to help identify reasons for the gap between expectation and reality. Specify what behavior you want to see and ask how you can support them in achieving it. Follow through and do everything you can to help with that change. Check in about the change for at least two meetings after the discussion, and be generous and honest with praise about each small step.

4. Pay attention to top performers and focus on making more of them.

The adage that 20 percent of the people do 80 percent of the work can play out at CASA and in any volunteer group.

Identify that talented 20 percent. Give your hard workers, long-term volunteers and talented advocates a proportional amount of your attention. Make sure that they are getting what they need, first. Consider the best returns on your coaching time investment.

Identify candidates in the 80 percent whom you think could be developed into top performers and retained. Using a two-year or three-year calendar, collaborate with the volunteer to choose skills that they would like to develop as a result of your coaching. Make calendar entries that map out the development of their skills and activities you will do together to help them grow. This will help them visualize themselves at CASA over time, and quantify the benefit of volunteering.

5. Mandate everyone to practice.

CASAs are constantly presented with new situations, people and choices to make. As a coach of your team, you can keep people curious and improving their skills by creating opportunities to practice together.

Harness the power of all the brains on your team to practice. Role play conversations and decisions that could confront them. One advocate plays the silent, angry child and another advocate plays the CASA who uses stuffed animals to create a rapport. Or one advocate plays the parent, and another plays the CASA or CPS worker who is discussing substance abuse treatment with the parent.

Let advocates try out their responses out loud in the circle of their team. Give them the collective task of finding the best paths to good outcomes.

USE POSITIVE LANGUAGE

Coaching is conversation. Language is a powerful way to shape reality. We created this list of verbs to avoid the phrase “using” volunteers. Tools are made to be used, not people. Add words of your own here to expand the list.



“20 percent of volunteers reported working with another volunteer. Out of those respondents, 91 percent said working with another volunteer was a good experience.”

— University of Texas
CASA Survey, 2008

ENCOURAGE PERSONAL SHARING

Encourage sharing by being open about feelings and what's going on in your own life. If you are overwhelmed or tired, you don't have to hide that from your volunteers. If you're happy or thrilled, don't hide that either. The goal is to truly be yourself and create an environment for your volunteers to do the same.

Prioritize Praise

Coaches catch people doing something right. Be ready to celebrate each step toward a goal, and to notice incremental progress. Praise and appreciative speech isn't just for the awards ceremony. It is woven into every interaction.

- Maintain a ratio of no less than 4:1 for praise to negative feedback, and when people are just starting out and learning, make it an 8:1 ratio.
- When you need to deliver critique, use the compliment sandwich for best results [praise] + [what needs changing] + [praise]

Reframe "NO" Language

A coach is always open to potential – their own, and the organization's, as well as their volunteers'. Reframing language when saying no can keep possibilities open and keep enthusiasm high. For example:

- Instead of "Sorry, but we don't have resources for that," try "We don't now, but we hope to in the future. Would you like to help look for resources?"
- Instead of "I'm too busy to talk right now," try, "I look forward to talking when my schedule opens up on Tuesday."
- Instead of "He doesn't have the skills to do that," say "He's getting closer, but he's not there quite yet."
- Instead of "You're not good at that task," try "You've developed other strengths. But this one could use some attention right now."
- Instead of "We can't," try "We choose not to right now."

Volunteers will pick up on your potential-based word choices and approach their cases with more positivity based on your example.

Critical Points for Relationship Building

As a coach-supervisor, you guide the calendar and hold the big picture. When a volunteer is sworn in, mark the date. Then fast forward in your calendar or datebook and make a note to recognize, check in with and celebrate your volunteers at each of these milestones:

- Supervision
- 1st week
- 60 days
- 90 days
- 6 months
- 1 year anniversary
- 2 year anniversary
- All annual anniversaries

Each of these moments represents a time when a volunteer might consider leaving service. Use the opportunity to express your gratitude and reflect on their impact. It can make all the difference.



1. Think of *that* volunteer, one you complain about or get frustrated with the most. Can you describe them only through their strengths? Brainstorm that person's assets. When you see them through a strengths-based perspective, do your feelings shift?
2. Group Activity: At a staff meeting, put the names of all volunteers in a hat. Choose one volunteer. List their strengths and the resources they bring to the agency.
3. What are the "Nos" or "Can'ts" you think or say often about yourself? List three. How could you rephrase them in positive, empowering language?
4. What are the "Nos" or "Can'ts" you think or say often about your volunteers, organization or community? List three. How could you rephrase them in positive, empowering language?



“Having a coach-supervisor gives me an opportunity to check things out, especially my feelings. I don’t often see the other volunteers and I can’t just talk to myself.”

– CASA Volunteer



CHAPTER 5

DEFINING CLEAR EXPECTATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

GOALS

- Communicate clearly about the advocate role
- Conduct application, screening and pre-service training
- Hold advocates to the minimum expectations of service
- Uphold the Volunteer Bill of Rights

OVERVIEW

The more clearly your expectations are defined for advocates, the more success they'll have meeting them.

Clear expectations and accountability steps will help them assess their own needs and know when to ask for coaching, support or respite.



DEFINING EXPECTATIONS

If you have high expectations you are likely to get good results. Most people have jobs that are too small for them and do not provide enough challenge. As a coach, you can define high expectations up front and establish a baseline for all of your volunteers to work toward.

Most overall expectations are covered in training, but when you begin a coach-supervisor relationship each person must agree on:

- Communication
- Job responsibilities
- Time expectations
- Minimum requirements
- Non-biased service

Although your volunteers will have gone through at least 30 hours of training, you will continue to train them for at least six months.

CASA upholds the expectation that we all – leadership, staff and volunteers – have a responsibility to hold each other and ourselves accountable.



“Everyone learns by doing. When someone gives away the answer, people often quickly forget. Instead of giving a volunteer an answer to a question, we try to ask them to research the answer themselves. We explain that they will learn more that way and the process will be helpful.”

— Volunteer Retention Committee

In Appendix 2: Resources and Forms, we have included a “Sample CASA Advocate Job Description” on p.104. It offers a fully built-out option that defines the purpose, responsibilities, requirements and qualifications for a CASA volunteer.

The specificity of the job description is very important so the potential volunteer can accurately assess whether they have the time and resources. This can also be expressed as a list.

CASA VOLUNTEER TASKS



The items listed below are the **tasks** that we expect CASA advocates to perform **at a minimum** in order fulfill their role as an advocate for a child in the foster care system.

- Review case records
- Research/gather information
- Participate in case staffings, family team meetings, court hearings and possibly FAPT meetings
- Establish rapport and relationships with parties in the case
- Establish rapport and a relationship with the child
- Meet with the child regularly (at least one time per month)
- Assess the child's physical, medical, behavioral, and educational needs (at least quarterly)
- Observe parent/child visits
- Monitor the child's placement
- Identify service needs
- Document all activities completed for the purpose of the case
- Submit monthly reports on the specified due date
- Contact CASA coach-supervisor on a monthly basis (at a minimum)
- Write a court report (if required) for each hearing
- Submit court reports 2 weeks prior to each hearing
- Complete a minimum of 12 hours of ongoing training each calendar year
- Comply with CASA policies and procedures
- Remain appointed until the case is closed

An expanded list gives even more detail to these responsibilities. Use the list on the next page to achieve clarity and to give exact definitions for each of the tasks.

VOLUNTEER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Minimum Expectations of Service to a Case

The advocate will:

- a. Identify and advocate for the best interest of the child by obtaining first hand a clear understanding of the needs and situation of the child, by conducting an ongoing review of all relevant documents and records and by interviewing the child, parents, social workers, teachers and other persons to determine the facts and circumstances of the child's situation.
- b. Have regular and sufficient in-person contact with the child where they live to ensure in-depth knowledge of the case and make fact-based recommendations to the court. The CASA volunteer shall meet in-person with the child once every thirty (30) days at a minimum. An exception may be granted:
 - i. If the child(ren) are placed more than 1 but less than 3 driving hours away, CASA will meet in person with the child(ren) at least once every three months.
 - ii. If the child(ren) are placed more than 3 driving hours away, CASA will meet in person with the child(ren) at least once every six months.
 - iii. In addition to in-person contact, have other types of monthly age appropriate contact with the child(ren) including telephone calls, emails, video conferencing and letters as applicable for the child's age and interests.
- c. Communicate with the DFPS caseworker after appointment and at least one time per month for the duration of the case.
- d. Meet in person with the child's primary placement provider, in a timely manner, after placement occurs. Communicate with the placement provider at least once per month thereafter for the duration of the child's case.
- e. Advocate for the child's best interests in the community through regular contact (at least quarterly) with attorney ad litem, mental health, educational and other community systems to assure that the child's needs in these areas are met and seek cooperative solutions by acting as a facilitator among parties.
- f. Determine the child(ren)'s permanent plan, access the educational portfolio and health passport and make recommendations regarding permanency, and education and medical services, as appropriate.
- g. Appear at all hearings to advocate for the child's best interests and provide testimony as needed.
- h. Provide at every hearing reports which include findings and recommendations, including specific recommendations for appropriate services for the child and, when appropriate, the child's family.

- i. Participate in all case-related meetings.
- j. Monitor implementation of service plans and court orders assuring that court-ordered services are implemented in a timely manner and that review hearings are held in accordance with the law.
- k. Inform the court promptly of important developments in the case through appropriate means as determined by court rules or statute.
- l. Maintain complete records about the case, including appointments, interviews and information gathered about the child and the child's life circumstances and return all records to the program after the case is closed.
- m. Communicate at least once monthly with CASA coach-supervisor and participate in case conferences as scheduled.
- n. Participate in in-service trainings.

Screening, Orientation and Pre-Service Training

You've got an interested candidate! Great! As you approach screening and the following steps, think about what kind of coach-supervisors will work with that person the best. A coach-supervisor is like a small business owner with 30 employees to manage and motivate. What kind of person is each most akin to, and able to communicate with best?

Screening helps determine if, and how, a candidate meets program requirements. It prevents an unqualified candidate from becoming a CASA and protects the children, the candidate, the program and the volunteers from liability or potential harm. It also creates rapport and is the first opportunity for coach-supervisors to bond with their potential new team members.

Each of us has a management style, and each volunteer has their own preferred management style, as well. We can describe these broadly as four orientations:

- **Relator** – Amiable, empathetic, makes warm bonds, attentive to feelings
- **Socializer** – Expressive, extroverted, communicator, attentive to groups
- **Thinker** – Analytical, logical, introverted, attentive to details
- **Director** – Visionary, driver, attentive to big picture



PRE/POST INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Below, we provide some tools programs can use in the screening process. Coach-supervisors can use them to determine which candidate is the best match for their team and their management style.

Reflective writing is a great tool for getting to know how a prospective volunteer thinks and feels. It's different from any other aspect of the interview process. Asking for responses to short answer questions will let you measure the process of change and growth that people have gone through during training.

Pre: Use the sample questions below prior to your face-to-face interview. Ask applicants to respond in writing.

Post: After pre-service training, provide applicants with same questions and ask for their new responses, or discuss each question in person. Use the results to inform the coach-supervisor.

CASA Applicant Reflection Questions

Please reflect upon the questions and write your thoughts in a few sentences for each question below.

1. What will you do to develop trust and respect with the children whose best interests you will be representing to the Court?
2. How will you learn what the children want, as well as what is in their best interests, other than simply asking them what they want?
3. What might you do to attempt to understand the parents, their limits, and their potential?
4. How will you go about encouraging parents to work toward accomplishing the things they need to do in order to be reunited with their children? How will you commend any progress they make?
5. What do the words reliance and consistency mean to you, in the context of a CASA guardian ad litem's relationship with the children of their case?
6. Generally speaking, what do you personally hope to accomplish as a CASA?
7. CASA promotes a positive inclusive environment for all who work and volunteer here, and for all of the unserved and underserved populations we work with. A commitment to supporting diversity is essential. Explain how your commitment to diversity has evolved over time.
8. Do you feel comfortable working with people of many races, ages, political beliefs, religions, sexual orientations and gender identities? For example do you feel like you can do a good job working with Muslims and Hindus, African-Americans, Latinos, Democrats, Republicans, and lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people?

CASA Applicant Scenario Questions

Use these questions to guide an applicant in thinking through some of the complexities that they might face during a term of service.

1. Two weeks into your first case, you realize that you haven't been able to accomplish everything required within the first month of your appointment as a CASA. Your life is very demanding and you can't imagine the next two to four weeks (and beyond) being any different. What will you do? How will you manage this problem?
2. Suppose that you have a very important Court hearing on your case scheduled for tomorrow – a hearing where placement decisions will be made. Your significant other calls to tell you that he/she has to fly to Hawaii on business at 8:30 in the morning, and you can go along. It will only be an overnight trip, but there will be at least a little personal time worked into the schedule. This has been your dream trip, and there may not be another chance for several years – what would you do?
3. The children on your case have been returned to their parents on a Return and Monitor basis (the Department still has legal custody of them, and you are still their CASA, but they are living at home on what could end up being either a temporary or a permanent basis). You take them out to the movies and dinner. When you return them home, nobody is there. You wait for a reasonable amount of time, and attempt to contact the parents by phone – but nobody returns, and your calls go unanswered. You take them for a ride, and return to the house, but still there is nobody at home. What do you do?
4. You are assigned to a case involving a lesbian couple and their child, and you feel strongly that no child should live in a home with non-heterosexual parents. In your view, their sexual orientation alone is grounds for removal. What do you do?



VOLUNTEER BILL OF RIGHTS

Alongside the myriad of ways that a program checks out prospective volunteers, remember that every volunteer is checking out the program. Use the Volunteer Bill of Rights as a starting point. Consider drafting your own Volunteer Bill of Rights for your organization. (Adapted from *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Recruiting and Managing Volunteers*)

Every volunteer has:

- The right to be treated as a co-worker, not just “free help”
- The right to a suitable assignment, with consideration for personal preference, temperament, life experience, education and employment background
- The right to know as much about the organization’s mission, its policies, its people and its programs
- The right to training for the job, thoughtfully planned and effectively presented
- The right to sound guidance and direction, by someone who is experienced, well-informed, patient and thoughtful
- The right to a place to work, orderly, designated, conducive to work and suitable for the job to be done
- The right to enhance skills and knowledge, through advancement to assignments of more responsibility
- The right to be heard, to have respect shown for comments and suggestions
- The right to recognition, through means of appreciation and by being treated as a bona fide co-worker

The coaching approach to accountability

One of the primary purposes of coaching is to provide a way to hold people accountable to their own goals. We all procrastinate. We all delay working on things that we are nervous about or that we could fail at.

A good coach recognizes the fears and blocks that may face volunteers, and talks about them proactively. This is especially important in the screening and training phase. If accountability issues arise, volunteers already know they will get help working through them, and what to expect in response.

Use the quarterly evaluation form to keep up-to-date on the service of each advocate.

CASA Volunteer QUARTERLY Evaluation Form

Completed by Coach-Supervisor

Name _____		Position _____			
Period of Evaluation _____		Number of Children Assigned _____			
Coach-supervisor _____					

Professionalism	Needs improvement	Fair	Good	Very Good	Superior
Understands purposes and goals of CASA					
Understands and complies with confidentiality in responsibilities to children, families and advocacy work					
Relates well with the public					
Exhibits poise in handling difficult situations					
Exhibits sincere interest and respect towards children, their families and advocacy work					
Holds self and others accountable to individual and organizational goals					
Is willing to challenge perceptions and engage in courageous conversations regarding race, gender, sexuality, age, religion, etc.					
Responsibility					
Reliable about schedule and time commitment					
Completes assignments in a timely fashion					
Pays attention to detail					
Willing to take on assignments					
Effectiveness					
Welcomes opportunities to learn information or procedures that will make work more effective					
Follows through on assignments					
Willing to ask questions when in doubt					
Gathers and facilitates sharing of information as appropriate					
Reports are fact-based and child-focused					
Benefits to staff working with this volunteer are:					
Benefits to program from this volunteer's skills, experience and knowledge are:					
Additional Comments					
Signature of Volunteer	Date				
Signature of Coach-Supervisor	Date				



1. Give your new advocates a copy of the Volunteer Bill of Rights. Ask them if there are any new rights or requests they would like to add.
2. Create a discussion circle with new volunteers. Ask them the following questions, and encourage them to talk about it with each other. Take notes on what each person shares about their accountability preferences.
 - a. How would you like me to hold you accountable for meeting the goals of your service?
 - a. If you are getting off track, how can I guide you in ways that will sound supportive rather than negative?
3. Invite your current advocates to a gathering to talk to new recruits about what they find most challenging and most rewarding in their cases.







CHAPTER 6

WHEN THINGS GET STUCK: MANAGING RISK AND TROUBLESHOOTING PROBLEMS

GOALS

- Know potential problems and take preventative measures
- Recognize the risks present for CASA programs and volunteers
- Learn ways to manage and mitigate risks
- Understand why good volunteers might do off-limits things

OVERVIEW

In the previous two chapters, we examined the **two complimentary aspects of your role: coach who inspires and motivates, and supervisor who defines expectations and holds people accountable.**

Bringing these two together and mixing in your own unique personality is the way to develop authentic, real, energized relationships with volunteers. Those real relationships are your number one asset in managing risks and troubleshooting problems. As coach-supervisor, you're engaging in rewarding connections where appreciation goes both ways.



MANAGING RISK

Real risks exist when managing volunteers, even when applicants are perfect for the role. Even when advocates have had years of successful CASA service, they can still slip into irresponsible behavior, become too attached to a certain child or take unnecessary risks.

Coach-supervisors need to be vigilant, follow gut feelings and intervene early, preferably before a problem can arise. Part of relationship building is knowing that there are times when you must directly and unapologetically supervise. Don't be afraid to take charge and hold people accountable. Being nice also involves being serious, being real, talking about problems and saying when things aren't working.

When problems do arise, emotional intelligence, good communication and staff willpower are needed. Let's take a look at some of the commonplace risks and trouble areas of CASA work.

Off-limits activities

There are no documented cases of crimes being committed against CASA volunteers during, or as a result of, their service. Volunteering is, by and large, a safe experience. That said, there are certain precautions that need to always be taken, and certain problems that will require troubleshooting.

The CASA volunteer does not engage in the following activities:

- taking a child to the volunteer's home or any home other than the child's
- giving legal advice or therapeutic counseling
- making placement arrangements for the child
- giving money or expensive gifts to the child, the child's family or the caregiver
- taking a child on an overnight outing
- other activities as defined by individual programs

There are three categories in which problems and risks arise in CASA service: regarding the safety of children, the safety of volunteers, and the safety of the organization as a whole.



SAFETY FOR CHILDREN, VOLUNTEERS, AND ORGANIZATION

Safety for children

The entire purpose of CASA work is to increase safety for children, and to assist in pursuing their best interests.

An example of a risk involving child safety is the issue of transportation. Volunteers who transport children in their cars take the risk of car accidents, of being alone with a child and vulnerable to claims of abuse, and of breaking boundaries with a child.

There's valid justification for the action. If you can't transport a child, it can impact their ability to bond. If you can't take the child out for ice cream, you may not be able to comfort them and help them relax. But the choice to transport children must always be weighed against the risks.

Both programs and volunteers balance risks and rewards to determine the safest course of action in the big picture.

Safety for volunteers

Many children in the system come from homes that experience poverty or substance use. This is not to say that the homes are dangerous, but volunteers need to use their gut feelings and not go into any environment where they don't feel safe.

On another note, volunteers may sometimes be drawn to service to children because in part, they have unresolved childhood trauma of their own. Compassion for others is often motivated by our own experiences of suffering, and wanting to prevent that or improve outcomes for others is natural. But that can also motivate problems of boundaries.

Permeable or broken boundaries are not safe for volunteers. It puts them at emotional risk, as well as puts the reputation of the organization at risk. These risks can be managed by careful training and frank conversations between coaches and volunteers.

Safety of the reputation of our organization and brand

The trust the public places in CASA is a huge resource – and is well-deserved. But being a national organization, any big problems, negative media attention, rumors or organizational vulnerabilities can filter both up and down.

New prospective volunteers have to go through a criminal background check, finger printing and questions they may have never encountered. It can feel like a very intrusive process, especially if they have not seen the less cheerful side of our world. But these measures are crucial to make sure that nothing takes place that could hurt a child or affect the good reputation CASA holds in the public eye.

Prevent problems by forming teams

Teams are an important part of risk management. Being connected to and observed by other volunteers helps people self-regulate their behavior. People are less likely to break rules or initiate boundary-breaking behavior if they are regularly checking in with peers. They can safely discuss any impulses they have, and hear good reasons for not following them from other volunteers.

Make sure someone is always available

In order to head off problems, someone needs to be a phone call away for volunteers, be it the director, coach-supervisor or other staff person. Volunteers need to know they have an outlet and can seek help, express their frustrations, ask for advice, or just vent their feelings. These conversations can reroute people away from inappropriate actions, recommend alternatives and/or prevent burnout. Provide advocates with an emergency number where someone from the program can be reached after office hours.



Recognize serious violations of policy

“Some violations of conduct may be so serious that a volunteer should be terminated immediately: appearing in court or making contacts while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol; offering drugs or alcohol to a child; any form of child abuse; or an intentional violation of a court order.

This is not an all-inclusive list, and it is up to each program to decide its own parameters. If termination becomes necessary, the coach-supervisor should document the reason in a letter to the volunteer, keeping a copy for the volunteer’s file. These files should be maintained permanently.” (Adapted from “Volunteer Supervision and Consultation,” National CASA)

“Some violations of conduct may be so serious that a volunteer should be terminated immediately...”

— from “Volunteer Supervision and Consultation” by National CASA



1. Create a buddy system by pairing a new volunteer with an experienced one.
2. Questions for discussion: How well do you think you know your volunteers? What do you consider a problem volunteer? How could you draw on your emotional intelligence to create a good outcome with them?
3. Role-play scenarios in which a volunteer is tempted to cross boundaries or break a CASA rule. Enlist other volunteers to persuade them not to.
4. Think about managers you've had in the past and the skills used by the ones you liked. What are the managerial skills you've appreciated most? How did they handle problems? How effective would their methods be in your CASA role?





CHAPTER 7

PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO COMPASSION FATIGUE AND SECONDARY PTSD

GOALS

- Understand and identify volunteer compassion fatigue and secondary Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Learn their impacts on staff and volunteers of Texas organizations serving child victims
- Examine wellness and support needs individually and as a group
- Consider methods of prevention and response
- Develop ways to support self-care and wellness for everyone in the organization

OVERVIEW

Volunteering can – and does – make people healthier. Advocacy can enrich life immeasurably. However, work in our field also carries a real possibility of secondary trauma and compassion fatigue.

Everyone working at CASA is vulnerable, whether through exposure to one difficult case or to cases over time. Coach-supervisors need to focus not only on how cases are proceeding but also on how advocates are handling the stress of the court system and the child's suffering. Open discussion of burnout and ongoing self-care initiatives are keys to retention, because they allow volunteers to process upsetting experiences in a supportive environment, rather than respond to them by leaving service.

Care and attention are needed on both an individual and organizational level to keep everyone well.



SELF-CARE AND WELLNESS NEEDS IN CASA PROGRAMS

The importance of creating self-care programs and emotional wellness support at CASA programs cannot be overstated, for both staff and advocates. A program that wishes to be sustainable and deliver the highest level of service must provide regular wellness and self-care activities. Prioritize these in both speech and action.

These actions have a positive effect on volunteer wellbeing:

- Creating opportunities to process the emotional impacts of cases and outcomes
- Providing regular sessions for advocates to debrief with counselors
- Reducing isolation by encouraging conversation about emotions
- Fostering an environment that also places value on recreation and rest
- Building work-life balance into staff expectations and time
- Offering wellness activities at least monthly
- Offering parties, outings and stress-free social activities
- Including articles about wellness, and compassion fatigue prevention and response in your newsletter

Identifying compassion fatigue in staff and volunteers

Compassion fatigue can make itself known in many ways. Here are the top three forms of impact, as described in "A Gecko's Guide to Building Resiliency in Child Abuse Staff & Volunteers," by the University of Texas Center for Social Work Research:

For Staff Working with Child Victims

- Negative attitudes (69%)
- Low energy (64%)
- Depression (59%)

For Volunteers Working with Child Victims

- Negative attitudes (49%)
- High turnover and depression (Both 35%)

Other signs of compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma include:

- Lack of, or poor boundaries when working with children and youth
- Anger and hopelessness
- Coming in early and staying late
- Absenteeism
- Revealing confidential information
- Developing overly personal relationships with clients
- Feeling personally responsible for client outcomes
- Lack of self-care such as poor diet, exercise and sleep
- Loss of hope and sense of meaning in life
- Experiencing more illness, fatigue and pain
- Feeling numb to some cases and overly involved in others

How can we prevent compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma?

Coaching of volunteers should include discussion of preventative approaches to the risks of compassion fatigue. The simple ABC formula is a tool coaches can bring up with volunteers, as well as a structure for conversation

A: awareness

- Enhance emotional intelligence and awareness of one's own feelings and limits
- Become aware of the signs of compassion fatigue in one's own mind and body

B: balance

- Nurture yourself and look for pleasure, joy and gratitude
- Attend to self-care, health, emotions, time away and maintaining hope
- Get enough sleep and preventative care for physical and psychological needs
- Get professional help when needed

C: connection

- Increase opportunities for peer support, processing and celebration
- Pair volunteers up so that no one is isolated with their own feelings
- Build connection activities in to the calendar throughout the year

“Burnout is the index of the dislocation between what people are and what they have to do. It represents an erosion in values, dignity, spirit, and will – an erosion of the human soul. It is a malady that spreads gradually and continuously over time, putting people into a downward spiral...”

— from *Supervising Volunteers* by
Jarene Lee and Julia Catagnus



COMPASSION FATIGUE SELF-TEST: AN ASSESSMENT

Use this assessment to help staff and volunteers assess their vulnerability to, or experience of, compassion fatigue.

Answer the questions below to the best of your knowledge. There is no right or wrong answer.

Assign each of your responses a number: 1 = Rarely True, 2 = Sometimes True, 3 = Often True

Add up your response numbers along the scale. Reflect on where you fall along the compassion fatigue scale.

1-15: Notice the strategies you use maintain a sustainable pace, and keep it up.
Seek to share what you know.

16-30: Observe the actions and thoughts that nourish you, rather than over-extend you.
Seek balance.

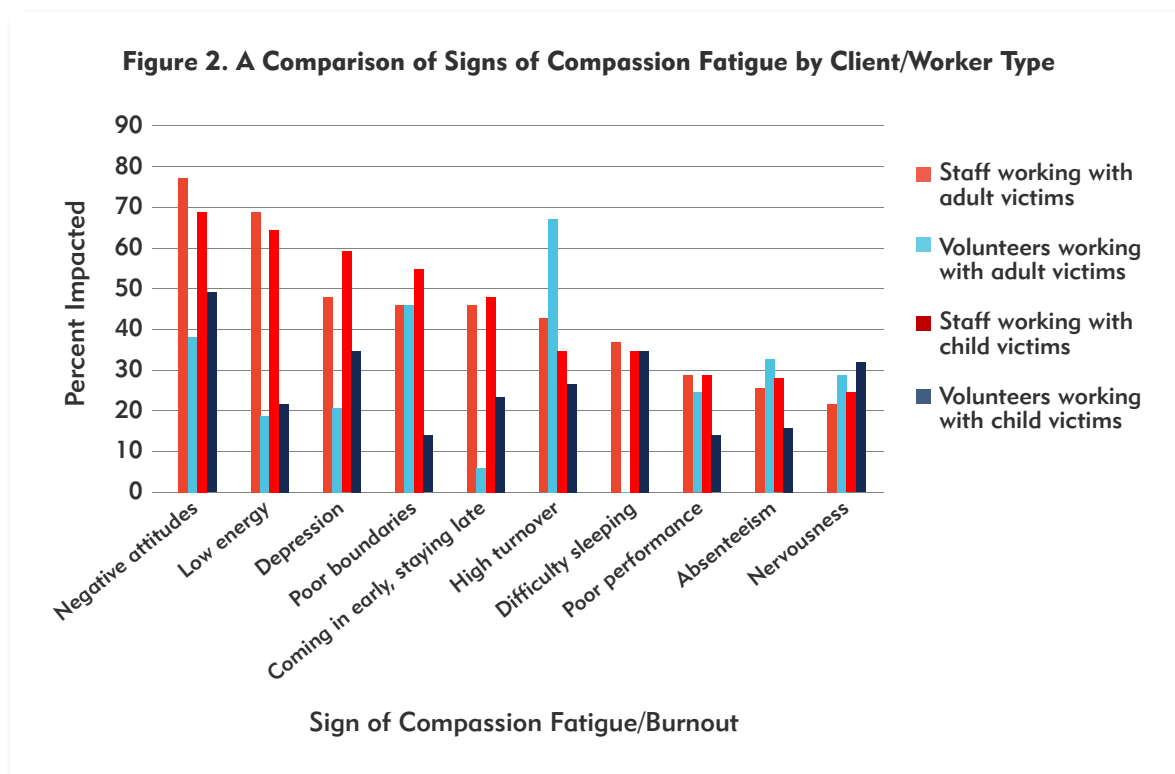
31-45: Slow down and gain distance from the work. Focus on self-care. Seek support.

-
1. _____ When people get upset, I try to smooth things out.
 2. _____ I am unable to listen to others' problems without trying to "fix" them and/or take away their pain.
 3. _____ My self-worth is determined by how others perceive me.
 4. _____ When I am exposed to conflict, I feel it is my fault.
 5. _____ I feel guilty when others are disappointed by my actions.
 6. _____ When I make a mistake, I tend to be extremely critical of myself. I have difficulty forgiving myself.
 7. _____ I usually don't know how I want others to treat me.
 8. _____ I don't usually tell people how I prefer to be treated.
 9. _____ My achievements define my self-worth.
 10. _____ I feel anxious in most situations involving confrontation.
 11. _____ In relationships, it is easier for me to "give" than to "receive."
 12. _____ I can be so focused on someone I am helping that I lose sight of my own perceptions, interests and desires.
 13. _____ It is hard for me to express sadness.
 14. _____ To make mistakes means that I am weak.
 15. _____ It is best to not "rock the boat" or "make waves."

(adapted from Compassion Fatigue Awareness Project, www.compassionfatigue.org)

Key Findings on Self-Care Initiatives for Staff & Volunteers at Programs Serving Victims of Interpersonal Violence in Texas

- “Self-care initiatives are formalized in only one-third of programs serving victims of interpersonal violence in Texas.
- Two-thirds of participants report that working with adult victims of interpersonal violence causes signs of burnout or compassion fatigue in their staff.
- Seventy-six percent of participants surveyed believe working with child victims of interpersonal violence causes signs of burnout or compassion fatigue in their staff.
- While the use of volunteers is highest in programs serving child victims, participants reported seeing signs of burnout and compassion fatigue in volunteers who work with adults and in those who work with children.
- Negative attitudes was the most frequent sign in staff and volunteers working with child victims.
- Participants are interested in more information and training on building in-house capacity for self-care, with interest from those serving child victims highest at 79 percent.”



– from “An Evaluation of the Need for Self-Care Programs in Agencies Serving Adult and Child Victims of Interpersonal Violence in Texas” by Noel Busch-Armendariz, Karen Kalergis and Jacqueline Garza (University of Texas at Austin School for Social Work)

SHIFT THE ROLE OF AN AFFECTED VOLUNTEER

Volunteers who show signs of burnout need to be encouraged (sometimes even required) to take a leave of absence from being an advocate. Don't make them feel rejected or isolated, though!

They need to be given more attention, care and belonging. If they want to stay, invite them to another volunteer role at the agency. Give them a different perspective – even helping with wellness and self-care initiatives.

According to Dr. Angie Panos, "Even Mother Theresa understood compassion fatigue, and wrote in her plan to her superiors that it was MANDATORY for her nuns to take an entire year off from their duties every 4-5 years to allow them to heal from the effects of their care-giving work." (from "Preventing Compassion Fatigue," a presentation for Texas CASA programs.)

Learning from the Resiliency Project: Core Elements for Resiliency

Five CASA programs participated in a national pilot of an organizational model to build resiliency in child abuse staff and volunteers. The project resulted in many suggestions, including these. (The Resiliency Project was led by the Institute on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault at The University of Texas at Austin, School of Social Work, and funded by an Office for Victims of Crime grant.)

Sense of Hope

Recognize staff and volunteers with thank you notes, retreats and activities that underscore the difference they are making. This helps build a sense of optimism that increases resiliency and decreases turnover.

In one project, teams had volunteers design individual t-shirts that answered the question, "What gives you hope?" These were hung in the CASA lobby and "made hope visible" to staff, volunteers and visitors.

Laughter

The work is serious, but we don't have to be. Opportunities for laughter and fun in the workplace are simple ways to build strengths in this core element.

Healthy Coping Protocols

Have protocols in place to deal with child deaths or other crises. Have a peer support protocol in place that volunteers can activate when they feel despair or overwhelmed about the course of a case.

Monthly Wellness Meetings

Have debriefings and monthly wellness meetings with a volunteer counselor. These simple steps include recognizing that the work has an emotional impact and designing ways to make sure the impact is addressed.

Personal Perspective and Meaning

Foster reflection and journaling that helps workers "make meaning" of the work and its alignment with their personal values, moral code, spirituality or meaning-making process.

Self-care and coaching inside the organization leads to retention. The healthier the organization is, the more people will want to be a part of it.

Coaching and encouraging colleagues

A staff that's immersed in a coaching framework should have the capacity to support a team-member and to build skills, practice and perfect another level of the motivational relationship.

Colleagues can serve as peer coaches to help each other rise to occasions. Three safety issues that need peer coaching are:

- a coach-supervisor working too many cases
- a coach-supervisor nearing burnout
- a coach-supervisor with negative perceptions about their volunteers

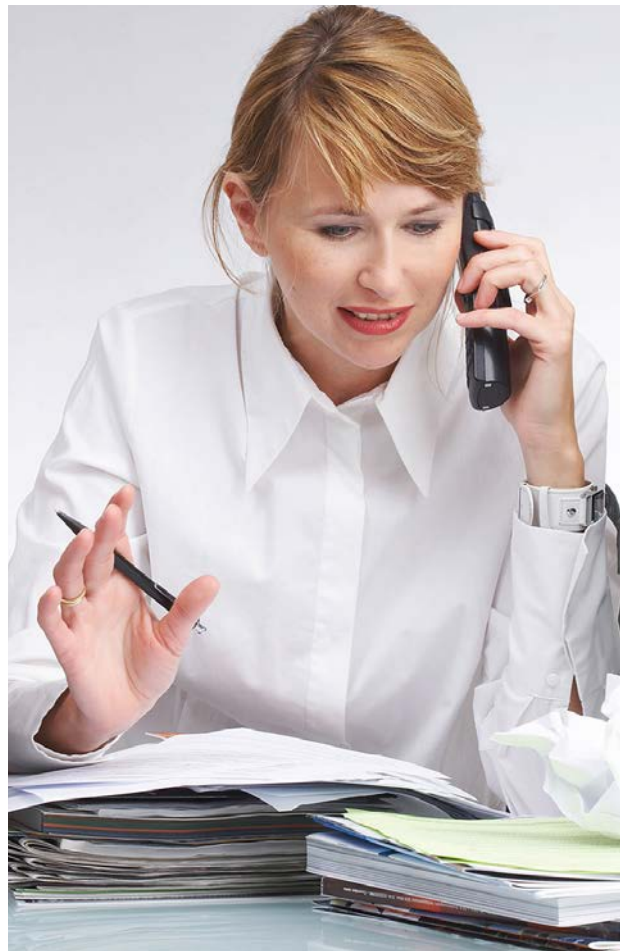
Trying to control too many outcomes

The most problematic coach-supervisor situation is a person who is simply supervising too many cases. Perhaps they are anxious about outcomes and having a hard time giving up control. Perhaps they do not yet trust that volunteers will do their best. Perhaps they have the attitude that as a coach-supervisor they can do a better job than their volunteers.

The problems can become self-fulfilling prophecies. The coach-supervisor's volunteers, feeling untrusted, may not rise to occupy their full potential. But taking on too much responsibility and feeling personally responsible for outcomes is also a sign of burnout or vicarious trauma.

A coach-supervisor in this position should reach out for support to their colleagues so that they can coach the coach-supervisor in taking the steps and strategies they need to let go. These include:

- doing the work to trust others
- emphasizing self-care, work-life balance and well-being
- accepting that everything will not go perfectly
- returning responsibility to volunteers



ADDITIONAL SIGNS OF COMPASSION FATIGUE

Frequent complaint or negative perceptions

Being a coach-supervisor can challenge people and create opportunities for personal growth as well. When frustrated with volunteers, some coaches may imitate them, talk down about them or make stereotypes about them. Sometimes, people express frustrations indirectly by complaining or acting as if they are better than others. It is also a sign of compassion fatigue.

Other coach-supervisors, managers or directors should step in to set a standard. If the negative talk is rooted in bigger problems, these should be addressed openly and candidly. It's important to nip negative speech about volunteers in the bud, as it could certainly hurt and demoralize the volunteer, and also hurt the organization if it became public.

Each one reach one

Work as demanding and complex as that of a CASA coach-supervisor can challenge anyone's inner resources. With a positive approach and open discussion of this subject, staff can form a strategy and tactics for making sure no one gets lost to burnout. For example, a team can form pairs or triads among staff so that each person has someone looking out for them who can help them objectively assess wellness and support needs.



With a positive approach and open discussion of this subject, staff can form a strategy and tactics for making sure no one gets lost to burnout.



1. Small Group Discussion:
 - Discuss a case that caused you personal distress
 - Identify why and how you began to identify deeply with the victim/family/event
 - Explore how your empathy was activated beyond your capacity
 - Note the impact that it had on your wellness
2. Small Group Discussion:
 - List one mini-escape or diversion that can restore and renew you
 - List one thing that brings you joy
 - Write a list of self-care activities that work for you personally
 - Each person in the group share one activity aloud
3. Brainstorm ways to relate to the case differently. Ask local healers, psychologists or therapists to provide a wellness support circle, healing support group, or group counseling to help volunteers process the emotional stress of volunteering.
4. Ask local massage therapists to donate one afternoon a month to providing chair massages to CASA volunteers.
5. Share the Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL):
 - The ProQOL scale is a free 30-item self-report to measure the positive and negative aspects of caring. It is available at www.proQOL.org. Invite staff and volunteers to take the test to measure their wellness. Gather a group to discuss responses.



CHAPTER 8

SAYING GOODBYE AND ENDING ON AN UP NOTE

GOALS

- Recognize when it's time to say goodbye
- Understand why volunteers leave
- Express personal thanks and agency gratitude
- Bring clear closure to service
- Appreciate your own coaching efforts and successes

OVERVIEW

When an advocate's service comes to its conclusion, take the opportunity to appreciate all they have given and to reinforce a positive connection to the program. Your next dedicated volunteer may be the last volunteer's close friend. Use all the personal depth of the relationship and your skill in coaching to facilitate a positive goodbye with both appreciation and clear closure.



RECOGNIZE WHEN IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE

Advocates leave for a wide variety of reasons. Some work one case, learn what they need to learn, and move on. Some serve for decades and retire only when their health demands it. (Even then, they might show up at the program office with cupcakes.)

The ideal scenario is an advocate's departure at the successful conclusion of a case. At times, however, you must ask a volunteer to step down from service because they have not lived up to the expectations of their role or have broken program rules. At other times, you may be tempted to encourage (or beg) a volunteer to stay on for longer than they want to – and must resist that urge in order to honor what the volunteer expresses as their limit.

Regardless of why an advocate's tenure ends, the moment provides opportunities to celebrate what went right, evaluate the big picture and reflect upon the future. (Forms at the end of this guide provide a map to necessary communications upon separation.)

Let's look at the top 12 reasons why volunteers leave, according "Holding Your Volunteers" to nonprofit risk expert Peter Sandman.

Top 12 reasons why volunteers leave service

#12 Burn Out – This can happen when we ask an advocate to do too much, too fast. For example, advocates could burn out from taking on a case with three or more siblings in different foster homes or cities. In this situation, consider assigning a buddy/partner. Ease volunteers into their roles, provide lots of support in the beginning, and monitor for overwhelm or secondary trauma.

#11 Cool Out – The opposite of asking volunteer to do too much, too fast is not asking them to do anything much at all. For some volunteers this is the #1 reason for leaving: *no one invited me to the workshop, no one told me they needed me, I didn't get a case soon enough, etc.* Don't be timid about asking people to do things and don't lose track of people. Be especially careful to touch base with volunteers who miss meetings, trainings, appreciation events, etc., so the lack of connection is not a reason to miss the next one as well.

#10 Keep Out – The "old-timers" inevitably gravitate to each other at gatherings, especially when they have been through tough times together. This can leave newcomers sitting painfully alone, watching the inner circle and pondering the invisible "Keep Out" signs we didn't mean to post. You can't stop the formation of cliques or keep people from wanting time with friends. But you can consciously reach out to newcomers, and ask advocates to do the same. In larger groups you can institutionalize a buddy system. Pair each newcomer with another newcomer (to compare notes with) and with an old-timer to go to for basic information.

#9 Pull Out – People are more likely to participate when the extent of their participation is safely under their control. Organizational commitments are like personal commitments in this way: no one likes to feel overwhelmed or trapped by the needs of another person that are too large. The sense that someone is clutching desperately for help provokes a strong impulse to escape while there is still time. Part of the solution is to project desire but not desperation. The rest is to allow the volunteer to control the commitment. When a volunteer sets explicit limits, such as *I don't want a teenager case*, respect them.

#8 Can't Win – Nothing scares volunteers more than futility: either feeling that the work is doomed to defeat or that goals are too unclear for success. To reduce this, help build the sense of efficacy: a sense that goals are worth achieving, that the group can achieve them and that the volunteer is contributing significantly to their achievement. Define explicit short-term objectives as well as the long term vision, and making an appreciative fuss each time an objective is achieved.

#7 Can't Lose – Working for a goal that's low-hanging fruit and too easy to accomplish can strike people as just pointless as working for the futile long shot. Keep advocate morale up by varying their tasks, in terms of probability of success. Be especially alert for the anticlimax that follows a victory. Yes, you want to celebrate the success and connect it in advance to the next step. But make sure the pause to celebrate is always followed by a reason to keep working.

#6 No Growth – Alienated, repetitive labor is bad enough when you are paid for it. It is intolerable when you are not. Volunteer work should be interesting; it should offer variety, change, and a chance for personal growth. Make it fun where you can, and alternate it with activities like getting more training, serving on a committee (such as LATS, Recruitment & Retention). Although they may not complain (until they quit) most volunteers want the chance to grow. Look around for the advocates who may be in a "no-grow rut," and offer them a spicy new challenge.

#5 No Appreciation – Volunteers don't just enjoy being appreciated. They need it and deserve it. Without it, they tend to lose faith in the value of what they are doing. The most obvious is "Thank You," and the one far most neglected is "Please." Perhaps the most crucial piece of appreciation is meticulous attention to logistics: returning phone calls promptly, answering notes, passing along information, scheduling meetings at times when volunteers can make, and staying closely connected in a positive relationship.

#4 External Opposition – If family or friends are opposed to an advocate's volunteering, odds are you are eventually going to lose them. Family and friends are in a real sense contributing some of their time with the volunteer, so find ways and occasions to thank them. Better still, involve them directly. Even family members who do not want to volunteer themselves may still want to meet people and get a sense of what goes on. For example, invite them to court, a tour of the office, an orientation, CASA Café, etc. External opposition can also rise out of skepticism about the cause rather than the resentment of the competition. Involvement is the best way to cope with this, too and the second best is making sure volunteers bring home a steady stream info demonstrating the wisdom and effectiveness of the work of CASA.

#3 Internal Conflict – Personality conflicts, tensions and even quarrels may be acceptable at home or at a paying job, but are death to a volunteer job. Part of the problem is imagining people who share the values of helping children are always going to like each other. Part of the solution is accepting that people simply may not like each other or get along – which is fine! Once it's acknowledged, the solution depends on the style of your organization. Some may mediate, some urge them to make up, and some reorganize the work so they won't have to deal with each other. Your program can determine the best way to handle these human situations.

#2 Policy Disagreement – Sometimes, a conflict arises that's genuinely over policies rather than personalities. A consensus decision-making process with advocates will help here. Though longer, it leads to better decisions. Unlike voting, it doesn't produce the disgruntled "few." It's crucial to listen to the volunteers on the losing side. Volunteers who quit over a policy disagreement almost always report that their position was not understood by the majority. If you can summarize the disgruntled volunteer's viewpoint accurately and respectfully, it's more likely they will accept the decision.

#1 Not Enough Fun – It stopped being fun. This one needs no explanation! Build in fun for everyone, including yourself. The work is serious, but the context of the work, the celebrations, the new challenges and the community can be very fun.

Now that you know the 12 reasons volunteers leave you can head potential departees off at the pass. Keeping a robust relationship as a coach-supervisor alive means you'll always have an inkling of what's going on, and can address it from a warm, friendly and supportive place.

Sometimes, though, people simply have to move on. When that happens, follow the steps on the next page.

STEPS TO TAKE WHEN ENDING ADVOCATE SERVICE

Collect the necessary documentation

An end to advocate service necessitates that a number of formal steps be taken and documents signed. In Appendix 2 you'll find these documents, including release of service documents to be signed by a judge. Make sure to also provide a copy of each signed form to the departing volunteer.

Perform exit interviews and invite feedback

The very best scenario involves both an in-person and a written exit interview. A written exit interview gives advocates a chance to be completely candid and communicate things they may not say aloud. An in-person exit interview has the same potential, and can reveal things a person would not write down.

Whichever possibility is right for your agency (or both), these questions can guide the process:

- How realistic was the job description?
- How were volunteer-paid staff relations?
- How were the working conditions?
- Did they find meaning or value in the work?
- How did they find the quality of the training?
- What was their personal comfort level with clients?
- Did they feel appreciated and recognized?
- What feedback did they receive on the quality of their work?
- Did they have access to, and good results with, supervision?

Determine how your agency will use the information collected in exit interviews. How will it get off the page or out of a folder and into use?

Bring clear closure to an advocate's service

Having a clear end-point is helpful for everyone. In addition to appreciations and exit interviews, your program should provide documents cementing the transition. The judge will sign an order discharging the volunteer from their role as guardian ad litem. Your program should provide a formal Release from Service document. (See Appendix 2 on page 122). Provide the volunteer with copies of these, and keep copies in their file.

Express personal appreciation and agency gratitude

As coach-supervisor, you've seen all of the effort, hope and heart that a volunteer puts into their case(s). You know the volunteer well enough to know what kind of appreciation they would most like to receive. Is it a ceremony and fireworks honoring their years of service? Or is it a handwritten note and a brass pin quietly delivered with a goodbye hug?

Even advocates who couldn't meet minimum expectations of service should be thanked for what they did contribute. Your next devoted volunteer may come from the departing advocate's social circle. They may simply be a bridge to your next great CASA.

However you decide to honor a volunteer upon departure, make sure that the appreciation is expressed both from you as the coach and from the CASA program.

Appreciate your own coaching efforts and successes

With every advocate you coach, an important relationship is built. Take the time to note down the growth and successes that came from your supervision of the volunteer. Appreciate yourself for the effort, integrity and care that you put into the relationship. Don't blame yourself if things didn't go perfectly. Simply do your best, keep growing and encourage others to do the same. Know that the small seeds you plant today will become tall trees providing safety, nourishment, shade and beauty for future generations.



1. Bring the "Top 12 Reasons Volunteers Leave" list to a staff meeting. Discuss how your agency can address these factors.
2. Write down the qualities that you love about yourself. What are your gifts as a coach or mentor to others? Remember how much your work changes the world. Take time to appreciate yourself.
3. Coach-supervisors need self-care as much as volunteers do. What is one thing you can do this week to support your body, mind and spirit?

**Know that the small
seeds you plant today
will become tall trees
providing safety,
nourishment, shade
and beauty for future
generations.**



MEANINGFUL MATH: HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR RATES OF VOLUNTEER RETENTION AND ATTRITION

GOALS

- Understand the importance of analyzing volunteer retention
- Know the volunteer retention definitions
- Calculate your annual volunteer attrition rate (AVAR)
- Calculate your 2-year volunteer retention rate (VRR2)
- Calculate your 5-year volunteer retention rate (VRR5)

OVERVIEW

Volunteer retention means keeping people engaged, productive and committed year after year. It means that when a trained advocate completes a case, they stay on to take another case. The *rate of retention* is the percentage of volunteers remaining in service after a specified period of time. The *rate of attrition* is the percentage of volunteers separating from service during a specified period of time.

Every program needs to calculate their rates of retention and attrition. Volunteer retention rates calculated in 1-year, 2-year and 5-year increments are recommended. As with recruitment, volunteer retention is not a once a year event or a single check box to be completed. It should be central to the organization's activities.



WHY ANALYZE VOLUNTEER RETENTION IN YOUR PROGRAM?

We are excited about being able to measure volunteer retention rates across our state once programs begin to integrate data collection and analysis. There are three primary benefits. We analyze retention so we can:

- estimate recruitment goals
- do retention planning
- assess program success and needs

Estimate recruitment goals

Knowing your starting point is essential in knowing how many new volunteers must be recruited in the coming months and year to meet the need. How many people do you need to replace exiting volunteers and achieve program growth?

Do retention planning

Calculating the volunteer retention rate is the first step in developing concrete plans to maintain or improve it. For example, if you find that the second year is the most common point of drop-off, this is useful information! Your program can focus on motivating volunteers at that particular juncture.

Assess program

Just as with recruitment, assess your program's retention from a 360-degree perspective.

Start with feedback from your current tenured volunteers. What contributes to their satisfaction? When do they get discouraged? At what point in a case do they consider giving up? What support can be added? Create a plan that addresses both ongoing culture and special activities geared toward volunteer recognition, appreciation and continued growth and learning.

Volunteer retention definitions

Volunteer retention is the process by which a trained volunteer accepts a new case after a case assigned to him or her closes.

A retention rate measures the length of time newly recruited and trained volunteers stay with a CASA program.

A volunteer retention calculation always includes a time element. A retention rate can be calculated for any period for which data are available, for example, a 1-year retention rate, a 5-year retention rate, or a 15-year retention rate.

In order to provide the most effective assistance to your program, Texas CASA is using calculations that create a degree of standardization for the network. The following rates are recommended: attrition rate for 1 year and retention rates for 2 years and 5 years.

ANNUAL VOLUNTEER ATTRITION RATE (AVAR)

An annual, or 1-year, attrition rate is the percentage of volunteers that separate from the CASA program during a year. It is calculated by dividing the number of volunteers that separate during the year by the number of unique volunteers assigned or available to be assigned, to cases at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Volunteer counts are of unique volunteers; that is, each volunteer is counted only once during the year. Volunteers whose cases carry over from the previous fiscal year are included. Volunteers sharing a case assignment are both counted.

How to calculate your annual volunteer attrition rate

Step 1

Prepare a list of assigned and available-but-not-assigned volunteers at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Step 2

Identify and count the volunteers who separated from the program during the year.

Step 3

Divide the number of separations by the number of volunteers at the beginning of the year to obtain the ratio of separations to volunteers.

Step 4

Multiply by 100 to obtain the percentage of separations, or annual volunteer attrition rate.

AVAR = Annual volunteer attrition rate

Vbegin = Number of unique volunteers assigned to cases or available to be assigned on the first day of the fiscal year

Vsep = Number of volunteers that separated from the program during the fiscal year

$$AVAR = \left(\frac{Vsep}{Vbegin} \right) \times 100$$



Knowing your starting point is essential in knowing how many new volunteers must be recruited in the coming months and year to meet the need.

Sample Problem

What is the 1-year attrition rate at *For the Children* CASA program in FY15?

Figure 1. Volunteer Roster, *For the Children* CASA, Fiscal Year 2015

	Volunteers assigned to cases or available to be assigned on September 1, 2014	Volunteers assigned to cases or available to be assigned on August 31, 2015	Volunteers separated during the year
1	Meryl	Meryl	
2	Beryl		Beryl
3	Harry	Harry	
4	Hermione	Hermione	
5	Ron	Ron	
6	Salina	Salina	
7	James	James	
8	Olivia	Olivia	
9	Toni	Toni	
10	Gregg		Gregg
11	Jennifer		Jennifer
12	Louise	Louise	
Number	12	9	3

Formula:

$$AVAR = \left(\frac{V_{sep}}{V_{begin}} \right) \times 100$$

Answer:

$$AVAR = \left(\frac{3}{12} \right) \times 100 = 25\%$$

ANOTHER WAY TO CALCULATE ATTRITION

A second method of calculating the annual volunteer attrition rate requires that all volunteers are assigned to cases on the first day and the last day of the year. If this is the case, the calculation can be done without referring to named lists of assigned volunteers.

Step 1

Obtain counts of assigned volunteers at the beginning of the fiscal year, assigned volunteers at the end of the fiscal year, and newly trained volunteers assigned to cases during the fiscal year.

Step 2

Calculate unadjusted number of separations as the difference between volunteer counts at beginning and end of fiscal year.

Step 3

Calculate adjusted number of separations by taking into account newly trained and assigned volunteers.

Step 4

Divide the number of adjusted separations by the number of volunteers at the beginning of the year to obtain the ratio of separations to volunteers.

Step 5

Multiply by 100 to obtain the percentage of separations, or annual volunteer attrition rate.

AVAR = Annual volunteer attrition rate

Vbegin = Number of volunteers assigned to cases on the first day of the fiscal year

Vend = Number of volunteers assigned to cases on the last day of the fiscal year

Vnew = Number of unique volunteers newly trained and assigned during the fiscal year

Vadjustment = Adjustment to number of volunteer separations during the year

Vsep = Number of volunteers separated from the program during the fiscal year adjusted for number of new volunteers

$$\text{Vadjustment} = \text{Vbegin} - \text{Vend}$$

$$\text{Vsep} = \text{Vadjustment} + \text{Vnew}$$

$$\text{AVAR} = \left(\frac{\text{Vsep}}{\text{Vbegin}} \right) \times 100$$

Sample Problem

The CASA program For the Children begins fiscal year with 12 volunteers, (**Vbegin**) all of whom are assigned to cases on September 1, 2014. During the year 4 newly trained volunteers (**Vnew**) are sworn in and assigned to new cases and still serving on August 31, 2015. The total number of volunteers assigned is 13 (**Vend**) on August 31, 2015.

Calculate the number of volunteer separations from the program. Remember that this method assumes that all available volunteers are assigned cases.

Answer:

$$V_{\text{begin}} - V_{\text{end}} = V_{\text{adjustment}}$$

$$12 - 13 = -1$$

$$V_{\text{new}} + V_{\text{adjustment}} = V_{\text{sep}}$$

$$4 - 1 = 3$$

$$A\text{VAR} = \left(\frac{V_{\text{sep}}}{V_{\text{begin}}} \right) \times 100$$

$$A\text{VAR} = \left(\frac{3}{12} \right) \times 100 = 25\%$$

2-YEAR VOLUNTEER RETENTION RATE (VRR2)

A retention rate measures the length of time newly recruited and trained volunteers stay with a CASA program.

As mentioned earlier, a retention calculation always has a time component such as two years, five years or 10 years. The retention rate for each time-span must be calculated separately. For that reason, two rates have been selected, a 2-year and a 5-year retention rate.

The calculation of a retention rate begins with a cohort. A cohort is a group of people having a factor in common. For our purposes, a cohort is defined as a group of volunteers who completed CASA pre-service training during a fiscal year.

A 2-year retention rate is the percentage of the cohort still serving CASA cases two years later. For example, the percentage of volunteers trained in fiscal year 2012 assigned to cases in fiscal year 2014.

How to Calculate Your 2-Year Retention Rate

Step 1

Prepare a list of volunteers who completed pre-service training during the designated fiscal year.

Step 2

Prepare a list of volunteers assigned two years later.

Step 3

Obtain a count of the number of volunteers who appear on both lists.

Step 4

Divide the number of volunteers retained by the number of volunteers in the cohort.

Step 5

Multiply by 100 to obtain the 2-year retention rate as a percentage.

VRR2 = 2-Year Volunteer Retention Rate

VYr0 = Count of volunteers who complete CASA pre-service training during the designated fiscal year

VYr2 = Count of members of Training Cohort 0 assigned to cases in the fiscal year two years later

$VRR2 = (VYr2/VYr0) \times 100$

Sample Problem

Twelve advocates successfully completed the training courses and were sworn in during the fiscal year. Most of the newly trained advocates were assigned cases during the fiscal year, although two of them were not assigned cases until September, in the next fiscal year.

Beryl was unable to complete her case because her mother became ill and she became her primary caretaker. Beryl's case coach-supervisor at *For the Children* took over the case and completed it during the fiscal year. Hermione's company transferred her from its Houston office to London early in 2012. Gregg became very involved in another local non-profit and felt he could not devote the time required to be an effective CASA volunteer, so he declined to take another case. James disagreed with the CPS placement recommendation ordered by the court, and did not want another case.

Figure 2. Retention of Cohort of Trained Volunteers, *For the Children*, Fiscal Year 2010 through 2015

	Trained FY10	Assigned FY11	Assigned FY12	Assigned FY13	Assigned FY14	Assigned FY15
1	Meryl	Meryl	Meryl	Meryl	Meryl	Meryl
2	Beryl					
3	Harry	Harry	Harry	Harry	Harry	Harry
4	Hermione	Hermione				
5	Ron	Ron	Ron	Ron	Ron	Ron
6	Salina	Salina	Salina	Salina	Salina	Salina
7	James	James				
8	Olivia	Olivia	Olivia	Olivia	Olivia	Olivia
9	Toni	Toni	Toni	Toni	Toni	Toni
10	Gregg	Gregg				
11	Jennifer	Jennifer	Jennifer			
12	Louise	Louise	Louise	Louise	Louise	
Number	12	11	8	7	7	6

Answer:

$$\text{VYr0} = 12$$

$$\text{VYr2} = 8$$

$$(\text{VYr2}/\text{Vyr0}) \times 100 = \text{VRR2}$$

$$(8/12) \times 100 = .667 \times 100$$

$$= 66.7\%$$

5-YEAR VOLUNTEER RETENTION RATE (VRR5)

Just as for the 2-year volunteer retention rate, the calculation of a 5-year retention rate begins with a cohort.

A 5-year retention rate is the percentage of a volunteer training cohort still serving CASA cases five years later. For example, the percentage of volunteers trained in Fiscal Year 2010 assigned to cases in Fiscal Year 2015.

How to Calculate Your 5-Year Volunteer Retention Rate

Step 1

Prepare a list of volunteers who completed pre-service training during the designated fiscal year.

Step 2

Prepare a list of volunteers assigned five years later.

Step 3

Obtain a count of the number of volunteers who appear on both lists.

Step 4

Divide the number of volunteers retained by the number of volunteers in the cohort.

Step 5

Multiply by 100 to obtain the 5-year retention rate as a percentage.

VRR5 = 5-Year Volunteer Retention Rate

VYr0 = Count of volunteers who complete CASA pre-service training in during the designated fiscal year

VYr5 = Count of members of Training Cohort 0 assigned to cases in the fiscal year five years later

$VRR5 = (VYr5/VYr0) \times 100$

Sample Problem

Based on the data provided in Figure 2 on page 86, calculate the 5-year volunteer retention rate for the CASA program *For the Children*. Is the VRR5 different for male volunteers and female volunteers in the Fiscal Year 2010 volunteer cohort for the agency?

Answer:

$$\text{VYr0} = 12$$

$$\text{VYr5} = 6$$

$$(\text{VYr5}/\text{Vyr0}) \times 100 = \text{VRR5}$$

$$(6/12) \times 100 = (0.5) \times 100$$

$$= 50.0\%$$





1. Make calculating volunteer retention and attrition rates a group event. Have cupcakes. Get a piñata. Have word problem stations. Teach everyone in the organization how to do the calculations.
2. Everyone understands that sometimes a volunteer needs to go after completing a case – and that is perfectly okay. At the same time, encourage departing CASAs to replace themselves by bringing in new volunteers from their circles.
3. Try a word problem: You start the year with 100 volunteers. By the end of the year you have 105 volunteers (15 volunteers have not taken a case and not returned and you brought in 20 new volunteers). What is your retention rate?

Volunteer retention means keeping people engaged, productive and committed year after year. It means that when a trained advocate completes a case, they stay on to take another case.





SURVEY OF CASA PROGRAM BY VOLUNTEER

Directions: Please rate each item as it relates to you as a CASA volunteer and the program you are currently affiliated with. In the areas where you disagree or strongly disagree, please take the opportunity to elaborate in the comment section. We welcome your valuable input.

1. How long have you served as a CASA volunteer?

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ 1–2 years
- ☐ 3–4 years
- ☐ More than 4 years

2. Please rate the following elements of the CASA program.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel adequately trained to serve as a volunteer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I receive adequate supervision and support from CASA staff.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My supervisor respects my role and my knowledge of my case.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am comfortable making recommendations about my case.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel prepared to write reports and testify at hearings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe the judge reads and considers my reports.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel like my opinions are taken seriously by parties to the case.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel like my input is respected by the other parties.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that I am making a difference for the children I serve.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel community partners respect this agency.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Additional Comments:

Core Values



What do I stand for?

I stand for _____ ,

_____ ,

and _____ ,

Signature: _____

CASA Volunteer QUARTERLY Evaluation Form

Completed by Coach-Supervisor

Name _____		Position _____			
Period of Evaluation _____		Number of Children Assigned _____			
Coach-supervisor _____					

Professionalism	Needs improvement	Fair	Good	Very Good	Superior
Understands purposes and goals of CASA					
Understands and complies with confidentiality in responsibilities to children, families and advocacy work					
Relates well with the public					
Exhibits poise in handling difficult situations					
Exhibits sincere interest and respect towards children, their families and advocacy work					
Holds self and others accountable to individual and organizational goals					
Is willing to challenge perceptions and engage in courageous conversations regarding race, gender, sexuality, age, religion, etc.					
Responsibility					
Reliable about schedule and time commitment					
Completes assignments in a timely fashion					
Pays attention to detail					
Willing to take on assignments					
Effectiveness					
Welcomes opportunities to learn information or procedures that will make work more effective					
Follows through on assignments					
Willing to ask questions when in doubt					
Gathers and facilitates sharing of information as appropriate					
Reports are fact-based and child-focused					
Benefits to staff working with this volunteer are:					
Benefits to program from this volunteer's skills, experience and knowledge are:					
Additional Comments					
Signature of Volunteer	Date				
Signature of Coach-Supervisor	Date				

GRASSROOTS RECRUITMENT DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Use the following questions as discussion starters to assess your program's current approach to recruitment and generate new ideas for growth.

1. Does our program have a team, committee or group focused exclusively on recruitment of volunteers? If yes, how often do they meet? How do they contribute to our overall recruitment efforts?
2. Does our program have an annual recruitment plan with goals, actions, time frames, and persons responsible? If yes, how would you rate it as a "road map" for achieving recruitment success?
3. Does our program utilize an annual pre-service training calendar within our recruitment plan? Does everyone associated with our program always know the start date of the next training? Do we use every opportunity to message our training dates (voicemail, web crawls, email sigs, judge announcements, newsletters, email communication to current volunteers, office door/bulletin board)?
4. Name the last five pieces of earned media coverage our program has received. What type of media? How did it come about? Did it result in inquiries?
5. What system does our program use to track recruitment efforts? Do we ask how/where people heard about our program? Do we track numbers of calls, applications, interviews, and turn-downs?
6. Does our program utilize a group orientation session for pre-service training? Do we ask for feedback from people who attend?
7. Think about the last event in our program (5K, fundraising dinner, swearing in ceremony). Did we use the event to recruit new volunteers? How? What were the results? What could we have done better, more of? If we didn't include a volunteer recruitment focus in our last event, discuss ways we might have missed opportunities.
8. When is the last time our staff or board members were trained in telling the CASA story? Does everyone know the three most frequently used reasons people give for not becoming a CASA volunteer (time, lack of training, emotional attachment)? Do we know how to respond when people offer up these reasons?
9. In what ways do our recruitment efforts emphasize the urgency of our mission? How could we add the urgency component to our messaging?
10. Think about everything we know about our program. List three possible barriers to recruitment. List ways to address these barriers. (Sample barriers: Have to own an automobile, English speaker, classes only offered at night, office located far away).
11. List the type of skills we believe are needed in an effective recruiter. (Sales, marketing, people skills extroversion, passion, story-teller). What other types of skills might be beneficial in recruitment of new volunteers (Analytical thinking, organized and process-oriented, big-picture thinkers, detail people, spreadsheet proficient, well-connected, innovators, out of the box thinkers, leaders, followers, people whose lives have been changed by a volunteer)?
12. Are there groups of people within our community that we have not yet (ever) approached regarding our program (teachers, nurses, state employees)? Are there groups we stay away from intentionally? Do we know why?



VOLUNTEER BILL OF RIGHTS

Every volunteer has:

- The right to be treated as a co-worker, not just “free help”
- The right to a suitable assignment, with consideration for personal preference, temperament, life experience, education and employment background
- The right to know as much about the organization’s mission, its policies, its people and its programs
- The right to training for the job, thoughtfully planned and effectively presented
- The right to sound guidance and direction, by someone who is experienced, well-informed, patient and thoughtful
- The right to a place to work, orderly, designated, conducive to work and suitable for the job to be done
- The right to enhance skills and knowledge, through advancement to assignments of more responsibility
- The right to be heard, to have respect shown for comments and suggestions
- The right to recognition, through means of appreciation and by being treated as a bona fide coworker

(From The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Recruiting & Managing Volunteers by John L. Lipp)



VOLUNTEER RETENTION SCENARIOS FOR DISCUSSION

Jennifer, age 35 (*Case Coach-supervisor*)

Becky, age 62 (*CASA volunteer*)

Scenario 1

Can you believe that Jennifer is sending me an email about the meeting? Why, I don't even have a computer! How was I supposed to know about the meeting! I guess I'm not really needed anymore, wait until I tell my friends about this! At least when I volunteer at the historical society they remind me of the meetings!

Scenario 2

I don't understand why Jennifer is not supporting me. I know this child better than anyone. When I say this child should not be returned to his family, I know what I'm talking about. I was told that my opinion matters but I see that is not the case.

Scenario 3

What? You want me to redo my court report? I didn't volunteer to write reports! I want to make a difference for children!

Scenario 4

I have left a ton of messages for the CPS worker. Jennifer has left me several messages that she wants to meet and discuss the case. I can't even fulfill Jennifer's first request. Next week, when I see Jennifer, I'm going to tell her this is not what I signed up for.

Scenario 5

I don't understand. I was told in the interview that I could pick the child or case that best fits me. Now, you want to give me a teenaged boy when I said I felt more comfortable with a young girl.

Scenario 6

Jennifer informs Becky that we are having a guest speaker come to our CASA Café this month. The speaker is talking about working with LGBTQ children and youth in foster care. Becky replies, "Absolutely not! These children are too young to know their sexual, whatever you call it. I don't believe in homosexuality. The foster parents feel the way I do."

Scenario 7

Jennifer informs Becky that a new policy has occurred and that now volunteers will need to be fingerprinted. Becky complies and later Jennifer learns that Becky has been talking to other volunteers and saying things like, "I can't believe we have to be fingerprinted! We're not criminals."

Scenario 8

Becky and Jennifer are together in court waiting for their hearing to begin. Becky tries to show Jennifer her notes of what she plans to say to the judge. Jennifer is on the phone and looks quickly at Becky's notes and nods approval. The hearing begins and CPS says something that Becky feels is dishonest. She whispers to Jennifer that CPS is not telling the truth. Jennifer says something like, "Don't worry about it, we do not want to make CPS upset." Becky speaks up to the judge in disagreement. Now, Becky sees that Jennifer is clearly upset with her.

Scenario 9

Becky has consistently turned her timesheets in late.

Scenario 10

Jennifer is observing new volunteer training and she has been informed that Becky is going to be one of her volunteers. Becky interrupts the trainer throughout the workshop with tons of questions. Jennifer notices that the trainer has answered the question but Becky does not seem to grasp the topic. Jennifer and the trainer are discussing Becky's behavior and considering if Becky should continue with the new volunteer training.

Scenario 11

Jennifer informs Becky that she would like for her to visit her child's mother who lives in a trailer home, (or a part of town that the community does not view as safe.) Becky makes a few statements that Jennifer views as judgmental (or displaying prejudice, bias, etc.)

Scenario 12

Becky meets with Jennifer to report on a visitation she observed. Jennifer views Becky's information as very negative. Becky commented that all the mother did was brush and play with her daughter's hair.

Scenario 13

Becky shares with Jennifer that she feels defeated. This is her third case that has not resulted in the outcome she would like. (*Can't Win*)

Scenario 14

Becky calls Jennifer to let her know that the judge decided to take her information and act. She is overjoyed with the judge's decision. (*Can't Lose*)

Scenario 15

Jennifer matches Becky with a case of five siblings. The siblings are 6 months, 3-, 7-, 9- and 12-years old and the mother appears to be in her late twenties. Within six months, the children should be reunited with mother if the mother continues to follow the plan set by CPS, but seven months has passed and reunification seems getting further and further away. Becky is overwhelmed.

Scenario 16

Becky shares with Jennifer that her husband and children feel that she is spending too much time away from home and that what she's doing is not safe.

Scenario 17

A Texas CASA staff member comes to your programs to present about starting a Legislative Advocacy Team (LAT). Becky has been a constant and solid volunteer for your organization. Becky attends the presentation. Jennifer learns that Becky attended the presentation.

Scenario 18

Jennifer attends the volunteer appreciation dinner and notices that Becky is not present. Jennifer and Becky meet.

Scenario 19

Becky shares with Jennifer that she has called and left messages for the attorney ad litem but has not heard back from them. In court, you witness Becky attempting to talk to the attorney ad litem, who is unresponsive and walks away.

Scenario 20

Becky does not understand the policy of not being able to transport children in her car. She appears frustrated and comments that the residential treatment center is too loud and she needs to get her child away so they can have more privacy. She talks to Jennifer about wanting to build a relationship with the boy and how she feels that taking him to dinner or for ice cream would be fun.

Scenario 21

Becky is working a Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC) case for the first time. She has only had Temporary Managing Conservatorship (TMC) cases up to this point. Jennifer notices that Becky does not talk about this case with much enthusiasm. Becky shares with Jennifer that she Skyped with her youth last week and that was all she had to report.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT-TO-DATE ASSESSMENT SHEET

1. Identify (specifically) the last three actions taken to recruit volunteers for your program and answer the questions in the last two columns below:

Action – Describe briefly what was done, by whom, with what materials, etc.	How or why did you select this action?	What were the results?

2. List all the places – online and in the real world – in which you have registered your search for CASA volunteers. Put the date you last refreshed the posting.

Registry, Listing, etc.

Last refreshed on:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Describe the ideal candidate for the CASA volunteer position.

4. Are there any special target groups you most want to recruit from (gender, ethnicity, age, education, etc.)? List.

Volunteer Recruitment-to-Date Assessment Sheet page 2

5. Thinking back over the last few years, what have been the most successful ways or places that you have found the types of volunteers you most want?
6. Why do you think people volunteer for CASA?
7. What do you think stops people from volunteering for CASA?
8. What would help you to be more successful in recruiting volunteers for CASA?

Information:

Materials and tools:

Training:

COACHING CONTRACT

A COACH can see what you cannot see to guide you to your best self and hold you accountable to your stated goals and intentions.

COACH:

I commit to coaching _____

to their goals and intentions for the period of 1 year beginning on

_____ and ending on _____.

I agree to hold them to their highest good.

COACHEE:

I agree to own responsibility for all my actions, my attitude and my results.

I commit to being open to coaching from _____

for the period of 1 year beginning on _____ and ending on

_____.

COACH: _____

DATE: _____

COACHEE: _____

DATE: _____

PLAN OF ACTION

For _____ for the period of 1 year

beginning on _____ and ending on _____

List at least 1 long-term (stretch) goal, 1 soft skill you want to improve and 1 goal with a tangible outcome.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

VOLUNTEER-CENTERED CULTURE SURVEY FOR VOLUNTEERS

- What was the most important factor motivating you to become a CASA?
 - Personal achievement through helping others
 - Community affiliation through working with CASA organizations
 - Power to help those who are less advantaged
- Are you included in the decision-making processes pertaining to your cases as well as the CASA organization you represent?
- Are you comfortable going to your coach-supervisor with case conflicts?
- Do you feel your coach-supervisor is supporting you in every aspect of your volunteering efforts? Please write your answer below and list issues.
- Does your CASA office offer a welcome place for volunteers to visit and work?
- Does your CASA office furnish needed resources, have positive reaction to volunteers and seem supportive of their individual needs?
- Do you understand the implications of secondary trauma produced from working with abused and neglected children? Has your CASA organization discussed how this may affect your wellbeing with you, or offered you support in this area?
- Would more support in the area of secondary trauma and wellness be beneficial to you?
- Have you considered leaving your CASA organization's service? If so, what could your program do to help you reconsider and continue?
- Has your experience been as rewarding and fulfilling as you anticipated? Please list any suggestions that affect your program and could help us serve you better.

[illegible]

VOLUNTEER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

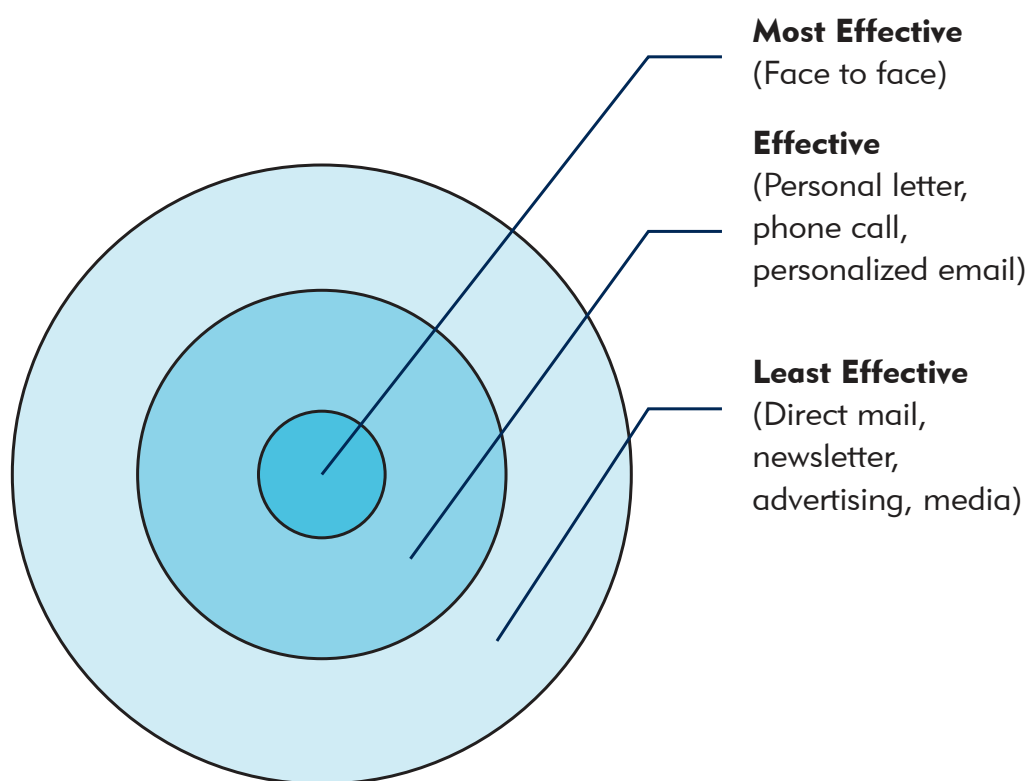
Minimum Expectations of Service to a Case

The advocate will:

- a.** Identify and advocate for the best interest of the child by obtaining first hand a clear understanding of the needs and situation of the child, by conducting an ongoing review of all relevant documents and records and by interviewing the child, parents, social workers, teachers and other persons to determine the facts and circumstances of the child's situation.
- b.** Have regular and sufficient in-person contact with the child where they live to ensure in-depth knowledge of the case and make fact-based recommendations to the court. The CASA volunteer shall meet in-person with the child once every thirty (30) days at a minimum. An exception may be granted:
 - i.** If the child(ren) are placed more than 1 but less than 3 driving hours away, CASA will meet in person with the child(ren) at least once every three months.
 - ii.** If the child(ren) are placed more than 3 driving hours away, CASA will meet in person with the child(ren) at least once every six months.
 - iii.** In addition to in-person contact, have other types of monthly age appropriate contact with the child(ren) including telephone calls, emails, video conferencing and letters as applicable for the child's age and interests.
- c.** Communicate with the DFPS caseworker after appointment and at least one time per month for the duration of the case.
- d.** Meet in person with the child's primary placement provider, in a timely manner, after placement occurs. Communicate with the placement provider at least once per month thereafter for the duration of the child's case.
- e.** Advocate for the child's best interests in the community through regular contact with attorney ad litem, mental health, educational and other community systems to assure that the child's needs in these areas are met and seek cooperative solutions by acting as a facilitator among parties.
- f.** Determine the child's permanent plan, access the educational portfolio and health passport and make recommendations regarding permanency, and education and medical services, as appropriate.
- g.** Appear at all hearings to advocate for the child's best interests and provide testimony as needed.
- h.** Provide at every hearing reports which include findings and recommendations, including specific recommendations for appropriate services for the child and, when appropriate, the child's family.
- i.** Participate in all case-related meetings.
- j.** Monitor implementation of service plans and court orders assuring that court-ordered services are implemented in a timely manner and that review hearings are held in accordance with the law.
- k.** Inform the court promptly of important developments in the case through appropriate means as determined by court rules or statute.
- l.** Maintain complete records about the case, including appointments, interviews and information gathered about the child and the child's life circumstances and return all records to the program after the case is closed.
- m.** Communicate at least once monthly with CASA coach-supervisor and participate in case conferences as scheduled.
- n.** Participate in in-service training.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

Volunteer recruitment is not an exact science, as there are many ways to recruit. Recruitment requires resources, time, money and people. When thinking about developing your recruitment strategy, here are some things to consider to help make your plan cost effective.



Recruitment Approaches

Traditional

- Passive – fill out an application at the front desk
- Broad, generic – “one size fits all”
- Pre-defined roles based on what works for your program
- During regular business hours

Non-traditional

- Personal invitation
- Compelling message
- Relationship-oriented
- Targeted in terms of message and media
- Customized roles (matched with children in PMC, race and ethnicity, LGBT, etc.)

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

Basic Recruitment Strategies

1. Warm Body Recruitment

This recruitment tactic is best when you need a large number of volunteers for a short period of time and qualifications of tasks are minimal. Examples include:

- Distribution of brochures
- Posters
- Speaking to groups
- Notices in appropriate media
- Word-of-mouth

2. Targeted Recruitment

This strategy requires a carefully planned approach to a small audience. Use this approach when particular skills are required. You should consider these questions:

- What do we need?
- Who can provide this?
- How can we communicate with them?
- What would motivate them?

3. Sphere of Influence (AKA Concentric Circle)

This strategy requires you to identify populations you are already in direct or indirect contact with and contacting them with your recruitment message. This population may include:

- Friends of your current volunteers, staff and board
- Former clients, adoptive parents, their friends or relatives
- Former foster youth alumni
- People in your program's neighborhood
- CPS staff, AALs and other social agencies

4. Recruiting Online

Although the most effective approach to volunteer recruitment is face to face, the use of online recruitment is continuously growing.



VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

Creating a Compelling Message

A compelling message includes 4 elements:

- The statement of need (need of the clients, not agency)
- How the volunteer can uniquely help
- Position requirements
- Benefits to the volunteer

Coaches Needed

Statement of need	They have gloves, bats and softballs, but no coach. 75 mentally challenged boys and girls are waiting for a coach.
How to help	Don't let them strike out. Join our Special Olympics Team! Call (phone number).
Benefits	You'll never feel more appreciated and you'll get some exercise too!

Adopt a Grandparent

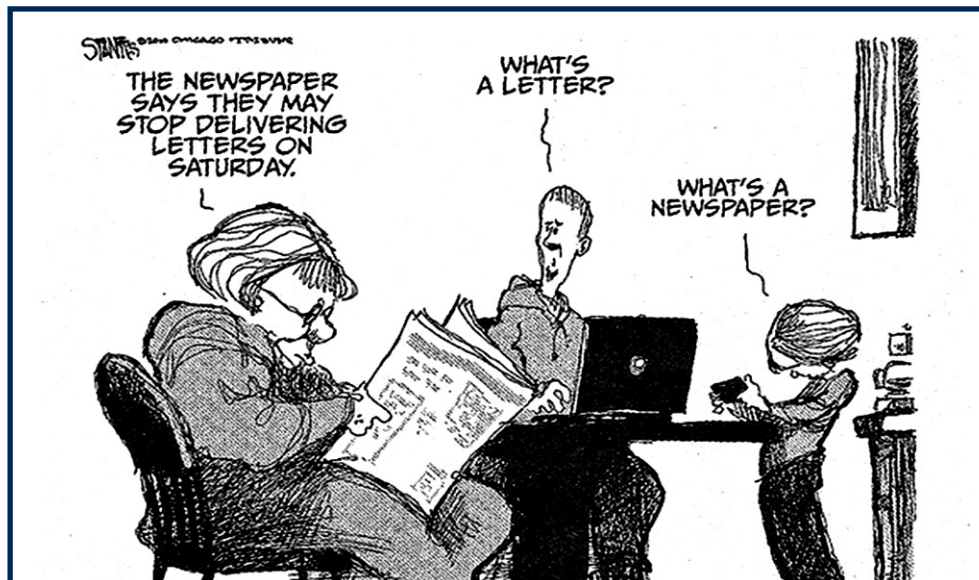
Statement of need	Many elderly people in our community live lonely stretches without a warm smile or embrace.
How to help	Your family could volunteer to "adopt" one of these senior residents.
Position requirements	Volunteers commit to hosting at least 1 family dinner per month with their adopted senior resident for at least 1 year.
Benefits	The members of your family will experience some rare quality time together while learning from an older generation and giving an elder in our community a real lift.

Become a CASA Volunteer

Statement of need	
How to help	
Position requirements	
Benefits	

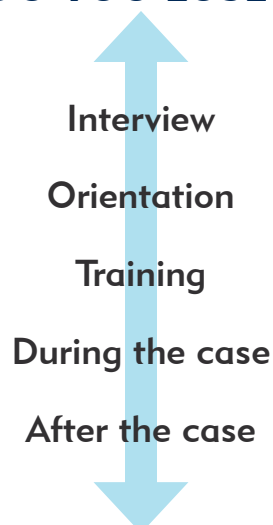
VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

Connecting with your volunteers



Traditionalist (62 +)	Hard-working, financially conservative, and cautious
Baby Boomers (43-61)	Egocentric generation, nuclear family, "live to work"
Generation X (29-43)	"To do" list, blended family, "work to live"
Generation Y (Millennials) (28 or younger)	Empowerment, everyone wins, make their own choices and question authority

WHERE DO YOU LOSE PEOPLE?



VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT

Connecting with your volunteers

Why do your volunteers leave?	How will you make volunteers want to stay?

Formal	Informal
Hold events for recognition	Make personally meaningful statements
Send formal correspondence by mail	Monitor satisfaction and fit frequently
Provide gifts/rewards	Say thank you on a day-to-day basis
*Avoid impersonal or costly gifts. Focus on should never replace day-to-day thank yous.	Give recognition as soon as possible after a task or goal is completed

WHAT STRATEGIES DO YOU USE FOR RETENTION?

1st week on the job	
Initial meeting of the child	
First big challenge	
End of the initial commitment	

SEVENTY-FIVE SUBCONSCIOUS REASONS PEOPLE VOLUNTEER

By Chris Forbes from *Guerrilla Marketing for Non-Profits*

Some researchers claims 90 percent of decisions are made on the subconscious level. Understanding what makes your volunteers tick will give you an incredible guerrilla edge by using psychology. You can learn to maintain volunteer interest—almost reading their minds.

Non-guerrillas only understand about 10 percent of the reasons that make volunteering attractive to people. Guerrillas know about the rest of the motivational iceberg that is beneath the surface and they use that understanding to deepen the interest of the people they want to recruit.

Here's a list of 75 reasons people will never tell you they are volunteering. Heck, they may not even be able to tell themselves.

1. To find a personal mission in life
2. To give back
3. To make a difference
4. To change the world
5. To mobilize support
6. To be relevant
7. To belong to a greater cause
8. To legitimize financial support given to a charity
9. To experience spiritual renewal or new power
10. To express love toward mankind
11. To overcome fears
12. To seek the approval of others
13. To appreciate the blessings one has
14. To be patriotic
15. To be loyal to a cause
16. To sacrifice, go beyond one's self
17. To make right for wrongs committed in the past
18. To have made an impact before death
19. To turn away from worries and responsibilities at home to find inner peace
20. To be compassionate
21. To be able to boast to others
22. To express one's religious beliefs
23. To overcome guilt for wasting time, energy, or resources in the past
24. To go back to a battlefield with a purpose that is life-giving
25. To try to make use of a language learned in school
26. To learn some new things and grow intellectually
27. To be an expert on the subject matter related to the cause
28. To find one's self
29. To pretend to be somebody else
30. To be true to what one stands for
31. To see how one's core values hold up

SEVENTY-FIVE SUBCONSCIOUS REASONS PEOPLE VOLUNTEER CONT.

- 32.** To appreciate one's daily life back home more
- 33.** To break with routines
- 34.** To experience the thrill of being outside one's culture
- 35.** To feel what it is like to be a philanthropist
- 36.** To find solutions to problems back home
- 37.** To have an experience to tell others about
- 38.** To take a break from everyday activities of home and work—
a temporary escape
- 39.** To confirm one has made the right investments with one's time
- 40.** To see first hand something that might be historic
- 41.** To see what the circumstances are in other places
- 42.** To gauge resources needed to complete the cause
- 43.** To assess the status of the cause
- 44.** To spy on the "other side" of another cause
- 45.** To get "outside the box"
- 46.** To join the crowd
- 47.** To impress other people at work
- 48.** To have a more interesting life
- 49.** To imitate others who have been models of behavior
- 50.** To respond to the many calls and invitations to volunteer
- 51.** To check the feasibility of being more deeply involved in a cause
- 52.** To see if sustainable change really is possible
- 53.** To believe in a cause more deeply
- 54.** To experience hope by seeing people helped
- 55.** To make one's own unique contribution
- 56.** To see the rest of the country or world
- 57.** To legitimize one's political views
- 58.** To have a vacation with a purpose
- 59.** To relieve tensions
- 60.** To experience a "different world"
- 61.** To have a controlled diversion of events, tastes, touch, etc.
- 62.** To use one's imagination
- 63.** To compare other ways of living with one's own background
- 64.** To compete with other causes
- 65.** To be passionate about something and feel good
- 66.** To be amused by strange people, places, and customs
- 67.** To spend quality time with friends, family, church members, etc.
- 68.** To take good pictures and videos
- 69.** To have great stories to tell back home
- 70.** To have souvenirs of other places
- 71.** To go to as many places as one can
- 72.** To go more places than others do
- 73.** To shop in places, ways and for things that are not possible back home
- 74.** To see beautiful things, places, people, etc.
- 75.** To explore new ways of communicating

TOP 12 REASONS WHY VOLUNTEERS LEAVE SERVICE

(adapted from "Holding Your Volunteers" by Peter Sandman)

#12 Burn Out – This can happen when we ask an advocate to do too much, too fast. For example, advocates could burn out from taking on a case with 3 or more siblings in different foster homes or cities. In this situation, consider assigning a buddy/partner. Ease volunteers into their roles, provide lots of support in the beginning, and monitor for overwhelm or secondary trauma.

#11 Cool Out – The opposite of asking volunteer to do too much, too fast is not asking them to do anything much at all. For some volunteers this is the #1 reason for leaving: *no one invited me to the workshop, no one told me they needed me, I didn't get a case soon enough*, etc. Don't be timid about asking people to do things and don't lose track of people. Be especially careful to touch base with volunteers who miss meetings, trainings, appreciation events, etc., so the lack of connection is not a reason to miss the next one as well.

#10 Keep Out – The "old-timers" inevitably gravitate to each other at gatherings, especially when they have been through tough times together, or when they have to work to transact or gossip to transmit. This can leave newcomers sitting painfully alone, watching the inner circle and pondering the invisible "Keep Out" signs we didn't mean to post. You can't stop the formation of cliques or keep people from wanting time with friends. But you can consciously reach out to newcomers, and ask advocates to do the same. In larger groups you can institutionalize a buddy system. Pair each newcomer with another newcomer (to compare notes with) and with an old-timer to go to for basic information.

#9 Pull Out – People are more likely to participate when the extent of their participation is safely under their control. Organizational commitments are like personal commitments in this way: no one likes to feel overwhelmed or trapped by the needs of another person that are too large. The sense that someone is clutching desperately for help provokes a strong impulse to escape while there is still time. Part of the solution is to project desire but not desperation. The rest is to allow the volunteer to control the commitment. When a volunteer sets explicit limits, such as *I don't want a teenager case*, respect them.

#8 Can't Win – Nothing scares volunteers more than futility: either feeling that the work is doomed to defeat or that goals are too unclear for success. To reduce this, help build the sense of efficacy: a sense that goals are worth achieving, that the group can achieve them and that the volunteer is contributing significantly to their achievement. Define explicit short-term objectives as well as the long term vision, and make an appreciative fuss each time an objective is achieved.

#7 Can't Lose – Working for a goal that's low-hanging fruit and too easy to accomplish can strike people as just pointless as working for the futile long shot. Keep advocate morale up by varying their tasks, in terms of probability of success. Be especially alert for the anticlimax that follows a victory. Yes, you want to celebrate the success and connect it in advance to the next step. But make sure the pause to celebrate is always following by a reason to keep working.

TOP 12 REASONS WHY VOLUNTEERS LEAVE CASA SERVICE CONT.

#6 No Growth – Alienated, repetitive labor is bad enough when you are paid for it. It is intolerable when you are not. Volunteer work should be interesting; it should offer variety, change, and a chance for personal growth. Make it fun where you can, and alternate it with activities like getting more training and serving on a committee (such as LATS, Recruitment & Retention). Although they may not complain (until they quit) most volunteers want the chance to grow. Look around for the advocates who may be in a “no-grow rut”, and offer them a spicy new challenge.

#5 No Appreciation – Volunteers don’t just enjoy being appreciated. They need it and deserve it. Without it, they tend to lose faith in the value of what they are doing. The most obvious is “Thank You,” and the one far most neglected is “Please.” Perhaps the most crucial piece of appreciation is meticulous attention to logistics: returning phone calls promptly, answering notes, passing along information, scheduling meetings at times when volunteers can make, and staying closely connected in a positive relationship.

#4 External Opposition – If family or friends are opposed to an advocate’s volunteering, odds are you are eventually going to lose them. Family and friends are in a real sense contributing some of their time with the volunteer, so find ways and occasions to thank them. Better still, involve them directly. Even family members who do not want to volunteer themselves may still want to meet people and get a sense of what goes on. For example, invite them to court, a tour of the office, an orientation, CASA Café, etc. External opposition can also rise out of skepticism about the cause rather than the resentment of the competition. Involvement is the best way to cope with this, too. The second best way to cope is to make sure volunteers bring home a steady stream of info demonstrating the wisdom and effectiveness of the work of CASA.

#3 Internal Conflict – Personality conflicts, tensions and even quarrels may be acceptable at home or at a paying job, but are death to a volunteer job. Part of the problem is imagining people who share the values of helping children are always going to like each other. Part of the solution is accepting that people simply may not like each other or get along – which is fine! Once it’s acknowledged, the solution depends on the style of your organization. Some may mediate, some urge them to make up, and some reorganize the work so they won’t have to deal with each other. Your program can determine the best way to handle these human situations.

#2 Policy Disagreement – Sometimes, a conflict arises that’s genuinely over policies rather than personalities. A consensus decision-making process with advocates will help here. Though longer, it leads to better decisions. Unlike voting, it doesn’t produce the disgruntled “few.” It’s crucial to listen to the volunteers on the losing side. Volunteers who quit over a policy disagreement almost always report that their position was not understood by the majority. If you can summarize the disgruntled volunteer’s viewpoint accurately and respectfully, it’s more likely they will accept the decision.

#1 Not enough fun – It stopped being fun. This one needs no explanation! Build in fun for everyone, including yourself. The work is serious, but the context of the work, the celebrations, the new challenges and the community can be very fun.

LETTER TO EXITING VOLUNTEER

(Date)

Dear

Just a quick letter to say thank you for your work as an advocate for children with the CASA program. I hope that this has been a positive and meaningful experience for you. Your contribution is deeply appreciated.

Your CASA case will be re-assigned as soon as we have some closure with the child(ren) regarding your advocacy role and your file and all case notes have been returned to the office. Please call me so that we can make specific arrangements for case closure.

Attached to this letter is an evaluation/case closure form. Please complete this form and return it with your case file and notes. Your suggestions and comments will assist us in making the program more beneficial and responsive to the needs of our volunteers. We wish you all the best in your future endeavors, and thank you again for your time of service.

Sincerely,

Advocate Supervisor

CASE CLOSURE LETTER

Date: _____

Re: _____

Petition _____

Dear

The case of your Advocate child has been closed and I want to thank you for your efforts on behalf of this child. I hope your experience with Child Advocates has been meaningful to you personally, as I know it has been very meaningful to your advocate child/ren.

If you have any suggestions on how we can make the job of advocate easier, please let me know. Thank you for your dedication.

Sincerely,

Advocate Supervisor

VOLUNTEER CLOSED CASE EVALUATION FORM

CASA volunteer name: _____

Case Name and cause: _____

CASA Supervisor: _____

Date of case closure: _____ # of days on case _____

1. From your perspective, discuss the outcome of your case and the impact of your involvement.

2. In what ways could the CASA program staff have offered more assistance or guidance?

3. What other areas of training would have been helpful to you in working on this case?

4. In regards to your experiences as a Court Appointed Special Advocate are you:

_____ very satisfied

_____ satisfied

_____ somewhat satisfied

_____ dissatisfied

5. Comments

RELEASE FROM SERVICE

_____ has been released from the _____
(Name of CASA Volunteer) *(Case file identification)*

case as a CASA volunteer as of _____. A final report has been submitted to the court, and all
(Date)

confidential information previously held by the volunteer has turned over to _____
(Name of CASA Volunteer)

and placed in the appropriate file(s).

CASA Volunteer Signature *Date* *Volunteer Supervisor Signature* *Date*

Family Court Judge Signature *Date*

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF _____

_____ JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Child's Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Cause Number _____

MINOR CHILDREN

ORDER DISCHARGING GUARDIAN AD LITEM

IT IS ORDERED that the appointment of CASA Volunteer, guardian ad litem for the minor children is hereby terminated and is relieved of any further responsibility in the case.

SIGNED this _____ day of _____, 2016

Signature of Judge

Date

101 WAYS TO RECOGNIZE VOLUNTEERS

1. Say, "Thank you!"
2. Smile.
3. Put up a volunteer suggestion box.
4. Treat to a soda.
5. Reimburse assignment-related expenses.
6. Ask for a report.
7. Send a birthday card.
8. Arrange for discounts.
9. Give service stripes.
10. Maintain a coffee bar.
11. Plan annual ceremonial occasions.
12. Invite to staff meetings.
13. Recognize personal needs and problems.
14. Accommodate personal needs and problems.
15. Be pleasant.
16. Use in an emergency situation.
17. Provide a baby sitter.
18. Post Honor Roll in reception area.
19. Respect their wishes.
20. Give informal teas.
21. Keep challenging them.
22. Send a Thanksgiving Day card to the volunteer's family.
23. Provide a nursery.
24. Say, "Good morning!"
25. Greet by name.
26. Provide good pre-service training.
27. Help develop self-confidence.
28. Award plaques to sponsoring group.
29. Take time to explain.
30. Be verbal.
31. Motivate agency VIP's to talk with them.
32. Hold debriefing/rap sessions.
33. Give additional responsibility.
34. Afford participation in team planning.
35. Respect sensitivities.
36. Enable to grow on the job.
37. Enable to grow out of the job.
38. Send newsworthy items to the media.
39. Have wine and cheese tasting parties.
40. Ask clients to evaluate their service.
41. Say, "Good afternoon!"
42. Honor their preferences.
43. Create pleasant surroundings.
44. Welcome to staff coffee breaks.
45. Enlist to train other volunteers.
46. Have a public reception.
47. Take time to talk.
48. Defend against hostile or negative staff.
49. Make good plans.
50. Commend to supervisory staff.
51. Send a valentine.

101 WAYS TO RECOGNIZE VOLUNTEERS CONT.

52. Make thorough pre-arrangements.
53. Persuade paid staff to equate volunteer experience with work experience.
54. Admit to partnership with paid staff.
55. Recommend to prospective employer.
56. Provide scholarships to volunteer workshops or conferences.
57. Offer advocacy roles.
58. Utilize as consultants.
59. Write them "thank you" notes.
60. Invite participation in policy formulation.
61. Surprise with coffee and cake.
62. Celebrate outstanding projects.
63. Nominate for volunteer awards.
64. Have a "President's Day" for new presidents of sponsoring groups.
65. Carefully match volunteer with job.
66. Praise them to their friends.
67. Provide substantive in-service training.
68. Provide useful tools in good working condition.
69. Say, "Good night."
70. Plan staff and volunteer social events.
71. Be a real person.
72. Rent billboard space for public laudation.
73. Accept their individuality.
74. Provide opportunities for conferences and evaluations.
75. Identify age groups.
76. Maintain meaningful files.
77. Send impromptu fun cards.
78. Plan occasional extravaganzas.
79. Instigate client-planned surprises.
80. Utilize purchased newspaper space.
81. Promote a "Volunteer of the Month" program.
82. Send letter of appreciation to employer.
83. Say, "We missed you."
84. Plan a "Recognition Edition" of the agency newsletter.
85. Color code name tags to indicate particular achievements (hours, years, unit, etc.).
86. Send commendatory letter to prominent public figures.
87. Praise the sponsoring group or club.
88. Promote staff smiles.
89. Facilitate personal maturation.
90. Distinguish between group and individuals in the group.
91. Maintain safe working conditions.
92. Adequately orientate.
93. Award special citations for extraordinary achievement.
94. Fully indoctrinate regarding the agency.
95. Send Christmas cards.
96. Be familiar with the details of assignments.
97. Conduct community wide, cooperative, inter-agency recognition events.
98. Plan a theatre party.
99. Attend a sports event.
100. Have a picnic.
101. Say, "Thank you!"

(Source: United States Army, <http://sill-www.army.mil/428thfa/frg/ideas/Volunteer%20Binder.pdf>)

COACHING ACTION PLAN

Statement of the Current Situation:

Specific Goals:

Timeline:

Action Steps:

Expected Outcomes:

COACHING VS SUPERVISION: WHAT MAKES US TICK?

Managing by Style



Relator – “Amiable”



Socializer - "Expressive"



Thinker – “Analytical”



Director – “Driver”

You have a style... they have a style... mastery is learning to shift!

NOTES

ASSIGNED CASE MINIMUM EXPECTATION OF SERVICE

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Case Assigned/ Closed												
Contact with CPS Worker (monthly)												
Contact with AAL (monthly)												
Visits to Foster Home (Local cases monthly. If 1-3 hrs away once every 3 months)												
Observed CPS Supervised Visit (monthly)												
Contact with Teachers, School Counselors, Therapist, Daycare												
Visit to RTC Placement												
Contact with CASA Supervisor (monthly)												

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Purpose

Each position at CASA of the Coastal Bend (CASA) is designed to make a meaningful contribution to the success of the organization and to those whom we serve. The performance management process is designed to help each employee be successful in their current role and to continue developing themselves towards increasing their contribution to the community in which we work. The process consists of ongoing conversations between employees and their supervisors that define clear expectations, provide encouragement and focus, and assess the level of performance towards those expectations.

At CASA those expectations for each employee include both clear performance goals based on job descriptions as well as behaviors that are consistent with the values of the organization, and therefore each employee will be assessed on not only what is accomplished but how the results are accomplished.

The Approach

The performance management system consists of three components. Although each component can be described separately, in actual practice they are integrated and support each other in forming an ongoing interaction between employees and their supervisor. The three components are: (1) setting expectations and goals; (2) ongoing coaching; and (3) performance evaluations.

Process

Goal Setting

Together with the supervisor, employees play an active role in determining and defining expectations for their jobs which are to be consistent with their job descriptions and with strategies and objectives as defined by CASA. The performance management process from setting goals to performance evaluation will include the active participation of employees, supervisors and leadership to ensure a consistent and fair process.

Performance Goals: The performance expectations will be based on the employee's current job description and the organization's strategic goals. Each employee's goals are to be aligned with the priorities of the organization. The results of the goal setting session may include clearly defined performance goals and behavioral goals consistent with CASA's values. It is important that these goals are not only clearly defined but also convey what would constitute meeting or exceeding the goals during the performance period.

Development Goals: In addition to performance goals, it is expected that each employee will be engaged in self-development. These development goals may involve: (1) developmental of skills and/or knowledge to better perform in the current role or areas of responsibilities; (2) developmental goals due to changes and additions to the skills and knowledge requirements of the current role; or (3) the employee's aspirations for future roles or responsibilities. The employee and supervisor will work together to identify any developmental goals.

The developmental goals required to meet current performance goals, or those required to meet any new or additional areas of performance will be the responsibility of the supervisor and the employee. The personal developmental aspirations, although highly encouraged and supported by the organization are largely the responsibility of the employee.

Coaching

The second component of the process involves the ongoing coaching of the employee towards achieving the goals. Coaching may include formal and informal conversations initiated by either the supervisor or the employee and focus on progress or lack of progress towards the goals. The purposes of the coaching sessions are to keep the employee focused on the right things, redefine goals if things change, offer assistance and encouragement, and serve as a method of tracking performance against goals. In addition, coaching sessions may focus on the progress towards developmental goals and provide additional guidance and support needed to accomplish the developmental goals set for the performance cycle.

Performance Evaluation

The third component of the performance management process is the performance evaluation. As the goal setting session is looking forward, the evaluation is primarily looking back with an eye to the future. The evaluation consists of the supervisor and employee comparing performance against goals and behavior against behaviors defined by the CASA values. The purpose is to assess where the employee has achieved or even exceeded the goals, where they may have fallen short of goals and to learn from what happened. In addition, clear feedback about "how" the goals were achieved is also a focus of the evaluation. Looking forward, a discussion of development tasks and some anticipation of setting goals for the next performance evaluation cycle will take place. If goals have been set clearly, and the employee and supervisor have had frequent coaching sessions, there should not be any surprises for either during the evaluation session.

Although the process of performance evaluation emphasizes the individuality of each job, each supervisor will make every attempt to achieve consistency across the organization. This is an ongoing process with new expectations set and reviewed each year including an organization wide review of ratings and calibration that will be conducted by the Management Team.

The Executive Director will review the evaluations of staff who report to Program Director and the Program Director will review evaluations of the staff who report to the Volunteer Recruitment Director. If the employee and supervisor cannot agree on one or more specific performance expectations the disagreement will be taken to the next level for resolution.

Evaluation Cycle

The employee receives a job description at time of hire. After the six (6) month anniversary, the employee receives an initial performance evaluation. From this point, formal performance evaluations occur on an annual basis. CASA evaluations will typically occur in the second quarter of the year. For this first round the performance evaluations will occur by the beginning of the year (2013) with six month goal setting with a second evaluation done by the end of the second quarter when goals will be set for a one year period and annual evaluations from that point on.

Transmittal of Forms

Once the evaluation has been approved by the next level manager and discussed with the employee, the original Employee Performance Evaluation is filed in the employee's personnel file. A copy will be given to the employee and the supervisor. NOTE: The employee's signature on the Employee's Performance Appraisal only acknowledges receipt; it does not indicate agreement or disagreement.

Appeal Process

Each employee has the right to appeal the results of the performance review within 30 days of the review date. Should an employee indicate disagreement with a performance review, the employee should refer to the Grievance Policy in the Employee Handbook for resolution.

VOLUNTEER REFERENCE REQUEST

REFERENCE'S NAME:	APPLICANT'S NAME:	DATE:
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The above-referenced applicant has given the CASA program permission to contact you as a reference. Although this is a volunteer position, the duties carried out by a CASA volunteer are extremely important. As advocates for children who have been victims of abuse and/or neglect, volunteers must be responsible, articulate, and mature. This reference form will be used to assess the candidate's ability to carry out the role of a CASA/GAL volunteer. Selected applicants will receive 33 hours of training and ongoing program supervision. Once appointed to a case, the volunteer will research the case, interview all relevant parties, and prepare written reports for the presiding judge.

Please do not hesitate to call if you seek any additional information about the CASA program. Thank you for agreeing to take a few minutes to fill out this form.

How long have you known the applicant and in what capacity?

Do you have knowledge of how the applicant relates to children?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please describe

Please list the three adjectives that best describe the applicant.

Please indicate how the applicant has handled the following situations:	Gracefully	Competently	With Some Difficulty	Never Observed
• Public speaking				
• Dealing with sensitive/controversial issues				
• Defending a position on an issue with colleagues				
• Defusing a potentially explosive situation				

How well does the applicant finish projects and activities?			
<input type="checkbox"/> Very Well	<input type="checkbox"/> Well	<input type="checkbox"/> Average	<input type="checkbox"/> Below Average

Please rate the applicant in the following areas:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Never Observed
• Writing Skills					
• Interviewing Skills					
• Interpersonal Skills					
• Level of Motivation					
• Political Savvy					
• Self-Assurance					
• Leadership					

Overall, I'd give the applicant the following recommendation for the CASA program:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> I have some reservations

Please add any additional comments below summarizing your view of the applicant's ability to work with court professionals on behalf of an abused/neglected child.

Signature

Date

WEBSITES

Compassion Fatigue
www.compassionfatigue.org

Energize Inc.
www.energizeinc.com

ePhilanthropyFoundation.org
www.e philanthropyfoundation.org

e-volunteerism.com
www.e-volunteerism.com

Hands On Network
www.handsonnetwork.org

Idealist.org: Action Without Borders
www.idealist.org

Independent Sector
www.independentsector.org

National & Global Youth Service Day
<http://www.ysa.org/nysd/resource/planning.cfm>

National Service Resource Center
www.nationalserviceresources.org

Network for Good
www.networkforgood.org

Service Leader
www.serviceleader.org

ServeNet
www.servenet.org

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A Research Brief on Volunteer Retention and Turnover

Executive Summary

Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE** ★★ ★

BACKGROUND

Baby Boomers—the generation of 77 million Americans born between 1946 and 1964—represent a potential boost to the volunteer world, not only because of the sheer size of the generation but also because of its members' high levels of education, wealth, and skills. Based on U.S. Census data, the number of volunteers age 65 and older will increase 50 percent over the next 13 years, from fewer than 9 million in 2007 to more than 13 million in 2020. What's more, that number will continue to rise for many years to come, as the youngest Baby Boomers will not reach age 65 until 2029. Harnessing Baby Boomers' skills and accommodating their expectations will be critical to solving a wide range of social problems in the years ahead.

To attract Baby Boomers to volunteering, experts on aging agree that nonprofit groups and others must boldly rethink the types of opportunities they offer—to “re-imagine” roles for older American volunteers that cater to Boomers' skills and desire to make their mark in their own way. This is vitally important to ensuring that the potential of this vast resource is tapped to its fullest.

While much attention has focused on how to recruit Baby Boomers as volunteers, relatively little attention has been paid to ensuring that those who volunteer one year continue to do so the next. The importance of volunteer retention should not be underestimated. Despite their reputation for self-centeredness, Baby Boomers today have the highest volunteer rate of any age group. They also, as this report notes, volunteer at higher rates than past generations did when they were the same age. Because 3 out of every 10 Baby Boomer volunteers choose not to volunteer in the following year, and since Baby Boomers are the next generation of older adults, it is important to understand how best to capture their experience and energy and what factors will impact their decision to volunteer from year to year.

To examine this further, the Corporation for National and Community Service has analyzed data collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Census as part of its regular decennial Census, as well as data collected in 1974, 1989, and from 2002 to 2006 as part of a special Volunteer Supplement to the Current

Population Survey. The data trace the volunteer habits of the same sample of Baby Boomers over two consecutive years, as well as a similar sample of pre-Boomers. Here are some findings about Baby Boomers gleaned from that research:

KEY FINDINGS

■ Baby Boomers volunteer today at higher rates than past generations did at roughly the same age.

At 30.9 percent, the volunteer rate for those ages 46 to 57 today, who make up the majority of the Baby Boomers, is significantly higher than both the 25.3 percent recorded by the same age cohort in 1974 (Greatest Generation, born 1910-1930) and the 23.2 percent recorded in 1989 (Silent Generation, born 1931-1945). Baby Boomers were volunteering at lower rates than their predecessors while in their 30s, but that trend has reversed.

■ Remaining in the workforce increases the likelihood that a Baby Boomer will continue to volunteer.

69.3 percent of Baby Boomer volunteers who experience no change in their labor status continue to volunteer the following year, compared to 60.5 percent of those who move out of the workforce.

■ Baby Boomers' relatively high volunteer rate is tied to their education level and propensity to have children later in life.

Education levels and whether one has children are two key predictors of volunteer levels; the factors account in part for the fact that the volunteer rate for Baby Boomer is peaking later in life than past generations. In fact, mid-life adults (ages 45 to 64) are nearly three times as likely to have a four-year college degree today as they were 15 years ago (from 11.5% to 29.5%). Once their children leave, Baby Boomers could maintain relatively high volunteer rates because of their higher education levels and expectations that they will work later in life than previous generations, two factors connected to higher volunteer rates.

■ Baby Boomers appear to have different volunteer interests than past generations.

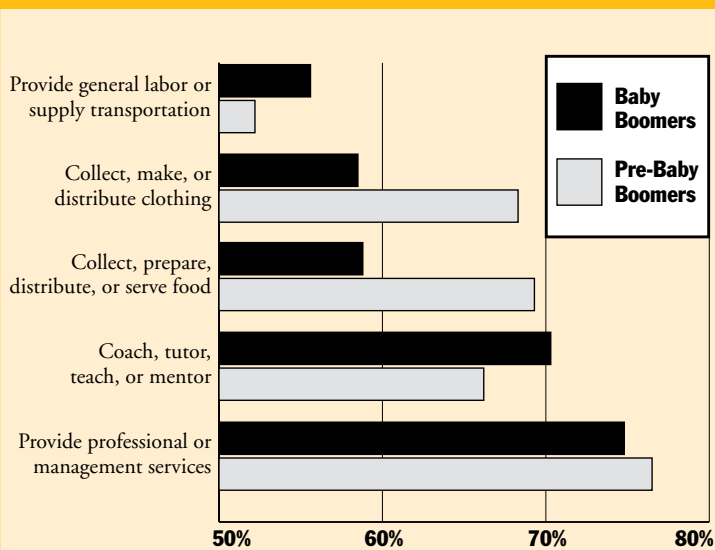
In the past 15 years, there has been a change in the types of organizations with which people ages 41 to 59 volunteer. While volunteering through religious

organizations is still the most popular venue for volunteer participation, volunteering with educational organizations has grown and is now the second most common venue for adult volunteers in this age range (Boomers). In 1989, when the Silent and Greatest Generations were between ages 41 to 59, the second most popular type of volunteer organization was civic, political, business, and international.

■ Baby Boomers who engage in professional or management volunteer activities are the most likely to volunteer from year to year.

The year-to-year retention rate for Baby Boomer volunteers who perform more challenging assignments, such as professional or management activities (like strategic planning, volunteer management and coordination, and marketing) is the highest, at 74.8 percent, followed by Baby Boomers who engage in music or other performance arts (70.9%) and those who do tutoring, mentoring, and coaching (70.3%).

Volunteer Retention Rates by Volunteer Activities for Baby Boomers and Older Generational Cohorts Who Only Perform One Volunteer Activity, (2002-2006)



■ Baby Boomers who engage in general labor or supply transportation are the least likely to volunteer the following year.

The year-to-year retention rate for Baby Boomer volunteers who do general labor and supply transportation is the lowest, at 55.6 percent.

■ The more hours a Baby Boomer devotes to volunteering, the more likely he or she will volunteer from year to year.

As annual volunteer hours among Baby Boomers increase, so do volunteer retention rates, making volunteering a “virtuous cycle.” Nearly 8 of 10 Baby Boomer volunteers who serve 100 to 499 hours a year volunteer again the following year, compared to just over 5 in 10 who serve 1 to 14 hours. In between, nearly 74 percent of those who give 50 to 99 hours continue to volunteer the following year. Likewise, 79 percent of volunteers continue volunteering when they serve 12 or more weeks a year.

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The hope is that the findings contained herein will help nonprofits and others gain greater insight into the volunteer preferences of Baby Boomers. If the nonprofit community can rethink how to utilize Baby Boomers as volunteers, turnover will be kept to a minimum and the greatest number of Boomers will remain engaged in their communities.

■ Nonprofits should look to put Baby Boomers’ skills to use in order to retain them as volunteers, as Baby Boomers are seeking challenging opportunities.

■ Nonprofits also need to strengthen their view of volunteers as assets, similar to how they view their donors and how employers view their employees. The more positive experiences a volunteer has, the more likely he or she is to return, just as with an employee or donor.

■ Adoption of key practices, such as matching volunteers with appropriate and challenging assignments, providing professional development opportunities for volunteers, and treating volunteers as valued partners, can help build organizational capacity to increase volunteer participation, and also sustain it.

■ Since volunteering and giving are related, and trillions of dollars are expected to be given to charity in the coming decades, it makes sense for nonprofits to find ways of encouraging substantial volunteering because it could eventually produce considerable monetary gifts.

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THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The Office of Research and Policy Development (RPD) is part of the CEO's Office within the Corporation for National and Community Service. RPD's mission is to develop and cultivate knowledge that will enhance the mission of the Corporation and of volunteer and community service programs.

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RELATED RESEARCH REPORTS ON VOLUNTEERING

Volunteer Growth in America: A Review of Trends Since 1974. December 2006. Provides an in-depth look at volunteering over the past 30 years, with particular attention paid to changing historical volunteer patterns by select age groups. The report analyzes data on volunteering collected by the Census Bureau in 1974 and 1989.

College Students Helping America. October 2006. Identifies key trends in volunteering among college students ages 16 to 24, looks at the demographics and select civic behaviors of college students who volunteer, discusses future implications for volunteering given the changing college environment, and provides state rankings for volunteering among college students.

Volunteering in America: State Trends and Rankings. June 2006. Presents a national, regional, and state-by-state analysis of volunteering trends.

Volunteers Mentoring Youth: Implications for Closing the Mentoring Gap. May 2006. Provides a greater understanding of the characteristics and traits that distinguish individuals whose volunteering includes mentoring youth from volunteers who do not mentor.

Youth Helping America Series. Educating for Active Citizens: Service-Learning, School-Based Service, and Youth Civic Engagement. March 2006. Takes a closer look at participation in school-based service among middle school and high school aged youth, paying particular attention to the relationship between different service-learning experiences and civic attitudes and outcomes.

Youth Helping America Series. Building Active Citizens: The Role of Social Institutions in Teen Volunteering. November 2005. Explores the state of youth volunteering and the connections between youth volunteering and the primary social institutions to which teenagers are exposed – family, schools, and religious congregations.

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STRENGTHENING THE VOICES OF CASA STATEWIDE
