



MONDAY MORNING MEMO

Monday, December 11, 2006 ☞ Volume 1, Issue 2

☞☞☞ ☞☞☞ **The A-Train** ☞☞☞ ☞☞☞

Dates for February Regional CASA Program Director Meetings

We have landed on the following dates for the February regional meetings:

Thursday, February 8th, Albany, New York, to be held at the offices of Capital District CASA, Mediation Matters, 10 Russell Road, 2nd Floor.

Tuesday, February 13th, Buffalo, New York, to be held at the offices of CASA-Voices for Children, Boys and Girls Clubs of Buffalo, 282 Babcock Street.

Tuesday, February 27th, New York City, to be held at the offices of New York City CASA, 50 Broadway, 31st Floor.

The meetings will be held from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. each day, and local directors can attend any of the three meetings they choose. Much thanks to the local directors who have agreed to serve on the Planning Committee for this meeting: *Kathy McGowan, Richard Heyl de Ortiz, Robin Robinson, Carol Demme, and Amy Feldman*. More information regarding registration and agendas for these meetings will be forthcoming: we will be working with the Planning Committee and State Association to finalize details. As of this date, the regional meetings will include training on adolescent advocacy, and roundtable discussions with your peers on “Volunteer Recruitment and Retention: Thinking Outside the Box” and “Recruiting for Board and Advisory Board Members.” Topic and format suggestions are welcome. Opportunities for informal networking will occur over lunch and the evening before each meeting.

“Janes” Call on Permanency to be Rescheduled

We will be rescheduling the follow-up conference call for later this winter with the “Janes” – *Jane Thompson and Jane Malpass* – who presented on permanency advocacy for children in September. If you have a scheduled volunteer in-service in January or February and would like to put the call on speaker phone for your volunteers to hear, please send me those dates as soon as possible.

Permanency Mediation Training to be held in Nassau County

A training on Child Permanency Mediation will take place January 8-11, 2007, at Hofstra University in Hempstead, Long Island, NY. Sponsored by the NYS Unified Court System’s Office of Alternative Dispute Resolution and Court Improvement, Nassau County Family Court, and Hofstra University School of Law, the four-day training is offered free of charge, but seating is limited and preference will be given to those affiliated with active child permanency mediation programs. There are two tracks, one for experience mediators and one for child welfare or family court professionals who do not intend to mediate, but who wish to better understand the mediation process and its application to child welfare



matters. If you are interested in more information, please contact *Trista Borra*, Office of ADR and Court Improvement, at tborra@courts.state.ny.us or 516-571-9360.

~~~~~ **Success Stories** ~~~~~

***CASA of Broome and Tioga Counties Has Success with Radio Ads***

*Kacey Elsworth*, Director of Voices for Children/Broome CASA, which now serves both Broome and Tioga Counties, has found radio ads for CASA volunteers to be an effective marketing tool. The project began about a year ago when she invited the general manager of the local Clear Channel radio network to come to a meeting of the program's Marketing Committee, in order to discuss options for advertising as a non-profit. He brought with him three new salespeople as part of their training, and they all spent the evening brainstorming.

Kacey writes, "One of the salespeople ended up being assigned to us," and was then asked to sit on the program's committee. This ultimately led to an inside track on happenings at the radio station, and to an award from the general manager "for going above and beyond" the call of duty.

From Kacey, some of the lessons learned from this project:

1. You can definitely target different audiences depending on the radio stations you select.
2. The radio is required to run a certain number of PSA's per month, so keep asking them to include yours.
3. Radio advertising only truly works when your commercial is run five or more times a day.
4. A advertising campaign should run 3-4 weeks to get optimum exposure.
5. Sponsoring the weather or traffic only gives you 10 seconds -- not enough time to get your message across.
6. Commercials should be at least 30 seconds long to get your message across.
7. Often they will give you buy-one/get-one free deals on commercials.
8. In a medium market (Binghamton is an example) for 5 commercials a day for 3 weeks you can plan on spending one to two thousand dollars.
9. It pays to get to know the local general manager and get an "in" with the station.

The impact on volunteer recruitment was significant. "For every time we have an aired commercial," Kacey said, "we have had two to three hundred phone calls. Out of those we have sent out application packets to about 75% and then out of the 75%, 40% will turn their info back in to begin the application process."

She suggests avoiding holiday months (November, December and May) because of the higher rates, but many other times of year are fairly inexpensive. She adds that radio stations will produce commercials for agencies for free and they will write them for you or you can write them yourself. The turn-around for producing a radio ad is generally only one day, so it is something that can be done on a short notice.



## ***CASA Advocacy for children in Institutional Settings***

At a recent local program site visit in *Onondaga County*, I was so impressed by the dedicated CASA volunteer advocacy on behalf of children in institutional settings – situations where children have no family visiting them, and the CASA volunteer is their sole link to the community; cases where CASA was instrumental in helping move a child to a less restrictive setting; incidents where CASA helped obtain services or items to make the child's stay there more comfortable. I'd love to put together some case success stories along these lines from around the state, and also hear of challenges that you may have encountered. Feel free to email or call to discuss.

### ~~~~~ **What's New at OCA?** ~~~~~

## ***CASA Program featured in The New York Mediator***

The Fall/Winter 2006 issue of *The New York Mediator* featured an article on Court Appointed Special Advocates and the CASA Assistance Program at OCA. The publication, produced by The Office of Alternative Dispute Resolution and Court Improvement (ADRCI), is distributed to mediators and Community Dispute Resolution Centers across the state.

To get on the mailing list, please contact Amelia Hershberger at [ahershbe@courts.state.ny.us](mailto:ahershbe@courts.state.ny.us).

## ***Judge Lippman Honored With Vance Award***

Chief Administrative Judge Jonathan Lippman was honored with the Fund for Modern Courts' 2008 Cyrus R. Vance Tribute at a recent breakfast Wednesday morning at the Yale Club. The award recognizes a figure "engaged in making the New York state justice system more efficient, fair and accessible to all."

### ~~~~~ **Ask OCA** ~~~~~

## ***Document, communication and records confidentiality***

These questions came in from a local program:

- 1) What documents are CASAs permitted to take with them outside of their CASA agency and the court?
- 2) What records storage methods are approved, locked cabinet, locked room, etc.?
- 3) How do agencies develop their policies about this and can we help each other by sharing these?
- 4) What documents are exempt from policies, such as notes, etc.?

Another program asked specifically about email notes, what are the parameters about sharing those? While we are gathering answers to the above, are there other questions on the same topic of records and



# CASA ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND COURT IMPROVEMENT

confidentiality? We'll collect the questions and answers, and send out a suggested "Best Practice" page for the UCS Program Manual.

## Quote of the Week

"CASA has been a godsend to me. I love working with my child, her sibling, the family, the agencies and the court. It is one of the most rewarding things I have ever done. Mary and her sister's smiles, the gratitude shared when I visit, send a postcard, attend a program or we just talk together, fill my heart with joy and hope for a better tomorrow for them."

*B. Johnson, CASA Volunteer, Chautauqua County*

## Next Issue

The Next Issue of the **Monday Morning Memo** would fall on Christmas Day, so we will resume publication on Monday, January 8, 2007.

*Best wishes to you and yours for a joyous holiday season,  
and every wish for a peaceful and prosperous new year.*

*We look forward to working with all of you throughout 2007  
to make it a good year for the children of this state.*



## Happy Holidays!

*This is a publication of the*  
**NYS Unified Court System, Office of Court Administration, Division of Court Operations**  
**Court Appointed Special Advocates Assistance Program**

*For further information, contact:*

**Darlene Ward, Program Manager**

**98 Niver Street, Cohoes, New York 12047**

**Phone: (518) 238-4360; Fax: (518) 238-2951**

**Email: [daward@courts.state.ny.us](mailto:daward@courts.state.ny.us) / Website: [www.nycourts.gov/ip/casa/](http://www.nycourts.gov/ip/casa/)**