

Lift up a child's voice  
A child's life.™



**CASA**

Court Appointed Special Advocates  
**FOR CHILDREN**

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**THE NATIONAL COURT APPOINTED  
SPECIAL ADVOCATE ASSOCIATION**

**THE NATIONAL CASA PRE-SERVICE  
VOLUNTEER TRAINING QUICK LINKS GUIDE**

**VOLUNTEER MANUAL**

# User Agreement



## User Agreement and Uses for the Pre-Service Curriculum Manual

National CASA Association and its many contributors across the network have worked very hard to create a state-of-the art curriculum. This evidence-informed manual has been created by contributors who are experts in their field, with the sole purpose of training CASA/GAL advocates to provide the best advocacy for the children served. Out of respect for this work, and because of the copyrights and legal protections this manual possesses, use of this manual (in part or in whole) by any person or entity that is not a member in good standing of National CASA is strictly forbidden.

Additionally, this manual is only to be used as a pre-service curriculum for potential advocates that have been recruited and screened by CASA/GAL programs in good standing with National CASA.

# Getting Started



Welcome to the first tab of the Pre-Service Volunteer Training Resources. In this section you will have the opportunity to download information and resources to prepare you for your first training session. Your first session introduces you to your fellow training participants and provides an overview of information about the CASA/GAL volunteer role and the child welfare system.

Good luck in the training and thank you for all you are doing to advance the advocacy work for children who have been abused or neglected.



## PRE-WORK FOR CHAPTER 1

# The CASA/GAL Volunteer Role



Chapter: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

## Chapter 1 Summary

In this chapter, participants learn about their roles and responsibilities as CASA/GAL volunteers and the principles that guide their work. This is a “big picture” chapter, setting the historical and current context of child protection and describing the CASA/GAL volunteer’s place in the overall system. This session provides an opportunity for participants to feel inspired, knowing they can make a difference in the lives of children.

## Quick Chapter Links



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# The Well-Being of a Child

Chapter: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

## Chapter 2 Summary

This chapter focuses on all there is to know about child development and what a CASA/GAL volunteer needs to know to do his/her job. The goal is not for volunteers to master all the information, but to help develop intuition and be able to “red flag” situations that should be evaluated by a professional or discussed with a supervisor.

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### PRE-WORK FOR CHAPTER 3

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- [Pre-Work: ACE Study](#)
- [Pre-Work: Interviewing Skills Part 1](#)
- [Pre-Work: First Impressions](#)

# Trauma, Resilience and Communication Skills



Chapter: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

## Chapter 3 Summary

This chapter introduces the importance of effective communication in CASA/GAL volunteer work. Participants practice the skills they're learning in order to build confidence and prepare them for their role.

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# Mental Health, Poverty and Professional Communication

Chapter: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

## Chapter 4 Summary

In this chapter, it is important for participants to understand that while mental illness and poverty are risk factors for child abuse and neglect, most people affected by mental illness and poverty do not abuse and/or neglect their children. When working on a case that involves either mental illness or poverty, participants should always focus on the parent's ability to provide a safe home.

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# Substance Abuse and Cultural Competence

Chapter: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

## Chapter 5 Summary

This chapter addresses substance abuse and how it can affect a parent's ability to care for a child. This chapter also includes why participants need to know about this subject, why they need to be aware of their personal values about substance use/abuse, and ways volunteers can set aside their values in order to consider what's best for a child.

This chapter introduces the concepts of culture, diversity, disproportionality and cultural competence that will be further explored in chapter 6.

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# Domestic Violence and Cultural Competence

Chapter: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

## Chapter 6 Summary

This chapter goes deeper into cultural competency issues and delves further into addressing bias, stereotyping, institutional racism, and allowing participants the opportunity to create a plan for increasing their cultural competence.

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# Educational Advocacy, Older Youth and LGBTQ Youth



Chapter: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

## Chapter 7 Summary

The material in this chapter about educational advocacy and advocacy for older youth is intended to briefly introduce issues related to these topics.

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# Wrapping Up

Chapter: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

## Chapter 8 Summary

This chapter wraps up the pre-service training program. As participants prepare to launch into their real-world role as CA SA/GAL volunteers, they review what they have learned in training, evaluate their strengths and challenges, and identify their support systems.

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