

COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE

McDonough County, Illinois

February, 2017 Newsletter

Advocacy Network for Children Mission Statement: To protect and uphold the rights of children when wrongs have been committed against them; to help abused or neglected children have safe, permanent homes where they can thrive; to act as a powerful voice in these children's best interest and to educate the public about the plight of unrepresented children within the child welfare system.

Donald Vandiver

June 7, 1954 – December 29, 2016

CASA volunteer Don Vandiver passed away on December 29th after a brief illness. Don was sworn in as a CASA in March, 2016 and loved advocating for abused and neglected children. He was also a member of the Bushnell Odd Fellows and the Good Samaritan Lodge. He worked as a Nursing Aide Instructor at Carl Sandburg College. We will miss Don in our CASA family.



Jim Percy – February 10

Jim Hayden – February 11

Legal Term of the Month

“Continuance Under Supervision” (CUS)

Sec.2 -20. Continuance under supervision.

(1) The court may enter an order of continuance under supervision (a) upon an admission or stipulation by the appropriate respondent or minor respondent of the facts supporting the petition and before proceeding to findings and adjudication, or after hearing the evidence at the adjudicatory hearing but before noting in the minutes of proceeding a finding of whether or not the minor is abused, neglected or dependent; and (b) in the absence of objection made in open court by the minor, his parent, guardian, custodian, responsible relative, defense attorney or the State's Attorney.

(705 ILCS 405/2-20) (from Ch. 37, par. 802-20)

An example of a “continuance under supervision” might be: following an incident that brought DCFS to the home, the children remain in-tact (in the home with the parents) and the parents maintain guardianship of the child(ren) while receiving services. The case is monitored closely for a period of time by the caseworker, the CASA, and through regularly scheduled hearings. This insures the parents adhere to recommendations in the service plan, if utilized, and hopefully make progress. Any issues which further endanger the welfare of the child(ren) might be cause for the children to be adjudicated as abused and neglected and guardianship and custody given to DCFS.

Emancipation

A CASA case recently had an older teen discuss wanting to be emancipated. Since you, the CASA volunteer, advocates for a child's best interest, it's important to be familiar with emancipation. This is a complex subject and we encourage to talk to the CASA staff if you have further questions.

What is emancipation?

Emancipation is a legal term describing a child's release from the custody and control of his or her parents or guardian. Emancipation occurs by law at 18, but a special emancipation order can be issued for minors between the ages of 16 and 18. This order allows minors to live independently from their parents and to exercise greater control over their own lives.

Is emancipation an available option for every adolescent?

No! While every adolescent automatically becomes emancipated at age 18, only "mature" minors, between the ages of 16 and 18, can become legally emancipated before their 18th birthday. To become emancipated, minors must have proven that they can manage their own affairs and already have lived wholly or partially independently from their parents. In addition, their parents must not object to the emancipation.

Who should seek emancipation and who should not?

Generally, only minors who have a special need for emancipation should consider it. Such special needs may include:

- ☐ Problems getting housing because of your age or legal status
- ☐ Educational barriers due solely to your age or legal status
- ☐ Inability to enter into contracts because of your age

Minors who should not consider emancipation include:

- ☐ Minors who need continuing financial support from their parents
- ☐ Minors who will not be able to support themselves financially
- ☐ Minors who have no special need for emancipation
- ☐ Minors who do not have a plan for safe and stable housing

Can I get public aid if I am emancipated?

Maybe. Courts probably will not allow you to become emancipated if your purpose is to get public aid. Also, you might still be denied public aid because of your age. If you become emancipated and later find you need public aid, you should apply for it and should qualify as an adult.

Is "independent living" the same as emancipation?

No. "Independent living" is a term for special state-funded programs to teach adult living skills to older teens. In fact, if you are emancipated, it may be difficult for you to get into an independent living program.

Can I be emancipated if I am a ward of the state?

Yes. A Juvenile Court can order you emancipated from the Department of Children and Family Services on the same basis as any other emancipation for a 16 to 18 year old minor. Remember that if you are emancipated, however, you will not be able to return to state-funded care, unless the court terminates the emancipation order. If your caseworker recommends emancipation for you, be sure to talk with your lawyer before you agree to an emancipation order.

The above information can be found at www.illinoislegalaid.org along with additional information.

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Upcoming Events in 2017

February 14 – Brown Bag Lunch at 12:00 noon. Will Wetzel, Director of Genesis Gardens will speak to us about the “journey of the homeless shelter” on Carroll Street and other program offered by Genesis Gardens. (Tour of shelter available.) We will meet on the second floor of the First Presbyterian Church.

March 4 – Save the date. Advocacy Network for Children Annual Fundraiser Dinner! CASA volunteers, you and your guest attend at no charge! FUN!

March 14 – Brown Bag Lunch at 12:00 noon. Susan Lawhorn, Board Member of Loaves and Fishes will talk about the food pantry, who they serve, and how they stock the pantry. Following lunch Susan will take us downstairs at the First Presbyterian Church for a tour of the pantry and it's storage facility. We will meet on the second floor of the First Presbyterian Church.

April – Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month

April 4 – Flag Raising at Macomb City Hall. The tradition of raising the Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention flag at Macomb City Hall will continue. The flag will fly throughout the month of April to promote awareness of child abuse. Please join us to show your support!

April 8 – Koins for Kids. Interested in volunteering a couple hours of your time at one of our collection sites? The “koin” collected help insure abused and neglected children in McDonough County have a CASA assigned to them. Contact Vicki Duba at 309-544-0003.

April 19 – Evening Poverty Simulation In-Service. CASA of McDonough County has invited Lisa Fulkerson, University of Illinois Extension Office, to conduct this poverty simulation. The event simulates living a life in poverty and needing to rely on the “system” to help meet the family's basic needs. The simulation is most successful when there is a good-sized group to participate. If you are a member of a local food pantry or school backpack program, agency, a church with an outreach program for the poor, or an individual interested in participating, please call Vicki Duba, 309-544-0003 to reserve a spot!

April 29 – Run for CASA Kids! First annual 5K. Working out the details now!

May 9 - Brown Bag Lunch at 12:00 noon. Kate McGruder, Director of Early Beginnings will speak about the services her program offers to children and their families. We will meet on the second floor of the First Presbyterian Church.