



Legacy Project Mentor Handbook Advocates for Children - CASA

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Purpose of this Legacy Mentor Handbook

Concrete Objective:

To provide Legacy Mentors with clear guidelines, expectations and program practices to support their service to Legacy Youth.

Legacy Mentors are to abide by policies and procedures set forth by Advocates for Children-CASA. This policy and procedure handbook has been developed in alignment with the guiding principles of the Advocates for Children-CASA program which follows the National CASA Standards for Local CASA Programs (2013 Edition).

About the Legacy Project

Overarching Objective: (Standard 7.A)

To provide at-risk youth, ages 14-24, in the 18th Judicial district with a trained Legacy Mentor Volunteer who will provide focused services, education and support to achieve successful transition from the child welfare system to adulthood.

Objective Statement:

“Our objective is to inspire confidence, motivation and self-reliance through the caring, supportive network of Legacy Mentors.”

Changing the Odds for At-risk Youth

Foster youth who age out of the system have the worst outcomes, statistically speaking of any group. Research shows that homeless children have better odds than those who age out of foster care. Youth who have been involved or are emancipating from foster-care are considered at-risk for becoming homeless, incarcerated, involved with the child welfare system as an adult, drug addicted and unemployed.

In an effort to address the serious concerns that affect our community’s at-risk youth, Advocates for Children-CASA of Arapahoe, Elbert and Douglas counties has increased focus on our Legacy Project services. Our Legacy Project was established in 2006 and serves former and current foster youth ages 14-24. They are all in different stages of emancipation from the system and need support to be successful in the next phase of their life.

Our program is designed to help youth improve academic achievement, self-esteem, social competence, and avoidance of problem/high-risk behaviors by providing a relationship with one of our caring Legacy Mentors. The Legacy Project works to help youth achieve their potential or learn a skill necessary for navigating adulthood. The Legacy Project’s core services consist of evidence-based assessments, a customized Independent Learning Plan, group learning life skills training, and the supportive interaction of peers, staff and mentors. We also offer the knowledge and experience of taking pride in his/her community through field-based volunteer opportunities which has been linked to positive behavior and self-esteem.

Focus of Legacy Project:

- Life Skills for Youth
- Sense of Community
- Individualized support and guidance for youth
- Education and workforce readiness focus
- Self-efficacy and self-sufficiency
- Community Service
- Peer Support

What Our Legacy Project Does

Our Legacy Project is passionate about delivering an effective program which consists of research-based practices, streamlined service delivery and measurable outcomes. Once a youth joins the program, one of our trained Legacy Coordinators becomes familiar with the youth's experiences, behavior, and challenges. This process involves a meeting with the youth, administering a research-based youth assessment and talking with professionals.

Youth are expected to complete a research based questionnaire before, during and after their time with the Legacy Project, which is designed to identify the youth's needs related to life skills, self-esteem and educational goals. Based on the results of the initial questionnaire, a Learning Plan is developed to address the youth's needs. The Legacy Mentor and staff will also locate helpful resources to provide the youth with the help he or she needs.

The Legacy Project Serves Youth By:

- promoting stable, permanent connections with caring adults
- assisting with the management of their physical and mental health needs
- supporting economic success through education and employment programs
- assist with providing life skills training to help youth navigate the adult world
- improving access to stable and safe housing
- providing individual mentorship, education, motivation and support
- assisting with developing a realistic plan with actionable steps and goals

Program Structure:

- One year of programming with Legacy Mentor including quarterly peer-to-peer events
- Staff and Legacy Mentor administers pre, during and post assessments
- Coordinator, Legacy Mentor and youth create an individualized learning plan with goal setting
- Focus on community resources, life skills development, self-advocacy, education, workforce
- Legacy Mentor meets with youth twice a month and Legacy Nights and places notes in Optima
- Youth graduate from program once they have set goals and covered all learning aspects

Job Description (Standard 7B)

Legacy Mentor

Reports to: Legacy Coordinator

Purpose: The Legacy Mentor works closely with an assigned Legacy Youth to: address his/her specific needs; seeks services and resources to benefit the youth; provides education via mentor guide; monitors and supports the youth's progress towards identified goals; provides emotional support and encouragement to develop self-efficacy; mentors and helps youth with developing life skills to navigate adulthood.

Qualifications:

- Interest in older youth, their needs and rights
- Attend Legacy Night with youth
- Agreement and ability to complete 12-hours of Legacy training
- Maturity, stability, confidence, common sense
- Ability to work with at-risk youth in a sensitive, positive and objective manner
- Good Communication skills
- Must be at least 21 years of age
- Ability to pass background checks

General Duties:

- Attendance at Legacy training
- Commitment of serving at least one youth in the program for 1 year; averaging 10 hours a month
- Have contact with the youth once a week with in-person visits at least twice a month and bring the youth to quarterly Legacy Night sessions, review all pertinent records and documents
- The Legacy Mentor is required to assist with transporting youth to Legacy Night sessions, community service, visits, appointments, staffings, etc.
- Assist staff and youth with developing and working through a Learning Plan
- Assist in the identification of resources appropriate to meet the needs of the youth
- Maintain complete and accurate records of time and activities in the program's web based data tracking system, Optima
- Complete youth assessments
- Maintain strict confidentiality
- Provide resources via mentor guide

Benefits:

- Training, support and supervision from the staff of Advocates for Children-CASA
- Opportunity to learn about Youth Advocacy, Juvenile Court and Social Service Systems
- Opportunity to develop own skills and abilities
- Satisfaction from contributing to community services on behalf of older at-risk youth

Code of Ethics

This Code of Ethics provides National CASA Association members with guidelines for professional behavior and ethical conduct. The Association may not, however, be held liable for the actions of its members. (Section 2.C)

Conduct (Section 2.C)

1. Members of the National CASA Association will abide by the NCASAA Code of Ethics and all laws and regulations governing their activities.
2. Members of the National CASA Association will uphold the credibility and dignity of the CASA concept by conducting all business in an honest, fair, professional, and humane manner.
3. Employees of CASA programs and its Volunteers will not use their authority inappropriately, nor condone any illegal act or unethical practices related to their program or community.
4. CASA programs and individuals who are members of the National CASA Association may not use CASA for personal gain.
5. Members of the National CASA Association will avoid any action which could adversely affect the confidence of the public in the integrity of the Association.
6. National CASA and its member programs will serve and respond to requests without bias because of race, religion, sex, age, national origin or handicap.

Confidentiality (Section 10.D)

7. CASA programs and their Volunteers will respect the right to privacy of all individuals, and will keep all information about their work confidential.
8. Persons affiliated with CASA will not use confidential information obtained through their work with CASA for personal benefit.

Knowledge and Understanding (Standard 7.C.5)

9. Individuals working in CASA programs as staff and/or volunteers must be trained in the operations of the court and child welfare systems, and in the nature of child abuse and neglect.
10. CASA programs and volunteers must respect a child's inherent right to grow up with dignity in a safe environment that meets the child's best interests.

National Affiliation (Standard 4.A.4)

11. A CASA program which is a member of the National CASA Association must operate in accordance with the NCASAA Code of Ethics, goals and purposes.
12. Official CASA designations may be used only for purposes in accordance with the goals and purposes of the National CASA Association.

Roles & Responsibilities of Legacy Mentors (Standard 7E)

One expectation of the Legacy Project is to promote strong teamwork between Legacy Mentors, Youth, Legacy staff, placement providers and caregivers.

The Legacy Mentors shall not provide direct service delivery to any parties that could (but not limited to):

- a. Lead to a conflict of interest or liability problems
- b. Cause a youth or a family to become dependent on the Legacy Mentors

Examples of inappropriate Mentors practices include (but not limited to):

- a. Taking a youth to the Mentor's home or any home other than the youth's current placement
- b. Giving legal advice or therapeutic counseling
- c. Making placement arrangements for the youth
- d. Giving money or expensive gifts to the youth, youth's family or caregiver. This does not include small gifts, birthday acknowledgment, holiday recognition, or taking them out to eat
- e. Accepting money or gifts from the youth, youth's family or caregiver

Conflict of Interest:

A Legacy Mentor should not be related or have a relationship to any parties to the case, or be employed in a position or with an agency that may result in a conflict of interest. (Standard 7.E.7.f)

Confidentiality:

Legacy Mentors must adhere to the confidentiality policy. (Standard 7.E.7.b)

Violation of this policy will be grounds for termination as a Legacy Mentor.

- A. The Legacy Mentor shall maintain strict confidentiality as to the youth's situation in which the Mentor is involved. The Legacy Mentor shall request only that information which the Mentor is authorized to receive.
- B. If it is necessary to obtain any privileged/confidential information about someone who is directly related to the youth, but is not the youth, the Legacy Mentor must obtain from that person a written release of information which allows the professional, hospital or treatment center to discuss the matter with the Legacy Mentor.
- C. While a person may sign a release allowing the Legacy Mentor to obtain confidential information he/she may not want to authorize disclosure to other parties. The Legacy Mentor should review the signed release form very carefully and seek guidance from the Coordinator if the Legacy Mentor has any questions at all.
- D. The Legacy Mentor is not allowed to disseminate documents to any of the parties, their attorneys, and or collateral sources, which are, covered by state and/or federal confidentiality laws. These documents may include drug and alcohol evaluations/records; involuntary mental health treatment and rape crisis center information; and some criminal histories. Those covered by federal law usually are stamped, "This information has been disclosed to you from records whose confidentiality is protected by Federal law (and) prohibits you from making any further disclosure." A general authorization for the release of medical or other information is NOT sufficient for this purpose."
- E. The Legacy Mentor will take appropriate measures to ensure that confidential records may not be observed by casual observers (family members, etc.)
- F. The Legacy Mentor should not promise a youth that statements will be kept secret or confidential. The Mentor should proceed on the assumption that all statements made or relied on should be shared judiciously.
- G. The Legacy Mentor may discuss a youth in general terms for purposes of illustration and examples at seminars or meetings designed to provide education on at-risk youth. The Legacy Mentor must not mention names of individuals involved with the youth or provide facts which would identify the youth.

Media Contact:

Legacy Mentor should not make any comments to the media, about the youth. Any general comments about the Legacy Project should be discussed with program staff prior to talking with the media. All comments or questions should be directed to the Executive Director or Board President.

Social Media:

Social media tools, when used appropriately, can be a powerful tool to increase awareness, support and a sense

of community for those engaged in mentoring at-risk youth. A thoughtful approach to online conversation and interaction among people online (on blogs, social networking, link-sharing, etc.) can enhance the reputation of *Advocates for Children-CASAs*' movement and help recruit needed supporters, mentors and volunteers.

While *Advocates for Children-CASA* encourages staff, board members, mentors and volunteers to join the global online conversation, we also believe it is important that those who choose to do so understand what is recommended, expected and required when they discuss program-related topics; whether at work or on their own time. Our ability to serve youth as a cause depends on the trust and support of the public, and it is critical that we tell our story well—and handle the confidential information entrusted to us responsibly.

The following guidelines will help you engage in online conversations about your involvement with *Advocates for Children-CASA*'s cause in a way that is appropriate, yet still interesting.

Online Communication and Social Media Guidelines

- 1. Be transparent.** Identify yourself and your role at the Legacy program (staff/volunteer/mentor/board member) when you discuss program-related matters. Write in the first person. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, be the first to point it out. Be clear that you are speaking for yourself, that the opinions expressed are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of *Advocates for Children-CASA* (unless, of course, you are posting as part of your employment responsibilities for the program—as a communications or online outreach manager, for example).
- 2. Always comply with the law regarding copyright/plagiarism.** Never post someone else's work without his or her express permission (other than short quotes that comply with the "fair use" exceptions).
- 3. Be aware of laws related to libel and defamation of character.** Defamation of character can lead to lawsuits against the author of the statement and will reflect negatively on the program's cause. In choosing your words or content, imagine your supervisor and your family reading everything you post.
- 4. Be respectful.** Don't pick fights. Be the first to admit and correct your own mistakes. You should show proper consideration for other's privacy and for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory, such as politics and religion.
- 5. Be considerate.** Remember that anyone, including fellow mentors, volunteers and staff, may be actively reading what you publish online. Refrain from any communication intended to bash, discredit or embarrass the program, families, board members, donors or your colleagues. If you have suggestions for improvements, please state them constructively or, better yet, go through the proper channels to air your concerns and share your suggestions.
- 6. Be accurate.** Even though your posts may be primarily made up of personal opinion, do your research well and check that your facts are accurate. Make sure you have permission to post any copyrighted or confidential information (e.g., images, statistics), and be careful about posting or linking to items that may contain viruses.
- 7. Be committed.** If you decide to jump into online communication, do so with a commitment to post regularly

and well. Link to others and show your unique contributions. Make it interesting and have fun!

8. Try to add value. Does your posting provide worthwhile information and perspective? Does it help you, your coworkers, volunteers, fellow mentors and supporters better understand and feel more connected to our cause? Does it build a positive sense of community?

9. Respect work commitments. Please remember that blogging and other social networking activities—unless specifically assigned as part of your employment—are personal and should be done on your own time. The obvious exception is if you have specifically been assigned to perform an online activity related to your responsibilities as a program employee or Mentor.

10. Don't reveal confidential information. Sharing stories that illustrate the value of the Legacy Project for youth is often the most powerful way to engage the public in our cause and promote empathy for the youth we serve. However, National CASA Quality Assurance standards and the policy of *Advocates for Children-CASA* require:

- Respect for the youth's and family's' rights to privacy regarding personal information
- Adherence to the confidentiality restrictions imposed by law and program policies and procedures

It is unacceptable to discuss online any identifiable details of youth or post pictures that include youth served by the Legacy Project.

It is acceptable to discuss general details and to use non-identifying pseudonyms so long as the information provided does not contain information recognizable to the family or others associated with the family or case. For example, use general terms such as “youth” instead of “14-year-old girl.” You should be careful to protect the dignity of families, children and social agencies, even if they are not named.

Mentors and staff should not link to personal pages (or become online “friends”) of families or youth they may encounter in their capacity with the Legacy Project. This includes email addresses, instant messenger names, blogs, photo sharing sites and social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.

11. When in doubt, do not post. Staff and Mentors are responsible for their words and actions, wherever they are. Exercise sound judgment and common sense, and if there is any doubt, DO NOT POST IT. In circumstances where you are uncertain please contact your Coordinator, the Program Director or the Executive Director for guidance.

12. Know that the internet is permanent. Once information is published online, it is essentially part of a permanent record, even if you “remove/delete” it later or attempt to make it anonymous. If your complete thought, along with its context, cannot be squeezed into a character-restricted space (such as Twitter), provide a link to an online space where the message can be expressed completely and accurately.

13. Be mindful that what you post can be a reflection on CASA and the Legacy Project, and can influence the perception and reputation of the program. Be respectful of all individuals, races, religions and cultures.

Legacy Mentor Roles & Work Flow

Investigation: (Standard 7.E.5)

The Legacy Mentor should determine whether appropriate services and resources are in place for the youth; whether the youth is involved in the child welfare or juvenile delinquency systems; whether the youth is thriving in his/her educational setting; whether the youth has a positive support system. If the youth is involved with the child welfare system, the Legacy Coordinator is required to collaborate with the CASA Volunteer if one is appointed. The Legacy Mentor should remain abreast of pertinent information related to the Youth. The Mentor should plan to make contact with the youth by meeting 10 hours a month or more if necessary. The Legacy Mentor should attend all Legacy Night sessions with the Youth. The Legacy Mentor should assess and evaluate the youth's progress in life skills learning, education and general wellbeing. Legacy Mentors should also research permanent connections for the youth as appropriate.

Assignment: (Standard 5.A.1)

Once a Legacy Mentor accepts assignment to a Legacy Youth, a Legacy Coordinator will assist with completing internal program paperwork and file it into Optima. Legacy Mentors will have access to all paperwork and a password protected profile in Optima.

Meetings: (Standard 7.E.5)

- *With the Legacy Coordinator:* The Legacy Mentor will meet with both the Legacy Coordinator and Legacy Youth shortly after being assigned to the youth. The Legacy staff will be available for guidance, coaching and assistance to the Mentor. The Legacy Coordinator will coordinate the initial orientation with the Mentor and the Youth. During the orientation, the Coordinator will explain the expectations to the Youth and discuss the ILP. The Youth will be required to complete pertinent assessments at different times during the program.
- *Youth:* Your Coordinator will arrange for an initial meeting with the youth and the Mentor within 2 weeks of appointment. It is required that you make contact with your youth once a week and in-person at least twice per month. You are strongly encouraged to attend all Legacy Night sessions with your assigned Youth. An exception may be granted at the discretion of program staff. Mentors and youth should regularly work on the youth's Learning Plan developed from the referral, intake and assessment process.
- *Caregivers/Important individuals to Youth:* Arrange a brief introductory phone call or meeting with the caregiver to explain the Legacy Mentor role and answer any questions the caregivers may have. It is best practice to engage caregivers as appropriate to foster a supportive network for the youth. This should be done within three weeks of receiving assignment.
- *Foster Parents/Placement Providers:* If children are in a foster or residential home, the Legacy Coordinator will inform he/she of the youth's acceptance into the Legacy Program. The Coordinator will explain your role, purpose of the program and the working relationship with the provider.

Telephone Numbers:

A Legacy Mentor should carefully consider the implications of giving their work and home telephone numbers to youth or family members; cell phones are recommended. The decision to give out these numbers is up to the Mentor.

Transportation of Youth or Family Members: (Standard 7.E.8)

For liability and safety reasons, Legacy Mentors must submit to their Legacy Coordinator a transportation waiver to transport youth. Transportation will be approved if the following are in place:

- A. Legacy Mentor must have a current (within past year) Motor Vehicle Record on file, as well as a copy of the Mentor's driver's license and auto insurance. Legacy Mentor should have adequate auto insurance coverage in compliance with Colorado state law. Mentors who do not have an MVR and a current and valid driver's license on file, or do not have proof of adequate, current and valid auto insurance will not be allowed to transport youth.
- B. The Legacy Mentor must accept responsibility for transporting the youth and sign a Transportation Waiver before transportation may take place. This waiver can be signed in person, scanned and emailed or faxed. The original will be placed in the office case file and uploaded to Optima.
- C. The Legacy Mentor will abide by all federal, state and local transportation and safety laws.

When considering transportation of Legacy Youth, the following points are important to remember:

- The Legacy Mentor is required to assist with transporting youth to Legacy Night sessions, community service, visits, appointments, staffings, etc.
- Although it is important to establish a relationship with the youth on your case, it is also important to remember appropriate boundaries.

Reporting: (Standard 11)

Maintaining Accurate Records

- A. All documents related to the youth must be shared with the Legacy staff.
- B. All records obtained from other agencies should be sent to the Legacy office. Legacy staff will copy the records and provide a working copy to the Legacy Mentor through email or in person. Confidential records are not to be electronically transmitted to computers used by persons other than the Mentor. If a Mentor has a fax or e-mail, which is strictly confidential, this should

be noted in the Mentor's file and materials can be electronically transferred.

- C. Forms for these reports in hand-written and/or electronic form will be provided by Advocates for Children CASA. Records are not to be altered after the original writing of the record. If records are kept electronically, it must be in a confidential file. These completed forms may be electronically transmitted to the Legacy office.

Contact Notes: Each Legacy Mentor keeps a log in Optima, the program's web based online data tracking system, which notes all contacts (in-person contacts, telephone, fax, e-mail, or written) with all individuals who are significant to the case, including attempts to reach parties which were unsuccessful. This log will include the time spent, the type of contact (phone, personal, etc.), miles/expenses, and date of the contact and should include appointments, interviews and information gathered about the youth and the youth's life circumstances. These notes should be objective.

Optima Data: At predetermined times, the Legacy Mentor will complete assessments located in Optima. Legacy staff will prompt Legacy Mentors to complete the assessment. The assessments provide information on the effectiveness of the program. This also includes statistics on the amount of personal contacts, hours, mileage and dollars that the Mentor contributed.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect: (Standard 7.E.7.a)

- A. The Legacy Mentor should immediately report any suspected child abuse or neglect which is observed or discovered while serving Legacy youth. A report should be made by calling the child abuse and neglect hotline at **1-844-CO-4kids**. It is important to note that identifying child information is acceptable to share with the hotline when reporting suspected child abuse or neglect (i.e. name, location).
- B. The Legacy Mentor should report to the Legacy Coordinator as soon as possible after making the report.
- C. The Legacy Mentor does **not** investigate the possible abuse. The Human Services Department will determine the need for and whether to complete an investigation.

Cooperation in Criminal Investigation of Alleged Child Abuse

If any officer, director, employee or Mentor of the organization should be asked to produce information or documents, or discuss the facts of any alleged child abuse with any investigator or counsel of record for the office of the prosecuting attorney or the defense attorney:

- No documents (written reports of the incident) shall be produced without having been properly subpoenaed. Cooperation to facilitate the service of subpoenas should be extended as professional courtesy.
- In the event that any investigator or attorney of record wishes to conduct a personal interview, the person requested to appear may appear with legal counsel at such interview.

- If a telephone interview is given, care should be taken to assure the identity of the contact person. It is suggested that the staff or Mentor call the office through the main line and be transferred to the person requesting the interview.
- It will not be necessary to be subpoenaed to this personal interview, although every effort should be taken to coordinate the time and date of the interview with the legal counsel.
- Before granting an interview, the Mentor and staff should review what may be discussed in the interview.

Advocacy & Mentorship:

Characteristics of a Mentoring Relationship

Legacy Mentors should understand the relationship between advocacy and mentorship for older youth as taught during training. Mentors should focus first on the development of trust as the core of the relationship with the youth. Legacy Mentors should avoid an authoritarian approach. Other characteristics of effective mentors include:

- Consistency and dependability
- Respect for the youth's viewpoint
- Paying attention to the youth's strengths and need for fun
- Getting to know the youth's family and supportive relationships but avoiding too much involvement
- Seeking and using program support

Meeting Attendance

If invited by the professional team, Legacy Mentors can and should attend staffings and other related meetings that are significant to the youth's areas of need such as school staffings, Legacy Night sessions, community service opportunities, housing, etc.

Youth Independent Learning Plan (ILP):

Legacy Coordinators and Legacy Mentors will help the youth develop an Independent Learning Plan including goals after the initial assessment is completed.

Facilitation: (Standard 7.E.5.c)

The Legacy Mentor may be in a position where it is appropriate to facilitate communication between individuals. This is not the primary role of the Mentor and should be discussed with your Coordinator. Legacy Mentors are expected to communicate with appropriate individuals regarding progress, upcoming events or opportunities. Failure to communicate can result in a strain in relationships that can be stressful for all involved.

Assignment to a Youth: (Standard 7.E)

- A. After acceptance and completion of Legacy training, Legacy Coordinators will match a youth to a Mentor Volunteer.
- B. The Coordinator will aim to match Legacy Youth to the Legacy Mentor based on best fit. The Coordinator will contact Mentor and brief him/her on the youth. Legacy Mentors have the option to accept or not accept the youth assignment.
- C. Legacy Mentors will be assigned to one youth at a time and may work with more than one youth simultaneously if desired. Exceptions for more than two youths at the same time may be granted with the discretion of Legacy Program staff.
- D. When a Legacy Mentor is assigned to a youth, your Legacy Coordinator will coordinate an orientation with you and the youth. Paperwork such as agreements, expectations and calendar of upcoming Legacy Night sessions will be discussed. The Legacy Coordinator will obtain all necessary information about the youth's situation and provide it to Mentor.
- E. Legacy Coordinator will plan to administer the initial assessment at intake to begin the development of the youth's Learning Plan.

Supervision and Support: (Standard 7.D)

- A. For all youth in the Legacy Project, Legacy staff will administer the assessment to the youth during the first contact. Based on the assessment responses, a general Learning Plan with three youth driven goals will be developed with the input of the youth, Mentor and the Legacy Staff. The progress on the Learning Plan will be monitored throughout the youth's involvement in the program.
- B. For youth accepted into the program, assessments will be given in the beginning, at the 6-month mark and at the end of the program. The Learning Plan will be the tool used to guide your work and mentorship with the youth. Legacy Staff will check in with you at least once a month and check Optima to offer support and guidance. Staff is always available for consultation.
- C. Mentors are encouraged to contact program staff at any time when questions arise about their work. In addition, Legacy Mentors and their Coordinator will communicate on a regular basis via email or phone regarding the youth, including information such as:
 - develop and review youth's Learning Plan
 - discuss findings and observations of assessments
 - review progress with the youth
 - discuss strategies for best mentoring the youth
 - Progress of providing resources and education
- D. Program staff and the Legacy Mentor will discuss the Mentor's work on the case, the monthly data requirement, resources for youth, services for youth, mentor training, areas of achievement, education and areas in which additional support is needed. The Legacy Mentor will have an opportunity to request

an internal staffing at any time to problem-solve ideas and solutions related to their youth.

E. Advocates for Children-CASA values its Mentors and has ongoing programs to recognize the efforts, dedication and hard work of our Mentors. Activities include, but are not limited to: (Standard 7.D.5)

- Notes of appreciation and support
- Recognition of other community involvement
- Numerous professional development & training opportunities
- Acknowledgement of birthdays and other significant life events
- Planned networking opportunities with other Mentors and Staff

F. A Legacy Mentor shall be considered active if s/he is involved with at least one youth, meets with them at least twice a month, presents curriculum and resources, brings them to Legacy Night group learning sessions and completes all requirements in Optima. If the Legacy Mentor is unable to do any of the above, the Mentor will be inactivated and removed from mailing and emailing lists. If a Mentor decides to become active again by participating in the above activities, s/he must contact the Legacy Coordinator and a decision about how to proceed will be made at that time. After an extensive period between cases, the Mentor may be required to participate in certain areas of the initial training. If there are special circumstances involved in a Mentor's inability to participate, the ability to remain active within The Legacy Project is at the discretion of the Program Director or the Executive Director.

Resignation: (Standard 7.F.1)

The Legacy Mentor should remain actively involved with the youth until formally discharged by the Legacy Program. The Mentor should consider the youth assignment a serious personal commitment. The Legacy Mentor should give honest and two-week adequate written notice if it becomes necessary to leave the program.

Closing of Mentor Relationship: (Standard 7.F.2.)

The Legacy Mentor may be terminated from the program through the following means: Legacy program decision or the youth being dismissed from the program. Advocates for Children CASA will have the discretion to terminate a Mentor from the program. When agreed upon between the youth, Mentor, Legacy staff and caregivers of the youth, the Legacy Mentor may maintain *occasional* contact with the youth after the case is closed. This is for the benefit of the youth who have formed a close relationship with their Mentor and will primarily occur on cases where an adolescent youth is aging out of the system.

Mileage: (Standard 11.B.12)

Mileage documentation (based on data in Optima) will be available to Mentors at the end of the calendar year for tax purposes (see a tax consultant for more information on volunteer mileage deduction). The Legacy Mentor must enter their mileage into Optima to receive an annual statement.

Equal Opportunity Clause: (Standard 7.A.3d)

Advocates for Children CASA shall not restrict its services or volunteer opportunities on the basis of race, religion, creed, color, disability, nationality, or sexual orientation or gender.

Non-Discrimination Policy: (Standard 7.A.2)

Advocates for Children-CASA does not discriminate in the solicitation of business, employment, or volunteers on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, gender, gender variance, gender identity, age, marital status, sexual orientation, military status or physical or mental handicap, provided that an individual or company is qualified and meets the requirements established by the agency.

Mentor Records: (Standard 7.B.4)

The Legacy Project will maintain a written/electronic record for each Mentor that contains, at minimum:

- Application
- Emergency & identifying contact information
- Job description
- Reference documentation
- Documentation of record checks
- Training records
- Performance evaluations and any other applicable documentation related to performance
- Documentation of Mentor status
- Copy of Mentor's driver's license, motor vehicles records check and verification of automobile insurance, if approved for transportation.

Mentors may coordinate a time with the Legacy Staff to review their personal file in the Advocates for Children CASA office. The Mentor may submit additions and corrections to their Mentor record. The file may not be removed from the office and will be maintained at the Advocates for Children office per the program's record retention policy. These records will be retained while the Mentor is active and for 10 years after a Mentor becomes inactive.

Access to Legal Advice: (Section 2.C.4)

Advocates for Children CASA will provide Mentors access to legal advice and representation, as needed.

Background Check Policy: (Section 7.B.4.c)

As part of the Legacy Mentor screening process, all Advocates for Children CASA and mentor volunteers will participate fully in various background checks. The required background checks that will be conducted on every Legacy Mentor to include: CBI (Colorado Bureau of Investigation), a Social Security Search, a 50 state Sexual Abuse Registry search, Arapahoe & Douglas County Police Department check, and Colorado TRAILS. If a Mentor applicant has lived in the state of Colorado for less than five (7) years, then similar out of state background checks will also be conducted. Mentor applicants will be required to provide a deposit for their initial background checks. There are scholarship opportunities if payment for background checks is a financial hardship. The Legacy Project will conduct random background checks on annual basis on all Mentors, at no further cost to the volunteer. Legacy Mentors must immediately notify the program of any criminal or civil charges filed against them.

Corrective Action (Section 7.F)

Corrective action may be taken if the Mentor's work is unsatisfactory. Corrective action is within the discretion of the Legacy Coordinators, Executive Director and Program Director and may include any of the following actions as deemed appropriate:

- Additional supervision
- Temporary leave of absence
- Retraining
- Reassignment
- Referral to another volunteer position
- Separation from the program

Criteria for Dismissal from a Youth or Termination

A Mentor may be discharged from a youth assignment by the request of the Legacy Coordinator and Program Director of Advocates for Children CASA.

All records kept by the Legacy Mentor must be returned to the Advocates for Children CASA office when the volunteer assignment terminates.

Termination from Legacy Program may occur, at the staff's discretion, if:

- **Monthly Data:** If monthly data is not entered into Optima on a monthly basis and is more than two (2) weeks late and the tardiness occurs more than three (3) times in a calendar year. Copies of contact logs may be requested at any time.
- Adequate and sufficient contacts are not being made.
- Pertinent records and documents are not reviewed.
- Complete and accurate records of time and activities are not documented.
- Close contact with the Advocates for Children CASA Legacy Program Staff is not maintained. A minimum of bi-monthly contact either by e-mail, voice mail or personal contact.
- Strict confidentiality is not maintained.
- Professional conduct within the parameters of the case is not maintained.
- Not following the Advocates for Children CASA Conflict Resolution Procedure.

Criteria for Dismissal from the Legacy Project

Involuntary termination of a Mentor must be approved by the Executive Director, with the input of the program staff. In the absence of the Executive Director, the Program Director has the authority to terminate a Mentor from service.

The following include, but are not limited to, grounds for involuntary termination:

- Misuse of Mentor Status: Legacy Mentors will not use their volunteer status to promote other

causes or for personal gain, unless otherwise stipulated by the Board of Directors. They are to call the Legacy Program Office when in doubt.

- The Legacy Mentor takes action without Program, which endangers the youth or is outside the role of the Legacy Mentor.
- The Legacy Mentor fails to complete required training.
- The Legacy Mentor violates program policy or law
- The Legacy Mentor fails to demonstrate the ability to effectively carry out duties
- The Legacy Mentor falsifies information on the volunteer application or misrepresents facts during the screening process.
- There are allegations of child abuse/neglect against the Mentor.
- A conflict of interest arises which cannot be resolved.
- Mentor uses drugs or alcohol
- Not maintaining close contact with the Advocates for Children CASA Legacy Program Staff. A minimum of bi-monthly contact either by e-mail, voice mail or personal contact.

Conflict with Mentor/Staff Resolution Procedure:

Overall Goal is Communication: Good communication is often the key to avoiding conflicts in any organization or setting. It is hoped that disagreements can be resolved through communication among the parties. In the event that assistance is needed to resolve any issues, the following procedure shall be followed:

A. Meet with your Legacy Coordinator:

- I. If a Mentor disagrees with any action, including correction or separation taken by Advocates for Children CASA, or any of its agents, he or she shall first meet with the with the Legacy Coordinator.

B. Meet with Program Director

- I. If the disagreement is not resolved to the satisfaction of the Mentor, they may elevate his or her concern to the Program Director.

C. Meet with the Executive Director

- I. If the disagreement is still not resolved to the satisfaction of the Mentor, they may elevate his or her concern to the Executive Director. If the issue is not resolved at this point, the Mentor can contact the Board of Directors Chair.

Conflict with Other Professionals Resolution Procedure:

A. Meet with Coordinator

- I. If a Mentor disagrees with any action taken by youth or professional, the Mentor should first contact the Legacy Coordinator on the case to express concern.

B. Contact the Professional directly

- I. With the assistance of the Legacy Coordinator, the Mentor should contact the professional with whom he or she has a conflict to discuss possible resolutions or compromises. If the Mentor and Coordinator believe that the Professional has engaged in inappropriate or unethical behavior, the Coordinator should contact the Professional's direct supervisor or manager to issue a complaint. In certain situations, the Mentor may want to include information regarding the misconduct in court reports.

Legacy Mentor

Handbook Acknowledgement & Agreement

1. I have read this Mentor Handbook in its entirety.
2. I agree to contact my Legacy Coordinator if I have any questions, concerns or challenges.
3. I understand that the Legacy Project is a sub-program of Advocates for Children-CASA and that I am representing the organization.
4. I commit to fulfilling my role as a Legacy Mentor and serving youth for the duration of his/her involvement in the program.
5. I understand and agree to the roles and responsibilities as a Legacy Mentor.
6. I understand and agree to the Transportation policy and procedure.
7. I understand and agree to the Confidentiality policy and procedure.
8. I am aware I need to comply with all the policies and procedures in this Handbook or it may result in a review of my ability to continue in my role as a Legacy Mentor.

Legacy Mentor

Date

Legacy Staff

Date

Please submit this signed form to Legacy Staff.