

February 18, 2022

Roll Call

Members Present

Judge Gara Lee, Judge Darrin Dolehanty, Brenda Matuszkiewicz, Rehana Adat-Lopez, Karen Bowen, Lee Anne Owens, Kristin Bishay, Annette Craycraft, Judge Stephanie Campbell, Judge Matthew Gruett, Judge Holly Harvey, Magistrate Kimberly Schmaltz, Leslie Hendricks (Chair), Caitlyn Cataldo, Glenna Cheesman, Therese Miller

Ex Officio Members Present

Rae Feller, Teresa Lyles, Tara Rochford, Emily Dippold, Stan Piercefield

Members Absent

Tonya Ruble-Richter, Katie Hall

Guests/Committee Chairs Present

Coleen Connor (Chair), Certifications, Standards and Best Practices Committee

Welcome and Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Advisory Commission Chair Leslie Hendricks brought the virtual meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. Minutes from the November 2021 meeting had been sent to members prior to the meeting. The chair asked members if they had had the opportunity to review the minutes, and all agreed that they had. She then asked for a motion to approve the minutes as written. Kristin Bishay made a motion to approve the minutes and Glenna Cheesman seconded the motion. Hearing no further discussion, all members voted in favor of approving the minutes.

Committee Reports

State Conference/Training Committee

State Office Program Coordinator Teresa Lyles presented an update on the Conference and Training Committee. The Committee has met to review the evaluations of the 2021 conference and have begun discussions regarding the themes and topics for the 2022 conference which will be held in French Lick on September 30-October 1, 2022.

Public Relations and Legislative Committee

Annette Craycraft (Chair) informed the Commission of the fact that virtual regional meetings were held with all local program directors in an effort help them hit the ground running to spread awareness of GAL/CASA in Indiana and to dismiss the misinformation provided in the legislative session. The State Office and the Legislative Committee will continue to work throughout the year to educate the public and our legislators. CASA Day for 2022 has been cancelled due to COVID restrictions. The State Office is creating a one-page document that will be shared with our legislative branch and our local programs.

Certification, Standards and Best Practices

Coleen Connor (Chair) informed the Commission that the Committee continues to meet to update the current Best Practices and will be meeting again soon.

Other Reports

Judge Reports

Judge Harvey shared that she has reviewed the bills that the Juvenile Judge's Improvement Committee (JJIC) has been going through (SB180) and stated that it appears the issues mentioned in current proposed legislation regarding attorneys for children is a push nationwide. She also noted that there seems to be an increase in DCS asking the GAL/CASA program to file various items with the court in her county.

Judge Campbell agreed, and said it seems at times that an FCM may feel their hands are tied and goes to the CASA to assist in getting information before the court.

Judge Dolehanty briefly discussed SB1359 which contains many items regarding the implementation and changes that will impact the court, DCS and CASA.

State Director Report

State Program Director Rae Feller reported that she agrees that the movement to appoint attorneys in CHINS cases is a national push at the present time. She and Deputy Director Leslie Dunn have spent considerable time discussing the issue with National CASA/GAL as well as other stakeholders. The hope is that states will be able to implement reasonable parameters and timelines for the appointment of attorneys in juvenile cases.

Regarding SB180, the State Office spoke to Senator Ford when the proposed legislation first came out to provide information regarding the fact that our current statutes do not require that a GAL/CASA must be an attorney. He said that was a mistake and changed the wording. After testimony was heard regarding the bill, it was referred to a Summer Study Committee for review. Everyone agreed that it is imperative that we stay involved with the issue and that we work together for what is in the best interests of the children we serve.

Rae went on to discuss the topic of expansion to access to attorneys for our network. It is required by both State GAL/CASA and National standards that programs have access to counsel when necessary. She opened the discussion with the Commission members to inquire as to how those programs represented in the meeting were addressing the need. Responses spanned from counties having difficulty with enough attorneys to represent parents in cases, to other counties where local attorneys were willing to work with programs pro bono (or programs may have an attorney on retainer to assist when needed). Rae will be organizing a focus group to look closer into the issue.

It was announced that the first 50% of the Matching and Capacity Grants were distributed to counties at the end of January, and the grant applications for the Wellness Grant (an expansion of the Triage Pilots that were created in 2018) would be going out to programs soon.

Optima Report

Optima Project Manager Tara Rochford reported that there has been discussion regarding the revitalization of the Optima Steering Committee as we move forward to into more intense data driven territory with Optima. She also announced that a new best practice guide for the use of conducting background checks with Safe Hiring would be coming out soon.

Program Coordinator Report

State Office Program Coordinator Teresa Lyles provided an update on programmatic changes regarding new directors across the State of Indiana. She also provided a report on the CASA Training Academy sessions held in the last quarter, as well as information regarding the New Director's Cohort she and Stan Piercefield have been facilitating to provide 8 hours of leadership training to all new directors per our State Standards. Finally, she talked about the upcoming National CASA Self-Assessment and Annual Survey and announced that the State Office would be announcing virtual guidance on its completion for our local program directors.

Adjournment

Annette Craycraft moved, and Lee Anne Owens seconded the motion that the meeting be adjourned. Hearing no discussion or further questions, all members voted in favor. The next meeting will be held on Friday, May 20, 2022.

May 20, 2022

Roll Call

Members Present

Judge Gara Lee, Judge Darrin Dolehanty, Brenda Matuszkiewicz, Karen Bowen, Lee Anne Owens, Kristin Bishay, Annette Craycraft, Judge Stephanie Campbell, Judge Matthew Gruett, Judge Holly Harvey, Magistrate Kimberly Schmaltz, Leslie Hendricks (Chair), Caitlyn (Cataldo) Doucette, Glenna Cheesman, Therese Miller, Katie Hall

Ex Officio Members Present

Rae Feller, Teresa Lyles, Tara Rochford, Emily Dippold, Stan Piercefield

Members Absent

Magistrate Kimberly Schmaltz, Rehana Adat-Lopez

Guests/Committee Chairs Present

Coleen Connor (Chair), Certification, Standards, and Best Practices Committee

Welcome and Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Commission Chair Leslie Hendricks called the (virtual) meeting to order at 10:00 AM (Eastern). The minutes from the February 2022 meeting were presented. Annette Craycraft moved that the minutes be accepted as written, and Kristin Bishay seconded the motion. Hearing no further discussion, all members voted in favor of accepting the minutes as written.

Committee Reports

State Conference/Training Committee

Committee Chair Katie Hall reported that the Spring Directors Meeting was held virtually in April of 2022, and the event was well attended. The annual fall conference will be held in French Lick on September 29-October 1, 2022. The theme of this year's conference is "The Impact of One." Katie asked members of the Commission to forward any ideas on breakout sessions to her via email.

Public Relations and Legislative Committee

Committee Chair Annette Craycraft reported that there is currently a Legislative Poll open via Wufoo that is intended for all program staff and volunteers to gather interest and potential connections for the upcoming legislative session. As of today's meeting, over six hundred responses have been received. Although the poll was set to close today, it has been decided that it will remain open through early next week.

Certification Standards and Best Practices

Committee Chair Coleen Connor presented two new Best Practice policies and one updated policy for the Commission's review and approval. Commission members were provided with copies of the documents via email prior to the meeting. The two new Best Practice policies were:

- Use of Name Badges for Staff and Volunteers—After reviewing the new Best Practice, Brenda Matuszkiewicz moved, and Therese Miller seconded the motion to accept the new policy. There was discussion prior to a vote. Caitlyn Doucette stated that although her volunteers have badges, they are still asked to provide a photo ID when they visit schools. Coleen stated that the

badge is secondary to an official photo ID that may be required in places such as the school setting. Leslie Hendricks agreed, stating that the volunteer's court order will also serve as a back-up to other ID requested. With no further discussion, all voted in favor of accepting the BP on the Use of Name Badges.

- Firearms—There was discussion regarding this Best Practices prior to a motion to accept it. It was suggested that the words “on their person” and “weapon” should be added for more clarification in the language of the BP. It was agreed in that the word “weapon” does not nullify the word “firearms,” but broadens the scope. Changes were made to the policy live during the meeting. After the changes were made, Lee Anne Owens moved to accept the new policy as written, and Judge Harvey seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

Finally, there were minor updates made to the current Best Practice on Statewide Data that reiterated the contacting the State Office for any media requests for statewide data. Katie Hall motioned that the modified version be accepted, and Karen Bowen seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and all members voted in favor to accept the revised BP.

Other Reports

Judge Reports

Judge Dolehanty reported that he and Wayne County CASA Director Karen Bowen recently appeared on a local news broadcast regarding the CASA volunteer program. He also stated that many Indiana judges are already speaking with legislators regarding the issue of counsel for children.

Judge Harvey reported that she and Judge Galvin had recently been approached regarding law students providing counsel for children. She said she would inform the Commission if she heard about anything further.

Judge Gruett reported that he has a meeting regarding the same issue later in the day. He was also pleased to announce that Joann Price, J.D. has accepted the position of CASA Program Director in Lake County following Rehana Adat-Lopez's appointment to the bench.

State Director Report

State Director Rae Feller reported that the Self-Assessment and Annual Survey that was due to National CASA/GAL by April 30, 2022, was submitted by 100% of Indiana GAL/CASA member programs. The State Office provided webinars and open discussion forums to assist directors as they completed the process. The next steps will include Quality Reviews that will occur from 2023-2025. It is not yet clear whether those will be completed at the local level by National CASA/GAL, the State Office, or a combination of the two.

Applications for the new Wellness Grants have been reviewed and decided. There were fifty county applications, and forty-four county grants in the amount of \$660,000.00 were awarded. Additionally, 3rd Round Grant distributions will be going out to all certified GAL/CASA programs that met the match by the end of the State Fiscal Year.

Advisory Commission terms for some members will be ending in June 2022. Both Judge Campbell and Judge Dolehanty will be completing their last term for the Commission, as well as Program Director Glenna Cheesman. Two new judicial members will be appointed to the Commission by July 1, and an election will take place for the directors in June.

Rae has been working on a proposal and a plan to secure counsel for CASA and/or more access to counsel as they need it. Additionally, she also has plans to work with the Certification, Standards, and Best Practice Committee to serve as mentors to programs who are struggling a bit, and to assist with the certification and quality review process.

Program Coordinator Report

Program Coordinator Teresa Lyles reported that the following programs have welcomed new directors since the last meeting of the Commission: Region 1—Joann Price (Lake County); Region 2—Erin Conley (Northeastern Indiana CASA, Inc.); Region 3—Crystal Robenstine (Franklin County) and Tammy Settergren (Hancock County); Region 4—Deann Fatthauer (Sullivan County).

New Directors will be starting a (virtual) four session New Director's Cohort with Teresa and Stan beginning in late May where they will receive 8 hours of leadership and program management training. Teresa also gave an update on topics and attendance for the CASA Training Academy during the last quarter and announced the upcoming Summer Series for the Academy as well: June 23—Testimony and Report Writing; July 13—Legislative Education; August 17—Effective Teaming; September 14—Working with Parents on Probation.

Adjournment

Prior to adjournment there was discussion as to whether future meetings of the Commission should continue as virtual meetings (as they have since May of 2020), or if we should consider live or hybrid meetings as things are beginning to get back to normal following the pandemic. While there was discussion by some that they missed meeting in person, others stated that it was extremely efficient to have them virtually because of the amount of time saved from not traveling. A vote was taken with two members voting for our next meeting to be live, five voting for a hybrid meeting, and seven voting to continue to meet virtually. It was decided after the vote that the upcoming August 19, 2022, meeting would be held virtually.

Glenna Cheesman voted that the meeting be adjourned, and Katie Hall seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and the meeting was adjourned.

August 19, 2022

Roll Call

Members Present

Brenda Matuszkiewicz, Katie Hall, Coleen Connor, Kurt Kiefer, Leslie Hendricks (Chair), Karen Bowen, Emily Angel, Lee Anne Owens, Kristin Bishay, Rich Kosmala, Judge Stephanie Campbell, Judge Dana Kenworthy, Judge Holly Harvey, Judge Matthew Gruett

Ex Officio Members Present

Rae Feller, Teresa Lyles, Tara Rochford, Stan Piercefield

Members Absent

Judge Gara Lee, Judge Shawna Webster, Therese Miller, Annette Craycraft

Guests/Committee Chairs Present

Katie Hall—State Conference/Training Committee Chair; Coleen Connor—Certification/Standards/Best Practices Committee Chair

Welcome and Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Commission Chair Leslie Hendricks called the (virtual) meeting to order at 10:00 AM (Eastern). Since this was the first meeting of the new State Fiscal Year and there were new members present, the Chair asked all members to introduce themselves and state what court or county GAL/CASA program they represent. The minutes from the May 2022 meeting were presented. Katie Hall moved that the minutes be accepted as written, and Coleen Connor seconded the motion. Hearing no further discussion, all members voted in favor of accepting the minutes as written.

Committee Reports

State Conference/Training Committee

Committee Chair Katie Hall provided an update on the upcoming 26th Annual Indiana GAL/CASA Conference, “The Impact of One, which will be held in French Lick on September 29-October 1, 2022. Registration for the conference is open. About 600-650 people are expected to attend. The registration cost for the conference itself was reduced to \$30.00 per person (a 50% decrease in cost) due to a generous CIP Grant. All speakers have been confirmed, and we are anticipating a great event.

Public Relations and Legislative Committee

Committee Chair Annette Craycraft was not in attendance for the meeting. State Director Rae Feller reported that she and Annette have been working together to educate directors on potential upcoming legislation, and Annette has planned virtual meetings to discuss the topic with her peers regionally.

Certification Standards and Best Practices

Committee Chair Coleen Connor presented one new Best Practice policy and four updated policies for the Commission’s review and approval. Commission members were provided with copies of the documents via email prior to the meeting. The new Best Practice policy was:

- Use of Interns—After reviewing the new Best Practice, Rich Kosmala asked why it is specified that interns must be at least 21 years old. Coleen stated that this follows the state and national requirement that all volunteers must be at least twenty-one of age. With no further questions

or discussion, Rich Kosmala motioned to accept the new Best Practice as written and Leslie Hendricks seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

The following Best Practice Policies were reviewed and revised by the Committee and were brought before the Commission for approval:

- Continuing Contact with Child After Case Closure—There was a brief discussion regarding the language of this Best Practice. The primary concern was whether the Best Practice applied to all children, or to older youth that age out while in care. Coleen clarified that it pertained to any child who themselves reach out to continue contact with a volunteer. Lea Anne Owens moved that the Best Practice be accepted as written, and Kristin Bishay seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.
- Child's Request for File—Discussion regarding this Best Practice revolved around Judge Harvey's regarding the definition of the "file." Does the "file" include third party records? DCS reports? Only what is created in the CASA file? There was concern about dissemination of these types of records without a release. Upon further discussion, the "file" and what should and potentially cannot be shared is covered in bullet #3 of the Best Practice regarding consultation with the director and/or an attorney. After discussion, Katie Hall motioned that the updated Best Practice be accepted as written, and Brenda Matuszkiewicz seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.
- Eligibility of Potential Staff, Volunteers, or Board Members with DUI Charges—Kurt Kiefer moved that the revised Best Practice be accepted as written, and Judge Campbell seconded the motion; there was no discussion following the motion and all members voted in favor.
- Staff and Volunteer Contact with the Media-- The only discussion regarding the changes to this Best Practice was clarification that it is, indeed, a Best Practice and not a Program Standard. Coleen confirmed that it is a Best Practice. Kurt Kiefer motioned that the updated Best Practice be accepted as written, and Judge Harvey seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

Other Reports

Judge Reports

Judge Campbell mentioned that the reports of drugs are extremely high at the present time and encouraged the use of hair follicle screens when there are concerns regarding drug use.

Judge Kenworthy noted that she has safety concerns due to the health of parents, drug use by parents, and safe sleeping with children. She encourages CASA to be watchful and to ask for restricted parenting time if these are concerns.

Similarly, Judge Harvey has seen the use of fentanyl increase in her cases, and secondhand exposure to children. She has been seeing an uptick in removal of children without a court order because of this issue and wondered if there had been a DCS policy on the topic. She also noted that there seems to be a shortage of DCS staff around the state and asked if directors were seeing a reduction in volunteers. Most directors agreed that they have, and Lee Anne Owens stated they are losing volunteers because filing numbers are down, and they are trying to engage them as mentors.

State Director Report

State Director Rae Feller reported that 2023 Matching Grant Applications will be going out in late October and the process and application will look similar to the 2022 grants. Matching and Capacity Grant estimates were sent out to all programs at the end of May of 2022.

Programs will be receiving their reports regarding the Self-Assessment that was submitted to National CASA/GAL in April of this year. Reports are supposed to reach all local programs by September 30, and the State Office will also receive a copy of the reports. As we move toward the Quality Review process (which is the next step in the process), Indiana has made National CASA/GAL aware that we prefer to be part of the process instead of leaving it for National to complete. We are waiting to hear about training for the process from their office. In preparation for the QR process, Rae is going to be working with the Certification/Standards/Best Practices Committee in creating and supporting a state level process for reviewing programs for compliance with State Office Standards and certification requirements. The Committee will also look at volunteer vs staff-served cases in programs as well as their waiting lists.

Rae has been monitoring legislation regarding attorneys for children and best interest vs client directed advocacy for children. Discussion was held on this topic with suggestions on the potential of age requirements for client directed representation (possibly age 14), concerns about mandates for attorneys and the number of attorneys available to be appointed (either due to not enough attorneys or potential conflicts of interest), and further delays to permanency. Rae is still looking into the possibility of creating a network of attorneys to represent programs regionally, with the potential for mini-grants available to counties.

Program Coordinator Report

Program Coordinator Teresa Lyles reported that the following programs have welcomed new directors since the last meeting of the Commission: Region 2—Regina Hauptli (Elkhart County) and Region 4—Nicole Taylor (Warrick County) and Ruth Wilson (Gibson County).

New Directors will be starting a (virtual) four session New Director's Cohort with Teresa and Stan beginning on August 26, 2022, where they will receive 8 hours of leadership and program management training. Other upcoming training includes another Training of Facilitators (TOF) August 29 and 30, and a CASA Training Academy session on the topic of Working with parents on Probation on September 14. CASA Training Academy sessions since the last Commission meeting included—June, Effective Testimony and Report Writing (490 registrants); July, Legislative Education (295 registrants); August, Best Interest Advocacy (427 registrants), and Effective Teaming (405 registrants).

Adjournment

The next meeting of the GAL/CASA Advisory Commission will be virtual, and will be held on Friday, November 18, 2022; from 10:00 AM-12:00 PM (Eastern Time).

November 18, 2022

Roll Call

Members Present

Brenda Matuszkiewicz, Katie Hall, Coleen Connor, Kurt Kiefer, Annette Craycraft, Karen Bowen, Lee Anne Owens, Kristin Bishay, Therese Miller, Rich Kosmala, Judge Stephanie Campbell, Magistrate Shawna Webster, Judge Holly Harvey, Judge Gara Lee

Ex Officio Members Present

Rae Feller, Teresa Lyles, Tara Rochford, Stan Piercefield

Members Absent

Judge Matthew Gruett, Judge Dana Kenworthy, Leslie Hendricks, Emily Angel

Guests/Committee Chairs Present

Katie Hall—State Conference/Training Committee Chair; Coleen Connor—Certification/Standards/Best Practices Committee Chair; Annette Craycraft—Public Relations and Legislative Committee

Welcome and Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Vice-Chair Katie Hall called the (virtual) meeting to order at 10:00 AM (Eastern). The minutes from the August 2022 meeting had previously been emailed to the members and Katie Hall asked if they had a chance to review them. After agreeing that they had, Annette Craycraft motioned that the minutes be accepted as written, and Kurt Kiefer seconded the motion. There was no further discussion, and all members voted in favor.

Committee Reports

State Conference/Training Committee

Committee Chair Katie Hall shared that the 27th Annual Indiana GAL/CASA Conference is scheduled to be held in Indianapolis at the Marriott East Hotel on September 7-9, 2023. She added that we are still waiting on the final evaluation summary of our recent conference September 2022 Conference. Additionally, the Spring Director's Meeting will be held on April 3-4, 2023, at the Renaissance Hotel in Carmel, Indiana.

Public Relations and Legislative Committee

Committee Chair Annette Craycraft announced that CASA Day at the Statehouse will be held on Tuesday, March 7, 2023, in the North Atrium of the Statehouse. She added that many new legislators will be coming on board and that our GAL/CASA volunteer programs need to reach out to them.

Certification Standards and Best Practices—Committee Chair Coleen Connor reported that a recent meeting was held to consider some components of the upcoming Quality Assurance Survey, and that more information will be shared in the future.

Other Reports

Judge Reports

Judge Campbell reported that the Juvenile and Family Court Board met with Senator Ford. Judges Hanlon, Dolehanty, and Kenworthy have also been communication in regard to the barriers judges will have concerning the availability of attorneys for additional appointments in juvenile cases. While the

focus seems to be to move forward with his proposed legislation, there is hopefully a better understanding of the potential challenges, and that there will be unique needs in different situations.

State Director Report

State Director Rae Feller stated that all of the Matching and Capacity Grant applications have been received, and the State Office is busy with the process of reviewing each application and will be sending recommendations to the Grant Review Committee in December. Rae then went on to the topic of data concerns regarding Optima contact logs, active vs inactive volunteers, and training logs not being logged by volunteers and/or staff. An email was sent to all program directors recently regarding the need for complete and accurate data being input regularly in Optima. There will be future discussions and Regional meetings regarding this important topic.

Programmatic concerns and reviews related to some of our network's programs struggling to adhere to the Core Model of volunteer-based programs (vs a majority of children being served by paid staff or professional GAL) was addressed. There was discussion regarding the difficulty in recruiting volunteers in this post-pandemic time period, and the increased use of staff during the Triage Pilot to reduce waiting across the state. Judge Harvey suggested forming leadership teams consisting of State Office staff and seasoned directors from nearby counties who could reach out to assist with struggling programs. We will survey the network to ask for directors who would be interested in helping in this endeavor.

Rae provided an update on CAPTA. The current draft would require Indiana to create its own plan as to how CAPTA will be implemented here and what the timeline for the implementation would be. The discussion for attorneys for children will continue on the federal level and the State Office will be in communication with National CASA regarding the same.

Program Coordinator Report

Teresa Lyles reported that Marciann Miller will be returning as the Director of the Hancock County CASA Program in Region Three. She also provided a summary of training and program support sessions over the last quarter. September—Completed New Director Cohort training and hosted the CASA Training Academy session on Working with Parents on Probation. October—Conference and Staff and Director's Meetings, "Zoom Rooms" for clarification on grant application questions, and Self-Assessment Report Initial Review Session. November—Another Grant Assistance Zoom Room, hosted two Self-Assessment Guidance sessions for items required on reports from National CASA/GAL, hosted the CASA Training Academy on the Ethical Impact of GAL/CASA.

Adjournment

LeeAnn Owens moved, and Kristin Bishay seconded the meeting be adjourned; all voted in favor.

The next meeting of the GAL/CASA Advisory Commission will be virtual, and will be held on Friday, February 17, 2023, from 10:00 AM-12:00 PM (Eastern Time).