

SFCASA News



July 2020

Congratulations to our Graduates!

We are incredibly excited to share that 85% of our seniors graduated this year! This is a huge feat, especially in the face of sheltering-in-place and the very challenging transition to remote learning. We are so proud of our graduates and wish them luck in all future endeavors!

Congratulations to our Spring 2020 Cohort!

We wanted to congratulate and welcome our Spring 2020 Cohort of CASAs! This was our first class to be trained virtually and we are excited to work with them. Thank you for your dedication to the training and the important work that you will do as you begin your role as CASAs.

Thank you, Jess!

SFCASA will bid farewell to Case Supervision Manager Jess Vaughn-Jansen at the end of July as she prepares for new and exciting indoor and outdoor adventures in the Great Lakes State, aka Michigan. Jess joined the SFCASA team in early 2019 and during her tenure supported SFCASA to grow and welcome new team members while advancing additionally vital work ranging from advocate support group and court report training to the launch of the CASA Community Network. And although MI does not boast proximity to the chiles of New Mexico, we trust Jess will continue to secure her annual supply of fresh Hatch chiles and work her culinary magic to combine MI blueberries and NM chiles?! Jess's last day at SFCASA is 7/31/2020. In the meantime, please join us in appreciation of Jess's contributions to SFCASA and to wish her the best for all that lies ahead!

With Jess departing at the end of the month, we are actively seeking a new Program Manager. Please see the [job posting](#) for more details, and share it widely with your personal and professional networks.

COVID-19 Advocate Survey Results

Thank you to CASAs who completed the COVID-19 advocate survey in May. Your input is invaluable to informing how to best provide support to advocates and youth during this difficult time of pandemic and beyond. Please take a moment to review the [summary of survey outcomes and next steps](#) to address these challenges. As always, we welcome hearing from you! Please address questions or feedback with your Case Supervisor, Erika or Renée.



IPads Available for Youth 13 and under

A generous volunteer has donated new and gently used iPads to SFCASA! These are available to youth 13 and under to support their technology needs and distance learning.

These are available on a first-come first-served basis.

Please contact your Case Supervisor to request an iPad and schedule a pick-up time.

Laptops and Wi-Fi Available through ILSP!

SF ILSP has laptops and Wi-Fi units (hotspot available for one year with possible renewal) available for youth ages 14-22.

If you would like to request the above hardware, please contact Marcie Johnson at MJohnson@firstplaceforyouth.org with the youth's name, DOB and contact information.

Youth and CASAs are welcome to drop into the center on Fridays at 10-12 pm to pick up their laptops and/or WiFi units.

Creative Ways to Connect with Youth

- Send a care package with financial support from SFCASA's Sunshine Fund.
- Play games together like Word Hunt or House Party on FaceTime, or interactive video games on a gaming system.
- Dance to TikToks together on FaceTime or Zoom.
- Order and send a pizza (or other meal) to give the caregiver a break.
- Cook a meal together over video chat.
- Meet at a park and visit (physically distanced with masks).

View our full [list](#) here.

If you have found additional ways to stay connected with your youth, please share them with your Case Supervisor.

Learn to Be Free Tutoring Program!

SFCASA has developed a partnership with Learn to Be Tutoring, a nonprofit that provides free and remote tutoring services to K-12 students in math, reading, writing, and English. Due to placement and school changes, youth in foster care often fall behind academically as they may not have access to the extra support and personalized attention they need to thrive. Since Learn to Be offers online services, youth can work with the same tutor regardless of where they live or what school they attend.

Our Education Specialist, Mia Ragent, will be in regular contact with Learn to Be tutors to communicate more specifically to the needs of each youth and the population that we serve.

Our partnership includes a customized [enrollment link](#) where CASAs can automatically sign their youth up for a tutor!



Customized Wooden Initials



Delivering smiles to children one birthday cake at a time®

Cake4Kids Reopening

Cakes4Kids is accepting requests to celebrate youth's birthdays and graduations!

Do you want to send your youth a personalized gift?

We have a volunteer who creates customized wooden letters that reflect your young person's interests and hobbies! She has offered to create these letters to support youth during this unprecedented time.

Fill out this [survey](#) to request a gift for your youth. All gifts will be mailed to you or your youth from SFCASA.

They are also accepting requests for youth who may need a "pick-me-up" treat; however, priority is given for birthday and graduation requests.

All desserts will be delivered to the SFCASA office to be picked up by the advocate.

Please be in contact with your Case Supervisor to assist you in filling out [this form](#) and scheduling a pick up date.

Upcoming CE Opportunities

CASA in COVID (Hosted by CASA Community Network Committee on **Tuesday, July 14, at 6-7 pm on Zoom**)

Pushpa Samuel is a current CASA in a permanent long distance relationship with her youth. Pushpa will briefly lead us through a conversation around creative communication methods, and navigating the challenges of connecting with your youth at a distance during Shelter-in-Place, followed by breakout sessions to brainstorm and share ideas with fellow advocates.

Erika Dirkse, SFCASA's Program Director, will go over ways to safely engage with your youth as restrictions lift and will share CASA funding/resources available that you may not be aware of!

You will receive 1 CE credit for attending this one-hour virtual event. **RSVP for the event [here](#).**

Safety Conversations (Virtual Advocate Support Group) on **Thursday, August 6, at 6-8 pm on Zoom**

Join Sue Lockyer (Case Supervisor) and Mia Ragent (Education Specialist/Case Supervisor) to learn how to talk with the young person you support about safety and reducing the harm of risky behaviors. We will provide practical suggestions, and an opportunity to discuss and practice what a safety conversation with your youth might look like.

To register, email our Training Specialist at training@sfcasa.org.

Virtual Summer Programs!

There are many organizations offering virtual programming (and some that are continuing in-person). These programs will help to engage our young people over the summer and provide opportunities for continued learning, growth, fun, and new experiences.

We are updating in-person and confirmed virtual options on our website. If you would like to share any programs with us, please contact our Program Assistant at christina@sfcasa.org.

Summer Programs

