

What youth and alumni think their CASA/GAL should know about them...

- Our wants, needs, situations, and past attitudes
- The real us and actual tendencies
- We are all different and have different needs and wants
- We don't trust easily because we have been let down a lot
- We need love, not someone looking for a paycheck
- Our living situation and personal life around foster care
- We are more than a document or case file, and we are more than our family name
- Our story and personality
- Our personality, and choices we would lean towards if we were presenting in court ourselves
- Our goals
- That we are responsible and do have a voice



Nisi and Angel

Membership—FFCA is comprised of individuals who are in or from the foster care system. The membership represents a wide range of ages including...

~Youth (soul of the group) ages 15-18

~Alumni (senior leaders) ages 18-24

~Elders (resources advisors) ages 24-100

FFCA wants to recruit and encourage anyone who is in or has been in foster care to join us. If you or someone you know is interested in joining FFCA please contact:

Amanda Metivier, FFCA President

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907-230-8237

Also check us out at :

<http://alaskacasa.org/FFCA.aspx>

or

<http://www.myspace.com/ffca>



We would like to give a special thanks to all of the CASAs and GALs at OPA for supporting our work and encouraging the voices of youth and alumni throughout the state.

FACING FOSTER CARE IN ALASKA

“HEAR US TO KNOW US”



Helpful information for CASAs and GALs working with children and youth in foster care

This document was put together by the youth and alumni of Facing Foster Care in Alaska in order to support the work of CASAs and GALs throughout the state who advocate for the children and youth in Alaska's foster care system.

Important qualities and characteristics youth and alumni want in a CASA/GAL...

- A positive attitude
- Caring, non-judgmental, compassionate
- Be a good listener
- Knowledge of youth and their case
- Dedicated and there for us
- Caring
- Boundaries
- Passion, love
- Organization— case loads are tough, but with organization certain attention to case loads can be obtained
- Communication
- Support
- Time
- To put our input in the most over anyone else's

Youth and alumni of foster care think you should always...

- Be a part of meetings that involve our needs and decisions
- Listen to what we have to say and voice that to others
- Be there. Be available to talk
- Ask our opinion
- Check in with us before court to make sure our opinion is heard
- Stay in touch and keep us aware of proceedings
- Be involved in our lives
- Visit us often
- Go to court
- Notify us of court
- Visit us before any major change in our lives
- Meet and get to know us

Never...

- Neglect us
- Make us feel stupid or unwanted
- Do something without us knowing
- Tell our foster parents what we said about our living situation if they may treat us badly because of it
- Do something without asking our opinions because you represent us
- Break confidentiality, call us names, quit
- Say only what you believe is best for us, without listening to what we think
- Never make decisions without our knowing or put words in our mouth

What youth and alumni expect from their CASA/GAL...

Communication

We expect you to educate us about your role. Call us and ask what we think. Don't just listen to us; really hear what we have to say. Let us know what is going on and how current choices will affect us. Ask if we want to attend court, and let us know what's happening in court. Ask if we agree with proposed solutions/decisions. We want openness; we want to be able to voice our opinions and all of the circumstances in our lives.

Advocacy

We expect consistency from you. We expect you to attend every single hearing, meeting, and to speak on our behalf. We expect your attendance and advocacy. We want you to help us achieve what is best for us. Just show up and support us!

Relationship

We want you to build a relationship with us. We want your respect: show that by listening to what we want, not just what you think we want. Please give us a chance. Trust us and show us that you deserve our trust. We want a piece of your heart, and for you to help us to get what we want/need. We want to realize that you care after a period of time. We want your time, your commitment, your respect, your honesty, your loyalty, and your confidentiality.

