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1-17-23

January Week 2 Journal

Evaluating CASA's Internal Research

I identified the research conducted by CASA to evaluate the effectiveness of their programs. This research is nicely summarized on their [website](#), and covers a lot of different aspects of the efficacy of the CASA program. I have consolidated some of the findings that stand out to me in this short paper.

First, studies found that children that are assigned a CASA advocate are more likely to achieve permanency (Calkins, 1999) (Gershun, 2018), and less likely to reenter the child welfare system (Abramson, 19920) (Gershun, 2018) (Office of the Inspector General Report, 2007). Permanency is the ultimate goal, (second to reunification) of the child welfare system and we are proud to be a part of the solution in achieving that for kids. Cases that are assigned an advocate also tend to be the more extreme cases, being more severe cases of maltreatment (Caliber Associates, 2004) (Office of the Inspector General Report, 2007). In my current placement we have experienced a change in office with our local judge and this has created a shift in our office as we fade off of custody cases and onto more dependency and neglect cases. Judges have a high satisfaction rate with 93% of judges surveyed reporting a positive experience with the CASA program (Weiner, 2020). Recommendations from CASA advocates have a high acceptance rate, four out of five recommendations (Caliber Associates, 2004) (Gershun, 2018). The children who are assigned an advocate are also more likely to be adopted (Abramson, 1991) and have a higher number of services ordered for children and families (Gershun, 2018) (Peters, 2008). My favorite insight was that a child's hope is linked to positive outcomes, and youth assigned a CASA advocate reported higher levels of hope (Stanley, 2019). Having an adult they feel they can talk to and who cares about them has an impact not only in the courtroom but also in the child's perspective on life.

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