



# SFCASA News

April 2020

## A Note from our Executive Director

This pandemic is affecting all of us in so many ways. First of all, I wish you and your family good health. On behalf of everyone at SFCASA, I also want to say thank you. Despite challenges in your own personal and work lives, you have inspired and impressed me beyond belief. The advocacy efforts that you began even before the shelter in place order took effect have been creative, effective and affirming of the value of each youth. While it's been a busy, stressful few weeks, learning of your terrific work lifts my spirits each day. Thank you and please continue to share updates with us.

In community,  
Renée Espinoza, Executive Director

### Advocacy in Times of Crisis

During this time of uncertainty and unsettling news, CASAs can provide stability and reassurance to their youth by maintaining consistent communication and continued advocacy. We encourage you to be in regular contact with your youth during this time. **We continue to be inspired by YOU, our CASAs!** Here are some creative ways CASAs have been advocating:

- Order and send a book on a topic the youth is interested in (SFCASA's Sunshine Fund can support this and other basic needs)
- Send a care package of goodies and activities to your youth
- Text with your youth and ask them to share emojis for how they are feeling
- Send written / snail mail letters to your youth with an enclosed return envelope so they can write back (please use the SFCASA office address as the return address, and we will forward the letter to you)
- Research online free classes for your youth in an area of their interest
- Talk with your youth over FaceTime or Skype.

If you have found additional creative ways you have connected with your youth during this Stay at Home time or if you'd like to access SFCASA's Sunshine Fund, please share with your Case Supervisor!

### SFCASA COVID-19 Resources

### Fostering Change Gala

We are devastated we've had to cancel our Fostering Change Gala, which normally provides one third of our revenue. Gifts to SFCASA are more meaningful now than ever. Visit our [website](#) to make a contribution and watch Emari's video about the impact his advocate had on his life.

Gala Update

### Virtual CEs

In response to COVID-19, SFCASA has enhanced access to online and virtual continuing education (CE) opportunities that our advocates can access and complete as we all are sheltering in place.

Please explore newly added resource podcasts to support your on-going learning and collection of strategies addressing SFCASA advocacy areas. You will find links to books, films, videos, podcasts and webinars, including directions to provide your reflections to receive CE credits as well as ask clarifying questions you may have.

In addition to SFCASA CE recommendations, we have also included the National CASA/GAL Virtual CE Resources and COVID-19 Relevant

Your youth and their family may be facing unexpected circumstances due to school and court closures, interruptions to support programs and financial support, and adjustments in daily life.

We have compiled a resource guide that will be updated on a daily basis. If you have any resources to add, please email our Program Assistant at [christina@sfcasa.org](mailto:christina@sfcasa.org).

SFCASA Resources for Foster Youth Impacted by COVID-19

Webinar trainings.

If you have any questions and/or concerns you can send them to our Training Specialist by emailing Diane Posner at [training@sfcasa.org](mailto:training@sfcasa.org).

SFCASA Continuing Education

SFCASA Advocacy Strategies

Title IV-E Virtual Trainings

## SOAR Deadline Extended!

The [application](#) for SOAR has been extended to **April 24, 2020!**

SOAR (Support, Opportunities, and Rapport) is a summer residential pre-collegiate academy at UC Berkeley for middle school-aged (grades 6-8) foster youth. SOAR aims to help young people graduate from high school, attend college, and succeed in life. The program includes academic enrichment, outdoor activities, life skills training, success stories from former foster youth and more. This is a great opportunity for youth to build self-esteem, challenge themselves, and meet lifelong friends and mentors. Learn more at <http://soarforyouth.org/>.

