

CSAAC PARENT HANDBOOK

COMMUNITY SERVICES FOR AUTISTIC ADULTS AND CHILDREN
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CONTENTS

ABOUT CSAAC

MISSION STATEMENT AND PHILOSOPHY

RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING CSAAC SUPPORTS

Individual Rights
Exercise of Rights

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

Admissions Criteria for CSAAC's Adult Residential Services
Admissions Criteria for CSAAC's Student Residential Services
Eligibility Status for CSAAC Residential, Vocational Services and
Community School of Maryland
Applying for Services
Operational Needs
Dismissal
Dismissal Procedures for Community School of Maryland

RESIDENTIAL SUPPORTS

Preparing for Your First Day
Definitions and Information
Concerns
Understanding Supervisory responsibility

VOCATIONAL SUPPORTS

Definitions and Information

CONTACT INFORMATION

ABOUT CSAAC

CSAAC is a private, nonprofit agency dedicated to serving persons living with autism. CSAAC was established to support these individuals so that they may remain in their communities to live, work, and play. CSAAC believes that all persons with autism can benefit from and be a benefit to their communities.

In 1979, several families of adult children with autism dreamed of having such a service. At that time, 95% of adults with autism were placed in institutions. Out of this need CSAAC was born.

Since its inception, thirty years ago, as a community based residential service, CSAAC has established over 50 homes and has been a “nationally recognized” leader in developing state-of-the-art services for people with autism. CSAAC’s Supported Employment Program was the first of its kind in the United States. CSAAC has been a model for other states to develop community based housing, employment, and other related services for individuals with autism whose only other choice would have been institutionalization.

CSAAC expanded its services to include an Intensive Early Intervention program including an autism pre-school, Family and Individual Support Services, residential and day school educational sites, adult and student residential houses, vocational, and recreational programs. Currently, CSAAC is the only provider in the State of Maryland with a comprehensive program for individuals from early childhood through retirement.

CSAAC uses positive behavioral methods. When no developed positive approach exists, CSAAC psychologists create one, test it, and publish it in professional journals.

The CSAAC Board of Directors are responsible for approval of the agency’s policies and procedures, establishment and implementation of the strategic plan, the budgetary accountability and viability of the agency, as well as the evaluation of the agency as a whole. As an active and involved Board, a number of subcommittees have been established ranging from Personnel; Finance; Evaluation; Admission, Review and Dismissal; Strategic Planning; as well as a Standing Committee which monitors legal and human rights, safety and issues of concern. Board meetings are held on a monthly basis.

CSAAC supports and strategies are based upon the principle of normalization. The principle of normalization implies that every person should have the option of having a home. Every person should be able to live in a comfortable setting which looks like, feels like, and is a valued home in the community. Each person should be able to choose with whom to live, and each person should be able to control the conditions of the home environment such as who are employed to assist them and who they live with. Every person should be enabled to individualize their home setting so that the home becomes truly their own.

The principle of normalization implies that each person should be presented and interpreted to the community at large in as positive a manner as possible. Too often, human service systems send negative messages about the people whom they serve, and very seldom do human service(s) systems take care to send positive and enhancing messages. The names by which we call people, the names by which we call programs, the sites in which we locate programs, the maturity with which we treat adults, and the meaningfulness with which we help to provide work, schooling, and other life experiences—all of these aspects of our programs say something to the public about the people with whom we work, even if we are not always conscious of the messages we are sending.

The principle of normalization implies that every person should be enabled to participate in the main stream of community life. Too often, human service systems have isolated people from the rest of society, physically or socially, removing opportunities for participation and learning. Integration into the community will provide models for people who need to learn more social skills, and it will provide a chance for people in general to learn that service consumers are more like other people than different from other people. Every person should be enabled to participate individually and in small groups in all the resources of our society. Every person should be able to make her/his choices as often as possible, even to take risks in decision-making. Instead of providing maximum shelter and protection for a person, we need to encourage growth and development by providing challenges to learning and establish linkages within the community.

To sum up, at CSAAC, the essence of the principle of normalization is the opportunity for equality: every person should have the right to share equally in the benefits and difficulties of life in the human community. To this end, CSAAC utilizes an array of therapy modalities and training/shaping behavioral approaches so that individuals with autism can work, live and play in the community at large.

CSAAC'S MISSION STATEMENT AND PHILOSOPHY

“To enable individuals with autism achieve their highest potential and contribute as confident individuals of their community.”

CSAAC's mission is accomplished through:

- Provision of the highest quality supports and services.
- Partnerships with individuals served, families, friends, neighbors, schools, businesses, employers, government, faith communities and other health care providers.
- The dignity and respect shown to each individual.
- The assurance of individual choice.
- Continued commitment to the rights of all people with autism to live, work, learn and play in their community.
- Continued advocacy and implementation of new models, methods and supports empowering individuals with autism.
- The demonstrated commitment to education, training and autism research.

CSAAC believes:

- That all persons with autism have the right to services provided within the least restrictive environment.
- That all persons with autism, regardless of their age or degree of handicapping condition, can be served in the community.
- That persons with autism can live in single family homes, townhouses or apartments where they have a right to use the telephone, send and receive mail, and receive guests without prior notice.
- That persons with autism have a right to work in private industry or government work sites among their non-handicapped peers.
- That persons with autism have a right to specialized services which facilitate living and working among non-handicapped peers.
- That the least restrictive, positive methods be emphasized in providing instructional and/or behavioral programs for persons with autism to live in the community.
- That persons with autism have the right to programs and services available to other members of the community and should not be denied access to these services on the basis of their handicap.
- That the principle of normalization should be implemented in all facets of the lives of persons with autism.

RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUAL'S RECEIVING CSAAC SUPPORTS

Individual Rights

Individuals with autism have the same rights as other citizens. When an individual's right to liberty must be abridged based on team decisions, the individual has a right to the least restrictive and most appropriate environment or alternative available. Adults with autism who have not been legally determined to be incompetent, have the right to decide whether their families shall be involved in program planning and implementation activities.

Individuals with autism may be unable to exercise all of their rights all of the time. They may need guidance and assistance, which may occasionally modify or limit certain rights. CSAAC makes every effort to strike a balance between an individual's desire to exercise his/her rights and the identifiable risks associated with the desire to exercise those rights. Where possible, supports are provided so that reasonable exercise of rights may be accomplished.

Exercise of Rights

Dissemination of Policy - A copy of the CSAAC policy on individual rights will be given to each individual entering the CSAAC program, to his/her next of kin or guardian, and to his/her representative payee. Changes or updates will be provided to the current participants.

Communication - Individuals should be encouraged to correspond with friends, family, colleagues, etc. Correspondence from an individual should be sent unopened. If requested, individuals should be assisted by CSAAC staff to type, write, address correspondence, etc., as needed. Correspondence to individuals should be delivered unopened. If requested, CSAAC staff should assist individuals in reading correspondence as needed.

Use of Telephone - At least one telephone should be available for individual use in each program site. CSAAC staff should facilitate each individual's access to a telephone by providing needed adaptations or assistance. Individuals should be encouraged to use the telephone to maintain contact with family and friends, make social arrangements, make appointments, obtain assistance if needed, etc. Privacy will be afforded for them as needed. Telephone use by individuals may not be arbitrarily limited or prevented by staff or other individuals.

Consultant/Physician Access - Each individual has the right to select private consultants/physicians of his/her choice at the individual's own expense. A number of local physicians provide the health care needs of the individuals supported at CSAAC. If family members or an *adult* in the residential program require physician or health practitioner services from someone outside of the local area, transportation will need to be arranged by the family member or resident.

Personal Clothing and Effects - Individuals should be encouraged and assisted as needed to obtain and maintain their own clothing and personal possessions. Individuals should be encouraged and assisted as needed to choose items they like and enjoy. Individuals should have access to their property and should keep it in convenient and if desired, private places such as closets, dressers, and bookshelves. Each individual should purchase and use their own toiletry articles and clothing. Clothing and items of personal ownership shall be identified by the individual or a family member to the Residential Coordinator. Families must recognize that normal wear and tear will occur with any clothing, furniture or items of personal ownership and CSAAC cannot be held responsible for the indefinite oversight of such items. As student belongings age, become damaged or no longer fit the student, they will be returned to the parent/guardian. Individuals receiving adult residential supports may make their own decision on how an item should be disposed of.

Housing & Privacy for Married Individuals - Individuals who are married shall be provided with a private room and given the opportunity to share a room.

Lawyer Access - Each individual has a right to consultation with, or representation by a lawyer at the individual's own expense. With the individual's permission, the lawyer may have access to the individual's record, interview staff who work with the individual and be provided with information about the individual's program and medications. A private space should be provided as needed for an individual to conference with his/her lawyer.

Performance of Services by individuals - Individuals shall perform duties or tasks shared by the household or included as activities in their Individual Plan. Such duties may include grocery shopping, cleaning his/her home, cooking dinner for self and housemates,

mowing the grass in his/her yard, etc. Individuals shall not be required to perform tasks which benefit the agency without proper remuneration.

Individual Rights Training - Individuals have the right to receive training about the rights they can exercise and the parallel responsibilities associated with exercising these rights in a language they can understand.

CSAAC provides consumers advocacy training in:

1. Awareness of rights, utilization of advocacy services and self advocacy groups.
2. Rights and responsibilities related to societal and employment activities.
3. Participation in community activities and public hearings.
4. Rights and responsibilities related to the law, and assistance if arrested.

Modification of an Individual's Rights / Informed Consent

When modification of an individual's rights is under consideration, the rights to be modified must be specifically explained to the individual, their family, and/or other significant individuals. The specific plan, reason for modification of rights, time limits, and individual plan with review dates must be submitted to the Standing Committee.

The individuals or others acting on their behalf will be given an opportunity to contest the action with the Standing Committee.

All modifications of rights must be documented in the Individual Plan (IP) or Individualized Education Program (IEP) and reviewed in the team meeting.

The opportunity for appeal concerning a specific modification should be made to the Standing Committee.

The appeal may be made orally or in writing, by telephone or office visit, or by signed/manual communication.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

Admissions Criteria for CSAAC's Adult Residential Services

Individuals seeking service in the adult residential supports program:

A: The Individual:

1. Must be 18 years or older;
2. Must be approved for a government funded placement,
3. Must exhibit behaviors related to autism spectrum disorder or need for CSAAC services,
4. Presently must not be able to function in a less restrictive environment, and
5. Must not be a threat to self or others through fire play or physical aggression toward potential co-workers/housemates.

B: The Individual's Family:

1. The individual's family must visit the program and endorse the CSAAC mission and philosophy; and
2. The individual's family must relinquish Social Security representative payee status upon admission to CSAAC.

C: Admissions Committee has determined:

1. That CSAAC has the resources required to serve the individual and their family.

Admissions Criteria for CSAAC's Student Residential Services

Individuals seeking service in the student residential supports program:

A: A Student:

1. Must be 18 months to 42 months of age to enter the Intensive Early Intervention Clinic Model, and 24 to 60 months for entry into the Intensive Early Intervention Workshop Model; 7 to 21 years for the day school and 7 to 21 years for the residential school;
2. Must exhibit behaviors related to the autism spectrum disorder or need for CSAAC services;
3. Must not be presently be able to function in a less restrictive environment;
4. Must be eligible for a funded placement through the Maryland or other State Department of Education;
5. Must have a current individualized education program;
6. Must be able to supported in a community-based residential program and
7. Must not be a threat to self or others through fire play or physical aggression toward potential classmates/housemates.

B: Children seeking Intensive Early Intervention:

1. Must be approved by CSAAC Intensive Early Intervention Psychologist; and
2. May be funded privately.

C: Admissions Committee has determined:

1. That CSAAC has the resources required to serve the individual and their family.

Educational Placements are determined based upon the above admissions criteria. It is important to recall that CSAAC and the Community School of Maryland are community-based programs. As a result, adults and students who cannot access the community would be better supported at a provider who maintains more localized supports. Although considerations regarding individual risk and individual desires are frequently assessed for each individual, an applicant who could avail himself/herself of the community-based programming at CSAAC/CSM would likely be declined admission. If an individual has already been admitted for supports and behaviors which would restrict community interaction arise and persist, a determination for dismissal might be warranted. See Dismissal below.

Eligibility Status for CSAAC Residential, Vocational Services and Community School of Maryland

1. Acceptance: The applicant has been screened by the Admissions Committee and meets all criteria for eligibility. The applicant has been selected by the committee to fill a vacancy in an existing service or to enter a new program and has been approved for funded placement.
2. Waiting List: The applicant has been accepted for admission into the service as soon as an appropriate vacancy exists.
3. Abeyance: The applicant has been screened by the Admissions Committee and the committee requests more information or the committee has determined that the individual may require staffing or resources currently unavailable through CSAAC. Applicants in the abeyance status will be reviewed again by the committee at a later date.
4. Not Eligible: The applicant does not meet one or more of the criteria for admission. CSAAC responds in writing to each applicant about eligibility status for services.

Applying for Services

The Admission, Review and Dismissal Committee (“ARDC”) of the CSAAC Board of Directors is responsible for the admission process for all applicants for services. When an Application is submitted for residential services and an intake assessment will be completed. The Intake Coordinator will require certain documentation before a final placement decision can be completed. Once the documentation is received by the Admissions Team, tours may occur so that the family and individual can view a representative sample of the housing available and jobs in place for CSAAC supported individuals. During these tours questions from the family and the individual to be served are encouraged. Once the necessary documentation has been obtained and reviewed and tours have been completed, a meeting will occur between the individual to be served and a CSAAC psychologist. The psychologist will forward his/her recommendations to the ARDC and an Admissions meeting will be held involving CSAAC staff, the family and individual to be served and members of the ARDC. The family and individual will be notified in writing concerning the decision of the ARDC.

Any applicant who disagrees with the decision of the ARDC and wishes to submit a request for reconsideration has the right to request another review by the Committee. If the matter cannot be settled in a second review, the applicant may request the CSAAC Standing Committee review the admission. The applicant should notify the CSAAC’s Executive Director, who will notify the appropriate committee and arrange the meeting.

Operational Needs

Operational and Programmatic Needs

Occasionally, programmatic decisions must be made regarding CSAAC ability to continue to support individual. Such decisions may require individuals to change staff, change residences, assume different job placements or change physicians. Although every effort will be made to minimize the impact on an individual, such operational decisions may be necessary for CSAAC to maintain acceptable agency operational standards or pursue strategic goals as recommended by the CSAAC Board of Directors.

For this reason, CSAAC does reserve the option to designate resources according to need, funding availability and agency viability.

All placements are temporary. Occasionally, care-giving needs, resources to continue service, individual abilities, familial cooperation and support philosophies do change. CSAAC welcomes and encourages active family involvement, participation and cooperation. However, CSAAC reserves the right to discharge an applicant from service if a family member engages in conduct which disrupts or undermines the ability of CSAAC to provide appropriate services. If necessary, the Admission, Review and Dismissal Committee will call a meeting with the family and individual to Review or possibly Dismiss an individual from service. The same grievance procedure outlined above will pertain to a family of individual who requires further review.

Dismissal

An applicant or individual receiving services may leave the service for one of several reasons:

1. he/she may be able to go on to a less restrictive environment;
2. he/she or the guardian may no longer desire service;
3. he/she may exhibit behavior that cannot be managed;
4. he/she exhibits behaviors which are a danger to him/her or others or which substantially interferes with CSAAC's ability to provide appropriate services. These behaviors include:
 - a. behaviors which violate the rental agreement with the landlord or homeowner association, such as excessive noise or destruction of property;
 - b. untreated or inappropriately treated psychiatric or neurological disorders; or
 - c. behaviors which greatly limit the individual's ability to access to the community or community supports.
5. he/she may develop a medical condition which requires long term medical services unavailable at CSAAC;
6. adverse family conduct;
7. he/she or the guardian may have an irresolvable disagreement about treatment recommendations; or
8. funding may become unavailable.

Determinations for dismissal should be made by the ARDC, with the advice of the Executive Director. In any of these events, CSAAC staff will make every effort to locate an appropriate living situation for the resident and will prepare a discharge plan and summary. However, CSAAC cannot guarantee the success of these efforts, and the resident may have to return to arrangements made before admission to the program.

Dismissal Procedures for Community School of Maryland:

The Community School of Maryland (CSM) shall follow its written policies and procedures for dismissal of students. The Educational Director shall promptly request that the responsible local school system that referred the student for placement conduct an IEP team meeting before a recommendation to dismiss a student is made. The school shall maintain a student's placement during mediation or due process proceedings, unless

the IEP provides for an alternative placement during due process proceedings and the parent has agreed to the alternative placement. CSM maintains the following policies and procedures for dismissal of students from the special education program.

Grounds for consideration of dismissal:

- Student becomes eligible for a less restrictive environment

- Student chooses to leave CSAAC voluntarily

- Student develops a medical condition which requires long term medical services unavailable at CSAAC

- Student loses funding source

- Student exhibits behaviors which are a danger to himself or others or which substantially interfere with CSAAC's ability to provide appropriate services or .

These behaviors include:

- Behaviors which violate the rental agreement with the landlord or homeowner association, such as excessive noise or destruction of property; or

- Untreated or inappropriately treated psychiatric or neurological disorders.

The school shall also conduct a Admissions Review Dismissal Committee (ARDC) meeting. The student, his or her parents and his or her advocates will be invited to the meeting to discuss the issue giving rise to the consideration of dismissal. If at the conclusion of the meeting the committee recommends dismissal, the Educational Director will contact the LSS so that an IEP meeting can be held.

If at the conclusion of the IEP meeting a determination is made that dismissal is warranted, then the Educational Director will complete a discharge summary within seven (7) days of the discharge date. The discharge summary shall include a progress report, the reason for service termination and specific plans and recommendations for future services and programming.

RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

CSAAC's Residential Support Service Department supports individuals with autism in community homes which use a variety of staff to individual ratios dependent on the individual's abilities, needs and desires or funding. CSAAC adult residential supports services program provides housing in Montgomery County, Maryland for adults (21 years or older) with autism. CSAAC's also operates a student residential supports program for individuals 21 and younger who are referred for residential services in conjunction with a placement in CSAAC's non-public school - the Community School of Maryland. These homes give individuals an alternative to living in an institution or in their parents' homes, and allow residents to exercise independence as adults, cultivating skills for community involvement and interaction.

The department is managed by the Director of Residential Supports. The Director oversee a team of Residential Coordinators who direct the programmatic components of

each individual's plan of care and are responsible for the oversight of the day-to-day operations of each home.

Generally anywhere from two or four individuals live in each home. Staff stay overnight in most homes and are scheduled as needed to assist the residents. Counselors also teach skills in housekeeping, personal hygiene, clothing care, shopping, money management, communication, telephone use, and leisure activities. All residents have access to vocational, recreative and rehabilitation programs as designed by their Individual Plans ("IPs") and educational programs as designed by their Individual Educational Programs ("IEP"). For those individuals who have paid employment, the State of Maryland expects that a portion of those wages to be designated as service fees for housing, supplies, and board based upon his/her ability to pay.

Acquisition of independence in daily living skills and community integration are emphasized and specific curricula and training programs are developed to the desired outcomes of the individuals. Individuals with behavioral concerns are treated by a licensed psychologist. Behavior plans emphasize the use of positive reinforcement; no aversive consequences or painful or noxious stimuli are permitted

The Maryland State Department of Health and Mental Hygiene funds the adult program. The Maryland State Department of Education and/or the Department of Social Services provide funding support for the student educational and residential programs. Local governments, federal programs, private foundations, and donations provide additional support.

Communication is critical to smooth operation of all CSAAC support departments. Residential Coordinators are required to contact family members at least one time per month and provide an update pursuant to Family Contact Documentation Policy and Procedures (ADMIN-101.01 – see attached, Appendix 1). Teachers are required to contact family members at least one time per week and report about the week's activities/progress. Of course, families may communicate with their loved ones at any time; however, late calls are discouraged if they will impact the rest of housemates.

Preparing For Your First Day:

Generally

Once an individual is accepted into CSAAC's Residential Program, we urge you to please review these guidelines and definitions which will help with the transition from YOUR home to OUR home.

We make every effort to make this transition go smoothly for all concerned. At first, the family often feels guilty and lonely, while the individual slowly becomes integrated into the daily routine of residential living. As this integration continues, behaviors related to the separation from family usually decrease and the individual will become accustomed to his/her new schedule of activities and work experiences.

We encourage you to stay involved in your child's life, participate in house activities, help to prepare meals and get to know the other residence and staff. We encourage family participation at Annual IP/IEP meetings and we expect that you will offer your input to the Residential Coordinator who is responsible for the operation of the residence.

Prior to Coming into the Program

One Month from Start date

Contact the nurse to make arrangements for medications to be sent to CSAAC. Complete any necessary paperwork and send in to CSAAC including an updated physical examination that has occurred within six weeks of the date of entry into services.

Two Weeks from Start date

Call the Residential Director to make arrangements to go see the home.

One Week from Start date

Make arrangements to have dinner at the house and meet the other housemates.

Day Of Transition

Please plan to arrive at the residence by noon of the "move-in" day. Feel free to assist in unpacking and setting up the individual's bedroom.

Information and Definitions

HOUSING: There are three types of housing: Single Family Homes, Townhouse, and Apartment style that are located in the Montgomery County area. An individual will be placed with several other age/behaviorally appropriate individuals. All residences are furnished.

ROOM SET-UP: You may provide furniture, bedding & linens, towels or CSAAC will supply and set-up. Individuals may also bring art work, electronics (TV, radio, clock, computer, & games), rugs or other items to personalize the room. Staff or parent are welcome to assist in room set-up.

DAILY ROUTINE/ DAILY SCHEDULE: Each resident will follow his/her own individualized Behavior Plan and daily schedule to be determined by the Behavioral Psychologist and Program Advisor. A written schedule will be available for all individuals supported at CSAAC so that not only does the individual know what activity is forthcoming, but the staff will know as well. Every effort will be made so that the wants and desires of the individual are incorporated into the daily schedule. Students are expected to be attending school on school days, adults will be attending to their

individual jobs or will be working on skill development during the weekdays. During non-school or non-work time, individuals supported will be involved with life skill training, which can involve an array of activities from in-house or community classes to household chores, to banking and local resource exploration to personal targeted skill acquisition. Schedules are revised on a regular basis to reflect changes in individual interest, seasons, and new IP objectives and services.

Implementation of the activity schedule reflects the ongoing interests of each individual. Ideas and suggestions from the individual's family should be solicited and included. Observations should be made of the individual's interest and preference when scheduling activities. Staff may discuss options available with individuals and their families using adaptations such as pictures to assist individuals in the decision making process.

The individual activity schedule should include specific training times for all prioritized objectives specified in the individual's plan. The training times should occur when the skill would normally be utilized and in the natural setting. For example, training on grocery shopping should occur in the store at the time the individual normally goes grocery shopping; showering should be taught in the bathroom of the residence before bed or in the morning when showering normally occurs.

All activities are scheduled to reflect the normal rhythm of life in the community. A variety of activities and materials should be available to each individual during free time. Staff should assist and encourage individuals to use materials or engage in preferred activities.

GROCERIES & MEALS: Grocery shopping is done on the weekends and as needed by the individual and his/her direct care staff (Residential Counselors/Individual Support Staff). Residents have a choice in menus which are written weekly by the nutritionist/dietician. Meals are prepared in the kitchen by direct care staff with resident's participation to enhance skill acquisition.

PERSONAL HYGIENE: Hair cuts and personal hygiene items (shampoo, soap/body wash, q-tips, deodorant, feminine hygiene items, hair spray, shoe polish, body/face lotions, toothbrush, toothpaste) are purchased with the help of the direct care staff and paid by the resident's personal budget, provided by CSAAC through state funding support for students. Adults pay for these personal care items out their earned income or benefits to which they are entitled from SSI.

MEDICATION: All medication is filled and bubble packed, for safety and reliability, by a CSAAC endorsed pharmacy. Management of medication is overseen by resident's own doctor and CSAAC nurse.

LAUNDRY: Residents will do their own laundry in house, with the assistance of direct care staff. Detergent, etc. is provided.

HOUSEKEEPING: Individuals will help with the cleaning of the homes on a weekly basis. All cleaning supplies and equipment are provided by CSAAC.

PHONE: Each house has a phone that is available for the individuals use.

COMMUNITY OUTINGS: Individuals will participate in community outings following their respective schedules. Because CSAAC attempts to expose the individual to community norms and experiences, CSAAC encourages the use of public transportation as much as practicable. Many individuals will need transportation training so that they will be able to use the many public transit systems that are available. CSAAC is a community-based provider, and as such, community integration is the goal of our model. CSAAC staff encourage the development of individual relationships outside the walls of the organization, where adults and students get to know their barber, banker, neighbors and local government employees, utilizing the resources and understanding their community to the fullest.

HOME VISITS: We encourage all parents/families to invite the individual supported by CSAAC for home visits on a regular basis. Do notify the Residential Coordinator prior to scheduling a home visit. Many of the individuals served by CSAAC require advance notice and appropriate scheduling so that transitions can effectively occur. Try not to cancel a home visit once scheduled, cancellations can be very disappointing. Family members are responsible for the transportation of an individual to and from the residence. There are regulations that CSAAC is subject to regarding limitations on the length of extended visits or vacations. Please be aware that there is a 35 day maximum limit for an extended vacation or service disruption over the course of a fiscal year (July to June). There are no “visiting hours” at a CSAAC residence – an individual can choose when he/she wants to visit. Because CSAAC is community-based, family members should confirm visits to the house with the residential coordinator to ensure that the individual will be at home for the visit.

RESIDENTIAL: Family living, in a home, for several individuals with direct care staff as required.

RESIDENTIAL STAFF: Individual Support Staff/Residential Counselors- direct, hands-on responsibility of providing positive reinforcement for the day-to-day running of the resident’s Individual Program, Behavioral Plan and daily schedule. The residential staff help residents on meal preparation, laundry, housekeeping, daily hygiene and daily community outings.

RESIDENTIAL COORDINATOR: Maintains oversight of residence. Maintains overall responsibility for programming for the individual, including daily schedule, recreation, enriched leisure program and instructional program. Sees to it that the IP (and IEP) are translated into activities and learning experiences. The residential coordinator also has overall responsibility to insure that the individual has appropriate day services. The residential coordinator is the family contact for all CSAAC services, including adult residential and adult vocational services.

RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT DIRECTOR: Overall responsibility for all adult residential services.

RECREATION: Evening and weekend social, hobby and sports activities are provided according to each person's interests. In the back of this handbook is the CSAAC Recreation Assessment/ Treatment Plan (See Appendix 2) that should be completed by the individual and/or their family members to identify activities the individual served will enjoy. CSAAC employs a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist who is tasked with seeking and developing an array of recreational opportunities consistent with the desires of the adults and students supported at CSAAC. CSAAC encourages participation in some form of recreational activity for every individual supported. Community recreational opportunities are encouraged and sought. All individuals are introduced to a variety of age appropriate leisure activities, suitable for his/her developmental level.

All individuals are given the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of recreational activities with their roommates and other individuals. These activities include excursions to community facilities and places of interest, individual and team sports, hiking, picnicking, gardening, going to restaurants, pubs, churches, shopping centers, movie theaters, parks, etc. These activities give the individuals with autism the chance to interact with individuals of both genders and all ages. Individuals are informed of the availability of recreational opportunities by the Residential Counselors and by brochures and handouts from CSAAC staff, the local ARCs, the Maryland Parks and Planning Commission, the Jewish Community Center, Montgomery County Recreation Department, Montgomery Village pamphlets, etc. In addition, students participate in extra-curricular activities such as dances, music enrichment, field days, themed school events and physical education.

Individuals are encouraged to explore interests and hobbies and to develop positive interpersonal relationships with staff assistance and support. For an individual to become comfortable and confident in a new social situation, it may be necessary for the staff to provide appropriate role model behavior, or to accompany the individual. It is important to fade assistance gradually as the individual develops social competency.

DIET: A staff Dietician/Nutritionist supervises staff in menu planning with recommendations for resident's individual needs. Groceries are bought with the resident, and meals are prepared with all sharing in the activity. The dietician monitors the purchases in each home to ensure that proper nutrition is offered. The dietician also works in conjunction with the nursing staff to monitor weight and exercise.

HEALTH & SAFETY: Each person has an assigned nurse who does regular check-ups no less frequently than every 45 days. Changes needing attention are reported to the individual's physician or psychiatrist. Families are urged to call the nurse when noticing changes that need attention. The nurse's name and phone number are posted in each house. Medications, prescribed by resident's doctor/psychiatrist are bubble packed for safety, kept in locked cabinets, and dispensed by Individual Support Staff. Families should pick up needed medications when taking resident on vacation or home visit.

Incidents of violent or dangerous behavior must be reported immediately to the Program Advisor, recorded, investigated, and counter measures taken as needed. In medical emergencies, staff will call 911, then the on-call supervisor, then the nurse. A staff member will accompany the resident to the hospital and stay to reassure the resident and provide information to the hospital staff. An emergency kit is provided in each residence for small incidents not requiring medical attention. Emergency information is posted in each residence. Residents have the physician, dentist, psychiatrist of their choice. They may be taken to regular appointments by residential staff or family members. Since residents are adults, it is recommended that each make out an Advanced Medical Directive, authorizing a family member to make medical decisions when necessary. (In an emergency, a physician is authorized to make critical decisions when no family member is available.)

MEDICAL & DENTAL CARE: CSAAC Residential Services obtains medical and dental care for all individuals as needed. All CSAAC staff are responsible for following emergency medical procedures for any medical emergencies. The CSAAC Community School of Maryland cooperates with and assists students and their families in securing appropriate medical and dental care. The school staff are to notify families when regular visits such as annual check-ups are needed, when special services are recommended, such as neurological exam, or when a student is ill and requires treatment. Families may request the school staff to arrange for medical or dental care as it is needed or they may make these arrangements themselves.

CSAAC School and Residential Service provides a comprehensive preventative dentistry program. Each individual must have a thorough check up, cleaning and fluoride application as prescribed by the dentist, at least annually. The dental examination form is to be completed and signed by the dentist. Recommendations for further evaluation or treatment are to be determined on the form. Each individual should be followed by one primary dentist who is familiar with the individual's history, present environment, and needs.

Specific recommendations by dentists or dental hygienists concerning comprehensive daily plaque control, therapeutic care to prevent the development and/or progression of cavities, periodontal and other oral diseases, nutrition and diet control measures, etc., are to be followed precisely. Individuals are taught, as specified on their IEPs or IPs, good dental care habits and techniques such as tooth brushing after every meal and flossing daily.

TRANSPORTATION: CSAAC maintains a fleet of 50 vehicles used to transport individuals to all medical appointments, school and school activities, vocational needs, recreation and community activities. Travel training is also provided to foster independence in the community.

THERAPIES: Individual therapy (Speech, Occupational, Physical Therapy, Counseling) is on an "as needed" basis as determined by the IP/IEP team. Related services required by the IEP are typically implemented within the school environment according to state guidelines. Adults may request/receive individual counseling as well.

PERSONAL FUNDS: CSAAC individuals receive varying degrees of assistance in managing their personal spending money dependent upon their need. All adult CSAAC individuals receive personal spending money from their SSI and wages from work. For an individual capable of budgeting for his/her spending needs on a weekly basis, only minor assistance from the Residential Counselor might be necessary. For instance assistance may be needed to assist an individual with certain banking transactions such as deposits, withdrawals, etc. as part of the weekly budgeting process. All students receive a weekly allocation for community activities, outings and transportation which has been calculated into the MSDE or DSS reimbursement funding rate.

Adults may have their own bank accounts and they are encouraged to do so. Some individuals may have bank accounts administered through CSAAC. In other words, the agency is responsible for assisting in the managing of the individual's personal finances. Individuals receive their monthly allowance for personal spending. The residential counselor is responsible for monitoring the individual's cash on hand which is kept in the group residence. On a daily basis when transactions occur the counselor records the date, the amount of cash spent, any monies which were received into the individual's house account, the current balance, and initials the entry on the Individual Budget Form. Receipts for the purchase of clothing, toiletries and personal items, and expenses for recreational activities are kept by the Residential Counselor and attached to the appropriate Individual Budget Form. The individual's cash kept in the residence is counted by both counselors at each change of shift. Discrepancies noted between the current balance and the cash-on-hand are noted on the Individual Budget Form and reported to the Residential Coordinator. The Coordinator is responsible for counting the individual's monies on a weekly basis. This intensive financial accounting is required by the State to ensure the safeguarding of individual funds.

INDIVIDUAL PLAN (IP): A comprehensive plan that covers all important aspects of the individuals life at CSAAC- residential, vocational, behavioral supports, health, recreation, diet, etc. It is developed by CSAAC staff, a Service Coordinator from Developmental Disabilities Association (DDA), the family and the individual being served. The IPP is revised annually.

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) A comprehensive plan designed to meet the unique educational needs of one child. The IEP is tailored to the individual student's needs as identified by the evaluation process so that teachers and related service providers understand the student's disability and how the disability affects the learning process. The classroom teacher oversees the implementation of the IEPs of her students. Some IEPs have both educational and residential goals delineated.

PERSONAL ITEMS: CSAAC advises all families to fill out the Personal Inventory form (See Appendix 3) located in the back of this handbook and give it to the Residential Coordinator. This will help to keep inventory on your family member's personal belongings.

REPRESENTATIVE (“Rep”) PAYEE: Once admitted to the program, CSAAC must become Representative Payee for the adults receiving supports. Contact the Social Security office and request for CSAAC to now be the Representative Payee for your family member within one (1) week of admission. The SSI payments will be forwarded to CSAAC’s Accounting Department. These funds are directly applied to the individual’s account and are used for residential fee’s.

BUDGETS & FUNDING: CSAAC services for adults are funded primarily by the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Association (DDA), with funding from other sources including Medicaid, SSI, or other government or insurance benefits that the individual may be receiving. CSAAC will require information on such entitlements in order to apply for reimbursements. Note that DDA requires all persons benefiting from DDA funds to apply for Medicaid as this provides matching federal dollars for many services. (For information related to your family member, talk to the CSAAC Financial Office.) CSAAC services for students are funded primarily by the Maryland State Department of Education or the Department of Social Services.

INCIDENT REPORTING: Any alleged abuse, neglect or potential risk to a child’s health and safety will be reported promptly to the parent/guardian; Children’s Protective Services (CPS) or Adult Protective Services (APS) as appropriate; the funding entities supporting the adult/child; and to all other entities required by the relevant abuse and neglect regulations. Formal documentation for said incident will be provided to all appropriate contacts.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES: CSAAC is not affiliated with any specific religion or spiritual belief system. CSAAC recognizes the individual rights of all persons who are supported to attend their preferred place of worship or decline to attend formal religious services. Children and adults are encouraged to become involved in community activities organized by their own specific religious groups and are offered participation opportunities whenever desired.

Concerns

When something goes wrong who do you call?

If the issues revolves around house management, call the Administrative Supervisor or House Manager. If the concern relates to the individual’s disability or behavior, contact the Program Advisor. If the matter is still unresolved, one of the two Co-Directors of Residential Supports.

If the concern is related to the individual’s vocational experience, you should still contact the Program Advisor first. If unresolved, the matter should be addressed with the Competitive Employment Assistant or the Training Assistant, depending upon the services utilized by the individual.

During regular works, recognize that our Program Advisors have office telephone numbers; please contact the PAs at their respective office phone numbers, not their cellular or home telephones. If the matter is not an emergency, please wait until the following business day to contact the Program Advisor. If there is an emergency (such as a death in the family) during non-business hours and the family member must notify the individual, please contact the on-call supervisor.

If there is an emergency while family member is enjoying a home visit, please contact 911 first. Then advise the on-call supervisor about the situation giving rise to the emergency and the resultant actions you have initiated.

CSAAC has a Quality Control Committee (Human Rights), made up of family members and staff, who track and review complaints and reported incidents. Continuing issues and concerns should be brought to this committee attention through the Quality Assurance Director.

CSAAC welcomes input from families to help identify problems and maintain high standards of service.

Please join the CSAAC Parent group which meets every month to discuss issues pertinent to the entire CSAAC community.

Understanding Supervisory Boundaries

During visitation to the residence, parents must respect the use of the behavior plan and daily schedule which are being followed by the direct care staff. Direct care staff are trained to implement the individual's behavior plans and schedules. If you have concerns, you are urged to discuss said concerns with the Residential Coordinator not the direct care staff. Further, family members should not influence staff to abandon the behavior plan or schedule. Only a direct care staff's supervisor may direct the staff. However, quality of care issues (such as safety, adherence to the schedule) should be brought to the attention of on-call supervisor or the Residential Coordinator. In order to be cognizant of concerns or additional information, the Residential Coordinator will serve as the primary CSAAC point of communication.

VOCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

CSAAC's Vocational Support Services Department provides a wide range of services to adults with autism regardless of their present level of abilities. This program allows individuals the opportunity to become acquainted with a variety of paid employment situations as well as the opportunity to train so that greater skills can be mastered permitting greater access to paid employment. This support service is designed to allow individuals to obtain their personal goals and dreams.

CSAAC provides each individual with the training and support necessary to achieve and maintain employment in the individual's chosen career field. After assessing each individual's interests, abilities, and needs, staff members match the individual with an available position which suits his or her interests and skill level. If no available position exists or if additional individual skills are needed so that the individual can reach his/her personal outcomes, CSAAC offers a training program complete with more than a dozen training stations. Individuals learn the skills necessary to perform at a given job and hone job skills as necessary.

The current vocational support protocol allows access at any one of three points. For those individuals just learning a skill, the individual will enter the program as a "trainee." Managed by the Supported Employment Training Assistant and supported by Job Trainers, the individual will then work his/her way through the steps to perform a given task or tasks. The staff analyzes the job, breaks it into several smaller components and determines which areas within the component parts that the "trainee" needs assistance (Task Analysis). As these individuals progress through the training program and proficiency is reached, he/she will move forward onto the "apprentice" role where skills will be tested within the CSAAC operational environment. While an "apprentice," CSAAC will pay wages to the individual for his/her work and the individuals will learn about workplace rules. Once an understanding of what will be required of the individual in the employment field is attained and paid positions are identified by the Competitive Employment Assistant, individuals will be placed into the competitive employment arena.

At the job site, Job Coaches provide the encouragement, training, and support which allows the individual to thrive in their chosen career. Individuals provide input on their enjoyment of their respective positions as they participate in the life in the community, interact with other members of the community, perform different social roles, have friends and are respected employees. These services facilitate the personal outcomes of the individual.

Individuals enrolled in CSAAC's Supported Employment Program have chosen careers in such diverse fields as printing, stocking, sales, preparing food at restaurants, biotechnologist, as well as 30 other career tracts. The Competitive Employment Assistant continues to develop placements in new career areas for individuals to explore.

INFORMATION AND DEFINITIONS

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT: Each person has weekday employment (paid or volunteer) with support staff as needed, with the goal of developing work and social skills and independent community participation.

JOB COACH/ TRAINER: Works directly with the individual on the job, helping develop work skills and appropriate behavior as indicated in the behavior plan. The intensity of support may range from 1:1 to occasional drop in check up when the individual can work with a great deal of independence. The Job Coach/Trainer ensures that the individual adheres to job site policy and procedures, monitors productivity, maintains data and coordinates transportation when necessary.

VOCATIONAL SUPPORTS DIRECTOR: Overall responsibility for vocational services.

COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANT: Responsible for job development and management of the individuals involved in the paid community work experiences. Oversees Employment Managers who maintain the competitive employment caseload. Serves as liaison to the Department of Rehabilitative Services (“DORS”)

TRAINEE: An individual learning the skills necessary to perform a given task or job.

APPRENTICE: An individual who has attained the skills necessary to perform a given job and is now employed in said capacity by CSAAC. For example, CSAAC employs a receptionist, a cleaning crew, a car wash team, to name a few. While a suitable job placement is being sought, these individuals will continue their apprenticeship when resources exist.

CONTACT INFORMATION

CSAAC East Village
8615 East Village Ave
Montgomery Village, MD 20886
Phone:(240) 912-2220
Fax: (301) 926-9384

CSAAC Brookeville
Community School of Maryland
21515 Zion Road
Brookeville, MD 20833
Phone:(301) 208-7250
Fax: (301) 208-7259

IN CASE OF EMERGENCIES

301-215-0940 Emergency On-Call Supervisor

301-370-1905 Emergency Nurse

Ian Paregol, J.D.

Executive Director

Marcia Smith, Ph.D.

Assistant Executive Director of Programs

Don Rodrick

Assistant Executive Director of Finance

Kim Dennie

Director of Quality Assurance

Sirin Yilmaz

Director of the Community School of Maryland

Sam Asiamah

Director of Residential Support Services

Dide Cimen

Director of Vocational Support Services

Jan Miller-Vogel

Director of Support Services

CSAAC WEBSITE

Please visit our website: www.csaac.org for updates about “what’s new” at CSAAC, including upcoming meetings and events. The website should be used as a resource for information about CSAAC and its operation.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CSAAC FOUNDATION

There are numerous ways you can contribute to CSAAC. The CSAAC is always seeking members, volunteers and assistants for special. The CSAAC Foundation, a wholly separate entity with a separate Board of Directors exists for the purpose of ensuring that needs are met for CSAAC’s growth and long term viability. The Grand Champion of the CSAAC Foundation was established so that families or sponsors could pledge \$84 per month to support the long range financial stability of CSAAC and ongoing needs of CSAAC individuals not met by state or county funding or families. In addition, a building campaign for the East Village site exists whereby families, individuals, even corporations can buy a brick for the walkway in front of the entry way to the completed building.

CSAAC Foundation also welcomes donations of automobiles (See Vehicle Donation Program on the website) and computer supplies. Of course, private undesignated gifts to the Foundation are greatly appreciated.

YOUR PERSONAL CSAAC RESIDENTIAL FILE:

(WRITE IN PENCIL- INFORMATION MAY CHANGE)

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
PHONE # _____
DOCTOR _____
DENTIST _____
PSYCHIATRIST _____
OTHER _____
INSURANCE INFO _____

STAFF INFORMATION

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT STAFF _____

HOUSE MANAGER/ADMIN. SUPERVISOR _____
PROGRAM ADVISOR _____
DIR OF RES SUPPORTS _____
BEHAVIOR SPECIALIST _____
JOB COACH/TRAINING COACH _____
DIR OF SUPPORT SER _____
HOUSE NURSE _____
HEAD NURSE _____
DIETICIAN/NUTRITIONIST _____
RECREATION SPECIALIST _____
EXEC DIRECTOR _____

HOUSEMATES & STAFF

NAME _____
STAFF _____

NAME _____
STAFF _____

NAME _____
STAFF _____

ADMINISTRATION MANUAL

POLICY TITLE

Family Contact Documentation Policy and Procedures

POLICY NUMBER

ADMIN-101.01

EFFECTIVE DATE

October 1, 2006

CORRESPONDING FORM:

Admin 030

PURPOSE:

This policy is intended to increase and improve the communication between family members and supervisors in response to continuing concerns about the frequency and quality of such interactions.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all program support departments at all CSAAC locations.

POLICY:

In the interest of improved quality and increased, documented communication between family members and supervisors, CSAAC requires its supervisors (specifically: residential coordinators, advisors, teachers and employment managers) to contact appropriate family members* of the individual's supported at CSAAC at least monthly, and more frequently if warranted. During these family contacts, supervisors should discuss the following matters:

- the individual's progress within the program,
- any upcoming changes that will be occurring involving the individual - including staffing changes,
- any reports - including injuries, behavioral data, nursing concerns - involving the individual,
- the individual's involvement in community activities,
- the individual's involvement in recreational activities,
- the status of recent medical visits (coordinators and advisors),
- the social interactions within the house (coordinators and advisors), and
- the family's concerns.

*There are some adult individuals that have indicated their desire to communicate many of these aspects with their own families. This indication has been and continues to be documented in the Individual Plan.

PROCEDURE:

The supervisor will initiate by telephone, the contact of family members so designated for communications by the 15th of each month.

If the supervisor is **able** to reach the designated contact by telephone:

- ✓ The supervisor will discuss with the contact person the areas in the above-noted policy as well as any other areas that need to be addressed.
- ✓ The supervisor will immediately document the content of the conversation as well as any concerns of the family member on form Admin 030 (Family Contact Documentation), completing the form in its entirety.
- ✓ The supervisor will review the content of the documentation with his/her director within seven (7) days of the contact.
- ✓ At the conclusion of the review meeting, the director will have the *original* placed in the individual's file for parent correspondence/contacts. The *yellow* copy shall be retained by the director who shall maintain a separate notebook for documenting contacts by staff member and individual. The *pink* copy shall be retained by the supervisor who submitted the form for his/her records.

If the supervisor is **unable** to reach the designated contact by telephone but **can** leave a message:

- ✓ He/she shall leave a message with a phone number asking that the family member return the call. Content of the communication, as delineated in the above, shall not be left on an answering machine or via voice mail. Form Admin 030 will be completed indicating that a message was left and the form will be submitted to the departmental director.
- ✓ The supervisor shall make a second attempt to contact the family member within 72 hours to convey the necessary communication consistent with the above-stated policy. Form Admin 030 will again be completed indicating that a message was left and the form will be submitted to the departmental director.
- ✓ If no family contact occurs within a week from the initial call after the second call has been placed and a message has been left to return the call, the supervisor shall write a letter to the family member indicating:
 - the times and dates he/she attempted to reach the family member and the telephone number called,
 - that messages were left,
 - a written summary of the relevant areas addressed above in the policy statement, and
 - a statement that the family member should contact the supervisor with any questions with the telephone number included.
- ✓ The original and three (3) copies of the letter shall be submitted to the director. One copy shall be placed in the individual's file, one copy shall be retained by the supervisor, one copy shall be maintained by the director and the original will be mailed by the director.

If the supervisor is **unable** to reach the designated contact by telephone and **cannot** leave a message because no answering machine or voice mail is available:

- ✓ He/she will attempt to call again within 72 hours. Form Admin 030 will be completed and under the “summary” section, the supervisor will note that no option to leave a message was available each time a call is placed and no message can be left.
- ✓ If no family contact occurs and no answering machine or voice mail option is again available after the second call is placed for the month, the supervisor shall write a letter to the family member indicating:
 - the times and dates he/she attempted to reach the family member and the telephone number called,
 - that there was no ability to leave messages at this phone number,
 - a written summary of the relevant areas addressed above in the policy statement, and
 - a statement that the family member should contact the supervisor with any questions with the telephone number included.
- ✓ The original and three (3) copies of the letter shall be submitted to the director. One copy shall be placed in the individual’s file, one copy shall be retained by the supervisor, one copy shall be maintained by the director and the original will be mailed by the director.

Consistent with this timetable, all letters indicating that contact was not made shall be mailed by the 30th of each month.

If after three (3) successive months, the family member has not contacted the supervisor or returned calls, the letter for that particular month and copies of the preceding two (2) months letters shall be sent by certified mail with a return receipt.