

SESSION 3 GREENE CASE:

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

This glossary identifies commonly used terms used among the judicial system, child welfare system, and CASA/GAL

COMMUNICATION SKILLS	
TERM	DEFINITION
Clarifying Questions	Used to gather additional details or clear up confusion. For example: “I didn’t understand the phrase you just used. Could you explain it?” or “You mentioned someone named James. What is his relationship to the child?”
Close-ended Questions	Can be answered with one word or a simple “yes” or “no” For example: “Do you understand the difference between a CASA/GAL volunteer and a caseworker?”
Communication	An interchange or an exchange of thoughts and ideas.
Feelings	The feelings that are experienced in the course of an interaction. While the verbal and nonverbal components can be directly observed, the feelings component is not so easy to observe.
Leading Questions	A question that suggests a desired answer. For example: “Your favorite weekends are spent with your dad, right?” This type of question is never appropriate in any CASA/GAL volunteer interview.
Nonverbal	Gestures, body movements, tone of voice and other unspoken means of conveying a message. The nonverbal code can be easily misread.
Open-ended Questions	Require more thought and more than a simple one-word answer. Invite others to engage in a dialogue with you. Sometimes open-ended questions are phrased as a statement that requires a response (for example, “Tell me about...” or “Describe for me...”). “Tell me your understanding of my role as a CASA/GAL volunteer.”
Verbal	The actual words spoken, the elements we traditionally think of as language and refer to as “communication.”

CHILD WELFARE TERMS	
TERM	DEFINITION
Adoption	When a child's case is closed and/or discharged because an adult legally adopted the child, taking on all the rights and responsibilities of a parent. The adoptive parent(s) can be an unrelated adult or a relative to the child.
Child Abuse and Neglect	<p>Federal legislation provides guidance to States by identifying a minimum set of acts or behaviors that define child abuse and neglect. The Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) (42 U.S.C.A. § 5106g), as amended by the CAPTA Reauthorization Act of 2010, defines child abuse and neglect as, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation"; or • "An act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm." <p>This definition of child abuse and neglect refers specifically to parents and other caregivers. A "child" under this definition generally means a person who is younger than age 18 or who is not an emancipated minor.</p>
Intergenerational	Involves several generations.
Parentification	The process of role reversal whereby a child is obliged to act as parent to their own parent or sibling. In extreme cases, the child is used to fill the void of the alienating parent's emotional life.
Physical Neglect	Failure to provide for a child's basic survival needs, such as nutrition, clothing, shelter, hygiene, and medical care. Physical neglect may also involve inadequate supervision of a child and other forms of reckless disregard of the child's safety and welfare.
Risk Factors	Characteristics at the biological, psychological, family, community, or cultural level that precede and are associated with a higher likelihood of negative outcomes.

CHILD WELFARE TERMS	
TERM	DEFINITION
Socioeconomic Status (SES)	“Encompasses not just income but also educational attainment, financial security, and subjective perceptions of social status and social class. Socioeconomic status can encompass quality of life attributes as well as the opportunities and privileges afforded to people within society. Poverty, specifically, is not a single factor but rather is characterized by multiple physical and psychosocial stressors. Further, SES is a consistent and reliable predictor of a vast array of outcomes across the life span, including physical and psychological health. Thus, SES is relevant to all realms of behavioral and social science, including research, practice, education, and advocacy.”
Termination of Parental Rights	Voluntary or involuntary legal severance of the rights of a parent to the care, custody, and control of a child and to any benefits that, by law, would flow to the parent from the child, such as inheritance.

COURT TERMINOLOGY	
TERM	DEFINITION
Adjudication Hearing	“An adjudication hearing is the stage of the proceedings in which the court determines whether allegations of dependency, abuse or neglect concerning a child are sustained by the evidence and, if so, are legally sufficient to support state intervention on behalf of the child.”
Disposition hearing	The court can make orders about visitation, issue restraining orders, and make any other orders the judge finds are in the best interest of the child.

CULTURAL AWARENESS AND BIAS	
TERM	DEFINITION
Bias	The action of supporting or opposing a particular person or thing in an unfair way by allowing personal opinions to influence your judgment.

CULTURAL AWARENESS AND BIAS	
TERM	DEFINITION
Cultural bias	“The process where we tend to judge other phenomena based on our own cultural preferences, or by the norms of a particular culture.”
Cultural competence	The ability to understand, communicate with and effectively interact with people across cultures. Encompasses being aware of one's own world view, developing positive attitudes towards cultural differences, and gaining knowledge of different cultural practices and world views.
Cultural considerations	Different cultural communities perceive mental health conditions differently. Cultural background can affect whether people seek help, what kind of help they turn to, their ways of coping, the kinds of treatment that work and the barriers to receiving effective care. It's crucial that professionals take culture into account when evaluating mental illness and providing treatment options.
Cultural humility	Replacing the idea of cultural competency, the term “cultural humility” is based on the idea of focusing on self-reflection and lifelong learning
Implicit bias	“Refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.”

DISABILITIES	
TERM	DEFINITION
Developmental disabilities	“A group of conditions due to impairment in physical, learning, language, or behavioral areas. These conditions begin during the developmental period, may impact day-to-day functioning, and usually last throughout a person's lifetime.”
Individualized education plan (IEP)	The IEP, Individualized Education Program, is a written document that's developed for each public school child who is eligible for special education. The IEP is created through a team effort and reviewed at least once a year. Before an IEP can be written, your child must be eligible for special education. By federal law, a multidisciplinary team must determine that (1) she's a child with a disability and (2) she requires special education and related services to benefit from the general education program.

DISABILITIES	
TERM	DEFINITION
Individuals with disabilities education act (PL 94-142)	“A law that makes available a free appropriate public education to eligible children with disabilities throughout the nation and ensures special education and related services to those children.”
Learning disability	Affects how people understand, remember and respond to information.

MENTAL HEALTH	
TERM	DEFINITION
Assessment	<p>It is not your task to diagnose mental illness. However, it is important to be aware of warning signs or indicators that may affect the health or safety of the child so that you can alert the child protective services caseworker about your concerns. Potential Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social withdrawal: “Sitting and doing nothing”; friendlessness (including abnormal self-centeredness or preoccupation with self); dropping out of activities; decline in academic, vocational or athletic performance • Depression: Loss of interest in once pleasurable activities, expressions of hopelessness or apathy; excessive fatigue and sleepiness or inability to sleep; changes in appetite and motivation; pessimism; thinking or talking about suicide; a growing inability to cope with problems and daily activities • Thought disorders: Confused thinking; strange or grandiose ideas; an inability to concentrate or cope with minor problems; irrational statements; peculiar use of words; excessive fears or suspicions • Expression of feeling disproportionate to circumstances: Indifference even in important situations; inability to cry or excessive crying; inability to express joy; inappropriate laughter; anger and hostility out of proportion to the precipitating event <p>Behavior changes: Hyperactivity, inactivity or alternating between the two; deterioration in personal hygiene; noticeable and rapid weight loss; changes in personality; drug or alcohol abuse; forgetfulness and loss of valuable possessions; bizarre behavior (such as skipping, staring or strange posturing); increased absenteeism from work or school</p>
Bipolar disorder	<p>“Is also known as manic-depressive illness, is a brain disorder that causes unusual shifts in mood, energy, activity levels, and the ability to carry out day-to-day tasks.”</p>
Mental illness	<p>“A mental illness is a condition that impacts a person’s thinking, feeling or mood and may affect his or her ability to relate to others and function on a daily basis. Each person will have different experiences, even people with the same diagnosis.”</p>

MENTAL HEALTH	
TERM	DEFINITION
Psychological evaluation	“Psychological testing and assessment are similar to medical tests. If a patient has physical symptoms, a primary care provider may order X-rays or blood tests to understand what's causing those symptoms. The results of the tests will help inform develop a treatment plan. Psychological evaluations serve the same purpose. Psychologists use tests and other assessment tools to measure and observe a client's behavior to arrive at a diagnosis and guide treatment.”
Stereotypes	<p>Stereotypes that are based on appearances can impact how a volunteer approaches and builds relationships with families and children. Stereotypes are rigid and inflexible and hold even when a person is presented with evidence contrary to the stereotype. They are harmful because they limit people’s potential, perpetuate myths and are gross generalizations about a particular group.</p> <p>For instance, a person might believe that people who wear large, baggy clothes shoplift. Because some teenagers wear large, baggy jackets, this person may assume that teenagers shoplift. Such stereotypes can adversely affect a volunteer’s interactions with children and others in the community. Even stereotypes that include “positive” elements (e.g., “they” are quite industrious) can be harmful because the stereotypes are rigid, limiting and generalized.</p>
Substance use disorder	When a person's use of alcohol or another substance (drug) leads to health issues or problems at work, school, or home. Also referred to as substance abuse.