1 2	CONFIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS! "By Court Order, these documents are confidential	
3	If you copy, distribute or disclose these records, you	
4	may be subject to contempt of court."	
5		
6	COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES	
7	OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY	
8 9	813 Freedom Blvd. Watsonville, CA 95076	
10	Telephone: (831) 761-2956	
11	Fax (831) 761-2913	
12	, , ,	
13	SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY	
14	JUVENILE COURT	
15	In the Matter of: Jake McKinley	
16	Age: 16	
17		NO.
18		CASA REPORT AND
19		RECOMMENDATION
20		
21		
22	A Minor	COURT DATE: August 3 rd , 2015
23		COURT TIME: 8:30am
24		
25	REPORTING ADVOCATE: Larry Samuelson	
26	TOTAL HOURS ON THE CASE: 287	
27	PERSONS CONTACTED:	
28		
29	Therapist	
30	Jake	
31	Social Worker	
32		
33		
34		
	II	

INTRODUCTION

Jake became a Dependent of the Court on February 10th, 2015 due to his mother's arrest on felony assault charges against stepfather and stepfather's assumed girlfriend. Jake initially lived with his four younger siblings at his maternal grandmother's home. He and his younger brother were removed from maternal grandmother's care and placed with new caregiver in July 2016. In January 2017 Jake was placed with his mother. I was appointed Jake's CASA on March 12th, 2015. We have spent our visits together collecting materials in parks, open spaces, beaches and forests in order to make primitive tools such as bows, arrows and arrowheads. He is a good teacher and I have enjoyed learning a new hobby with him. Jake is passionate about primitive cultures, especially Native American. He reads widely on implements made of stone, wood and plant fiber and displays a robust understanding of their usage. He is normally reserved and quiet until you engage him on this topic; he then becomes cheerful and articulate and will talk as long as you will listen.

CURRENT STATUS

School Jake currently attends Santa Cruz High School and is far behind in credits and is not progressing at a rate that will result in graduation. In a January 12th school meeting to discuss a multidisciplinary report, it was determined that Jake meets the eligibility criteria for an IEP. Santa Cruz High has since indicated that it is unlikely that Jake can continue attending in the Fall.

They need to move him to a school that can be more flexible with his educational needs and give him a better chance to catch up on credits and graduate. The alternative programs require fewer credits, have resource and counseling support, and include a vocational component.

Jake says that he would choose to attend Soquel High if he were unable to stay at Santa Cruz High in the Fall. His preference is to stay at Santa Cruz High.

Extra-Curricular Activities: Jake remains highly focused on primitive skills and spends almost all of his free time making things like arrowheads, bows, stone tools, fire and clothing. He has been making items for the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History and plans to demonstrate arrowhead making to visitors. We also visit local shops and seminars that relate to his interests, such as; Museums, Libraries, taxidermist, leather shops, pet stores, native foods work shops, rock and gem shows, etc.

Relationships: 1) Mother. Jake loves his mother and says he has a good relationship with her. When I have seen them interact, I would agree that they share mutual affection and have a positive relationship. Jake trusts only his mother to do certain things for him, like cut his hair and take him to the dentist. 2)

29

Younger siblings. Jake has great affection for his younger brother and sisters. In his current placement, he only sees his three sisters and younger brother once each week during scheduled visits.

Visitations: Currently 1 hour per week with younger siblings.

Therapy & Medical Needs: Jake continues to see a therapist from Children's Mental Health and reports that he likes his therapist and wants to continue seeing her.

Dr. Mason from Children's Mental Health tentatively diagnosed him with high functioning Aspergers Syndrome in June 2015. The treatment protocol continues to focus therapy efforts on the hyper-vigilant and mildly paranoid aspects of Jake's behavior. His therapist reports improvement in this area.

Jake received a breathing device for his sleep apnea in October and says that he is sleeping better.

He has also gotten prescription eyeglasses, but does not like wearing them.

He is receiving physical therapy for tendonitis in his forearm, attributable to repetitive stress caused by making stone tools.

Jake's mother has been very active in seeing that Jake's health care needs have been addressed and accompanies him to his appointments.

Jake's therapist stated that she was concerned that Jake would exhibit increased stress and agitation if he was placed with his mother, but is currently pleased that this has not been the case. Jake seems stable and is adjusting well to living with his mother.

She said that she is confident Jake has the abilities and gifting to be successful and become independent, as long as he has active, intentional direction and support toward that goal.

Placement: Jake is currently placed with his Mother.

Permanency: The current plan is for Jake to continue to be placed with his mother and the case dismissed in September.

ASSESSMENT

1

I think Jake is doing very well in his current situation. His mood and general demeanor is relaxed and comfortable in his home. He has the space he needs to make a mess with tool making and flint knapping and he enjoys freedom to pursue the skills he is passionate about. He is also getting better at cleaning up. Jake loves his mom and I do not doubt that she loves him. I have heard it said by several people that they share a special bond. He states unequivocally that he wants to live with his mother and siblings. He says that he has no interest in going to college or getting a job. His long-term plan is to "go live in the woods." I have spent many, many hours in the service of this goal with him; making tools, shelter and hunting implements and gathering animal carcasses from the roadside. I think he will be more inclined to consider other opportunities for independent living only after he has spent time living in the forest. Over the past 26 months his grandmother, therapist, social worker, schoolteachers and caregivers have all tried repeatedly to dissuade him from this goal. I have talked extensively with Jake about what his plan would entail and he has not wavered in the slightest in his desire to see it through. I have come to respect him for his tenacity, if not his wisdom regarding long-term outlook. I think it is possible for Jake to develop a more mature view of what his life could become, but I think this will take a long time and will be less difficult to accomplish with the emotional support of his mother.

I have been to his home each week for the past 4 months and it is my opinion that it is a safe place for him and his mother is taking good care of him. She has communicated with me each week about visitation and scheduling, and she is proactive in this regard.

I think Jake benefits greatly from the regular therapy he is receiving and I am certain that continued therapy is in his long-term best interest. Whenever I ask him if he wants to keep seeing his therapist his answer is always yes.

RECOMMENDATIONS Therefore, I respectfully recommend: 1. Jake continue to be placed with his mother. Family Maintenance services be provided for 6 months. Jake continues therapy. Jake continues attending Santa Cruz High. 5. Jake attends Soquel High if unable to attend Santa Cruz High. By Larry Samuelson Date 5-16-2017 Larry Samuelson Court Appointed Special Advocate **APPROVED:** Sarah Robey Sarah Robey CASA Advocate Supervisor