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7 **COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES**
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14 **SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ COUNTY**
15 **JUVENILE COURT**

16 **In the Matter of:** Jessica Davis
17 **Age:** 16

18 **NO. DPXXXXXX**
19 **CASA REPORT AND**
20 **RECOMMENDATION**
21

22
23 **A Minor** COURT DATE: June 15, 2017
24 COURT TIME: 8:30am

25 **REPORTING ADVOCATE:** Annette Funicello

26 **TOTAL HOURS ON THE CASE:** 136

27 **PERSONS CONTACTED:**

28 Jackie Davis, Mother

29 Maternal Grandparents

30 Melissa McKnight, Social Worker and Gina Davis Social Worker Supervisor

31 Teachers

32 Foster Ed Liaison

33 School Counselors

34 Extended paternal family – aunts, uncles, cousins

35 CASA Supervisor

1 William Louis and Betty White, Co-Advocates for siblings

2 **INTRODUCTION**

3 Jessica and her two siblings Janet and Jake Jr. became Dependents of the Court for the
4 second time on 07/09/2015. I was appointed Jessica's CASA on 03/08/2016. At the 18 month
5 review on 12/22/2016, the parents was given 6 more months of reunification services. We have
6 spent our approximately fifty visits spending time together over food and shopping, doing some
7 fun outings like hiking, getting nails done, and working on her various educational needs.

8 After the case originally opened, all children were assigned to live with their mother, Jackie.
9 From at least late January/early February 2016 to the present, Jessica has lived with her siblings
10 and extended family in the paternal grandparents' house. This living situation continues to be a
11 good fit. Jackie has consistently and vigorously looked for steady housing, but it has been
12 difficult to come by. Currently, Jackie lives at her boyfriend's home, and Jessica's father Jake
13 Sr., who was incarcerated when the case opened, lives at his girlfriend's house with her children.

14 Right before the 18 month review on 12/22/2016 Jessica's father, Jake Sr. was released from
15 prison. He attended the 12/22/2016 court date with his girlfriend. Since then, according to the
16 social worker, he has been holding down a steady job, actively engaging with his case plan, and
17 visiting his children. During the past six months his social worker and probation officer made
18 decisions to increase his visitations with his children, which have been going well. Jessica's
19 mother Jackie continues to be very engaged in Jessica's life, providing for all of her health and
20 safety needs, working jobs, and actively trying to find housing for herself and her children.

21 Jessica is a quiet, kind and thoughtful young lady. She enjoys spending time with her family,
22 going to the movies, shopping, cooking and spending time on her iPhone. Her freshman and
23 sophomore year of high school she struggled with attendance, only attending about half the time.
24 Her junior year began that way too, but with incentives and a new attitude, she has greatly
25 improved her attendance and credit recovery efforts. At this time, if she keeps actively working
26 on her credit recovery, she is absolutely eligible to graduate on time in June 2018.

27 **CURRENT STATUS**

28 **School**

29 Jessica has an IEP, and has only smaller "Special Day" classes. She has three teachers and an
30 active Foster Ed Liaison that help support her needs.

1 Jessica missed a little more than half the school year her freshman and sophomore years.
2 Until mid-October she was missing about half of her junior year, too. Jessica has stated a few
3 reasons for missing school including having stomach pains and cramps, getting frustrated when
4 she doesn't understand things, and feeling like she doesn't need to be there. It has been unclear to
5 what extent her school was communicating absences to her caregivers, but starting in mid-
6 October 2016 her grandmother Josefina gave her an attendance incentive. Their agreement is that
7 each day Jessica attends school, she gets to have her iPhone. If she misses a day, her iPhone will
8 be taken away indefinitely. Combined with this incentive, with being more present at school
9 Jessica began connecting with her teachers and peers more, making school a place where she
10 wanted to spend more time.

11 She is currently working incredibly hard to make up her 30 missed credits so that she can
12 graduate on time (this will change before the court date as some of her credit recovery efforts will
13 be reflected at the end of this school term). Since April 2016 Jessica has been participating in a
14 newly developed after school recovery program, where she is doing well. She will complete her
15 20 units of Physical Education over this summer school. As needed during her senior year, she
16 can continue to do after school recovery classes.

17 Jessica has been approved to enroll in general education courses for certain subjects next
18 year. She has not been in a general education setting since her Freshman year, and is nervous but
19 feels ready. She can switch back to Special Day if she needs to, and will take Government and
20 Economics in a smaller class regardless. Since March, Jessica's teachers have reported that she
21 has been doing an "amazing job" and is "doing the best that she can do to be able to graduate by
22 June 2018."

23 **Extra-Curricular Activities**

24 Jessica is not involved in any school related extracurricular activities. At the end of April she
25 attended Prom, which was the first school-related function that she has ever participated in.
26 Through fundraising efforts, she was able to pay for her way to go and she had a really fantastic
27 time.

28 She wants to get a part time job to earn fun spending cash. We have made her resume, and
29 she has applied to work at Target, Kmart, and the City of Metropolis. Although nothing has
30 worked out to date, she has gained a lot of good experience with the job application process. Her

1 family wants her to prioritize school over working, but she desires to work and might apply to
2 Little Caesar's Pizza or Wing Stop.

3 Jessica needs to complete 40 hours of community service to graduate from high school, and
4 has agreed to complete these hours at her paternal grandmother's place of work (which is a pre-
5 school center) over the course of a few weeks during summer.

6 **Relationships & Visitations**

7 Jessica enjoys living with her paternal grandparents, and would like to continue living there
8 until she graduates high school. Her mother regularly picks Jessica up from school, and spends
9 time with her during weeknight evenings and sometimes on weekends. Jessica's dad has been
10 more organized about scheduling visits, and they do activities mainly on the weekend, along with
11 his girlfriend and sometimes her kids.

12 **Therapy & Medical Needs**

13 We have discussed her time and experience with a mental health counselor, and though she
14 had a positive experience with her prior counselor, she expressed that she feels she currently does
15 not need one. If situations arise where Jessica feels angry or violent, they tend to be at school
16 where she has the counseling support needed to help her cope with her emotions. Jessica very
17 much likes her school counselors and teachers, and think they understand her needs well.

18 Jessica has previously had health problems including having her appendix removed, ear
19 surgery, tinnitus, depression and anxiety. Historically she has suffered very bad stomach pains
20 and cramps from ovarian cysts, but with the appropriate medications that she is now taking this
21 has recently improved.

22 **Placement**

23 Jessica currently lives at her paternal grandparents' house in Metropolis, and this placement
24 is strong and a good fit. If Jessica's mother does secure her own housing, or encourages the three
25 kids to move in with her and her boyfriend's current house, Jessica may want to continue living
26 with her paternal grandparents and continue just visiting with her mom and dad. Paternal
27 grandparents appear to be fine with this decision.

28 This has been a point of contention between Jessica and her mother, according to Jessica.
29 Jessica believes that a reason why she has been able to improve in school is her living situation
30 with the paternal grandparents. She strongly desires to keep doing well in school, and thus wants
31 to keep living in their home.

1 **ASSESSMENT**

2 Living with her paternal grandparents, siblings, and other extended family is working very
3 well for Jessica. From my observations, she appears to live in a stable and caring environment.
4 She shares with me that she enjoys regularly seeing her mom, and visiting with her dad.

5 Jessica has made significant gains to make up her missing credits, attend school regularly,
6 and participate in school activities, like prom. If she continues working hard and keeps up her
7 positive attitude, I think that she will be able to graduate on time in June 2018. She attributes a
8 part of her school success with living with her paternal grandparents, and overall I think this
9 living situation fits her needs very well.

10
11 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

12 Therefore, I respectfully recommend:

- 13 1. Jessica and her two siblings, Jake Jr. and Janet live with the paternal grandparents, and be
14 under the care of Jackie, Jake Sr., and the paternal grandparents.
15 2. That the case be dismissed and joint custody awarded.

16
17 By ____ Date 5/23/2017

18
19 Court Appointed Special Advocate

20 **APPROVED:**

21 *Alma Rocha*

22 Alma Rocha

23 CASA Advocate Supervisor