

Orange County Hiking Club
Attn: Suki Reed
2222 Michelson Dr.
Suite 2470
Irvine, CA 92612

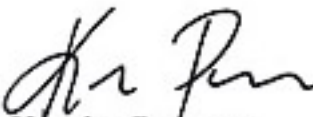
Dear Suki,

On behalf of CASA and the over 800 kids we serve I would like to thank you and the OC Hiking Club for your dedication to the youth of Orange County. Our partnership with you has not only provided a free, educational and inspirational activity for our kids and volunteers to participate in each month; you have also created community awareness through the Kids in Need Hikes, the OC Hiking Club website and newsletter as well as the articles you have written for the OC Register regarding children in foster care in Orange County.

We are especially appreciative of the article calling males to sign up as CASA volunteers. As you know 48% of the children in the foster care system are young boys and only 18% of our advocates are males. We received several calls from men who said they heard about CASA through your article in the outdoor section and one of the male hikers from your club is already going through CASA training. We expect to receive more calls from men and women who have been exposed to our organization through you in some way.

The CASA youth who have attended the Crystal Cove hikes have had an incredible time discovering the joys of nature. One child had never seen the ocean before and another child learned to skip rocks for the first time while on the hike. It is because of the OC Hiking club that these children were able to make these lasting memories. The kids have also made special bonds with the hikers who have attended and taught them about hiking, marine biology and nature. Our staff has enjoyed getting to know the hikers and talking to them about CASA. Overall this has been a very beneficial connection for our organization and the kids we serve.

Thank you for all that you have done to advocate for youth in the foster care system in Orange County. We truly appreciate your commitment to them.



Kendra Puryear
CASA of Orange County