



Forging Their Future Training Outline

Purpose/ Goal

- To promote involvement in the Guardian ad Litem Program (GAL) by members of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers (FAWL) by providing an episodic mentoring program.
- To assist older youth in the dependency system with transition by providing a positive role model and mentor.
- To provide training to members of FAWL who join the project and agree to mentor an older foster youth (ages 13-18).
- To provide focused training on mentoring, including the unique circumstances and issues of teenagers in the dependency system.
- To provide CLEs for FAWL members to encourage participation.

Background

The FAWL in Love with GAL project fulfills two needs by providing a limited scope opportunity for attorneys to become involved while providing mentors to at-risk youth. It has been proven at-risk youth who have a mentor have better long term economic, academic and social outcomes.

The project matches members of FAWL with an older youth in care. The pro bono attorney then works with the youth, providing episodic mentoring moments. The pro bono will also work with the GAL Program staff to ensure youth's needs are met. The GAL Program will provide mentoring training for attorneys interested in the project. The GAL Program will work with partners and sponsors to hold the trainings throughout the state in April 2019.

Training Outline

The training will be divided into five sections:

1. 101 on Dependency and GAL Program
 - Brief overview of Chapter 39

- Brief overview of players in the dependency system (i.e. Community Base care, Department, placements, caregivers, parents, child)
 - Brief overview of GAL Program (structure, purpose, effectiveness)
2. Mentoring 101:
 - Why Mentoring Matters: The effectiveness of mentoring (including studies on mentoring and reduction of recidivism, increased educational outcome)
 - The connection to the Florida Bar/ American Bar priorities and responsibilities of being an attorney
 - Responsibilities of mentoring and expectations
 - The 'yes and no's of mentoring
 - Dealing with difficult situations (i.e. what to do when dealing with sensitive topics or when the mentor-mentee relationship is strained)
 - Testimony from youth who have/had mentors
 3. Tough being a Teenager. Tougher being a Teenager in Foster Care.
 - Factors that increase the risks of youth in foster care (trauma-based evidence)
 - Facts about foster youth compared to other youth (decreased participation in secondary education, increase dropout rates, increase rates of substance abuse, etc.)
 - Legislation pertaining to older foster youth (i.e. Keys to Independence, Extended Foster Care, PESST)
 4. Dealing with Diversity: Race and Gender Issues
 - Approaching Diversity
 - LGBTU youth and the unique issues they face
 5. Ethics