PARENT COUNSEL
General Best Practice Tips

- ***Maintain at least monthly contact with your client. Meet prior to each hearing to explain the purpose of the hearing and to prepare your client.***
- ***Provide your client with all pleadings and court documents. Ensure that he/she understands them.***
- ***Explain concurrent planning, and work with your client and the DHHS caseworker to expeditiously explore relative placements.***
- ***Advise your client of their alternatives and of the pros and cons of each.***
- ***Regularly remind the client that the clock is ticking and services must be completed.***
- ***Use discovery if necessary.***
- ***Attend all staffings. If DHHS doesn't schedule a staffing, request one prior to court.***
- ***Collect and review progress reports from the CASA volunteer and service providers prior to court and see if the OCC attorney and attorney ad litem will allow those into evidence without requiring the presence of the person who wrote the report.***
- ***Request CHRIS notes from the DHHS caseworker in advance of the hearing.***
- ***Make sure relatives who are requesting or have placement are notified of and attend the hearing.***
- ***Advocate for appropriate services for your client.***
- ***Know that, for parents who are addicted, relapse is part of recovery. Help them access services quickly so that a slip does not turn into a full relapse.***
- ***Seek a productive working relationship with DHHS, the AAL, and the CASA program.***
- ***Subpoena necessary witnesses for each hearing.***
- ***Always carry your calendar to court.***
- ***Review all court orders for thoroughness and accuracy.***