

National CASA/GAL Association 2019 Summer Reading List

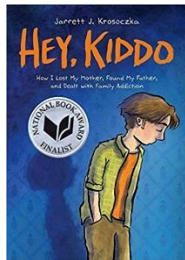
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BOOK LIST

NCASA 2019 CONFERENCE READING

Addictions

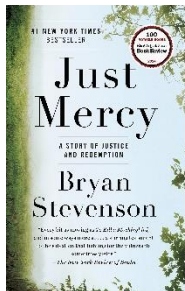


Hey Kiddo by: Jarrett Krosoczka

A profoundly important memoir about growing up in a family grappling with addiction, and finding the art that helps you survive.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/1049152928>

Social Justice



Just Mercy by: Bryan Stevenson

Bryan Stevenson grew up poor in the racially segregated South. His innate sense of justice made him a brilliant young lawyer, and one of his first defendants was Walter McMillian, a black man sentenced to die for the murder of a white woman - a crime he insisted he didn't commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, startling racial inequality, and legal brinksmanship - and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/875246596>

SUGGESTED READING

Abuse

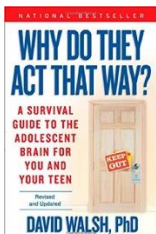


Cinder Girl by: Christina Meredith

Born into a large working-class family in upstate New York, Christina Meredith endured years of abuse before entering the foster care system as a teenager. As she prayed in her car every day, Christina had no idea that in just a few years, she would be crowned Ms. California. She had no idea that her suffering would one day help others find healing. But she did know that she was destined for more, and she would not give up hope no matter the circumstance.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/1083674999>

Adolescent Brain Development

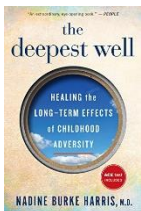


Why Do They Act That Way? By: David Walsh, Ph.D

Even smart kids do stupid things. It's a simple fact of life. No one makes it through the teenage year's unscathed - not the teens, not their parents. But now there's expert help for both generations in this groundbreaking new guide for surviving the drama of adolescence.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/966136957>

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

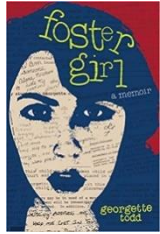


The Deepest Well by: Dr. Nadine Burke Harris

A pioneering physician reveals how childhood stress leads to lifelong health problems and what we can do to break the cycle.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/1033570604>

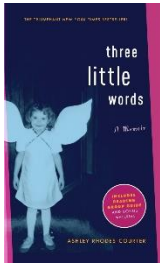
Child Welfare



Foster girl by: Georgette Todd

Foster Girl reveals what it feels like to grow up in foster care. Readers will come away from this book with a better understanding of how the foster care system works and what we can all do to make a difference.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/867794235>

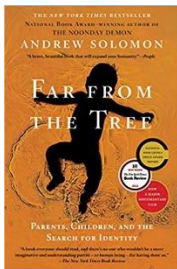


Three Little Words by: Ashley Rhodes-Courter

An inspiring true story of the tumultuous nine years Ashley Rhodes-Courter spent in the foster care system, and how she triumphed over painful memories and real-life horrors to ultimately find her own voice.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/883868926>

Cultural Awareness

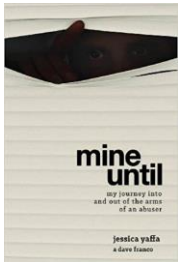


Far from the Tree: Parents, Children and the Search for Identity by: Andrew Solomon

The author writes about families coping with deafness, dwarfism, Down syndrome, autism, schizophrenia, or multiple severe disabilities; with children who are prodigies, who are conceived in rape, who become criminals, who are transgender. While each of these characteristics is potentially isolating, the experience of difference within families is universal, and Solomon documents triumphs of love over prejudice in every chapter.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/957705235>

Domestic Violence



Mine Until by: Jessica Yaffa

The moment Jessica walked into her high school English class and laid eyes on fellow classmate Trent, she felt alive in ways that she had always dreamed of. Swept up in a teen romance by the very charming Trent, Jessica finally had the connection and attention she'd always wanted but never seemed to achieve. When other sides of Trent's personality began to emerge--jealous, demanding, controlling--Jessica was convinced that if she could only please and satisfy him the way he deserved, the relationship would survive.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/960086578>

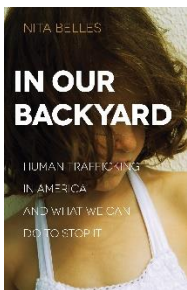
Human Trafficking



Girls Like Us: Fighting For A World Where Girls Are Not For Sale by: Rachel Lloyd

During her teens, Rachel Lloyd ended up a victim of commercial sexual exploitation. With time through incredible resilience, and with the help of a local church community, she finally broke free of her pimp and her past.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/974387395>

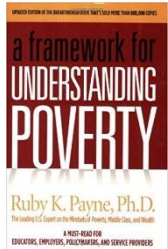


In Our Backyard: Human Trafficking In America and What We Can Do To Stop It by: Nita Belles

In recent years, Americans have woken up to the reality that human trafficking is not just something that happens in other countries. But what most still do not understand is that neither is it something that just happens to "other people" such as runaways or the disenfranchised. The human trafficker is no respecter of faith, education, or socioeconomic status, and even kids who are raised in solid families in middle and upper class suburbs can fall victim. Likewise, labor trafficking happens in our cities, neighborhoods, and rural areas.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/894140114>

Preventing Intergenerational Child Welfare

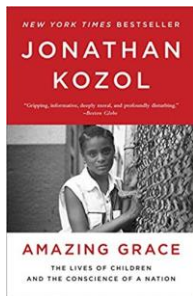


A Framework for Understanding Poverty by: Ruby K. Payne Ph.D

Carefully researched and packed with charts, tables, and questionnaires, Framework not only documents the facts of poverty, it provides practical yet compassionate strategies for addressing its impact on people's lives.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/1086206196>

Sociology of Urban Areas

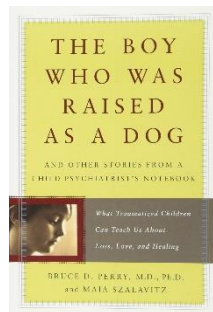


Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation by: Jonathan Kozol

Jonathan Kozol's classic book on life and death in the South Bronx—the poorest urban neighborhood of the United States brings us into overcrowded schools, dysfunctional hospitals, and rat-infested homes where families have been ravaged by depression and anxiety, drug-related violence, and the spread of AIDS. The author also introduces us to devoted and unselfish teachers, dedicated ministers, and—at the heart and center of the book—courageous and delightful children.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/34557322>

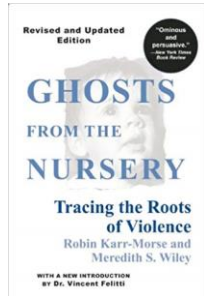
Trauma



The Boy Who Was Raised As A Dog: and Other Stories From A Child Psychiatrist's Notebook by: Dr. Bruce Perry and Maia Szalavitz

The authors explain what happens to the brain when a child is exposed to extreme stress, and how today's innovative treatments are helping ease children's pain, allowing them to become healthy adults.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/1001467186>

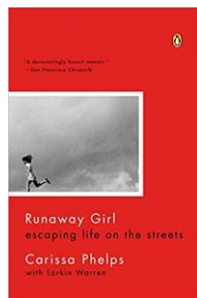


Ghosts From The Nursery: Tracing the Roots of Violence by: Robin Karr-Morse and Meredith S. Wiley

Provides scientific evidence that violence can originate in the womb and become entrenched in a child's brain by preschool.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/1037264146>

Youth Who Run Away from Care



Runaway Girl by: Carissa Phelps

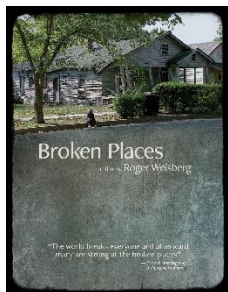
Carissa Phelps was a runner. By the time she was twelve, she had run away from home, dropped out of school, and fled blindly into the arms of a brutal pimp. Even when she escaped him, she could not outrun the crushing inner pain of abuse, neglect, and abandonment. With little to hope for, she expected to end up in prison, or worse. But then her life was transformed through the unexpected kindness of a teacher and a counselor. Through small miracles, Carissa accomplished the unimaginable, graduating from UCLA with both a law degree and an MBA. She left the streets behind, yet found herself back, this time working to help homeless and at-risk youth discover their own paths to a better life.

<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/859201104>

FILM AND TELEVISION LIST

The National CASA Association offers the following list of films and television programs to help improve and inspire your service to children. Almost all items on this list were suggested by volunteers and supporters. *Please note that not all films have been viewed by National CASA staff.*

NCASA CONFERENCE DOCUMENTARY



Broken Places

Explores why some children are severely damaged by early adversity while others are able to thrive. By revisiting some of the abused and neglected children we profiled decades ago, we're able to dramatically illustrate how early trauma shaped their lives as adults. BROKEN PLACES interweaves these longitudinal narratives with commentary from a few nationally renowned experts to help viewers better understand the devastating impact of childhood adversity as well as the inspiring characteristics of resilience.

<https://brokenplacesfilm.com/media-library/>

MOVIES/DOCUMENTARIES

Abuse



Buck

A richly textured and visually stunning film, follows Brannaman from his abusive childhood to his phenomenally successful approach to horses. A real-life “horse-whisperer”, he eschews the violence of his upbringing and teaches people to communicate with their horses through leadership and sensitivity, not punishment.

<http://buckthefilm.com/>

Addiction

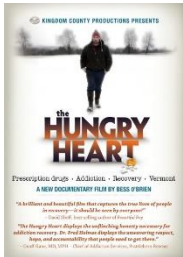
FIRST CIRCLE *First Circle*



A film about foster care, family and healing in the West.

A revealing documentary about Foster Care, family, and healing in the Western United States. This film was filmed over a five year period in Idaho and Oregon and follows families struggling to heal, administrators working for change, and the isolation of a western landscape responsible for both the manufacturing of and liberation from meth addiction.

<https://www.amazon.com/First-Circle-Heather-Rae/dp/B00LTMHL78>



The Hungry Heart

Explores the struggles and challenges faced by Dr. Holmes and the simple and profound connection he forges with each of his patients. The Hungry Heart shines a light on the healing power of conversation and the need for connection that many of these young addicts yearn for in their lives. Interviews with older addicts discussing their recovery process are juxtaposed against Fred's younger patients. The road to recovery is paved with success stories and strewn with relapses, and downfalls. The Hungry Heart profiles the many faces and diverse populations of those struggling with addiction, and their continued search for a life of recovery.

<http://thehungryheartmovie.org/about-the-film/>



Prescription for Hope: Overcoming Nevada's Opioid Epidemic

The 29-minute documentary received a regional Emmy nomination for best documentary. It follows the lives of several Nevadans who have experienced the loss of a loved one due to opioids and the constant battle and power of hope to overcome an opioid addiction.

<https://vimeo.com/286378323>



Trust: Second Acts in Young Lives

TRUST is about creativity and the unexpected resources inside people you might discount because they are poor, young or of color. APTP is a neighborhood theater project dedicated to helping young people reimagine their experiences on stage. Marlin's is one of incredible struggle and pain, from enduring rape as young girl, to the difficult journey of immigrating to the U.S., to further abuse at the hands of her own brother, and finally to emancipation and overcoming substance addiction.

<http://trustdocumentary.org/>

Adoption



Adopted: For the life of me

Follows Dave, a fifty-two year old adoptee as he embarks on a journey to find his birthmother. His saga, with its unexpected and moving epiphany, illuminates the impact secrets can have over an entire lifetime.

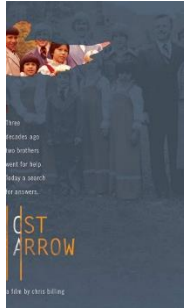
<http://www.adoptedforthelifeofme.com/>



Closure

A documentary about a transracial adoptee who finds her birth mother, and meets the rest of a family who didn't know she existed, including her birth father. A story about identity, the complexities of trans-racial adoption, and most importantly, closure.

<http://closedocumentary.com/>



Lost Sparrow

On June 27, 1978, a 44-car Conrail freight train struck and killed two Crow Indian brothers near Little Falls, New York. The day before, the boys had disappeared. It was later revealed that the two boys — Bobby, 13, and Tyler, 11 — had run away from the white, Baptist family that had adopted them and their biological sisters seven years earlier, spiriting them from a troubled Montana reservation family to an idyllic Victorian castle across the country. *Lost Sparrow* is filmmaker Chris Billing's investigation into the dark family secret that prompted his own adopted brothers' fatal flight.

<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/videos/lost-sparrow-video-extra/>

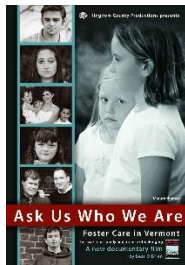


Unlocking the Heart of Adoption

This film bridges the gap between birth and adoptive families through diverse personal stories of adoptees, birthparents and adoptive parents in same race and transracial adoptions interwoven with the filmmaker's story as a birthmother revealing the enormous complexities in their lives with fascinating historical background.

<https://www.kanopy.com/product/unlocking-heart-adoption>

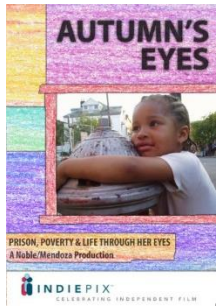
Child Welfare



Ask Who We Are by: Bess O'Brien

A documentary film focused on the challenges and extraordinary lives of youth in foster care. The film is a reflection on loss and the search for belonging and finding family. Although the film highlights the heartbreak that many foster care youth carry with them as they move through their lives, the documentary also reveals the tremendous strength and perseverance that grows out of their determination to survive and thrive.

<https://kingdomcounty.org/shop/ask-us-who-we-are-dvd>



Autumn's Eyes

A compelling documentary about a 3-year-old girl who tries to navigate through the harsh reality of severe poverty, her teenage mother's incarceration and looming foster care. Charming, obedient, and unable to fully comprehend the severity of her environment, Autumn is shielded from her own reality. Caught between the innocence of childhood and the growing necessity to be an adult, she represents hope to a family of women caught in the cyclical web of abuse, incarceration and poverty. Autumn's Eyes captures this impressionable time in this child's life, and ask the greater question: is there truly hope for a child growing up in these circumstances? Through the perspective of a little girl, Autumn's Eyes explores this perilous state of hope.

<http://www.indiepixfilms.com/film/3123#.XNm8pKiUk>

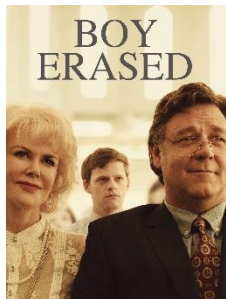


Know How

A film written and acted by foster care youth ripped from the stories of their lives. Five youth's worlds interweave as they confront loss, heartbreak, and come of age in this tale about transience and perseverance. Addie struggles to graduate from high school while her best friend Marie loses her grandmother. Megan copes with being taken from her abusive family and faces the harsh reality of living in a residential treatment center. All the while Eva works to be mother to her sister while their father falls deeper into a crack addiction. Finally, there's Austin who's living on the street with his brother; barely able to feed himself. All of them must decide to survive or else fall victim to a broken system.

<http://www.knowhowmovie.com/>

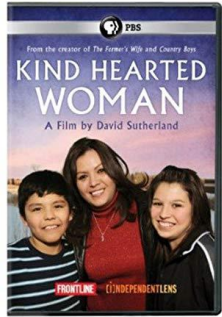
Cultural Awareness



Boy Erased

Jared Eamons, the son of a small-town Baptist pastor, must overcome the fallout after being outed as gay to his parents. His father and mother struggle to reconcile their love for their son with their beliefs. Fearing a loss of family, friends and community, Jared is pressured into attending a conversion therapy program. While there, Jared comes into conflict with its leader and begins his journey to finding his own voice and accepting his true self.

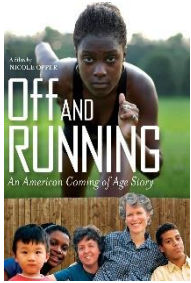
<http://www.focusfeatures.com/boy-erased>



Kind Hearted Woman

In a special two-part series, acclaimed filmmaker David Sutherland (*The Farmer's Wife*, *Country Boys*) creates an unforgettable portrait of Robin Charboneau, a 32-year-old divorced single mother and Oglala Sioux woman living on North Dakota's Spirit Lake Reservation. Sutherland follows Robin over three years as she struggles to raise her two children, further her education, and heal herself from the wounds of sexual abuse she suffered as a child.

<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/kind-hearted-woman/>



Off and Running

With white Jewish lesbians for parents and two adopted brothers — one mixed-race and one Korean—Brooklyn teen Avery grew up in a unique and loving household. But when her curiosity about her African-American roots grows, she decides to contact her birth mother. This choice propels Avery into her own complicated exploration of race, identity, and family that threatens to distance her from the parents she's always known. She begins staying away from home, starts skipping school, and risks losing her shot at the college track career she had always dreamed of. But when Avery decides to pick up the pieces of her life and make sense of her identity, the results are inspiring.

<http://www.offandrunningthefilm.com/>

Domestic Violence

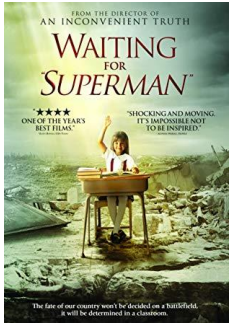


Dear Zachary: A Letter to a Son about his Father

On November 5, 2001, Dr. Andrew Bagby was murdered in a parking lot in western Pennsylvania; the prime suspect, his ex-girlfriend Dr. Shirley Turner, promptly fled the United States for St. John's, Canada, where she announced that she was pregnant with Andrew's child. She named the little boy Zachary. Filmmaker Kurt Kuenne, Andrew's oldest friend, began making a film for little Zachary as a way for him to get to know the father he'd never meet. But when Shirley Turner was released on bail in Canada and was given custody of Zachary while awaiting extradition to the U.S., the film's focus shifted to Zachary's grandparents, David & Kathleen Bagby, and their desperate efforts to win custody of the boy from the woman they knew had murdered their son.

<http://www.dearzachary.com/>

Education

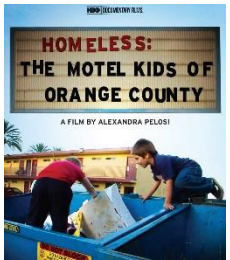


Waiting for "Superman"

For a nation that proudly declared it would leave no child behind, America continues to do so at alarming rates. Despite increased spending and politicians' promises, our buckling public education system, once the best in the world, routinely forsakes the education of millions of children.

<http://www.takepart.com/waiting-for-superman/index.html>

Homelessness

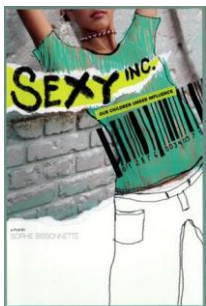


Homeless: The Motel Kids of Orange County

Explores the world of children who reside in discounted motels within walking distance of Disneyland, living in limbo as their families struggle to survive in one of the wealthiest regions of America. The parents of motel kids are often hard workers who don't earn enough to own or rent homes. As a result, they continue to live week-to-week in motels, hoping against hope for an opportunity that might allow them to move up in the O.C.

<https://www.hbo.com/documentaries/homeless-the-motel-kids-of-orange-county>

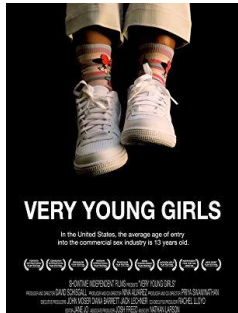
Human Trafficking/Exploitation



Sexy, Inc.

Analyzes the hypersexualization of our environment and its noxious effects on young people. Psychologists, teachers and school nurses criticize the unhealthy culture surrounding our children, where marketing and advertising are targeting younger and younger audiences and bombarding them with sexual and sexist images. Sexy Inc. suggests various ways of countering hypersexualization and the eroticization of childhood and invites us to rally against this worrying phenomenon.

<https://topdocumentaryfilms.com/sexy-inc-our-children-under-influence/>



Very Young Girls

Very Young Girls is an exposé of human trafficking that follows 13- and 14-year-old American girls as they are seduced, abused, and sold on New York's streets by pimps, and treated as adult criminals by police. The film follows the barely-adolescent girls in real time, using vérité and intimate interviews with them as they are first lured on to the streets and the dire events that follow.

<https://vimeo.com/60571430>

Immigration

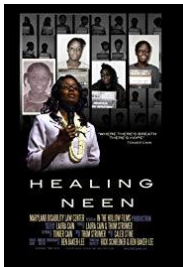


Inocente

At 15, Inocente refuses to let her dream of becoming an artist be caged by her life as an undocumented immigrant forced to live homeless for the last nine years.

<http://inocentedoc.com/>

Trauma



Healing Neen

For 19 nightmarish years, she lived on the streets, racking up 66 criminal convictions, until finally treatment for her trauma offered her a way out and up. Her story points to the consequences of untreated trauma to individuals and society at-large, including mental health problems, addiction, homelessness and incarceration.

<http://healingneen.com/>