

Tracy Workman



- 5 years
- 2 cases
- 4 kids

Nationally,
the average
caseload for
a child
welfare
worker is
24-31 cases.

Who knew that knowing about anime would come in handy as a CASA volunteer?

Tracy Workman was glad her daughter had filled her in on the Japanese comic book art form when she met the children in her most recent case.

The three boys moved here from Columbus with their single mother. She had already lost custody of several other children because of her unaddressed mental health needs. When she moved here, she ended up calling for help when she said her two older boys attacked her in their hotel room.

“She was threatening to harm herself and the children,” Tracy says. Mom kept custody of the now 3-year-old, but the older two were moved to separate foster care homes.

Tracy began working with the whole family on a variety of issues: the older son needed to focus on school and therapy, their mother needed to participate in court-ordered services, and the middle son needed stability as well as therapy.

Older son Adam, who is now 17, has a number of mental health issues, Tracy says. She crosses her fingers every day that he will go to school so he graduates this year. He has made a number of bad choices, Tracy says, and is facing the consequences – but he really wants to move home with his mother.

The boys’ mother has been inconsistent in participating in the services she needs but calls on Tracy regularly. “I just remind her of what she needs to do,” Tracy says. “She’ll get mad at me, but then she gets over it.”

Erin Holden, the CASA Manager who works with Tracy, says that Tracy has good relationships with people like the boys’ mother, who can be difficult to deal with. “At one point the mother wanted Tracy off the case. She just gets angry with anyone trying to help her. Tracy dealt with it so well, knowing that it wasn’t personal and keeping her focus on the children,” Erin says.

The middle brother, Paul, now 16, has always felt ignored by his mother. His foster mother, Tracy says, has “turned out to be the perfect person at the perfect time.”

Between her and Tracy, Paul is getting the structure and encouragement he needs to create a different future for himself, Tracy says. “He really works on his goals. He wants to be OK.”

Paul’s doing well in school and is even involved in activities, like the after school anime club. “His school has embraced him as he figures out who he is,” Tracy says. “I see him growing into this neat guy because he has all of us on his team: me, his therapist, his teacher. We are all fighting for this kid to have every opportunity.”

Tracy appreciates the family’s interconnectedness and their relationships with one another. She also appreciates each of the two older boys’ unique needs and advocates for them as individuals.

“Tracy has a way of calming everyone down,” Erin says. “She finds ways to encourage people along the way.”

“My own daughter has special needs and I had learned how to advocate for her. I was surprised when I found out not all parents know how to do that effectively,” Tracy says. “It’s a gift I can share as a CASA volunteer.”

ProKids
volunteers
generally
have **one**
case,
serving just
a single
family,
usually
with 1 or 2
children.