



During her career in San Diego, Debbie had the opportunity to work across the table with many CASAs. When she relocated to Utah, one of the first things she did was to apply to become a CASA in Second District. She was excited to work specifically with children and to be a consistent person in their lives. She is a big believer in the notion that one positive adult can make a difference in the life of a child at risk. She accepted her first case and worked for over a year with a 16 year old that had been in foster care for eight years. The child lived in two different homes during Debbie's time on the case, which meant two different schools. Debbie knew after reading the 8" file, that this was a case where she was needed and that she could

make a difference—so she jumped right in. One of things Debbie found out that Christie wasn't getting the therapy that was recommended. She also didn't have any independent living skills and wasn't involved in anything outside of attending school. She spent most of her time in her bedroom by herself. Christie also kept a suitcase packed with all her belongings, as she knew from past moves that her belongings would be left behind if she was moved and not prepared. Debbie consistently advocated for the recommended Trauma Focused Therapy for Christie, independent living skills, reading glasses, and other opportunities for the child. At times, Debbie felt frustrated with the system. But she realized that she was the only caring, consistent adult in Christie's life. Together, they learned how to use public transportation so Christie could get around on her own and go to the library. Debbie got her involved at the local animal shelter, and even took her to her High School football game so she could experience something most kids her age do. At age 17, Christie's dream of being adopted came true with the help of a Wendy's Wonderful Worker. The family was out of state, so Debbie stayed in contact by phone during the next six months to make sure things were going well for Christie. When Debbie attended the adoption, she was so grateful to find that the child was happier and looked better than she had ever seen her. They continue to stay in touch through text and snail mail. In fact, Debbie says they just exchanged Halloween cards. [Stock photo ID:20883090](#)



Laurie thought she wanted a younger child, but there was one teenager that really needed a CASA. When the coordinator in 5th District proposed a teenager instead of a child, she was open to the idea. Soon Laurie found that this was the best assignment for her after all. Ellie came into the system through dependency and under some unfortunate circumstances. She was having a hard time transitioning. From the very first visit, they hit it off. Laurie visited her every week and kept the Guardian ad Litem updated after every visit. She was the one that lent a listening ear and shared advice to help the Ellie in all aspects of her life. When Laurie first started, Ellie didn't want finish high school and was so far behind didn't think she would finish even if she tried. Laurie pushed her to be the best that she can be, encouraging her that she can do more. Laurie was very involved with the school and helping Ellie get the credits completed that she

needed. At one point during the case, Laurie broke her foot and was not able to visit. That didn't stop her from participating on the case. She stayed in touch over the phone. Sometimes Ellie would call her, just to talk because she missed their visits. Ellie has finished high school, and Laurie attended the graduation.

Since then, Ellie applied and was accepted to a college. She was also adopted by a family instead of aging out and is now married and has a baby of her own. She still calls Laurie from time to time to give her updates of how she is doing, and from every indicator, she's happy and doing great.. She still needs and talks to Laurie about other aspects of her life and looks to Laurie for guidance. [Stock photo ID:53681270](#)