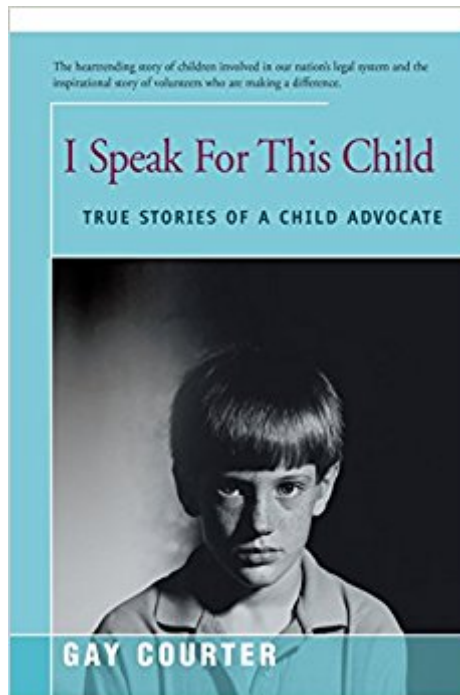


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I Speak For This Child: True Stories Of A Child Advocate



Synopsis

In *I Speak For This Child*, best-selling novelist Gay Courter recounts her experiences as a Guardian ad Litem, a volunteer court-appointed advocate for children involved in Florida's court system. Following her first tentative approach to her local Court Appointed Special Advocates program to her more determined efforts, we get an insider's glimpse on this hidden world and learn what it takes to ensure that America's most vulnerable citizens are treated with care and respect. Courter's story is both heartbreaking and heartwarming, and is an inspiration for anyone who has ever looked up from a newspaper and wondered, "What can I do to help?"

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Customer Reviews

How Gay Courter (*The Midwife*) became a guardian ad litem, a court-appointed advocate for children caught up in the Florida justice system, is detailed with almost Dickensian touches of abuse and familial neglect in the lives of her charges. A serendipitous event led Courter to volunteer for this relatively new position in American justice. Inexperienced in the ways of the courts but fired with idealism and courage, Courter embarked on a mission to right wrongs for victimized children who fell between the cracks of foster care and the law. Here we follow her unflagging efforts to win the trust of her understandably wary clients, tireless travels through the maze of guardianship and, in one case, a hard-won victory in dismissal. No happy endings here: "most of them are in flux," reports Courter, whose heartwarming interventions should inspire others to volunteer in state judicial systems. Author tour. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of

print or unavailable edition of this title.

Since 1989, novelist Courter (*The Midwife's Advice*, LJ 9/1/92) has served as a volunteer Guardian ad Litem, a court-appointed guardian for children involved in custody battles or child abuse cases. She has worked on more than a dozen cases, privy to the children's wishes as she challenged state agencies, caseworkers, foster parents, and courts to seek her charges' "best interests." This book offers to the public her unique, insider's view of child advocacy in America. Through engaging and true stories of several children with abusive parents, Courter suggests that a child's primary need is "a permanent, safe, nurturing environment." She views the legal, bureaucratic, and emotional issues involved through the eyes of the children, vividly recounting their tumultuous placements in foster homes, humiliating court cases, heartbreaking separation from parents, and personal conversations. Her book will interest all who are concerned with the social health of American communities and will be particularly useful to students of law, public administration, and social work. Cedar Carlton, New York Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I found Ms. Couter's book when I was deciding to become a CASA in my California county. I am at the beginning of my journey and the laws governing my scope in California are different from those in Florida outline in her experience, but what I hope to bring with me in my experiences with my own advocate children is the passion and unrelenting support that Ms. Counter exhibits in her accounts. I am grateful for those who have gone before me in this service and so generously proved support and inspiration, even at a distance as is the case with this inspiring book of unconditional love and courage. I am choosing to stand up for the rights of another because I can, because even in our flawed legal system the courts have seen fit to let someone like me with no experience other than my humanity to have a voice for a child, who at this stage in our social evolution, has no real voice in the system that controls their destiny. I have no doubt this will be one of the most challenging things I do in life , but I will have the experiences shared in this book to encourage me and inspire me to think outside the box and do whatever I can to fight for the rights and wishes of the people the court puts in my path.

As I begin my training as a guardian ad Litem, this book prepared me for what I am about to embark on, and the impact I can have. Reading it gave me perspective and the belief that I, even i, can have an impact. The stories brought home something that was, for me, invisible, in the background,

hidden. Now, understanding the plights of even these few children, I know that it will take people standing up for them and loving them one by one, day by day, and I look forward to being a part of that. Gay has inspired me.

This book gave me a greater understanding of how inept and incompetent CPS (Texas) truly is. On all the legal papers CPS files with the courts, 'IN THE INTEREST OF THE CHILDREN' is on the heading. That is not the case. Until my Grandsons' CASA GAL showed up on the scene, they as well as my husband and I were in living hell. One visit from our GAL and life has changed for all of us. This book gave me a deeper understanding of how broken the "system" really is and how important CASA GAL's truly are for the children. This book was an eye opener for me. I just thought our case workers were lazy and incompetent. Seems to be the norm.

as a Guardian-ad-Litem in the state of FL. I truly admired Gay & her 'kids'. She is someone I can look up to, with her 'caring & love'. She also, went the extra mile, when it seemed impossible. The children in Fla, are represented well, by thousands, of guardians. As volunteers, we all agree, we get so much more, than we receive. Judy Campbell GAL

This is a great book. I wanted to learn more information on child abuse and came across this book at my local library. I loved the way that Mrs. Courter describes her experience from an outside perspective with little experience with child protection agency or psychological aspect. It helps us that are not familiar with the topic understand better. I was not aware of the child advocate program prior to reading this book and I think the author does a great job demonstrating what it looks like. After I read a couple of chapters I knew I had to own the book and bought it here on for a very reasonable price.

She wanted to toot her own horn, but as a CASA volunteer myself, I appreciated the education.

As a guardian ad litem I loved reading this book and realizing the importance of this wonderful program for foster children.

I loved this book and find the work that Gay does is very admirable, I have shared this book with friends and my daughter who is a social worker is reading it now, The pain adults inflict on kids that hinders their normal development is shameful. I wish I could bring them all home and show them

what valuable lovable people they are.

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