



Legacy

A FINANCIAL & CHARITABLE PLANNING GUIDE FROM ADOLESCENT COUNSELING SERVICES | SUMMER 2009

SUPPORTING ACS TOMORROW AND BEYOND

By Philippe Rey, Psy.D., Executive Director

As students, teachers, administrators and staff were preparing to enjoy the end of another school year and the start of summer, those happy feelings instantly vanished for the greater Palo Alto community. In early May and June 2009, we lost two Gunn High School students to suicide. We at Adolescent Counseling Services (ACS) extend our sincerest condolences to the families, friends and community members who have been touched by these recent tragedies.

The emotions that come with losses like these are varied: anger, confusion, sorrow and fear. While we will never have an answer for why these two individuals took their lives, it is important that we are cognizant of the thousands of other teenagers in our community who may be struggling with issues like depression, family turmoil, academic stress, peer pressure or substance abuse, to name a few.

ACS provides free counseling to students and families at eight local public schools, outpatient treatment for teens struggling with substance abuse and/or addiction, affordable

evening counseling and psychotherapy to teens and families in the greater Silicon Valley area, and preventive education. We need your help to ensure that our teens are mentally and emotionally healthy. We can't stand to lose another teen to suicide.

Your help will allow ACS to be here for the challenges of tomorrow. We know that a number of our loyal supporters have already included ACS in their estate plans. We are grateful for these future gifts, which will help ensure that ACS will be here for our children's children.



Should you wish to include ACS in your estate plan, we are happy to help you plan a gift that helps us carry out our mission while meeting your financial goals. Contact Aarika Riddle, Development and Marketing Director, at (650) 424-0852, Ext. 103, or aarika@acs-teens.org.

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» Create a Five-Star Estate Plan

4 STEPS TO MAKING YOUR FIRST WILL

Developing a will is the single most critical component when it comes to protecting your assets and securing your family's future. When you create your will, you want one that works for you and one that just plain works from a legal standpoint.

Step 1: Begin With the Basics

Outline your objectives, determine the value of your property, inventory your assets, estimate outstanding debts, and prepare a list of family members and other beneficiaries to whom you may want to pass assets. There are a number of questions you should ask yourself, such as:

- How do I want to divide my assets among family, other loved ones and favorite charities?
- Do I need to make special provisions for any of my heirs?
- How can I pass on my property in the most tax-efficient manner?



Return the enclosed reply card to learn how your will can meet your unique needs and goals in our [FREE](#) guide.

Step 2: Choose Guardians

The most common reason to name a guardian is to care for minor children. But if you have a disabled

adult child, parent or spouse who is your dependent, you must also think about who will care for them when you are gone. Talk to the guardian ahead of time about your wishes. If you don't name a guardian, a judge may end up doing it for you.

Step 3: Choose an Executor

Your executor undertakes many important responsibilities, including:

- Notifying all interested parties and agencies of your death.
- Paying creditors and outstanding taxes.
- Distributing your assets according to your will.

If you don't have a will, or if you draw up a will that doesn't name an executor, a judge will appoint one.

Step 4: Meet With an Estate Planning Attorney

Now that you've made important decisions about your property, an



estate planning attorney can help record your wishes in a legally sound will. An excellent place to start looking for an estate planning attorney is through referrals from family and friends.



When drafting your first will, we hope you'll remember Adolescent Counseling Services by including a charitable bequest that will support our important work after your lifetime. Contact Aarika Riddle at (650) 424-0852, Ext. 103, or aarika@acs-teens.org to learn more.

WHILE YOU'RE MEETING WITH YOUR ATTORNEY...

Congratulations on setting aside the time to create a will that protects your family's future. Ensuring that your wishes are carried out requires more than just a will, however. Consider also creating these health-related documents:

- **A living will.** You need to indicate whether you want your life prolonged using heroic measures if you become terminally ill and unable to communicate your wishes.
- **A health care power of attorney.** Use this form to authorize someone to make more routine medical and health care decisions on your behalf when you are not able to make them yourself.

Q. I WANT TO REMEMBER ADOLESCENT COUNSELING SERVICES IN MY WILL. HOW DO I ACCOMPLISH THIS?

A. The process of making a provision in your will for Adolescent Counseling Services is simple.

You can include a charitable bequest when you create your will, or you may add or update a bequest later with a codicil.

A common mistake—It's important to precisely identify our organization. By avoiding generalities in naming our charity, you alleviate confusion or possible litigation and help ensure

that your donation helps others. Just call us for our official bequest language to share with your attorney. (We are happy to accommodate your wishes regarding anonymity.)

Safeguarding your plans—

Although it is not required, making us aware of your bequest is very helpful. By informing us of your wishes, we can recognize you for your thoughtful generosity and better plan for the future and intention

of your gift. In addition, we have special ways of recognizing people who have named us in their wills.

i Several methods are available for making gifts through your will that support our mission, with varying tax consequences depending on the method you choose. Contact Aarika Riddle at (650) 424-0852, Ext. 103, or aarika@acs-teens.org to learn about your different options.

VISIT US ON THE WEB AT WWW.ACS-TEENS.ORG



Change Your Mind At Any Time

We realize that circumstances change, and your gift to us in your will or trust may no longer be possible at some future date. Your family and friends come first, and that's why a bequest works for so many of our supporters—you can change your mind at any time.



» DOES YOUR WILL COVER YOUR PARTICULAR SITUATION?

Our **FREE** guide, *Your Will: Uniquely You*, shows you how to address your specific needs and goals, whether you:

- Are single.
- Are remarried.
- Have grandchildren.
- Have a child with a disability.
- Intend to make charitable gifts.

Return the enclosed reply card to receive your complimentary copy today!



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CREATE A FIVE-STAR ESTATE PLAN

You might think that once you have made a will, your estate plans are settled and all is in good order. Unfortunately, it's not always that simple.

Additional factors play a key role in adequately protecting you and your heirs. For example:

- 1 Review ownership and beneficiary designations.** Not coordinating your ownership and beneficiary designations with your will can thwart your plans. For example, assets you own jointly with another person with rights to survivorship will pass at your death to that person, regardless of what your will states.
- 2 Keep your financial affairs private.** Unlike a will, a living

trust is not available under public records, and assets in the trust are handled with the same privacy. Your personal business is not exposed.

- 3 Include a trust in your will.** If you have substantial financial assets, consider creating a credit shelter trust in your will. Potential benefits include estate tax-saving opportunities that can help ensure that your heirs won't have to liquidate those assets to pay estate taxes.
- 4 Finally, allow yourself peace of mind.** Seeking professional advice and looking at all your



options can lead to a tax-wise estate plan that meets the needs of your heirs and your favorite charities, such as Adolescent Counseling Services, giving you the comfort of knowing that your assets will benefit those you leave behind.

Thank you for your support! Your gift, large or small, helps us carry out our charitable mission.

ACTION LIST Estate Planning Measures You Can Take Today

- 1** Return the reply card to receive ***Your Will: Uniquely You***, and learn what an updated will can do for you and your family.
- 2** If you would like to remember us in your will, contact Aarika Riddle at (650) 424-0852, Ext. 103, to receive our official bequest language.
- 3** Meet with your attorney to go over your estate plans to make sure your will and other documents are up to date.



Adolescent Counseling Services

4000 Middlefield Road, Suite FH
Palo Alto, CA 94303

(650) 424-0852, Ext. 103 | Fax: (650) 424-9853

Aarika Riddle | Development and Marketing Director
aarika@acs-teens.org | www.acs-teens.org