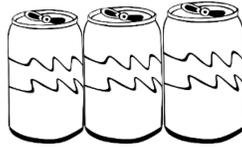


CANS Guidance and FAQs

Why CANS?



Reason #1: It is a state law!

“The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths assessment (CANS) shall be the uniform assessment instrument for children and youth receiving services funded through CSA state pool funds” (State Executive Council for Children’s Services: Policy 3.6)

Reason #2: It is good system of care practice to have a plan that identifies children/family strengths!



“CANS CAN”

Provide Tools for:

- Comprehensive and flexible assessment, that easy to understand (with a trauma focused approach)
- Track individual progress and results
- Data points to support decision making with families
- Communication & rapport building among all stakeholders
- Develop an action-oriented service plan (while focusing on strengths) to prioritize/organize complex needs



Why are There Different CANS Assessments?

- **DSS- Enhanced-** Only for DSS staff (created by VA state DSS)
- **Standard-** For all other government employees (private sector is not authorized for the CANS site)
- **Initial Assessment-** A comprehensive (full assessment) version of the Virginia CANS completed to determine eligibility for CSA-funded services and prior to services starting, with an exception (14 days) for emergency services and placements through DSS (this is the **baseline** assessment for each case).
- **Reassessment-** A Reassessment version of the Virginia CANS completed at regularly defined intervals for FAPT reviews.
- **Discharge-** Completed when Chesterfield/Colonial Heights CSA funded services are terminating, and the case is being closed to all of CSA funded services.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Do I need to do an initial CANS prior to CSA funded services beginning?

A: YES, an *initial comprehensive CANS* must be completed the week prior to the scheduled FAPT meeting.

Q. In an emergency (DSS cases only), does a CANS need to be done when I do not know much about the child and family?

A. Yes, an *initial comprehensive CANS* assessment must be done for all CSA funding, emergency, and non-emergency situations. Doing the CANS with the child/family is a good opportunity to build rapport and get to know them better. State policy allows for up to 14 days to give time to assess emergency cases. Consult with the CSA office on a case by case basis if needed.

Q: Do I need to complete the CANS for every FAPT meeting?

A: Yes, the CANS (*Reassessment*) should be sent to the CSA office the week prior to the FAPT date. If the CANS is not received, the FAPT meeting will be rescheduled and funding would be at risk of ending.

Q: Can I copy the previous CANS if there have been no changes?

A: No, each time you are doing the CANS it should be a fresh perspective about the strengths and needs of the family. Remember that the CANS is being used to drive services and should be completed with the family as much as possible. If there are no notable changes, this is a good time to review the effectiveness of the service plan.

Q: How often do I complete the CANS?

A: Every time a FAPT meeting occurs, a new *CANS Reassessment* needs to be completed. Remember the “**A**” in FAPT is for *Assessment* and “**P**” is for *Planning*) and their role is to determine the best plan for the child and family. (Exception: TFC has strict 90-day CANS reviews that may not fall on the FAPT review dates. Please confer with the CSA office for case specific questions.)

Q: How often do the various services get reviewed at FAPT?

A: The local practice for services reviews are as follows: **Residential treatment and Group Homes**-30 to 60-day review; **TFC**-up to 90-day review; **Community based services/wrap around**-up to 90-day review; **local foster care w/day care** up to 180-day review; **Foster care mait. & Fostering Futures**- annually; **BID trans.**-annually; **Special Education day placement**- IEP annual reviews.

Q. I need to request an earlier FAPT meeting due to sudden needs with my case and I just came to the FAPT within the month. Do I need to do a new CANS?

A. Yes, if the needs have changed and you are presenting new information to the team to adjust the plan, the new *CANS Reassessment* will provide supporting documentation.

Q: When do I need to do the discharge CANS?

A: A *Discharge CANS* must be completed **within 30 days** of when *ALL CSA funded services* end and likely not to ever receive services in the future (foster care cases continue CSA funding until *permanency* is met). *Discharge CANS is needed* when a family is *moving* to another locality and being transferred. *Discharge is not needed* when youth go into Detention or AWOL and are temporarily unavailable for services. **NO DISCHARGED CANS NEEDED, if one service ends but the family still receives some other service.** For example, if a child is closed to services referred through the CSB but remain in a SPED Day placement- No Discharge CANS needed.

Q. My CANS Certification expired, can I just get my co-worker to log me in?

A. No, this is unethical practice and can lead to you being permanently banned from the CANS website and the state withholding funding for services. Users are given ample notice of when the certification will expire. Please plan accordingly.