

# The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessment

## CANS Cheat Sheet for Caregivers

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### **Needs Scoring**

0= means there is no “need” or problem in a particular area.

1= means that an area might require a little attention or an issue that we want to keep our eye on.

Items can also be rated a “1” if we want to do some prevention to make sure problems don’t resurface.

2= means that there is a problem that should be worked on. For scoring it is less important to figure out what we need to do, or who is going to do it (that will come in the plan); we simply are trying to agree that there is a problem that needs attention.

3= means that there is a problem that needs to be addressed immediately! Items rated as 3’s indicate areas where there is significant concern and require immediate attention.

### **Strengths Scoring**

0= means this is the best thing the youth has going for them, it is the best rating a youth can get in the area of strengths.

1= means a strength that can be useful when service/case planning with a youth.

2= means this is not a useful strength, but has potential. For these items the team needs to decide if they can build these strengths.

3= means there is no strength identified in a particular area.

### **Prep for Assessment Meeting**

- Make sure you have enough time set aside to talk about the current issues and past events. ***If you need more time suggest a follow up meeting.***
- Don’t try to solve problems during the assessment meeting. Simply try to get on the same page with the team about the needs and strengths.
- Review the previous CANS assessment before the meeting (*if there was one*). Think about what has changed since then.
- Make sure important team members are invited, if they can’t attend get their input before the meeting.

### **During the Assessment Meeting**

- Remember the importance of being open and transparent with your child’s team about what is going on with your child and family.
- Remain mindful of the ‘*big picture*’ of your child and family’s needs, while staying focused on, and prioritizing your child’s most important needs.
- At the end of the assessment, schedule a time to develop the service plan with your worker/team.

### **Follow Up after Assessment Meeting**

- Make sure you obtain a copy of the assessment, check it for accuracy.
- Track progress of the youth (building strengths and working on areas of need).
- Use the assessment to guide the development of the plan. Make sure areas of need are addressed in the plan.
- Each identified need will not necessarily need to be addressed separately. Work with the team to come up with ideas about how the different types of needs your child has might be related to one another. This will allow the team to develop targeted goals and work to achieve improvements in multiple areas of your child’s life.

# CANS Rating Windowpane- Scoring Guide

<p>0= No Evidence of a Need</p> 	<p>1= Monitor, Keep an Eye on It</p> 	<p>2= Take Action! There is Information that this is an area of Need for the Youth/Family</p> 
<p>3= ACT IMMEDIATELY!!!!</p> 	 <p>NEEDS</p> <p><b>CANS Ratings</b></p> <p>STRENGTHS</p>	<p>0= CENTERPIECE! This is the Best Strength for the Youth/Family! I can build an entire plan around this!</p> 
<p>1= Identified Strength. These are good strengths. Not the best, but good for the youth/family. Let's add these into our plan!</p> 	<p>2= Not Useful Right Now. We need to build on these in order for them to be Strengths.</p> 	<p>3= Not a Strength. I have no information about this area or I cannot find anything positive. It could be a weakness for the youth/family.</p>  <p><small>© Poul Carlsen * www.ClipartOf.com/71083</small></p>

For more information about the CANS Assessment contact:  
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