

Department of Child Services (DCS) Policy Regarding the Use of CANS in Residential Settings

The DCS contract with Residential Providers requires that at admission of a child in a facility, the Residential Provider shall administer the age appropriate Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment (CANS) Comprehensive tool unless an assessment has been completed on the child within 30 days of admission and the Residential Provider obtains the necessary consents and obtains the assessment. CANS reassessments are required every 90 days by the Residential Provider and at discharge. The Residential Provider is required to enter the data from the CANS assessment into DARMHA. The Residential Provider is required to be fully operational in using the CANS tool within six (6) months of having SuperUsers trained and certified. CANS users must be re-certified annually.

If the Residential Provider is an Emergency Shelter Care facility, then the short version of the CANS must be completed within 7 calendar days of admission. If the short version the CANS indicates any issues, then the full CANS must be completed by either the facility or by an outside mental health professional qualified to complete the CANS. The short CANS tools include behavioral health needs, functioning and risks for the child and the caretakers' needs and strengths. The ratings of individual needs and intensity of service recommendations can be used to support a family's and referral agency's decisions about the next steps and possible interventions.