

USING THE CANS-NY FOR QI ASSESSMENT

QUICK INFORMATION GUIDE

WHAT IS THE CANS?¹

- The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) is a multipurpose tool developed for children's services to support decision-making, including level of care and service planning.
- Versions of the CANS are currently used in 50 states in child welfare, mental health, juvenile justice, and early intervention applications.
- Decision-support applications include the development of specific algorithms for levels of care including therapeutic foster care, residential treatment, intensive community services, and traditional outpatient care.
 - 17 states are currently using the CANS (or a related tool) for decision-support models, and 10 additional states are in the process of developing decision-support models using these tools.
- The CANS has demonstrated reliability and validity. On a scale of 0.0 to 1.0, the average reliability of the CANS is 0.75 with vignettes, 0.84 with case records, and can be above 0.90 with live cases. Validity is demonstrated with the CANS relationship to level-of-care decisions and other similar measures of symptoms, risk behaviors, and functioning.

CANS-NY AND THE FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES ACT (FFPSA)

- New York State (NYS) has developed a version of the CANS called the CANS-NY. Versions are available for children aged 0-5 and aged 6-21.
- For youth who are placed in a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP), FFPSA requires an assessment by a Qualified Individual (QI) for appropriateness of placement in a QRTP.
- The QI must use an age-appropriate, validated assessment tool approved by OCFS.
- In NYS, the CANS-NY was selected as one of the validated tools.
- NYS is providing training and ongoing coaching for QIs using the CANS.

In NYS, the QI must have a professional clinical or social work license as well as two years of experience in child welfare.

¹ Information provided by the Praed Foundation.

CANS-NY ALGORITHM

- The CANS-NY algorithm was developed after careful review of the strengths and needs of youth in placement in NYS and of algorithms developed by other states for the same purpose. It was developed in consultation with various partners, including the Praed Foundation, local departments of social services and voluntary authorized agency representatives, and other state agencies.
- The algorithm is intended to help the QI identify the level of need of the youth to help determine the appropriateness of a QRTP placement.

CANS NY QRTP Placement Algorithm

	High	Medium	Low
Behavioral Health Needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychosis • Attention/Concentration • Impulsivity • Depression • Anxiety • Oppositional • Conduct • Emotional Control • Anger Control • Attachment 	2 ratings of 3 OR 3 ratings of 2 or 3 OR Rating of 3 on Psychosis	1 rating of 3 OR 2 ratings of 2 or 3 OR Rating of 2 on Psychosis	All other children not meeting criteria for the other levels.
AND			
Risk Behaviors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suicide Risk • Self-Injurious behavior • Other self-harm • Danger to others • Fire setting • Sexually reactive behavior • Sexual aggression • Delinquent behavior • Bullying • Eating disturbance 	1 rating of 3 OR 2 ratings of 2 or 3	1 rating of 2 or 3	

- A high level of need is most likely to be associated with the need for a QRTP placement, although the QI can recommend a lower level of care as appropriate. It is expected that youth that score low or medium on the algorithm are most appropriate for a family-based level of care, unless there are other factors that warrant a QRTP placement.
- The QI makes the final recommendation based on the score based on a synthesis of CANS scores as well as other factors explored during the assessment. The decision is documented in the QI report.