

Using the Child & Adolescent Needs & Strengths (CANS) & Adult Needs and Strengths Assessment (ANSA)

What is the CANS/ANSA? This is a tool to gather information about an individual’s needs and strengths.

How is the CANS/ANSA used? A rating scale is used for each question/item which will determine the action level for each item. The CANS/ANSA is asking about the behaviors present, in other words – it is about the “what” not the “why”. Unless otherwise specified, each item should be rated from information/behaviors occurring within the last 30 days.

What are the rating scales?

For Needs Items

0 No Evidence	This rating indicates that there is no reason to believe that a particular need exists. It does not state that the need categorically does not exist, it merely indicates that based on current assessment information there is no need to address this need.
1 Watching Waiting/Prevention	This level of rating indicates that you need to keep an eye on this area or think about putting in place some preventative actions to make sure things do not get worse.
2 Action Needed	This level of rating implies that something must be done to address the identified need. The need is sufficiently problematic that it is interfering in the child or family’s life in a notable way.
3 Immediate/Intensive Action	This level of rating indicates a need that requires immediate or intensive effort to address. Dangerous or disabling levels of needs are rated with this level.

For Strengths Items

0 Centerpiece Strength	This is a strength that can be used as the focus or foundation of a strength-based plan.
1 Useful Strength	This is a strength that exists and can be used in a strength based plan.
2 Identified Strength, Need to Build	This is a strength that you know the focus of building but it currently can’t be used.
3 No Strength Identified	This is similar to “no evidence” for needs. This rating would not mean that no strength exist, only that they are not currently identified.