

Date: September 19, 2018

CYF Memo: # 03 - 18/19

To: CYF Mental Health Treatment Programs

From: Yael Koenig, CYF Deputy Director

Re: **CANS Family Letter**

In an effort to continuously share pertinent behavioral health assessment information with children/youth and families, Behavioral Health Services (BHS) has developed a **CANS Family Letter** which will be offered with the Child and Adolescents Needs and Strengths (CANS) results. The CANS Family letter will support programs with providing a consistent and standardized way of explaining and sharing CANS results with children/ youth and families. The County will have the CANS Family Letter available in all threshold languages and will distribute once complete.

For children and youth involved in Child Welfare Services (CWS), the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) disseminated an All County Letter (ACL) [No. 18-85](#) mandating that the CANS assessments be shared between County placing agencies and Mental Health Plans (MHPs).

The ACL identifies parameters around sharing specific CANS items. When an Authorization to Disclose Protected Health Information (including the 04-24A; 04-29) is in place, our local process allows for the providers to release the full CANS to the placing agency.

Please start utilizing the CANS Family Letter as soon as your program has a process in place and no later than November 1, 2018.

Attachments: CANS Family Letter
CANS Family Letter Explanation

CC: County of San Diego Child Welfare Services
County of San Diego Probation Department
Child and Adolescent Research Center (CASRC)
Health Services Research Center (HSRC)
County of San Diego Performance Improvement Team
County of San Diego Quality Management
Optum Health

CANS FAMILY LETTER

Dear Family,

To help us in the work we do together, I have completed the **Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS)** assessment based on the information shared with me. The attached CANS is considered an assessment tool that helps us to figure out your strengths and to identify the areas that we will work on together. Over time, we will be making updates to the assessment to reflect the changes in your life. The CANS helps us to:

- Identify your strengths so we can leverage them for positive change
- Determine what we need to work on
- Explore if there are any educational needs
- Identify any supports the family may need
- If applicable, support placement decisions
- Develop a comprehensive plan to support safety, permanency, and well-being

If you are a part of a **Child and Family Team (CFT)**, the CANS results are shared with team members which may include the Child Welfare Protective Services Worker or Probation Officer. In the CFT meeting we will talk about the CANS so we can all work together.

Thank you.

(Clinician Name)

(Date)



CANS FAMILY LETTER

Page 2 of 2 for office use only

File in Client Record

Copy of the CANS Family Letter and CANS results were offered to:

- | | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child/Youth on _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Documented in Progress Note _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Caregiver on _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Documented in Progress Note _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Welfare on _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Documented in Progress Note _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Probation on _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Documented in Progress Note _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CFT Discussion on _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Documented in Progress Note _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> NA |

Comments: _____

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County of San Diego
Health and Human Services Agency
Mental Health Services

9/19/18

Client:

Case#:

Program:

County of San Diego Mental Health Plan
**CHILD AND ADOLESCENT NEEDS AND
STRENGTHS (CANS) FAMILY LETTER**



2018

COMPLETED BY:

1. Licensed/Waivered Psychologist
2. Licensed/Registered/Waivered Clinicians
3. Licensed/Registered Professional Clinical Counselor
4. Physician (MD or DO)
5. Nurse Practitioner

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS:

1. CANS certified clinical staff will offer CANS Family Letter with CANS results to caregiver(s) upon each completion of the CANS assessment.
2. CANS certified clinical staff will offer CANS Family Letter with CANS results to the child/youth (as appropriate considering age and developmental capability) upon each completion of the CANS assessment.
3. CANS assessments are completed at admission; UM cycle or every 6 months; discharge.

DOCUMENTATION STANDARDS:

1. Clinician shall document on the CANS Family Letter (page 2 of 2) the date the CANS Family Letter and CANS results were offered to the:
 - a. Child/Youth
 - b. Parent/Caregiver
 - c. Child Welfare
 - d. Probation
 - e. Date of CFT discussion
2. Offering of the CANS Family Letter shall be documented in a progress note.
3. Clinician shall document on the CANS Family Letter (page 2 of 2) the corresponding date for the progress note documenting offering the CANS Family Letter and CANS results to:
 - a. Child/Youth
 - b. Parent/Caregiver
 - c. Child Welfare
 - d. Probation
 - e. Date of CFT discussion

**** Note:** For children and youth involved in Child Welfare Services (CWS), the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) disseminated an All County Letter (ACL) [No. 18-85](#) mandating that the CANS assessments be shared between County placing agencies and Mental Health Plans (MHPs). The ACL identifies parameters around sharing specific CANS items. When an Authorization to Disclose Protected Health Information (including the 04-24A; 04-29) is in place, our local process allows for the providers to release the full CANS to the placing agency.