



Los Angeles County DMH, Continuum of Care Reform Division

Trauma/Resilience Tip of the Week: CANS and the Child/Teen Perspectives

CANS: Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment can be a valuable tool to assist in decision-making including level of care and service planning. Additionally, it can facilitate quality improvement initiatives and monitor service outcomes. This tool is intended to be completed with the child and caregivers in an effort to gain a better understanding of the youth's needs.



Engaging children/teens in CANS process

- ◆ Explain CANS and purpose of CANS to child/teen in a developmentally appropriate way.
 - ◆ Ask if the child/teen would like to go over the questions.
 - ◆ Honor the resistance: do not force the child/teen to engage.
 - * Explore resistance with child/teen
 - ◆ Ask what the child/teen thinks their biggest struggles and strengths are.
 - ◆ Allow time for the child/teen to talk about what is important to them.
 - ◆ Always thank the child/teen for their time.
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