

Fact Sheet #1-Overview

CANVaS 2.0 is coming!

(No, really! J)

The Office of Children's Services (OCS) is pleased to announce that the new software version of the CANS, CANVaS 2.0, will be launched July 5, 2016.* It's been a long process! We hope the improved version of CANVaS will assist in making the CANS assessment easier to use as you incorporate it into assessing strengths and needs of your children and families and creating service plans with them.

This is the first in a series of "Fact Sheets" about CANVaS 2.0 to be issued over the next few weeks regarding the changes to the CANS, available resources and training, and the implementation process.

The CANS assessment has been the mandatory uniform assessment instrument for children, youth and families served by the Children's Services Act (CSA) since July 1, 2009. The Virginia Department of Social Services, in recognition of the need for a standard assessment, is now requiring the CANS be administered for all children placed in foster care, including those whose placements are funded solely by Title IV-E. With this policy change, VDSS requested modifications to the CANS assessment to better capture the needs of children and families in the child welfare system. These revisions will be more fully described in an upcoming Fact Sheet.

Consequently, Virginia will have two versions of the CANS; one for use by local department of social services staff (the "DSS-Enhanced" CANS) and one used by staff of the court services unit, community services board/behavioral health authority and schools, now known as the "Standard CANS." There are versions of the "Birth to Four" and the "Ages 5-21" of both the Standard and DSS-Enhanced CANS.

It's important to know that not only was the CANVaS software updated, but the actual CANS assessment underwent review and revision. With Dr. Lyons' assistance, minor wording changes were made on items, new items were added to the Trauma module, and the ability to rate more than one caregiver were all incorporated into the new Virginia CANS.

The CANVaS website was completely revamped with a new look and easier way to navigate items and domains, changes we think you'll like. For example, items are displayed full-screen and when "trigger" items are rated a "1" or higher, the corresponding module drops open as you rate, instead of having to find and rate the module at the end of the assessment. New reports on child and family progress have been added.

Creation of accounts in CANVaS will be different, also. For example, gone are the paper user agreements! Users will be expected to read, agree to and abide by the online user and confidentiality agreement upon first access to CANVaS 2.0.

Be on the lookout for later Fact Sheets which will more fully describe the purpose of the CANS, the different versions, navigation of the site, the ability to create reports on child and family progress, transition process and training resources. For example, OCS has created and recorded navigational demos for both the Standard and DSS-Enhanced CANS which will be accessible on the state CSA website soon.

**Cross your fingers! J*