

# *Application of the CANS-Trauma in relation to Trauma-Informed Treatment and Services*

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The Center for Child Trauma Assessment and Service Planning  
at Northwestern University

# Objectives of Presentation

Introduce the **Center for Child Trauma Assessment and Services (CCTASP)** and overview project goals and activities

Overview development and use of **CANS Resources** *to assist with client/family engagement and trauma-informed treatment planning*

Introduce a **Survey to Assess Resource Needs** related to the application of CANS in trauma informed practice and interest in future collaborations in this area

# The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)

[www.nctsn.org](http://www.nctsn.org)

- **Mission: To raise the standard of care and increase access to services for traumatized children and their families across the US**
- Established by Congress in 2000
- National collaboration of multiple academic and community-based service centers
- Serves as a national resource for disseminating evidence-based interventions, trauma-informed services, and public and professional education
- Emphasis on transforming trauma-focused services throughout child-serving systems of care across the U.S.
- Currently comprised of 176 member centers - including 79 currently funded Centers and 98 affiliate members

NCTSN

The National Child  
Traumatic Stress Network



The Center for Child Trauma Assessment and Service Planning  
at Northwestern University

# The Center for Child Trauma Assessment and Service Planning (CCTASP)

University-based/Treatment Services and Adaptation Center of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network

Funded by The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) since 2010

Focus on dissemination and translation of comprehensive, trauma-focused assessment strategies (e.g., CANS) for various providers/service settings

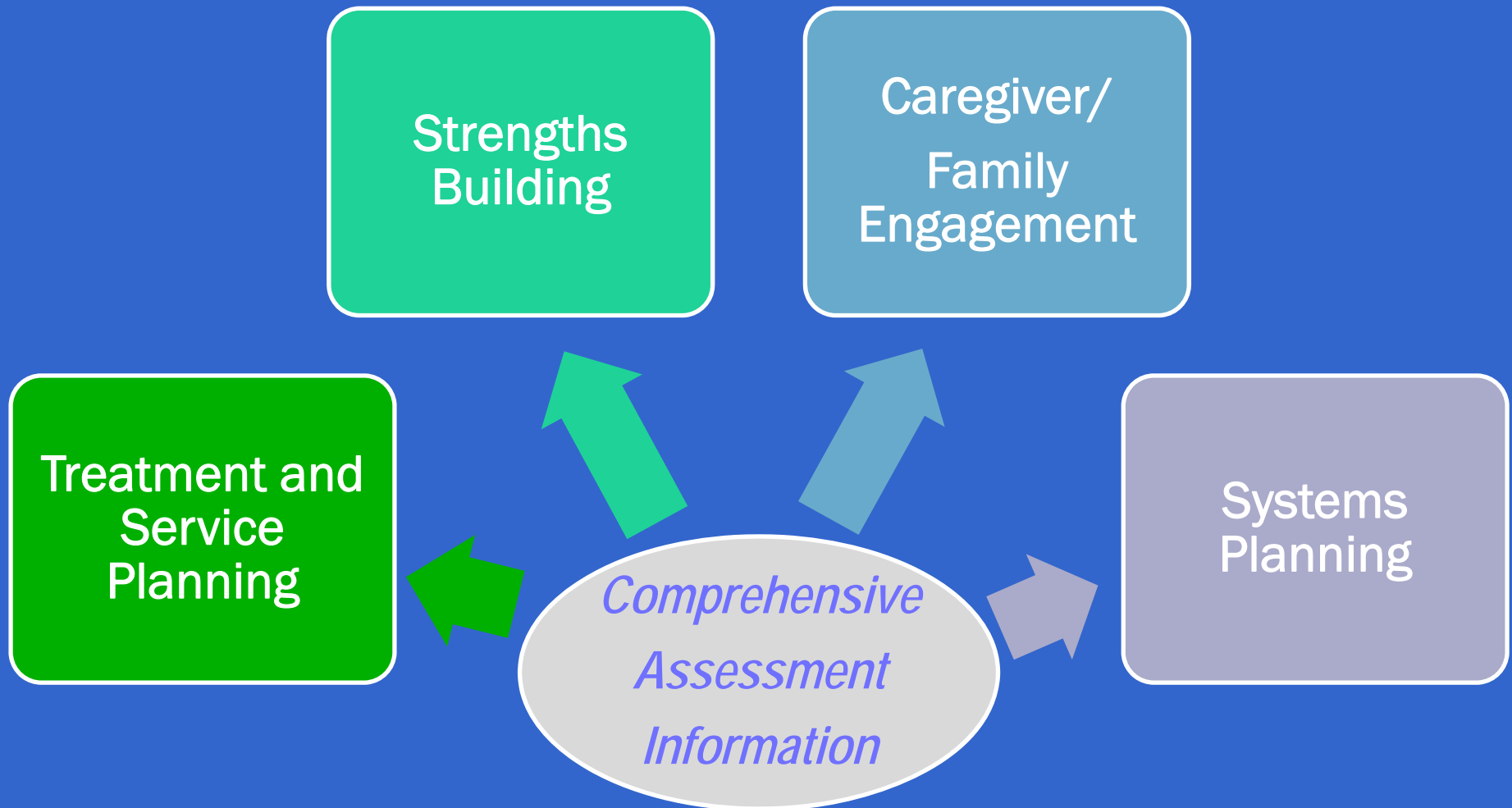
Application of the CANS in relation to Trauma-informed Treatment Planning, Psychoeducation, and in relation to Evidence-Based Practices

Enhancing education on complex, developmental effects of trauma: offering resources and training/consultation to support providers in child welfare, residential, and juvenile justice settings

NCTSN

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# Trauma-Informed “Data Driven” Planning and Engagement



# Resources developed to support the CANS and Trauma-Informed Treatment Planning

1. CANS 'Cheat Sheet' A Guide for using CANS with Clients and Families

2. Concrete Guidelines to Treatment Planning and Clinical Application: One-page Summary

3. Guidelines for Trauma Informed Assessment, Treatment Planning and Treatment with the CANS Trauma Version

4. Using the CANS with Complexly Traumatized Children and Adolescents, Creative Applications for Different Provider Roles

5. VIDEO: Use of the CANS in Trauma-Informed Clinical Practice, Application for Comprehensive Assessment, Psychoeducation, Client Engagement and Collaborative Treatment Planning.

# #1: The CANS 'CHEAT SHEET'

## A Guide for Using the CANS with Clients and their Families

... provides the therapist and/or family members with the following:

1. *A summary of the CANS and simple explanation of scores*
2. *Ideas about using the CANS at beginning of treatment – how to introduce and use for client engagement*
3. *Client-friendly description of why it's important to collect CANS data and strategies for using the CANS*
4. *A one-page summary (at the end) that can torn off and given directly to families*

## #2: Using the CANS in Working with Complexly Traumatized Children and Adolescents:

### Creative Applications for Different Professional Roles

*Offers targeted questions to support use of the CANS in:*

1. Clinical Treatment Planning and Intervention
2. Clinical Supervision
3. Casework Planning
4. Working with Other Professionals /a Multi-disciplinary Team Approach



# #3: Guidelines for Trauma-Informed Assessment, Treatment Planning and Treatment with the Trauma CANS

## *Three Parts:*

1. CANS in Trauma-Focused Assessment
2. CANS Scores in Trauma-Informed Treatment Planning
3. Trauma-Focused Treatment



# Guidelines for Trauma-Informed Assessment, Treatment Planning and Treatment with the Trauma CANS

## Part 1: Use of the CANS in Trauma-focused Assessment

### CANS General Scoring Guidelines

- Domain Specific Scoring and Action Levels
- Scoring Challenges, Making Difficult Decisions

### Scoring Issues: The Trauma Domains

- Exposure to Potentially Traumatic/Adverse Childhood Events
- Symptoms Related to Potentially Traumatic/Adverse Childhood Events
- Pointers for Specific Trauma Symptom Items

### CANS Scoring Issues: Child and Caregiver Strengths

- Using CANS Child Strengths in Trauma-focused Treatment

# Guidelines for Trauma-Informed Assessment, Treatment Planning and Treatment with the Trauma CANS

## Part 2: Use of the CANS Scores in Trauma-informed Treatment Planning

General Recommendations for Trauma-informed Treatment Planning

Use of the CANS Scores in Developing Trauma-informed Treatment Goals

- Incorporating Child Needs and Strengths
- Incorporating Caregiver Needs and Strengths

Potential Challenges with using the CANS in Trauma-informed Treatment Planning

Questions to Guide Development of Trauma-informed Treatment Planning

# Guidelines for Trauma-Informed Assessment, Treatment Planning and Treatment with the Trauma CANS

## Part 3: Trauma-focused Treatment

Phases of Trauma Treatment

Common Core Components of Trauma-focused Treatments

Suggested Treatment Tasks for Each Core Component

How to Identify Appropriate, Trauma-focused Treatments

# Guidelines for Trauma-Informed Assessment, Treatment Planning and Treatment with the Trauma CANS

## Scoring Challenges, Making Difficult Decisions:

Below are some common struggles and recommendations on making difficult scoring decisions...

1. “My client’s presentation does not match the examples listed in the manual.”
2. “I am getting conflicting information from multiple reporters and I do not know the child/family well enough to decide which is most valid.”
3. “The symptom(s) reported by my client seem to fit into more than one item on the CANS.”

# #4: Concrete Guidelines to Treatment Planning and Clinical Application: One Page Summary

## Summary of “CANS POINTERS”:

Give priority to ...

- ✓ ‘Actionable’ items (rated 3 and 2) in all domains
- ✓ All Traumatic Stress Symptom items should be accounted for in a trauma-informed treatment plan
- ✓ Other items linked to “Adjustment to Trauma” problems are also incorporated
- ✓ A child’s strengths: underdeveloped strengths should be targeted and built; well-developed strengths can sometimes be used to address needs.

*CANS Media, Video Clips from:*



## Use of the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) in Trauma-Informed Clinical Practice:

Application for Comprehensive Assessment, Psychoeducation, Client Engagement and Collaborative Treatment Planning.

## Goals of the Video:

- ✓ Illustrate a variety of ways to collaboratively complete CANS
- ✓ Identify strategies for using CANS assessment data in practice, including:
  - Reviewing comprehensive assessment information with clients
  - Use of CANS as basis for collaborative treatment planning with youth and caregivers
  - Use of CANS in tracking client change over time and adjusting treatment plan as necessary.
- ✓ Demonstrate how CANS data (e.g., graphs) can be used for initial and ongoing engagement, psychoeducation, to highlight changes in relation to therapy, and ongoing needs.





## Ongoing / Future Collaborations and Resources: Supporting Application of the CANS and Trauma- Informed Practices

- Additional CANS Assessment Translation Resources for Staff and Caregivers/Family Members
- CANS Mapping with Clinical Interventions for Treatment Planning (ARC and SPARCS)
- Assessment-based curricula for application with specific trauma-focused clinical interventions
- CANS /FANS –Trauma Webinars and Learning Collaborative
- Fact sheets for a) Professionals in child-serving settings and b) Youth/ Caregivers on the developmental effects of trauma and its assessment.
- Training Videos/DVDs and briefer YouTube videos to enhance public awareness on the developmental effects of trauma

*For more information, please contact us at:*

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