



# Child and Family Team (CFT)

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# California Integrated Core Practice Model

- Shared values, principles and behaviors
- To help improve engagement of children and families in case planning and decision-making processes across the life of the case for safety, permanency, and well-being
- Goal of improving accountability and outcomes for children and families
- ICPM provides a unifying framework informed by and consistent with existing and emerging California initiatives.



# Child and Family Teams - Teen



# The Child and Family Team

The **Child and Family Team (CFT)** is the vehicle for collaboration on assessment, case planning, and placement decisions.



## Places youth and families at the center of care

The CFT process is a team-based activity that ensures youth and families are involved in and central to their care.



## Brings together the people important to a youth and their family

In addition to the youth and their family, the CFT includes their extended family, friends, community supports, professionals, and other formal supports that are identified by the family.



## Both a meeting and a process

The CFT meeting is a time & place for team members to consider the youth and family's needs and strengths and decide on strategies to help address those needs. It is a process based on trust, collaboration, and shared decision making among the team members.



## Individualized

Each CFT is unique and builds upon a youth and family's strengths, values, and goals. Each youth and family's CFT process should reflect their own unique culture and individual preferences.

# Who's on the CFT?

Certain members are required to be part of the team, like the assigned social worker and resource parent.

Other members of the team should be people who know and care about the youth & family

CFTs are successful when team membership is centered on the preferences of the youth and family

## **Always:**

- Youth
- Youth's Family
- Current Caregiver
- Skilled and Trained CFT Facilitator
- Child Welfare Social Worker or Deputy Probation Officer

## **As applicable:**

- Behavioral Health Staff
- FFA Social Worker or STRTP Rep
- Tribal Reps
- Regional Center Staff
- CASA Worker
- Educational Rights Holder

## **Who Would You Invite?**

- Friends and Neighbors
- Faith Based Supports
- Coaches
- Other Natural Supports
- School Counselor
- Community Members
- Parent Partner
- Youth Partner

# WHY CHILD & FAMILY TEAMS?

- Families are their own experts and achieve success if given the supports to do so
- Family Voice and Choice
- Improved outcomes for children and families
- Promotes collaboration, communication, and shared decisions
- Services are most effective when delivered in the context of a single, integrated plan
- CFTs speak to the engagement of families and the agencies' reasonable (and active) efforts towards a family's identified goal.

Engaging and  
Developing Team  
Membership

Coordination,  
Communication and  
Collaboration

Case Plan Development  
and Permanency  
Connections

Monitoring and  
Adapting

# CANS: Enhancing and Supporting the CFT

The **Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS)** tool can assist the CFT in collaborative decision-making regarding case planning and placement decisions.



## Summarizes the Assessment Process

The CANS is intended to be the process by which the assessment information is organized, summarized, used and communicated after it has been collected.



## Integrates the Family's Story

The CANS provides a summary of the family's story, but it should be done as an integration of multiple story tellers.



## Develops a Shared Vision

The consensus-based process of determining action levels on items, and prioritizing relevant needs and strengths to build creates a shared understanding from which a coordinated plan is developed.



## Supports Change Management

Mapping the CANS to the plan facilitates outcomes monitoring and management by the team members, allowing for plan adjustment, acknowledgement of accomplishments and celebrating goals that have been met.

## What is the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Tool?

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The CANS is an **information integration tool** used to identify where support could be beneficial to children/youth and their families.

Helps achieve **collaborative, consensus-based assessment** across multiple levels—family, program, and system.

Its **approach is person-centered:** continuously aligning the work of all persons with the identified strengths and needs of children and families at all levels of the system.



# CANS

Child and Adolescent  
Needs and Strengths





# Who can request a CFT meeting?

- Every member on the Child and Family Team can request a CFT meeting when they feel it is necessary to bring the team together.
- It is the placing agency's responsibility to ensure this CFT meeting is held timely when requested.

# When to Convene a CFT Meeting



- The frequency of CFT meetings should be determined by the needs and preferences of the youth and family.
  - The frequencies shown here are the minimum required.
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- Dependent youth in foster care must have an initial CFT meeting within 60 days of entering foster care.
  - At minimum, dependent youth in foster care must have a CFT meeting at least once every six months.
  - If a youth is receiving Specialty Mental Health Services such as Intensive Care Coordination, Intensive Home Based Services, or Therapeutic Foster Care services, a CFT must occur at least once every 90 days.
  - Youth placed in an STRTP must also have a CFT every 90 days.



Child and Family Teams are  
more than just meetings

- CFTs are a practice of ongoing **engagement** and **collaboration**.
- The purpose of the CFT meeting is to ensure that plans and decisions benefit the child through the integration of **multiple perspectives**.
- Risk and accountability are **shared** among team members.
- CFTs ensure “solutions” are **individualized and unique** to the child and family.

# Why Work Together?



Working together builds:

Trust

Open Communication

Transparency

Appropriate Linkage to Resources and Services

Accomplishing Goals

# CFT Materials

- [ACL NO. 16-84](#)  
Requirements and Guidelines for Creating and Providing a Child and Family Team.
- [ACL NO. 18-23](#)  
The Child and Family Team (CFT) Process Frequently Asked Questions.
- [ACIN I-14-18](#)  
Dissemination and use of the “What is a Child and Family Team (CFT)?” Brochures Designed for Youth, Parents, and Professionals
- CFT Webpage  
<https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/foster-care/child-and-family-teams>
- CFT Survey  
<https://www.cdss.ca.gov/cftsurvey>





# CANS Materials

- [ACL NO. 18-09](#)  
Requirements for Implementing the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment Tool within a Child and Family Team
- [ACL NO. 18-81](#)  
Requirements and Guidelines for Implementing the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessment Tool within a Child and Family Team (CFT) Process
- [ACL NO. 21-27](#)  
Child Welfare Requirements for Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Training, Certification, and Entry of CANS Data into the CARES-Live System
- CANS Webpage  
<https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/foster-care/cans/the-cans-tool/cans-resources>
- Praed Foundation  
<https://praedfoundation.org/tools/the-child-and-adolescent-needs-and-strengths-cans/>

The California Integrated Core  
Practice Model for Children,  
Youth, And Families



# ICPM Materials

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- [ACIN I-21-18/MHSUDS IN 18-022](#)  
The California Children, Youth, and Families Integrated Core Practice Model and the California Integrated Training Guide.
- ICPM Webpage  
<https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/the-integrated-core-practice-model/about-icpm>
- [All County Letter \(ACL\) 19-116](#)  
AB 2083 (2018) Memorandum of Understanding Guidance
- [AB 2083 MOU Guidance Toolkit](#)





THANK YOU

Please email [CWSCoordination@dss.ca.gov](mailto:CWSCoordination@dss.ca.gov) with any questions or if you would like any additional information!