

Family Advocacy and Support Tool

(FAST) USER TIP SHEET


The FAST is the family version of the CANS and ANSA tools. The purpose of the FAST is to support effective interventions when the focus of those efforts are on entire families rather than single individuals. The most common use of the FAST is in efforts to address the needs of families who are at risk of child welfare involvement. The FAST includes ratings of the Family Together, each Caregiver, and a children and youth.

Guiding Principles

1. Items are included because they are relevant for planning and decision making.
2. Item ratings translate into action levels.
3. Focus is on the family's needs, not interventions or services that could mask a need.
4. Consider culture and development before establishing action levels.
5. It's about the 'what,' not the 'why.' Don't explain away needs with what you think might be an underlying cause.
6. Specific ratings window (30-days) can be over ridden based on action levels.

Before rating an item, consider the following questions:

- Is there any evidence of a need or strength?
- Are you understanding the family's behavior within normal development given their ages?
- Have you considered and are respectful of the family's culture?
- Is the need impacting the family's functioning?
- How urgently is action required on a need or strength? How useful are the family's strengths in achieving targeted outcomes?
- Are you focused on describing the need or strength, and not the underlying cause?
- What services are already in place for the family?



Unlike the CANS and ANSA, however, the FAST has only one action-level framework for its items.

	General Ratings	Trauma Experience Ratings
Item Rating: Action Levels	0 Clear strength OR No evidence of a need	0 No evidence
	1 Opportunities for strength building OR Watchful waiting/prevention (No need for service action)	1 Single incident or suspicion
	2 Need interferes with functioning (Need for service action)	2 Multiple incidents or a moderate degree
	3 Need is dangerous or disabling (Need for immediate or intensive service action)	3 Repeated and severe incidents with medical/physical consequences