



CHANGES TO PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION POLICY

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Children's Services Act Office

Question, concerns or compliments ... Please don't hesitate to let us know!

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Helping families complete the Parental Contribution Assessment documents has gotten easier! While Virginia law requires parents to contribute financially to the cost of services provided to their child based on their ability to pay, localities have the ability to develop policies and processes that best meet the needs of the community.

To ensure that we aren't making families do unnecessary paperwork, the assessment process to determine financial ability to contribute to services has been streamlined. If the parents' income level qualifies the family or child for income-based benefits such as Medicaid, SNAP, TANF, and Free or Reduced school lunches, the family may submit proof of the benefit in lieu of submitting income verification.

The Parental Contribution Assessment form and worksheet (available on FairfaxNet's CSA forms page) has been updated to reflect the change in policy. If the child/youth has been found eligible for free or reduced lunch, a Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) or Falls Church City Public Schools (FCCPS) social worker can sign off on the form. If the child/youth has Medicaid, TANF, or SNAP benefits, CSA reach out to the appropriate partner agencies to verify. These steps will mean that a family meeting the above criteria won't need to once again provide proof of income, backup documents, etc to yet another agency.

Additionally, when determining a family's ability to contribute financially for services, the income of kin and fictive-kin who are caretakers is not counted when determining the parental financial contribution for *community-based services only*.

You can find the full parental contribution policy in the Fairfax-Falls Church Policy and Procedures Manual online at <http://fairfaxnet.fairfaxcounty.gov/Dept/DFS/csa/Pages/Manuals.aspx>.



TEEN AND PARENT RECOVERY GROUPS

"Heads Up" and "Talk It Out" are weekly concurrent groups for teens between the ages of 14-17 who are working through emotional, mental health or substance use challenges, and their parents. These groups will feature guest speakers and participants are welcome to drop in any time, weekly attendance is not required.

At the **Heads Up** group, teens will learn to develop strategies and tools to manage stress and weather life's inevitable challenges. Together with other young people, they will learn about successful, sustainable recovery and resilience and how to bend but not break when anxieties arise. Attendees will have opportunities to engage with each other, enjoy leisure activities and outings, and snacks.

Parents are encouraged to join other parents for coffee, tea and connections with CSB Youth & Family staff in our concurrent **Talk It Out** session. Parents will discuss ideas on how to help their teen live their healthiest, fullest lives in the aftermath of trauma or through times of emotional distress. Guest speakers will offer parents ideas on how to discuss tough issues and offer tips on how to break communications barriers with their teens.

Groups will be held each Thursday from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the [Merrifield Center](#) in Room 3-332.

IDENTIFYING AND RATING CAREGIVERS (WHO, WHY, AND HOW)

Carol Wilson, Office of Children's Services

If you are assessing a child and family using the CANS, it's important to understand not only who you should rate as "caregivers" but also why you're rating caregivers. All caregivers are rated on the "Caregiver Strengths and Needs" Domain. For families served by a local department of social services (LDSS), caregivers are also rated in the Child Welfare Domain. Let's look first at the "Caregiver Strengths and Needs" Domain.

Who are you rating?

Caregivers are birth parents, adoptive parents, relatives or fictive kin. Foster parents are not rated as a child's caregiver unless 1) parental rights have been terminated and the foster parents plan to adopt OR 2) if an older youth has remained in foster care. Agencies such as the LDSS or Court Services Unit as well as residential programs are not named or rated as caregivers.

Typically, the caregivers that should be rated are those individuals with whom the child is living, except foster parents unless as noted above, the foster parents plan to adopt. If a child is in foster care, you should rate the birth parents or other family members from whom the child was removed and/or to whom the child will return or be placed. These caregivers are usually the child's biological parent(s) and the goal is reunification. Or perhaps a grandmother has been identified as a placement option if the child cannot return home to his/her biological parents.

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Why are you rating caregivers?

The purpose of rating the “Caregiver Strengths and Needs” Domain is to determine the ability of the parents or caregivers to appropriately supervise the child and ensure the child’s needs are met, even if the child is not currently living with that caregiver.

If a child is out of the home in a residential placement or in foster care, the ratings should reflect how the planned permanent caregiver would be able to supervise and meet the child’s needs at the time of the assessment, i.e. if the child were placed at home with the caregiver on the assessment date. This provides additional data to support either reunification, or the continuation of the child in placement as it will provide documentation which demonstrates the caregiver is not able to currently meet the child’s needs. Or perhaps a relative is being considered as a possible placement and is rated as to how their strengths and needs at the time of the assessment would reflect their ability to support and care for the child.

The DSS Enhanced version of the CANS permits up to three caregivers to be rated to assist in concurrent planning. The Child Welfare Module was added to the DSS version of the CANS to allow for assessment of specific caregivers regarding protection and permanency.

When you rate this module, you should consider only the specific caregiver (or potential caregiver) that you are rating. For example, if you are rating an aunt as a prospective caregiver, on the “Condition of the Home” item, you would rate the aunt’s home. If an item does not apply (e.g., “Commitment to Reunification” for a child who is living with parents), rate a “0.”

How do you rate older youth?

A frequently asked question is how to rate the Caregiver Domain and Child Welfare Module for older youth who do not plan to return home, and for whom the plan is to be self-sufficient. It may be helpful to rate the youth on the items in the Caregiver Strengths and Needs Domain (e.g., if this youth were living on his own today, how well would he be able to care for himself? Would he be able to safely self-supervise? Would he have stable housing? Does he have adequate transportation?) For LDSS youth, if this option is chosen, the Child Welfare Module would be rated all “0s.” Another option for all older youth with the Caregiver Strengths and Needs Domain is simply to rate all “0s” as not applicable.

Case situations: Who should I rate as the caregiver(s)?

Choose the most appropriate caregiver(s) to rate in the following examples.

1. Tony was removed from his birth mother due to allegations of neglect and placed in foster care. The goal is to reunite him with his mother. The paternal grandmother has also expressed an interest in caring for Tony if his mom is unable to do so.
 - a. Birth mother
 - b. Paternal grandmother
 - c. Foster Parent
 - d. Both a. and b.
2. Jacob is placed in a pre-adoptive home with resource parents. Parental rights have not been terminated.
 - a. Birth parent(s)
 - b. Pre-adoptive parent(s)
 - c. Both a. and b.

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SAVE THE DATE

19TH ANNUAL NORTHERN REGION CSA SYMPOSIUM & PROVIDER EXPO

This event sponsored by the collaboration of CSA Managers for the jurisdictions of Arlington County, City of Alexandria, City of Manassas, Fairfax-Falls Church, Loudoun County and Prince William County, as well as NOVACO, the Northern Virginia region's coalition of private provider associations.

WHEN
March 11,
2020
8am - 3pm

WHERE
NVCC, Ernst
Cultural
Center
8333 Little River
Turnpike
Annandale, VA
22003

REGISTRATION
STARTS
FEBRUARY 1

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- 3. Emily is a 19 year old youth participating in Fostering Futures. She resides in an Independent Living Arrangement supervised by LDSS.
 - a. Emily
 - b. No caregiver
 - c. LDSS
 - d. Both a. and/or b.

- 4. Whitney is a 16 year old placed in residential through a CSA Parental Agreement. The goal is to return her home to her mother.
 - a. Residential program
 - b. Birth mother

Article originally published in [CSA TODAY, Volume 3, Issue 3, Fall 2019](#)

Correct Answers: 1. d, 2. c, 3. d, 4. b

CANS CERTIFICATION

The Child Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment (CANS) is a mandatory uniform assessment required for children and youth served through the Children’s Services Act. New CANS users and those who need to recertify can do so at

<https://www.Schoox.com/login.php>.

Users must pass the CANS exam with a score of .70 or more. Please send a copy of your certificate to CSA via fax at 703.653.1369.

For info on how to create an account on the CANS training website, please download the “How To” Guide at <https://praedfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Schoox-How-To-08072018.pdf>.

Upcoming Trainings & Public Meetings

County employees can register through Employee U by searching for “CSASOC”. Non-county and FCPS staff can register at: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hrcode/EReg/Registration.aspx?groupID=87>

CSA Part I: Intro to Systems of Care

Monday, January 13, 2020
9am—Noon, Pennino 206

CSA Part II: Facilitating Family Resource Meetings

Wednesday, February 12, 2020
9am—Noon, Pennino, Room 206

CSA Part III: Accessing CSA Services

Wednesday, February 12, 2020
1pm—4pm, Pennino 206

Wraparound—Why Do I Need It?

Monday, February 3, 2020
1pm—3pm, Pennino 206

Parental Contribution 101

Wednesday, February 19, 2020
10am—Noon, Pennino 206

Have ideas about possible training topics? We’d love to hear from you! Please contact Patricia Arriaza at patricia.arriaza@fairfaxcounty.gov with your thoughts.

Public Meetings

CPMT

Friday, December 6, 1pm—3pm
Government Center, Room 120

ICC Stakeholders

Friday, December 6, 10am—Noon
Pennino, Room 408D

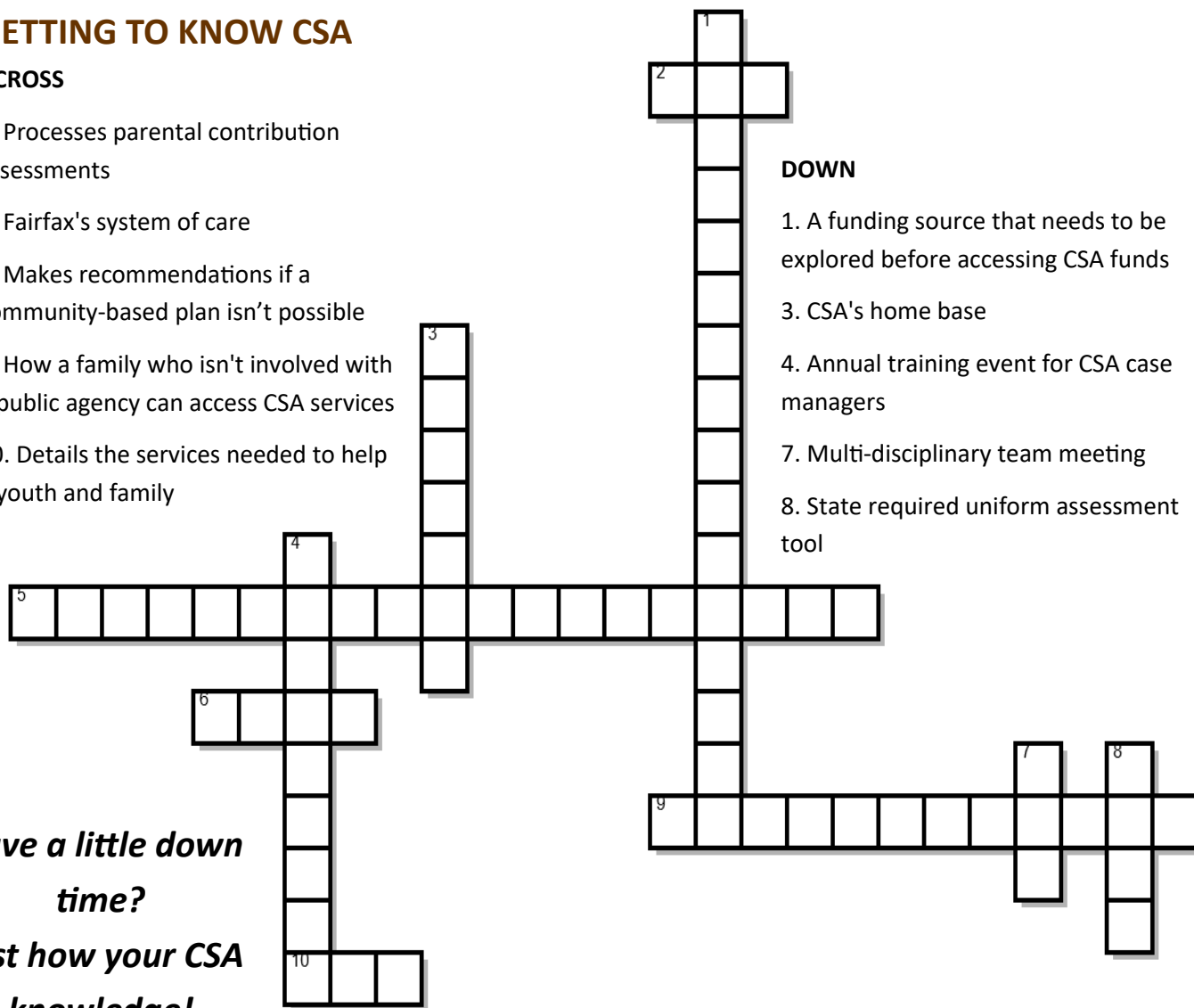
GETTING TO KNOW CSA

ACROSS

- 2. Processes parental contribution assessments
- 5. Fairfax's system of care
- 6. Makes recommendations if a community-based plan isn't possible
- 9. How a family who isn't involved with a public agency can access CSA services
- 10. Details the services needed to help a youth and family

DOWN

- 1. A funding source that needs to be explored before accessing CSA funds
- 3. CSA's home base
- 4. Annual training event for CSA case managers
- 7. Multi-disciplinary team meeting
- 8. State required uniform assessment tool



*Have a little down
time?
Test how your CSA
knowledge!*



QUESTIONS/CONCERNS ABOUT POSSIBLE FRAUD?



If you have concerns about service delivery, the Service Summaries distributed by CSA are a good mechanism for reporting those concerns. CSA program staff are also always available to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

Additionally, a more formal process can be followed by contacting the Fairfax County Fraud Hotline at 703.787.3243 to report an allegation. The calls are reviewed and followed up on by the Internal Audit Office.

