

From strengths and needs to a plan

A worked example followed by discussion prompts for an individualized planning conversation.

Illustrative example

A teenager leaves class after unexpected changes. The youth says advance notice helps. A caregiver describes successful routines, and a school adult has a trusting relationship with the youth. No real client is described.

Strengths and relationships

The youth recognizes early stress, enjoys visual schedules, and trusts a school adult. The caregiver can describe routines that help.

Shared need and family-defined goal

Need: predictability and a respectful way to request help. Goal: participate in the school day with less distress and more confidence seeking support.

Strategies and responsibility

School contact: arrange an agreed advance-notice routine and an approved quiet space with a return plan. Support person: practice a help-request phrase. Facilitator: confirm the arrangements. Coordinate clinical assessment or treatment when indicated.

Baseline and review

Agree on the observation period and measures before judging progress. Review the youth's experience, school participation, and whether adults delivered the agreed supports. Record what changed and why.

Use the CANS version required by the county and program, such as CANS-SB in San Bernardino DBH materials, while meeting state requirements. Follow BHIN 26-032 for California's January 1, 2027 IP-CANS transition. This aid does not score CANS or replace approved assessment, training, certification, planning, or authorization processes.

Connect the decisions

Record the applicable CANS version and use your program's approved planning and documentation process.

What does the youth say? What does the caregiver say?

Which strengths and relationships can support the goal?

What is the shared need and the goal in daily life?

Which actions fit? Who owns each action, and by when?

Distinguish a requested support from one that is authorized, scheduled, or received.

How will the team review progress and adjust the plan?

Name the baseline, review date, family feedback, and evidence that agreed supports occurred.

Revised October 23, 2026. See the companion article for CANS-SB, IP-CANS, California Wraparound Standards, and BHIN 26-032 source links. Protect completed worksheets as appropriate to their content.