

## Key Principle: Ratings Describe the Individual not the individual in Support Services

This principle helps us identify when personal change happens. The CANS-NY rating should describe the child/youth, not the child/youth in care. It is only when no more intervention is needed that a need has been addressed—if action is still required—the need is still present. To properly distinguish between supports and interventions that must remain in place and the success and completion, we use principle 3.

In order to properly rate the child/youth, we have to consider the concept of “masking”. Masking describes situations where a need is less observable because the person receives support services or interventions that hide or diminish the intensity of that need.

- ADHD, Depression or Psychosis when managed by medications or
- Runaway, Substance Use, or Fire-setting behaviors when a child/youth is in a secured facility.

School attendance when wake-up and transportation support are provided.

Masking only applies to the direct target of interventions and supports. Masking does not apply to indirect effects of interventions. Thus, support to make sure a child attends school ‘masks’ School Attendance, but we can see and document progress in School Achievement if the child returns to effective learning. A medication masks depression, but Social Functioning might be improved, or Interpersonal Strengths might be built as a result of managed irritability.

