



400 Oak Street, Ste. 217
Abilene, Texas 79602
(325) 677-6448
www.BigCountryCASA.org

Psychotropic Medications Roadmap for CASA

Introduction

On November 6, 2020 Judge Propst and Judge Rotenberry issued a standing order requiring the consent of the guardian ad litem/CASA to the administration or change in dosage of all psychotropic medications. This was a result of the courts seeing an overwhelming number of children on these medications without the courts' knowledge, a violation of the Texas Family Code.

Children in Foster Care may be misdiagnosed as their behaviors can reflect their traumatic experiences instead of underlying psychological diagnoses. See this [brief overview](#) of trauma in childhood and possible related behaviors. Often, children are prescribed medications without first utilizing nonpharmacological means such as therapy.

To help staff and volunteers navigate this order and the courts' desire for assistance in upholding the best interests of the children in the state's and 2INgage's care, this roadmap was developed.

Key Trainings:

[Psychotropic Medication and Children in Foster Care: Tips for Advocates and Judges](#)

[DFPS Psychotropic Medication for Children in Texas Foster Care Training](#)

[Psychotropic Medication Utilization Parameters for Children and Youth in Foster Care](#)

Your youth is being prescribed psychotropic medications. Now what?

Gather Relevant Documentation

- Most recent version of Health Passport (prescriptions filled dates)
- Most recent CANS assessment
- Latest report from 2INgage and/or treatment plan
- Utilize [Child Medical Fact Sheet](#)
- See [Psychotropic Medication by Diagnosis](#)

Connect With Team Members

- Determine who the relevant people are for medical needs (example: therapist, counselor, physician) and ask to see notes quarterly.
- Discuss non medication interventions. (See [Interventions](#))
- Request a Psychotropic Medication Utilization Review (PMUR) and consider getting a second opinion.
- Questions to [ask the prescribing doctor](#)

Work with your youth and their placement

- Check in regularly with your youth about how they feel regarding medications. ([Guide for Youth](#))
- Observe and document your youth's behavior.
- Ask placement for their observations and to see children's medication.

Advocate During Hearings

- Utilize the [Preparing for Court Checklist](#)
- Include medication information and current diagnosis in the court report.
- Report during hearings on negative or positive changes in behavior and medications.

General Oversight

- Work with team to ensure that a treatment plan is in place.
- Encourage regular check-ins about treatment plans.
- Participate in medical appointments and medication reviews
- Review [Decision Making Tree](#) to inform next steps when medication changes arise

*Note that not all of these may be appropriate based on your case and your youth's situation. Always make sure to work with your CASA supervisor on your advocacy strategy.
