



Supports Intensity Scale® for Individuals, Families and Providers of DD Waiver Services

Why the National SIS[®]

- The Supports Intensity Scale[®] (SIS[®]) was developed by American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) over a five-year period in response to changes in how society views and relates to people with disabilities.
- The SIS[®] is a standardized assessment tool, specifically designed to measure the pattern and intensity of supports needed by individuals to be successful.

SIS[®] Development

- Normed with over 1300 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who had a variety of support needs in 33 states and 2 Canadian provinces
- Individuals ranged in age from 16 to 72 and were culturally diverse
- Determined to be reliable and valid for individuals with intellectual **and** developmental disabilities

Is the SIS[®] valid for people with developmental disabilities, like autism?



Yes!

Why is this?

Because:

- when the SIS[®] was validated people with a diagnosis of autism, as well as other developmental disabilities, were part of the validation group
- since initial publication, the SIS[®] has been investigated with groups of people with different disabilities and verified as statistically reliable
- the SIS[®] focuses on the supports a person needs to meet their goals, not on a diagnosis.

The SIS[®] Today

- Currently, 29 states and 20 countries are in various stages of using the SIS[®]
- A finalized version of the Children's SIS[®] assessment will be available in the fall of 2015– SIS-C[®]

The SIS[®] Makes Sense for Virginia

- SIS[®] reflects a positive way of thinking; it looks at the supports needed for the individual to be successful versus focusing on his or her deficits
- SIS[®] helps identify the supports a person needs to have a life of his or her choosing and greatest potential.
- Direct, reliable, and valid measure of supports needed across life areas
- Helps in planning for individualized supports and services

The SIS[®]

- Is comprehensive
- Evaluates the **pattern and intensity of needed supports** in:
 - ✓ 6 Life Activity Domains (common to *all* persons)
 - ✓ Protection and Advocacy Activities
 - ✓ Exceptional Medical and Behavioral Supports

Who conducts SIS[®] interviews in Virginia?

- DBHDS contracted with Ascend Management Innovations, Inc. to conduct SIS[®] assessments in Virginia.
- This is not the same organization (AAIDD) that performed previous SIS[®] assessments.
- For individuals who had a SIS[®] completed previously by AAIDD, a new SIS[®] is unnecessary at this time.
- Ascends website address is: www.ascendami.com

SIS[®] Interviewers Are Professionals Who:

- Have experience and a degree in the field of Developmental Disabilities
- Have participated in Ascend's rigorous training schedule
- Have passed AAIDD's Interviewer Reliability and Quality Review sessions
- Have been endorsed by AAIDD as a SIS[®] interviewer

Assessment Schedule

- A SIS[®] assessment is completed every three years for adults and every two years for children 5-15 years of age.
- All individuals receiving DD Waiver services will need a SIS[®] completed by April 30, 2016.
- Due to this timeframe:
 - ✓ Individuals, families and providers should respond promptly when contacted by Ascend.
 - ✓ Once scheduled, SIS[®] assessments should not be cancelled except in an emergency.

Assessment Schedule

- In the event of a family emergency or hospitalization, etc. please cancel at least 48 hrs prior to the interview date/time.
- If cancelled with less notice, there is a financial penalty to DBHDS.
- Cancellations should be avoided as it may be difficult to reschedule a SIS[®] interview to occur before the deadline.

Scheduling the Interview

- Respondent information is provided by the case manager to Ascend.
- The case manager identifies for Ascend a likely location for the interview; one that most enhances the individual's participation.
- When it is time to schedule the interview, an Ascend scheduler will contact the case manager to identify their availability for the interview.

Scheduling the Interview

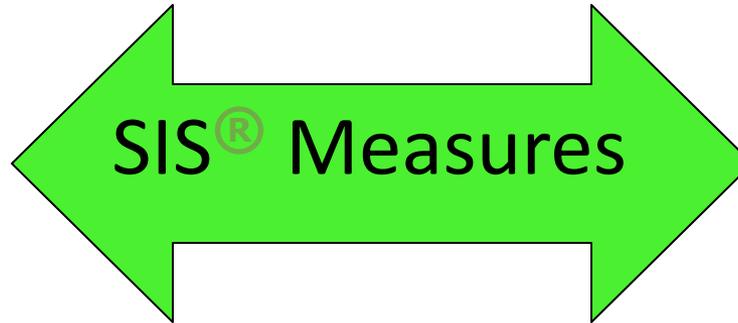
- Ascend then contacts the individual, family member and providers to schedule the interview.
- The individual is encouraged to participate as much as possible. At a minimum the interviewer must meet the individual.
- Primary respondents must stay for the duration of the interview.
- If a person uses Assistive Technology, he or she is rated with the technology in place at the interview.

The SIS[®] Uses a Small Group Interview Process

- To engage individuals and other respondents
- To consider supports that will meet the individual's needs
- To involve the individual as a vital source of information

Standards of
Same Age Adults
in The
Community

Expectations
Responsibility
Involvement



Difference:
Support Type,
Frequency,
and
Daily Support
Time

Individual's Own
Patterns of
Behavior

Expectations
Responsibility
Involvement

Supports Intensity Scale



What does **Support** mean in the SIS[®] Assessment?

Supports are:

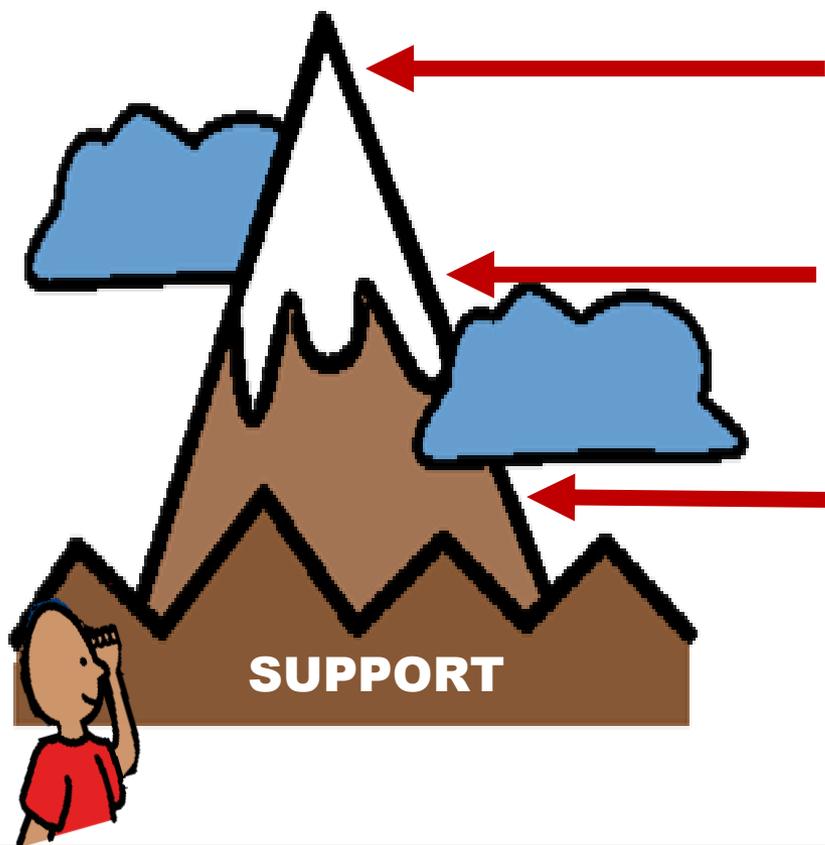
- The things we do with or for someone to help the person do something successfully.
- Places these supports may occur:
 - ✓ Home
 - ✓ Friends and relationships
 - ✓ Choices
 - ✓ Work or other meaningful day activity
 - ✓ Participation in activities of interest to the individual

Supports **Intensity** Scale



What does **Intensity** mean in the SIS[®]
Assessment?

Intensity is the level of support an individual needs.



- Lots of support.
- Some support.
- A little support.

Supports Intensity **Scale**



What does **Scale** mean in the SIS[®]
Assessment?

Scale means a standardized way of measuring support needs.

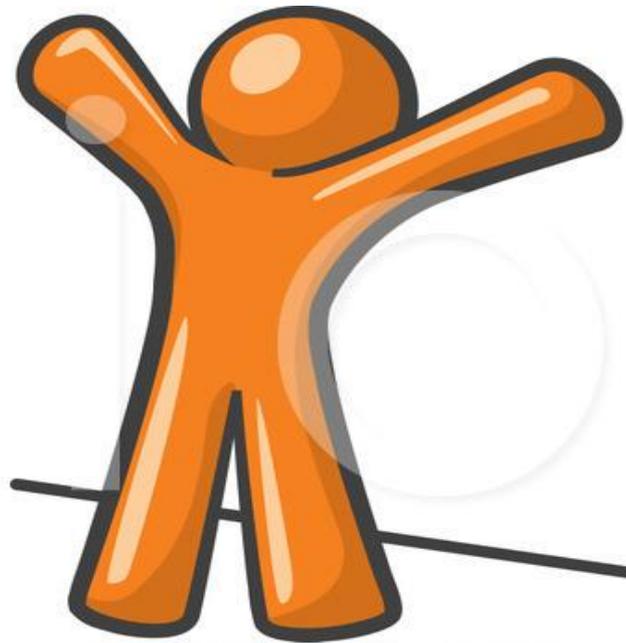


Rating = 0 - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4

Everyone is measured on the same basis.

“The interview is about the individual’s life. It is not the family’s or provider’s interview.”

~AAIDD 2008



SIS[®] Format

- The SIS[®] generally takes about 2 hrs.
- To complete the SIS[®] in a thorough but timely way, provide information as requested by the interviewer.
- In order to obtain the information needed, the SIS[®] asks for information in a semi-structured format.
- Some questions may appear to be similar but actually capture different information.

Sections of the SIS®

- Support Needs (Section 1)
- Protection and Advocacy (Section 2)
- Exceptional Medical Support Needs (Section 3A)
- Exceptional Behavioral Support Needs (Section 3B)
- Supplemental Questions – may be asked to clarify support needs, including risk of falls

Respondents

A **Respondent** is a person designated to answer questions about the support needs of the individual.



A Primary Respondent is an individual who:

- Has known the individual for at least the last three months
- Has had recent opportunities to observe the person functioning in one or more settings for substantial periods of time.

SIS[®] Interview Respondents

- The right respondents can make a difference in capturing an accurate picture of an individual's support needs
- An interview typically includes:
 - ✓ The individual
 - ✓ A guardian or family member
 - ✓ An in-home or day services support person
 - ✓ The case manager

Preparation

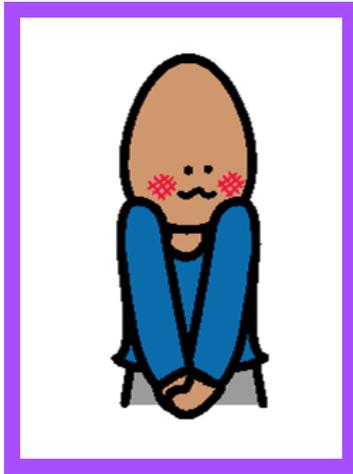
- Consider identifying someone who would be available to assist, should the individual need to leave the interview.
- Arrive at the interview on time.
- It is not necessary to bring anything with you.

Preparation

- Be prepared to describe what kind of supports are needed, how often and how long the support is needed.
- Ask for guidance from the interviewer if information is unclear

During the Interview Respondents will:

- ✓ **Answer all the questions**, even if they don't seem to apply to the individual now or in the future.
- ✓ **Be ready to describe supports**. This is what makes the picture complete and person-centered.
- ✓ **Be specific** when describing the support needs of the individual.



If respondents know of any topics that may:

- make the individual feel uncomfortable or
- trigger uncomfortable responses

- ✓ Help the individual tell the interviewer or
- ✓ Tell the interviewer yourself, prior to the interview

Things To Know About the Interview

- The SIS[®] is not a test. It is a guided conversation with participants.
- It's important for respondents to give their input and be as accurate as possible.
- Since the SIS[®] is a standardized assessment, all the questions must be answered even if they don't seem to relate to the individual now or in the future.

What will the interviewer do?



- **Explain** the interview process
- **Ask** the interview questions
- **Record** your answers

What will the interviewer do?

- Assist the team to develop a clear picture of the individual's support needs because:
 - Not everyone sees the individual the same way
 - Individuals need different supports in different settings

What Kind of Questions Will Be Asked at the Interview?



Medical and Behavioral Sections

- Completed first to help the interviewer become more familiar with the person.
- Rated to reflect the support needs the individual has at the time of the assessment.
- The SIS[®] is a snapshot in time.

Two Rating Keys

Exceptional Medical/Behavioral Supports Needs (Sections 3A and 3B)

- No Support Needed
- Some Support Needed
- Extensive Support Needed

Activity Domains (Sections 1 and 2)

- Type of Support
- Frequency of Support
- Daily Support Time

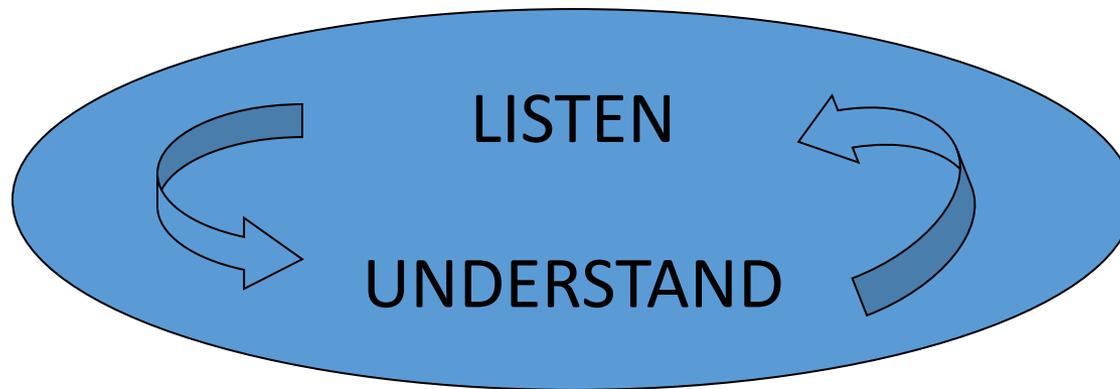
To's and For's

- To ensure we have drawn the whole picture, the final step in the interview is to identify important To's and For's.
- Important "To's" and "For's" are listed only for the next plan year.

Important "To" the Person

- What individuals say "in their own words"
- What individuals say with "their own behavior"
- What you hear depends on what you are listening for

~ ELP Learning Community 2005



Important “For” the Person

- Health
- Safety
- Being a valued member of his or her community

To Summarize

- Ratings reflect the individual's current support needs.
- The individual, team, interviewer, ratings and commentary create an accurate representation of the person's life.
- Planning decisions are informed by the SIS[®] and prioritized by the person and his/her team of supports.

Distribution of the SIS[®]

- The case manager sends SIS[®] results to the individual, guardian/family member and providers between 8 – 15 business days after the interview.
- Providers are required to have a copy of the SIS[®] report available for review in the individual's record.

Level of Functioning Survey

- Level of Functioning is the assessment that determines eligibility for DD Waiver.
- Information on the SIS[®] should be consistent with the information in the Level Of Functioning (LOF).
- The LOF is completed annually prior to or at the plan meeting.

A New SIS[®] Is Needed When:

- An individual is new to DD Waiver
- There has been significant and sustained increase/decrease in medical or behavioral support needs (Sections 3A/3B) for 6 months or more
- There has been a sustained and significant change in any 2 Life/Activity Domains (Sections 1 & 2)

Appeal Process

- **Who can appeal?**

The SIS[®] may only be appealed by the individual, his/her legal guardian/authorized representative or her/his family members.

- **What can be appealed?**

The Standard Operating Procedures were **not** followed.

- **What cannot be appealed?**

A SIS[®] score is **not** appealable.

Contact Information

- DD Waiver Helpline: 804-663-7290
- DD Waiver Fax: 804-225-3390
- Sam Piñero, DD Waiver Director: 804-786-2149

Contact information

Region 1: Kenneth Haines – 804-337-5709 / kenneth.haines@dbhds.virginia.gov

Region 2: Betty Vines – 804-221-9442 / betty.vines@dbhds.virginia.gov

Region 3: Jason Perkins – 804-221-2454 / jason.perkins@dbhds.virginia.gov

Region 4: Maureen Kennedy – 804-774-2276 / maureen.kennedy@dbhds.virginia.gov

Region 5: Brandy Martin – 804-221-2749 / brandy.martin@dbhds.virginia.gov

Region Support Supervisor: Joan Bender – 804-774-4469 / joan.bender@dbhds.virginia.gov

State SIS Coordinator: Cheri Stierer – 804-786-0803 / cheri.stierer@dbhds.virginia.gov



Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services

“A life of possibilities for all Virginians”

www.dbhds.virginia.gov

Thank you!