

## **Helpful Tips for a Successful SIS® Assessment**

### **What is a Supports Intensity Scale® (SIS) Assessment?**

A SIS assessment is a meeting with a DDS SIS Assessor and at least two people (respondents) who know a great deal about the individual's daily support needs. The individual being assessed is encouraged to attend and may serve as a respondent if he or she is able to accurately answer detailed questions by using a rating key. It takes place in a private location and can take up to three (3) hours.

### **What will the SIS be used for?**

The results of the SIS will be used for individualized service planning.

### **Who plays a role in the SIS Assessment?**

#### **Individual and Family/Guardian(s)**

- Can serve as respondents
- Assist SIS Assessor in identifying respondents to invite to the assessment
- May host the assessment at a private place, such as a home/residence, with a table and chairs

#### **Service Coordinators and Providers**

- Can serve as respondents along with families
- Assist SIS Assessor in identifying respondents to invite to the assessment
- May host the assessment at a private place, such as an office/conference room, with a table and chairs

#### **The SIS Assessor**

- Schedules the assessment and facilitates the SIS

#### **SIS Director:** Assistant Commissioner of Policy/Planning & Children's Services

- Oversees the SIS Department and reviews results

## **Before the Assessment**

### **What does the SIS Assessor do?**

- Contacts key people in the individual's life
- Collaborates with participants to identify who will attend as valid SIS respondents (A valid respondent has had at least three months of experience with the individual and is knowledgeable about the individual's daily needs and supports)
- Collaborates with participants to identify a location that will ensure privacy
- Collaborates with participants to identify a date and time that will work for everyone

### **What can participants do?**

- Collaborate with the SIS Assessor at the time of scheduling by assisting to identify respondents who know detailed information about the individual's daily life activities
- Discuss the possibility of the individual serving as a respondent. If an individual attending the SIS assessment is not comfortable with long meetings, consider bringing something that s/he can use to hold his/her attention, such as a tablet.
- Think about what supports the individual would need to successfully take part in all activities as compared to a typical person of the same age in his or her community
- Be prepared to answer the following questions:

1. What type of support would be needed?
2. How often would the support be needed?
3. How much support time would be needed cumulatively over a twenty-four hour period?

**These questions will be applied to each of the following areas:**

- Exceptional Medical
- Exceptional Behavioral
- Home Living Activities
- Community
- Life Long Learning
- Employment
- Health and Safety
- Social
- Protection and Advocacy

#### **During the Assessment**

- Try to answer each question as briefly and accurately as possible to allow the assessment to be completed in the three (3)-hour time frame.
- Do not over or underestimate support needs.
- Keep an open mind about things that the individual may not be able to do now but may be able to accomplish with certain types of supports.
- The assessment should feel conversational so feel free to speak up if you don't understand something or disagree.
- If there are different points of view, the SIS Assessor is trained to facilitate a consensus.
- Typically, a five (5)-minute break is taken about halfway through the assessment.
- All phones should be turned off. If expecting an emergency call, ask for a break.
- Do not bring other assessments or copies of the SIS with you.
- Do not bring video or audio recording.
- Feel free to bring a drink or snack if the location allows.

#### **After the Assessment**

- Results will be processed electronically.
- Individual/family/guardian and DDS Service Coordinator will receive hard copies of the report to be used for individualized service planning.

***For additional information please visit: [aaidd.org/sis](http://aaidd.org/sis)***

#### **For concerns about the process write to:**

SIS Director, Department of Developmental Services  
500 Harrison Avenue  
Boston, MA 02118

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