

Supports Intensity Scale (SIS®) FAQs for Families

1. *What do the scores and the percentages listed on the SIS® report mean?*

Ratings reflect the individual's current support needs. The higher the scores on the chart on page 2 of the report, the more supports a person needs. This coincides with the percentiles, the higher the percentile the more support a person needs. Percentile is the standard conversion of scores into a scale that is 0 to 100 percent.

2. *Who was used to norm the SIS scale?*

The SIS® was normed on a population with intellectual disabilities and related developmental disabilities (IDD). Many of the states used in the norming process had closed all their institutions, so the community population utilized was inclusive of those who may have lived in an institution during some point of their life.

3. *I keep hearing about levels and tiers; what are these?*

The redesigned waiver funding mechanism is built upon the SIS® and additional supplemental questions to determine the extent of support needs. Support needs have been characterized into 7 levels from this information and verified by specific plans in the ISP for those with significant needs. *The SIS® is intended to be utilized with Person Centered Planning for the individual.*

The rate structure was developed based on a statewide study completed by Burns and Associates. A tiered reimbursement schedule has been developed to allow for a fair and more equitable reimbursement structure for the entire state.

4. *When will I know my level and tier?*

A method to communicate this information to individuals and families is currently being developed.

5. *I just received my SIS® interview report. What should I do with it?*

The family version of the report is designed to assist individuals and families in the planning process. Please bring it to your next planning meeting. The person centered plan should incorporate many aspects of the SIS®.

6. *The individual ratings on the SIS® do not agree with what I said in the interview.*

The interviewers are trained extensively on how to score the SIS®. While it may seem the SIS® could be scored by anyone, this is not the case. The score is based on specific criteria for each question that the trained interviewer understands. The team's response, not the response of just one person, will inform the score.

7. *Why wouldn't the interviewer include the historical information I shared about my son/daughter?*

While historical information is important, the intent of the SIS® is to capture current information regarding the support needs of your son/daughter. The SIS® is a snapshot in time. Historical information should be identified in the Individual Service Plan (ISP) and updated as needed by the support coordinator.

8. *My son/daughter has made a lot of progress with the help of their current provider. I am concerned that this support won't be counted on the SIS®.*

All support is considered in the SIS®. The SIS® reflects a positive way of thinking so the interviewer will also consider the parts of the activity your son or daughter can complete.

9. *The interviewer would not count the supports we reported for each item on the SIS®. She/he said the support had already been counted by another item.*

The SIS® is designed to be conducted by AAIDD endorsed interviewers according to a particular methodology, which may not be apparent. Generally, the same activity is not rated in more than one item.

10. *Is the SIS® optional?*

No. The SIS® is required for all individuals who receive waiver services. Adult SIS® assessments are required every 3 years. The Children SIS® are required every 2 years.

11. *If I speak for myself do I need respondents during my SIS® interview?*

Your participation is valued and critical in creating an accurate picture of your support needs. The observations of those who provide you with supports are equally important to create the whole picture of support services and thus, will also be invited to participate.

12. *What does the SIS® determine?*

The SIS® is a standardized assessment tool, specifically designed to measure the pattern and intensity of supports needed by individuals to be successful in areas of life, similar to their peers in the community.

13. *I was recently called by Ascend about an interview. Who is Ascend?*

Ascend Management Innovations, Inc. is the agency with whom the state has contracted to complete the SIS® across the state. This is to assure there is no conflict of interest between the assessor and the support coordinator/case manager. Ascend interviewers are all AAIDD endorsed for administering both the SIS-A as well as the SIS-C.