



Why Use the SIS®?

Pennsylvania Office of
Developmental Programs

Ascend Management
Innovations
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This handout tells about the SIS® and its benefits as a Universal Assessment tool in Pennsylvania.

The SIS® looks at individual's potential rather than their deficiencies. It assesses supports that are needed to help individuals successfully function in their communities. It encourages respondents and the planning team to see the person as a full-fledged participant of their community who deserves the same opportunities and choices as all other members.

I am glad it's [the SIS®] different. I'm sick of people talking about things I can't do.—
A quote from an individual receiving services in Washington State

The SIS® concentrates on age appropriate adult activities. It is not biased toward looking at persons with disabilities as if they had "children's minds in adult bodies." This helps the planning team members develop support plans based on age appropriate activities enjoyed by all members of the community. The SIS® shifts the support planning focus from "care giving" to developing and nurturing formal and informal support networks. This shift is very important. It emphasizes success and inclusion in age appropriate activities as a fully participating member of the community. Past assessments tended to be biased toward '*doing for*' the individual. The SIS® encourages a different way of looking at supports. It promotes focus on helping the individual participate as fully as possible in his or her own life activities.

This thorough and standardized interview will assess every person that is receiving Waiver services throughout Pennsylvania. It will help advocates, providers and the ODP identify and address gaps in service availability. It improves on the past county-by-county data collection process that made it difficult to identify or address service needs in a statewide manner. The assessment summary report lists the supports needed for the individual to be successful in a wide range of activities. This information, together with what is *important to* the individual and *important for* the individual, encourages the planning team to discuss an entire range of positive supports.

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Everyday people with developmental disabilities face people who underestimate them. We didn't want an assessment instrument that reinforced that. We wanted an instrument that reinforced that people can learn and grow with proper support and the assessment instrument is going to give us the opportunity to do that.

- Linda Rolfe, Washington State, Director of Division of Developmental Disabilities [Comments about the SIS®]

Information for Individuals, Family Members, and Providers