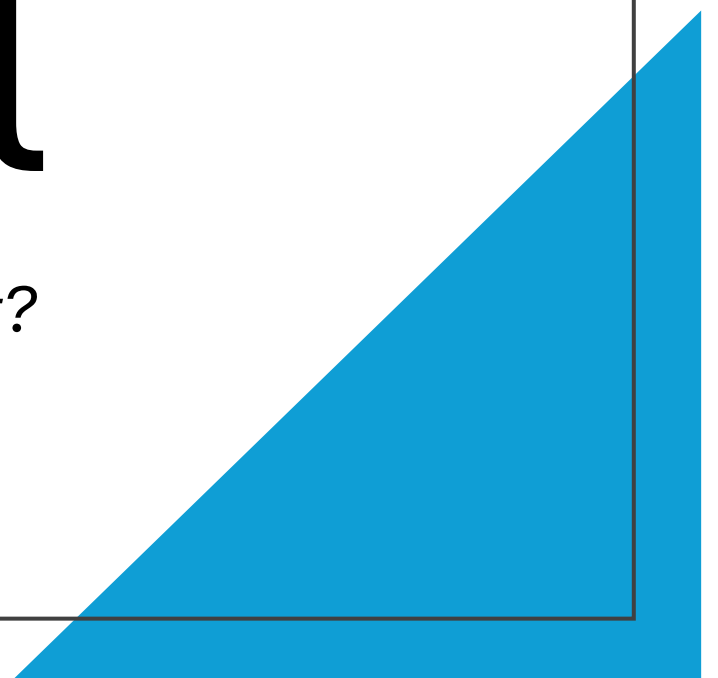


Context Tool

What is it? How will Developmental Services use it?

Presented to Vermont DAIL Advisory Board
May 9, 2024





Quick Review:

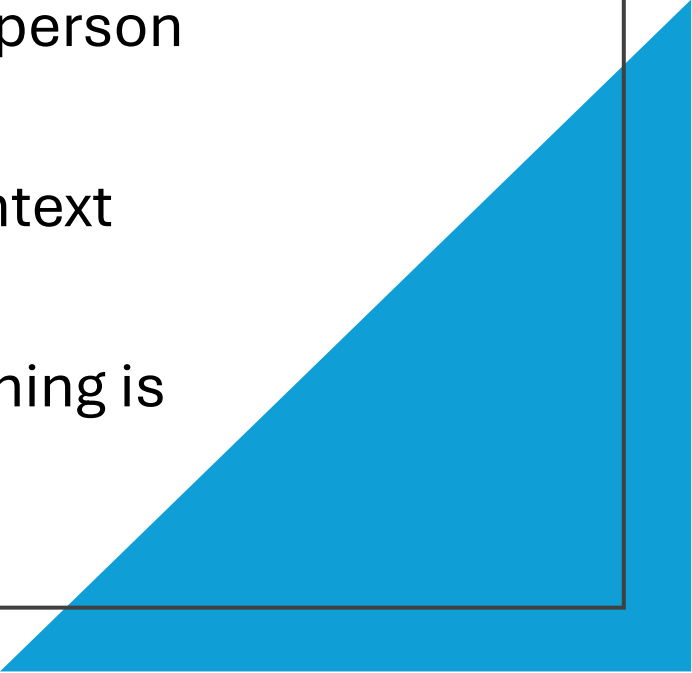
- Vermont has decided to use the **Supports Intensity Scale, Adult Version (SIS-A)**. This is called a “standardized assessment tool.” This means the tool has been shown to be consistent in how it measures need.
 - Vermont also changed who does the needs assessment. Now Assessment is done by **Public Consulting Group (PCG)**.
 - Vermont must have an independent entity give the SIS-A interviews.
 - The SIS-A cannot be given by the same agencies that deliver services. This is because of new Medicaid Rules that protect people from conflicts of interest.
-



Quick Review, continued

- First, Vermont gave the SIS-A to 500 Vermonters receiving services. The SIS-A showed that it could identify 6 different levels of need.
 - Now everyone will have at least 1 SIS-A by 2025. After 2025, people will take the SIS-A every 3 years, or more if there is a change in need.
-

The Developmental Services (DS) Standardized Assessment Team

- This Team has been meeting since 2019 to talk about how the Developmental Services System learns about what a person needs.
 - This Team has been working for 18 months on the Context Tool.
 - Their goal is to create a tool that ensures service planning is based on a full picture of who the person is.
- 

The Team Added Supplemental Questions

- The SIS-A allows states to added extra questions.
- Stakeholders felt the SIS-A did not address communication support needs in enough detail.
- A group worked with the Communications Task Force to add extra questions about the support that a person needs to communicate.

... But the Team thought important information was still missing.


- What can we learn from the person's past experiences?
- Would it be helpful to know more about the support that the person already has available?
- Have we lost some of the rich detail that we used to get when we had a more open-ended conversation?



Taking a second look

- The Team went through each section of the SIS-A.
- The Team asked, “what more would we want to know so we could create a great Service Plan (ISA)?
- Can we add more information about the person’s history and their situation... the **CONTEXT** of their life?





What were here to
talk about today

The Context Tool

What is “Context”?

“Context” is the situation in which a person, object, or idea exists.



In a Pond, a frog is a friendly, fun creature.... But in your bed, the same frog is kinda scary!

Overview of the Context Tool



9 Areas of Support Needs, based on SIS-A

Exceptional Medical Needs

Actions, Tendencies, and/or Mental Health

Home Living Activities

Community Living Activities

Lifelong Learning Activities

Employment Activities

Health and Safety Activities

Social Activities

Protection and Advocacy

Other things to Think About

Residential Considerations

Future Planning Needs

Short Term

Long Term



EXAMPLE: Social Activities

- Can the person be supported in small group settings when appropriate?
 - Is the person receptive to meeting new people to build friendships outside of family and/or paid supports? Are they interested in sustaining friendships over time?
 - Is the person adaptable and/or flexible enough to participate in social activities that are not preferred?
 - How does the person respond when there are guests in the home?
-

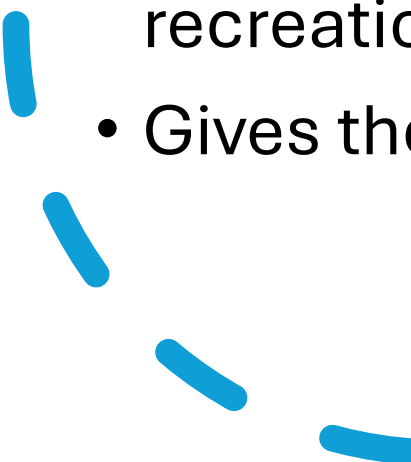


EXAMPLE: Social Activities, continued

- How much choice is the person given around social relationships?
 - What supports are needed to maintain healthy relationships and/or boundaries with family members?
 - What supports are needed to maintain healthy relationships and/or boundaries with friends?
-



Advantages of Adding the Context Tool

- Captures details that are not fully explored in the SIS-A.
 - Gives the individual and/or family/friends the chance to share their expertise. “Who knows us better than we do!”
 - Expands on needs that may be addressed by resources other than agency sponsored supports – natural supports, a medical team, recreational opportunities.
 - Gives the Person-Centered Planning Team the full picture.
- 

How it might work...

- The Context Tool could/would be given on a different day from the SIS-A.
- It would be part of the information collected before having the person-centered planning meeting.
- The questions are “prompts” that would lead to discussion.
- The information that the person and their family give would be written down; it is not about “scoring” or checking a box.
- Would it be “required”? Maybe not. Just encouraged as the best way to write an excellent person-centered plan.





It takes lots of information to build a person-centered plan.



SIS-A SCORE



SUPPLEMENTAL
QUESTIONS



CHOICE OF
RESIDENCE



CONTEXT TOOL



PLANNING MEETING
- HOPES & DREAMS



Questions for Your Feedback:

- Do you think the Context Tool will be helpful?
- What is missing from the Context Tool?
- Is the Context Tool too long?
- Should folks be able to use the Context Tool flexibly. For example, should teams pick some, not all, of the 9 support areas?
- How often do you think the Context Tool should be used?
 - It could be used annually when making changes to the ISA.
 - It could be every 3 years when the SIS-A is done.