

SSDS 1.0 Stanford Social Dimensions Scale

Name: _____ ID#: _____

Date of Birth: ___ / ___ / ____ (MM/DD/YYYY) Gender: female male

Today's Date: ___ / ___ / ____ (MM/DD/YYYY)

Informant Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Please answer the following questions about this person's social behavior in general over the past four weeks or since your last visit, not merely on his/her best or worst days. Circle your answer. Use the definitions in the box below to score each item.

N = Never true R = Rarely true S = Sometimes true O = Often true A = Always true

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|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Makes attempts to get my attention for the purpose of sharing his/her interests or enjoyment with me. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 2. | In a social situation, attempts to play with other children/peers instead of avoiding the group. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 3. | Actively avoids social interactions. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 4. | Tries to get my attention using both verbal and nonverbal communication in a way that seems typical for others his/her age. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 5. | Without prompting from an adult, will initiate social interactions with others | N | R | S | O | A |
| 6. | Does NOT want to participate in activities that involve other children/peers. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 7. | Will try to get my attention or interact with me, without being reminded to do so. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 8. | Plays with others his/her own age. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 9. | Shows me toys/objects, etc. just to show them to me, not to get help or make a request. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 10. | Prefers to play with children/peers rather than alone. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 11. | Shows me things that he/she finds interesting, not just to make a request or get help. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 12. | Is interested in having friends. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 13. | When enjoying something, he/she tries to share that enjoyment with me. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 14. | Enjoys interacting with others. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 15. | Seeks out interactions with me (e.g. smiles, makes noises, laughs etc.). | N | R | S | O | A |
| 16. | Shows empathy for others (e.g. shows happiness or concern for others). | N | R | S | O | A |
| 17. | Approaches others appropriately to interact without being prompted. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 18. | Does not notice or pay attention to the presence of other children or adults. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 19. | Spends more time playing by him/herself than with others. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 20. | It is not concerning to my child that he/she is often alone. | N | R | S | O | A |

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autismdd@stanford.edu.

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|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 21. | Chooses to play by him/herself or with pets, animals or objects instead of with others. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 22. | Begins interactions/conversations in ways that seem unusual to others. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 23. | Waves as he/she says hello or goodbye. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 24. | When I interact with my child, he/she makes eye contact with me. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 25. | Vocalizes and makes eye contact with me when he/she makes a request. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 26. | Approaches other children/peers in a way that seems unusual or odd in comparison to others his/her age. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 27. | Reads subtle emotions (e.g. ashamed, jealous, pleased) in others through their facial expressions. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 28. | Understands complex nonverbal gestures used by another person (e.g. descriptive gestures to enact or represent an event or object, emphatic or emotional gestures). | N | R | S | O | A |
| 29. | Understands the subtle emotions (e.g. ashamed, jealous, pleased) that another person is feeling based on their body language (e.g. posture, gait, eye contact). | N | R | S | O | A |
| 30. | Reads basic emotions (e.g. happy, upset, sad) in others through their facial expressions. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 31. | Recognizes simple nonverbal gestures used by another person (e.g. pointing, nodding, shaking the head). | N | R | S | O | A |
| 32. | Identifies adults or children/peers he/she has met before. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 33. | Recognizes people outside of the context in which he/she is used to seeing them (e.g. sees a therapist at the grocery store). | N | R | S | O | A |
| 34. | Recognizes familiar people. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 35. | Identifies familiar people in a picture. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 36. | Puts his/her hand out to receive something he/she has asked for. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 37. | Approaches and makes appropriate social contact with peers (e.g. smiles, makes noises, laughs, etc.). | N | R | S | O | A |
| 38. | Smiles when he/she approaches another adult or child/peer. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 39. | Has trouble understanding personal space (e.g. stands too close to others when interacting). | N | R | S | O | A |
| 40. | Will orient toward me when interacting with me. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 41. | When someone smiles at my child he/she will smile back. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 42. | Makes attempts to get my attention to get me to attend to his/her needs. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 43. | My child's play is led by other's directions rather than his/her own initiative. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 44. | Watches other children/peers who are not his/her siblings. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 45. | Uses gestures: waves goodbye/hello, claps hands for job well done, leads people to places to share interest, etc. in order to communicate with others. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 46. | Is often withdrawn in social settings where other children/peers are present. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 47. | Interacts with others to get his/her needs met rather than for social interaction. | N | R | S | O | A |

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|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 48. | Engages socially with others but only as part of his/her own routine or preoccupations. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 49. | Prefers to be with people he/she has met before. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 50. | Spends more time looking at unfamiliar people than familiar people. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 51. | Is able to read the meaning of nonverbal cues another person makes with their body (e.g. use of eye contact, orienting the body to the speaker, leaning forward to show interest, walking quickly when in a hurry). | N | R | S | O | A |
| 52. | Points to objects of interest to share his/her enjoyment with others. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 53. | When I point out something interesting, my child looks at it. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 54. | Shares snacks, toys, objects etc. with others without being prompted. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 55. | Does not respond when approached by others in a familiar situation. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 56. | Shares food or toys with others without being asked. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 57. | When a familiar person tries to engage with my child, he/she responds positively and appropriately by smiling, saying hello, etc. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 58. | When my child asks for help, he/she also looks at or points to the object he/she wants and checks to see if I am looking. | N | R | S | O | A |

If this person is nonverbal, stop here.

| | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 59. | Engages in back and forth conversations with others. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 60. | Does NOT ask to have play dates with friends. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 61. | Asks to have play dates with friends. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 62. | I can have a conversation with my child in which he/she responds to me by building on what was said. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 63. | Will respond when others make small talk about things outside of my child's specific interests. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 64. | Talks about wanting to have friends. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 65. | Mostly talks about topics that interest him/her with little attempt to involve me in the conversation. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 66. | Is able to integrate the use of vocalizations, eye contact, and/or gestures when starting a conversation. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 67. | Will begin a conversation with another child/peer he/she has just met. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 68. | Does NOT start conversations with others. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 69. | Will respond when an adult makes small talk, but only when the topic relates to his/her interests. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 70. | Engages in small talk with me on a variety of topics. | N | R | S | O | A |
| 71. | Asks questions about other people's thoughts, feelings or experiences. | N | R | S | O | A |

Instructions for Use of the SSDS

The SSDS is a 71-item parent/caregiver questionnaire suitable for parents who have a child of any age. There is published evidence of its suitability for use by parents of children ages 2 to 17 years (Phillips et al., 2019). It is suitable for use in typically developing youth as well as children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorder and those with neurodevelopmental disorders and/or psychiatric disorders. The first 58 items are appropriate for any child of any language level, while the full 71 items include additional language-based items suitable for verbal individuals.

There are currently no cut-off scores available to indicate clinical concern. However, the standard scoring will allow comparisons in scores for research purposes.

Ratings reflect observations of behavior within the past month and should be made by a parent or caregiver who has adequate knowledge of current behavior. The SSDS can be administered by paper and pencil or electronically, but item selection, order, and wording must not be altered in any way.

SSDS Scoring Guidelines

For most items, use the following point assignment:

N = 1 R = 2 S = 3 O = 4 A = 5

Reverse coded items use the following points:

N = 5 R = 4 S = 3 O = 2 A = 1

The following items are reverse coded:

3, 6, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, 39, 43, 46, 47, 48, 50, 55, 60, 65, 68, 69

In addition to a total SSDS score, scores can be further separated by factor analysis clusters:

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Social Motivation: | 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 21, 37, 46 |
| Social Affiliation: | 1, 4, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 52 |
| Expressive Social Communication: | 24, 25, 38, 40, 41, 42, 57 |
| Social Recognition: | 16, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 51 |
| Unusual Approach: | 22, 26, 39, 48 |

Terms and Conditions of Use

- The SSDS is available free of charge for use in research and clinical practice.
- There should be no charge to families for the use of this instrument.
- Please do not distribute the SSDS to other researchers or clinicians for use. Please ask them to contact us first.
- The SSDS should be used as is, without changing the order of items, wording of questions, or number of items administered.
- Unauthorized translation is not permitted. If you notice an error or would like to translate the SSDS, please contact us at autismdd@stanford.edu.
- If you publish any work using the SSDS, please cite the following as the source:

Phillips, J. M., Uljarević, M., Schuck, R., Schapp, S., Solomon, E. M., Salzman, E., Allerhand, L., Libove, R. A., Frazier, T. W., & Hardan, A. Y. (2019). Development of the Stanford Social Dimensions Scale (SSDS): Initial validation in autism spectrum disorder and in neurotypicals. *Mol Autism*, 10:48, <http://doi.org/10.1186/s13229-019-0298-9>