

STANDARDIZED SILS READINESS ASSESSMENT TOOL

Supervised Independent Living Settings (SILS) were created to provide Young Adults (YA), with the opportunity to live in an independent setting while still receiving supervision and services, to help prepare them for living on their own post-foster care. SILSs were designed to be a flexible type of placement offering a range of appropriate options with varying degrees of independence.

Supervised Independent Living Setting (SILS): A broad range of settings as defined and permitted under federal regulation for federal funding. SILS are not licensed, they are approved by the agency which provides child welfare services. A SILS placement may include apartments, shared apartments, dorm rooms and rented rooms/space. A young adult may rent a room in the home of a parent, legal guardian, or former foster parent as long as it is paired with agency supervision. In such a placement, the parent, legal guardian, or foster parent is not considered the foster provider for that young adult and therefore does not need to meet the requirements of a traditional foster home and the young adult is not considered to have been returned home. Please note: the young adult may instead be placed with a foster parent, relative, or in any other traditional (e.g., non-SILS) placement in the same way that a child under 18 may be placed as long as the young adult consents to such a placement.

This assessment looks at the YA's current level of functioning in several areas to determine readiness for a SILS. Although the use of this particular assessment is optional, agencies are highly encouraged to utilize it to standardize how YAs are assessed for SILSs. Functioning is determined by the YA's knowledge and skills, as well as their behavioral history. For each area, the assigned agency worker is asked to consider whether or not the YA has the ability to handle that task or if the YA is in process of developing a skill. Certain results may indicate that a YA is not yet ready for a SILS (such as choosing to live with someone who is abusive to the YA) or may indicate that this particular SILS is not appropriate (such as monthly expenses exceeding monthly income). However, YAs do not have to show knowledge and skill in every area for a SILS to be approved. A YA can be approved for a SILS even if some of the skills are still in development. Similarly, while some behavioral patterns such as those resulting from substance abuse or impaired mental health functioning, may indicate a lack of readiness for a SILS, some behaviors exhibited in other living situations may actually improve when a YA is living on their own. Therefore, in addition to the type of SILS requested, readiness should be determined by an overall evaluation of the assessment results.

If the assigned agency worker determines that the YA is not ready for any type of SILS at this time, the assigned agency worker should note what other placements are appropriate

and available for the YA and should ensure the YA is offered an appropriate placement. If the YA is not currently in placement or is in one that is more restrictive than necessary, and the YA wants to move to another placement, the assigned agency worker should facilitate such a move whenever possible. The agency assigned worker, and the YA should work together to develop Young Adult Self-Sufficiency (YASS) plan goals that address the areas where the YA needs to gain knowledge and/or skills and/or change behavior. These new goals should be included in the next YASS plan when it is due.

The assigned agency worker and the young adult should complete this assessment together. It may take up to 45 minutes to complete.

Young Adult: _____ Agency Assigned Worker: _____

Address of proposed SILS: _____

YA plans to live: ☐ alone or with child only ☐ with roommates ☐ with supportive adult

Other relevant information about the proposed SILS: _____

Section 1: FINANCIAL PLAN

Using the budgeting tool provided below, have the YA list out their projected income and expenses to calculate whether they can afford the proposed SILS.

Monthly Sources of Income	Monthly Expenses
1. SILS payment: \$ _____ 2. _____: \$ _____ 3. _____: \$ _____ 4. _____: \$ _____ Total: \$ _____ List all sources of income above and the expected monthly amount from that source. This should include wages from employment, financial aid and any other sources of income.	1. Rent: \$ _____ 2. Utilities: \$ _____ 3. Cable/Internet: \$ _____ 4. Food: \$ _____ 5. Household items: \$ _____ (e.g., toilet paper, cleaning supplies) 6. Personal/Hygiene: \$ _____ 7. Cell Phone: \$ _____ 8. Clothing/Shoes: \$ _____ 9. Car payment: \$ _____ 10. Car insurance: \$ _____ 11. Gas: \$ _____ 12. Car repair/maintenance: \$ _____ 13. Entertainment: \$ _____ 14. Child-related expenses: \$ _____ (e.g., diapers, formula, baby food, clothing, toys, books) 15. Savings: \$ _____ 16. Other: _____ \$ _____ 17. Other: _____ \$ _____ Total: \$ _____
TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME: \$ _____	TOTAL MONTHLY EXPENSES: \$ _____

Total monthly income \$ _____ minus total monthly expenses \$ _____ = \$ _____

1. Is the YA's income greater or equal to their expenses? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. If additional income is needed beyond the SILS payment to meet the YA's expenses, does the YA have stable income? * ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

**Examples of unstable income include seasonal work, such as holiday retail or summer recreation; vendor work, such as selling items at flea markets, farmer's markets, etc.; self-employed without history of steady income; "pick-up" work, such as filling in for a friend who paints houses; etc. In addition, if the YA is in a very new position, it may not yet be considered stable.*

3. If housing unit requires payment of a security deposit does the YA have funds available or a plan for paying the deposit?** ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A
4. If a rent payment(s) is due before the first SILS payment will be received, does the YA have the funds to cover the rent payment(s) or have an alternate arrangement to take care of the payment(s)?** ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

If the YA does not have these funds available, other funding sources/options should be explored, including ILP funds.

***There are instances when YAs have access to available funding resources that are not part of their monthly income. If YA does not have the necessary funds available, per the SILS readiness assessment, a goal should be added to the YA's YASS Plan for how the YA will obtain the necessary funds.*

Section 2: KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND DEMONSTRATED BEHAVIOR

Using your knowledge of the YA's past behavior and their current knowledge and skills based on your experience with the youth, evaluate the readiness indicators for each subject area.

Budgeting and Money Management (note: must show reasonable competence in this area for SILS to be approved)

	Subject	Description	Yes	No	Skills to be developed/Notes
1.	Budgeting	During completion of Section 1, did the YA have a clear understanding of their daily expenses and what their expenses will be when residing in the SILS?			
2.	Rent/Bill Payment	Does the YA know where and how to pay rent and bills on time?			
		Does the YA understand the consequences of not paying rent, e.g., eviction, court record impacting ability to find future housing, and/or bills (damaging credit incurring late fees, losing service)?			
		Does the YA know what to do if they receive some type of late notice?			
		Does the YA demonstrate the capability to pay rent and bills in a timely manner, including any history of bill-paying such as for a cell phone?			
3.	Money Management	Ask the YA to explain how the income they receive will be used to cover the bills that arrive at different times of the month.			
		If the YA will be receiving financial aid for school, can they explain how they will manage the funds to ensure that they will be available throughout the school term as needed?			
		Does the YA know how to protect themselves from being taken advantage of financially by family members or friends/acquaintances, scams, etc.?			

Budgeting and Money Management (note: must show reasonable competence in this area for SILS to be approved)

	Subject	Description	Yes	No	Skills to be developed/Notes
4.	Responsible Spending	Does the YA understand the risks associated with buying on credit (such as using credit cards, “rent-to- own” stores and payday loans)?			
		Is the YA able to name the risks: paying excessive interest, accumulating debt, damaging their credit history, etc.?			
5.	Banking	If the YA has a bank account, ask them to describe how they currently manage their money. Do they have a history of overdrafts and/or excessive ATM fees? Does the YA balance their transactions?			
		If the YA does not have a bank account, does the YA know how to obtain one and how to bank responsibly (e.g., avoid overdrafts and excessive fees)?			

Self-Care and Interaction with Others (note: it is important that the YA have good skills and a history that predicts success in these areas in order to be SILS-ready).

	Subject	Description	Yes	No	Skills to be developed/Notes
6.	Safety	Is the SILS living situation the YA is requesting a safe environment?			
		Can the YA describe what a safe living environment looks like? Can they identify where/to whom would they go to if they found themselves in an unsafe situation?			
7.	Healthcare & Medication	Does the YA know where the nearest hospital or emergency 24-hour clinic is located and how to find one?			

7.	Healthcare & Medication	Does the YA know the benefits of preventative care?			
		Does the YA have a primary care doctor?			
		Does the YA have a Medicaid/other health insurance benefits card and/or their Medicaid/other health insurance number and know what type of Medicaid/other health insurance plan they have?			
		Does the YA know what to do if they have a mental health emergency?			
		Does the YA know how to access therapy and prescribed medication if needed?			
		Does the YA know how to obtain and renew prescribed medications?			
		Does the YA understand the importance of following the directions on over-the-counter medication and prescriptions (risks of over-dosing, mixing certain medications, side effects of some medications that can make you drowsy and unable to perform certain tasks like driving, operating machinery)?			
8.	Healthy Sexuality	Does the YA understand myths around preventing pregnancy (e.g., that “pulling out” or only having unprotected sex during your period do not prevent pregnancy)?			
		Does the YA understand that only abstinence can fully protect against STIs but that proper condom use and limiting sexual partners can help reduce the risk?			
		Does the YA know where to go to get contraception and treatment for sexually transmitted infections?			

	Subject	Description	Yes	No	Skills to be developed/Notes
9.	Substance Use	Can the YA explain a safety plan if they engage in drinking or substance use (e.g., using a designated driver, having a safe person to call)?			
		Does the YA understand the risks to personal safety when drinking or using drugs (e.g., can be sexually assaulted, robbed)?			
		Does the YA understand the consequences (health, legal) of drinking and vaping or marijuana while underage?			
		Does the YA know where to access substance use resources/services?			
10.	Problem Solving	Can the YA describe coping strategies for when they are angry or upset (e.g., taking a walk, listening to music, talking to a friend)?			
		Can the YA deal with a conflict in the home (e.g., how would they handle a disagreement with their landlord, a roommate or a neighbor)?			
		Can the YA name someone they could reach out to if they are involved in a conflict they cannot resolve on their own?			

Ability to Handle Household Tasks (Note: YA can develop these skills in the SILS so a willingness to learn is enough to approve the placement).

	Subject	Description	Yes	No	Skills to be developed/Notes
11.	Food Preparation	Can the YA shop for food and prepare meals?			
		Have the YA name a few items or meals and describe how to shop for food within their budget.			
12.	Home Maintenance	Have the YA explain what a hazard free home is and their plan to maintain it.			
		Does the YA know how to maintain a home free from hazards?			

Other (note: a SILS can be approved if YA is still gaining this knowledge and learning these skills).

	Subject	Description	Yes	No	Skills to be developed/Notes
13.	Driving and/or Public Transportation	Ask the YA to describe what is necessary to own and operate a car (e.g., a valid license, insurance, money for gas and repairs, annual vehicle registration). Can the YA describe a plan for obtaining all of these?			
		Ask the YA to describe what public transportation they use to get to their job, school, or other daily activities.			
		Has the YA verified that they will be able to get to school, work, etc. at necessary times from the identified SILS site?			
14.	Community Resources	Is the YA aware of relevant community resources and how to access them if they encounter housing problems, run out of food, have a legal issue, etc.?			

Parenting - Complete if YA has or will have a child or children residing with them. (If YA is still developing these knowledge/skills, a supportive SILS can still be approved). NOTE: Proceed to Readiness Assessment Summary if this section does not apply to YA.

	Subject	Description	Yes	No	Skills to be developed/Notes
15	Budgeting	Did the household budget as listed in Section 1 account for the expenses related to the child(ren)?			
16.	Child Care	Does the YA have a childcare plan that is realistic and safe?			
		Does the YA understand how to access subsidies for child care?			
17.	Health and Safety	Does the YA understand how to create a child-safe environment (e.g., not leaving dangerous objects within reach, installing child safety plugs, keeping medicines and cleaning supplies away from the child(ren), keeping windows secured)?			

READINESS ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Based on the readiness indicators, the assigned agency worker should determine which of the following statements best describes the YA's current level of functioning and situation. It is essential for the YA to have an income that covers their expenses and to possess a reasonable level of knowledge and skills in readiness items, numbers 1-11. However, for other readiness indicators, a SILS can be approved with a plan for the YA to continue developing those skills.

Caseworker note: These are recommendations, not requirements. The agency may recommend a direction and the YA may choose a different living plan for themselves. In these cases, the agency assigned worker should make all attempts necessary to support the YA in their decision. The use of this Readiness Assessment is to help the caseworker guide conversations around the YA's ability to live independently.

Check One	Readiness Assessment Summary	Explain
	Recommendation for a fully independent SILS Setting	YA has a stable income and can afford the identified housing. Their knowledge and skills indicate readiness for this type of SILS.
	Recommendation for a supportive SILS Setting	YA will need additional support from adult(s) who can provide assistance and support to help the YA fully develop their knowledge and skills.
Recommendation YA is not ready for an SILS at this time		
	Income will not cover expenses	Indicated in Section 1: FINANCIAL PLAN
	Readiness indicators show that YA's knowledge and skills are not at the level needed to successfully live independently.	Identify item numbers from the assessment that indicate a lack of readiness to include in YA's next YASS Plan

The identified areas where the YA lacks readiness for independent living, should be incorporated into the YA's YASS plan goals as soon as possible or, at the latest, at the next YASS review.

Date of assessment: _____

Name of Assigned Agency Worker: _____

Assigned Agency Worker signature: _____

Young Adult signature: _____