



This tips sheet provides an overview of how and why to use the Integrated Supports Star.

Overview of the Integrated Support Star Principle:

All of us access a variety of supports to achieve our envisioned good life. Historically, planning for a person's and/or family's supports focused mainly on the government-funded or specialized services available and often left out the many assets and resources that could be leveraged to meet a person's needs.

The Integrated Supports Star encourages accessing five main areas of supports:

- **Public or privately funded based on eligibility**
- **Community places and services that are available to anyone**
- **Relationships**
- **Day-to-day and adaptive technology**
- **The assets and strengths of the individual and family**

This principle serves as a reminder that everyone accesses a variety of supports to meet their day-to-day needs, support the achievement of long-term or short-term goals, solve problems, or enhance their quality of life.

Who Should Use it and Why?

The Integrated Support Star can be used by anyone (individuals, families, or professionals) for mapping current services and supports, problem-solving for a specific need or planning next steps. It can be used to explore current needs, identify gaps, or plan how to access supports for the future. The tool can be used to guide a conversation over the phone or facilitate an in-person planning meeting with one person or a group of people. The Integrated Supports Star can be used by anyone to guide their thinking.

Important Things to Remember about the Integrated Supports Star:

- The Integrated Supports Star helps organize and generate ideas. This can be done using the actual tool or just remembering the five points of the star during planning and problem-solving.
- The Star can be used for making day-to-day decisions or for planning for the future. It can also help when having conversations with other support team members about new ideas or hard to talk about topics.
- There is no wrong way to get started or wrong place to put your ideas. It is designed to expand ideas and to explore how to leverage and connect the different types of support.
- Completing the Star simply for the sake of completing the tool should never be the goal. The tool is designed to help you have interactive conversations and visually organize thoughts and ideas.
- Be mindful that any conversation about someone's life or future is very personal. It is important to recognize and be responsive to the diversity of experiences, situations and reactions when planning.





Suggested Steps for How to Use the Integrated Supports Star:

Decide the Purpose:

The Integrated Supports Star can be used to explore many different situations. Decide if you are mapping supports or using it to work on a specific goal or situation and then use the center part of the Star to write that purpose. If you are problem-solving, put the specific problem or goal. If you are mapping current or future supports, write the name of the focus person.

Explore Each Part of the Star:

During this step, you are learning more about the person or their situation and what supports they are currently using that might be available to achieve the goal or solve the problem. This information can be gathered during a conversation by listening for the responses that could go in each area of the Star. This is determined by the situation or the comfort level of the person guiding the conversation. Use the Star on the front of the Tips Sheet to guide you through each section.

Identify Specific Resources:

You can now begin identifying additional resources or ideas for each part of the Star to address the specific issue or support need. The idea is to explore options that provide hope and relief for meeting their needs right now and in the future. The supports identified during this step can be written on the original Star or another Star worksheet can be started that is used to define the next steps based on the discussion.

On-going Use of the Star:

The Integrated Supports Star is designed to be used over and over again. It can be repeated for each situation or problem that needs to be addressed. The completed Stars can be used at meetings to add or delete things that have been accomplished. It is designed to become a problem-solving, planning, or progress tracking process, not a tool to be completed and put into a file.

Stuart's Integrated Supports Star

Stuart is a 45-year-old man who lives in his family home. He was diagnosed with traumatic brain injury from a car accident when he was a teenager and has received support for his activities of daily living from his parents. Recently his father was diagnosed with terminal cancer and is now in hospice care, and his mother, who is in her nineties, is becoming frail. Stuart has a younger sister, Amy, who lives in another state. Stuart's case manager met with Stuart and his mother in person, and Amy joined them via Zoom, to plan for on-going and future supports. They used the Integrated Supports Star to identify areas where Stuart had a lot of support already in place, such as relationships and in his community, as well as how he was able to use technology and his own strengths in his daily life. They were also able to think about different eligibility supports he might be able to access.

