**Protocol for Conducting a Social Network Analysis Interview
and Completing the Social Network Analysis Form**

Purpose of the Social Network Analysis Interview

The Social Network Analysis Interview can be used to gather information about a focus participant's social relationships. Such information could be used to develop content for an Individualized Support Plan. Such information may also be useful in the context of gathering research/evaluation data.

Participants

Use the Social Network Analysis Form to guide your interview. Ideally, the interview will include the focus participant and at least two other people who have lived with or had daily contact with the focus participant during the three-month period preceding the date of the interview. These people are hereafter referred to as "anchors." The anchors may be family members, staff members, guardians, advocates, or others who have knowledge of the focus participant's daily activities. If the focus participant chooses not to participate, interview only the anchors.

Typically, the anchors would provide interview information only when:

1.   The focus participant does not respond to a question, or

2.   At least one of the anchors believes the information reported by the focus participant is incorrect. In this instance at least two of the people (i.e., both anchors; or one anchor and the focus participant) should agree on the accuracy of the information. (For example, if you are asking how often the focus participant had contact with a particular person during the last 3 months, at least two people should agree on the answer.)

Conducting the Social Network Analysis Interview

The Social Network Analysis Interview is conducted with the aid of the Social Network Analysis Form. The interview is used to gather information about the focus participant's social relationships (e.g., the people he or she likes to spend time with). The following provides information about each section of the form.

Family and Other Important People

Begin by asking the focus participant and the anchors to name the family members and other people who are the "most important" to the focus participant. These are the people with whom the focus participant "most likes to spend time," or with whom the person likes to (or

would like to, given the opportunity) spend "a lot" of his or her time. Typically, you would explain that you are interested in people *other than those who are paid to provide support to the focus participant*. (Note, however, that you are free to alter this protocol and the Social Network Analysis Form to address issues that are important to you. This is described in more detail below.)

Family. Begin with family members. Write the name of each family member, and place a check mark under the "Family" column.

Next, record approximately how often the focus participant had contact with each family member during the last 3 months. "Contact" means doing an activity together.

(Some rules of thumb: When two people are "doing an activity together," this usually means that they are engaged in the activity for 15 minutes or more. This rule of thumb helps to ensure that the contact is something more than a mere "howdy" from a grocery check-out clerk. Also, doing an activity together usually means that the people are engaged in some kind of *reciprocal social contact*. For example, the two people may be talking to each other, touching each other, cooperating with each other to complete a task, just doing the activity together, and so on. For example, two people who go to a movie together are probably experiencing reciprocal social contact of some kind no matter how subtle [e.g., sharing a box of popcorn]. However, simply sitting beside a stranger in a movie theater is not reciprocal social contact and thus is not an instance of social contact.)

Use the following codes to record the frequency of contact with each family member:

D   Place a check mark in this column if the focus participant had contact with the person approximately *daily* (or more often) during the last three months

2W   Place a check mark in this column if the focus participant had contact with the person approximately *twice a week* during the last three months

1W   Place a check mark in this column if the focus participant had contact with the person approximately *once a week* during the last three months

2M   Place a check mark in this column if the focus participant had contact with the person approximately *twice a month* (i.e., once every other week) during the last three months

1M   Place a check mark in this column if the focus participant had contact with the person approximately *once a month* during the last three months

<1M   Place a check mark in this column if the focus participant had contact with the person approximately *less than once a month* (but at least once) during the last

three months

0   Place a check mark in this column if the focus participant had no
         contact with the person during the last three months

Other important people. After completing the list of family members, gather the same
information about other important people. If you are conducting the interview as a *researcher*,
rather than (or in addition to) as someone who will use the information in developing an
Individualized Support Plan, you may want to consider the following:

- Are you specifically interested in identifying social network members with disabilities as
  you complete the interview? For example, you might consider this to be important if you
  are interested in determining whether the focus participant experiences social
  relationships with anyone other than (for example) his or her housemates with
  disabilities. If this is a concern, you may want to phrase you questions, and code the data,
  in a particular way.

- Are you specifically interested in identifying (or excluding) social network members who
  are people paid to provide support to the focus participant? For example, you might
  consider this to be important if you were interested in determining whether the focus
  participant experiences social relationships with anyone other than people who are paid to
  provide support to him or her. If this is a concern, you may want to phrase your
  questions, and code the data, in a particular way.

- The Social Network Analysis Form currently includes the following categories of social
  network members: family, housemate, co-worker, schoolmate, neighbor, and other. You
  might want to change these to a set of categories that are more meaningful (a) to the
  participant and to you as collaborators in ISP development, and/or (b) to you as a
  researcher.

- When social network members are co-workers or schoolmates, you may be interested in
  the participant's contact with them only when it occurs *outside the context of work or
  school* (where such contacts may be virtually guaranteed, and where the contacts might
  be considered as "formal" or forced, rather than freely chosen). If this is a concern, you
  may want to phrase your question, and code the data, in a particular way.

Begin by asking the focus participant and the anchors to name the people who are the
"most important" to the focus participant, or the people whom the focus participant "most likes
to spend time," or with whom the focus participant likes to (or *would* like to, given the
opportunity) spend "a lot" of his or her time. As you gather the list of names, place a check mark
in the column that best describes the relationship (i.e., "Housemate," "Co-Worker,"
"Schoolmate," "Neighbor," "Other").

Next, record approximately how often the focus participant had contact with each person during the last 3 months.

Other People. Now, ask the focus participant and the anchors to name any other people the focus participant had contact with *at least once in the last three months.* (See the bottom panel of the Social Network Analysis Form.) Although these are people whom the focus participant does not regard as "important" (otherwise they would have been previously named), they *are* people with whom the participant experiences activities. This information may help you determine the degree to which the participant's social contacts are with people who are—and who are not—regarded as important.

Remember that "contact" means doing an activity together. And remember that "doing an activity together" means the two are engaged in reciprocal social contact for approximately 15 minutes are more. Do not record the names of any people who do not meet this criterion.

As you gather the list of names, place a check mark in the column that best describes the relationship (i.e., "Housemates," "Co-Workers," "Schoolmates," "Neighbor," "Other"). Record the frequency of contact using the same codes you preciously used. However, the "0" does not apply *because the people listed in this section are people with whom, by definition, the focus participant experienced at least one contact in the last 3 months.*

Social Network Analysis Form

Date: _____
Focus Person: _____
People Interviewed: _____
Interviewer: _____

Name of Social Network Member	Social Network Category						Frequency of Contact, Last 3 Mos.						
	Family	Housemate	Co-Worker	Schoolmate	Neighbor	Other	D	2W	1W	2M	1M	<1M	0

Family and Other Important People

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Other People

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10/25/05

Name of Social Network Member		Social Network Category						Frequency of Contact, Last 3 Mos.						
	Family	Housemate	Co-Worker	Schoolmate	Neighbor	Other	D	2W	1W	2M	1M	<1M	0
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21													
23													
25													