

*Objective*

accurate

VALIDATED

SASSI~4

SASSI~A2

Spanish SASSI

SAVR~S2

SAS~ASL

BADDS

Effective

efficient

*Versatile*

informative



## ~ Message ~ from the CEO

by Nelson J. Tiburcio, Ph.D.

Dear SASSI Friends and Colleagues,

Here we are with 2019 right around the corner; yet another year has come and gone. This has been a year of many sad statistics, including recent documentation that more than 72,000 individuals lost their lives as a direct result of opioid overdoses in 2017 (CDC Wonder, 2018). Recent data from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (March 2018) cites: "Every day, more than 115 people in the United States die after overdosing on opioids. The misuse of and addiction to opioids—including prescription pain relievers, heroin, and synthetic opioids such as fentanyl—is a serious national crisis that affects public health as well as social and economic welfare." Trends suggest that by year end, 2019 may result in even greater numbers of these devastating tolls on human lives. These drug abuse and overdose patterns that continue to ravage our country have finally taken on a national focus. Overdose prevention efforts, including first responder training in overdose prevention and medications have become the norm rather than the exception. This is exciting news, and I am sure all will agree, it is about time, and so very, very needed.

We at The SASSI Institute continue to collaborate with many of you on various initiatives. Perhaps our most important one is the finalization of our Adolescent SASSI-3 research study; we are hoping to conclude data collection by December 2019. We continue to seek your participation as we near completion of this important work so we may offer you an updated instrument that accurately identifies the most recent trends in adolescent alcohol and drug abuse, as well as the abuse of prescription medications.

Some of the feedback from currently participating users include how helpful the online administration screening platforms are in facilitating your work. In tandem with our clinical help-line and customer service lines, it is only one of the latest initiatives we are providing in the hopes of making your jobs easier. But we need your help; we simply cannot finish this and other studies without your collaboration. Later in this issue look for more information on how to participate. Our principal aim is to ensure that this revision offers those of you on the frontlines, another tool to identify and address substance use disorders, including those affecting our most vulnerable population, our young.

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# PROFILE ANALYSIS

by Kristin S. Kimmell, LCSW, LCAC

If you have attended one of our trainings either in-person or online, you know the section on how to administer the SASSI to a client is one of the most important. A thoughtful approach can set the tone for the entire assessment by helping a client feel more at ease and engaged in the treatment process. We emphasize the importance of first establishing rapport with the client. The questionnaire is presented as an aid, not a test with right or wrong answers. We instruct to administer the true/false side first, then checking the appropriate time frame for the face valid side. Letting the client know s/he will have a chance to discuss the results at a later time increases the client’s comfort level.

Our protocol is based on the recommended one-on-one consultation. We realize that is not always possible. Administrators of the SASSI work in a variety of settings including schools, probation departments, EAP, treatment agencies, institutions and private practice. Since the SASSI does not require a professional to administer it, a variety of personnel can be trained, but both the context and the administrator can have a significant impact on the receptivity of the client. This example of the context of a SASSI given to a client dramatically shows the difference the setting can make in the results.

One of our clinicians fielded this call. The administrator did not know which results to use even though both profiles came up with a high probability of having a Substance Use Disorder.

The client is a 46-year-old male who was given the SASSI at the Courthouse in a packet of material he was instructed to complete. Two weeks later he was given another SASSI to complete. This time with a counselor assigned to evaluate him.

Here are the results of the first SASSI he completed at the Courthouse:

As you can see, he meets Decision Rule # 9. Looking at the graph, some scales and numbers stand out. On his face valid scales, including SYM, his numbers were within the norm, between the 15th and 85th percentile. His OAT score is extremely low which indicates he has a hard time acknowledging personal limitations or shortcomings and may have difficulty in groups. The other significant score is the DEF score of 8. In spite of the elevated DEF score, he did meet one rule. The SAM is almost at the 85th percentile so, in my mind, I might be more inclined to say he was defensive about his substance use and perhaps minimizing on the face valid scales. This hypothesis would depend on the rest of the assessment with any additional information. However, he was given the SASSI to complete within a packet of materials, and it is very unclear what instructions he was given, if any, on how to complete the SASSI.

### SASSI-4 Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory

To reorder: 1-800-726-0526  
Professionals may call 888-297-2774 for free assistance interpreting this profile.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Gender **M** Age **46**

Case Number \_\_\_\_\_ Test date \_\_\_\_\_

#### Adult Male Profile

Face Valid Alcohol	Face Valid Other Drugs	Symptoms	Obvious Attributes	Subtle Attributes	Defensiveness	Supplemental Addiction Measure	Family vs. Control	Correctional
FVA	FVOD	SYM	OAT	SAT	DEF	SAM	FAM	COR
7	1	2	0	3	8	8	11	1

T Score

Percentile

Scale	Percentile
FVA	15
FVOD	15
SYM	15
OAT	15
SAT	15
DEF	85
SAM	85
FAM	85
COR	15

Rx Prescription Drug Scale

Rx1 0 + Rx2 0 = Rx Total 0

**RAP** Random Answering Pattern

**0** If RAP is 2 or more results may not be meaningful. Try to resolve problem before proceeding.

Check every rule, yes or no.

Rule 1 a. FVA 18 or more      Either      **a or b?** ☒ yes ☐ no  
b. FVOD 16 or more     

Rule 2 SYM 7 or more? ☐ yes ☒ no

Rule 3 OAT 8 or more? ☐ yes ☒ no

Rule 4 SAT 7 or more? ☐ yes ☒ no

Rule 5 a. SYM 5 or more      Both      **a and b?** ☒ yes ☐ no  
b. SAT 4 or more     

Rule 6 a. SYM 6 or more      Both      **a and b?** ☒ yes ☐ no  
b. DEF OR SAM 7 or more     

Rule 7 a. OAT 7 or more      Both      **a and b?** ☒ yes ☐ no  
b. SAT 6 or more     

Rule 8 a. FVA OR FVOD 3 or more      ☒ All three      **a, b and c?** ☒ yes ☐ no  
b. OAT 3 or more       
c. DEF 9 or more     

Rule 9 a. FVA 6 or more      OR FVOD 4 or more      ☒  
b. SAT 3 or more      ☒  
c. DEF 7 or more      ☒ All three      **a, b and c?** ☒ yes ☐ no

Rule 10 a. FVA 8 or more      OR FVOD 5 or more      ☒  
b. SAT 1 or more      ☒  
c. DEF 4 or more      ☒ All four      **a, b, c and d?** ☒ yes ☐ no  
d. SAM 4 or more

THE DECISION RULE:

1. ANY rule answered "yes"? ☒ **HIGH PROBABILITY** of having a Substance Use Disorder

Check if Rx is 3 or more      High Probability of Prescription Drug Abuse

2. ALL rules answered "no"? ☐ **LOW PROBABILITY** of having a Substance Use Disorder

Check if DEF is 8 or more      Elevated DEF scores increase the possibility of the SASSI masking individuals with a substance use disorder. Elevated DEF may also reflect situational factors.

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## PROFILE ANALYSIS

Continued from page 2

Let's look at the results of the 2nd administration given just two weeks later in the office of the counselor who was evaluating him after meeting and talking with the counselor.

In this profile, the client meets multiple decision rules including numbers 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 10. All it takes is one rule to meet high probability and more than one does not mean a more severe substance use disorder. Diagnosis and severity are based on the DSM-5 criteria. It is evident his raw scores have changed to impact the decision rule results.

There is a significant change in his Face Valid Scales with an FVA of 11 and an FVOD of 14. His SYM score of 6 also shows elevation. OAT has changed from a 0 to a 9. He is now indicating a willingness to acknowledge shortcomings and limitations. In addition, he probably can identify with other substance abusers so a referral to a group treatment program can be considered.

The significant drop in the DEF score from an 8 to a 5 is nice to see. The client met with the counselor who was able to establish rapport by making the client more comfortable and explaining what the SASSI is and how it will be used in the context of the assessment.

The low FAM score reflects the client's internal state of mind. He is probably very concerned about what is going on within himself and not so concerned about others.

The final interesting scale change is the COR score and probably more representative of the client's self-assessment at this point. Perhaps he is more able to identify impulsive or anger management issues, risk-taking behaviors, low frustration issues, or poor social skills. It gives the counselor some insight on what to explore, regarding behaviors which are impacting the client's choices.

The most important difference in these two profiles was how the SASSI was presented to the client. Context, and establishing rapport can produce a more useful SASSI by obtaining a depth of clinical information.

As an aside, we were not informed on why the SASSI was administered twice within a two-week time frame. We do not usually recommend doing so. It may have been the counselor was unaware of the first SASSI administration until receiving the completed materials from probation.

We hope you find this useful information regarding clinical issues. As always, the Clinical Helpline at 888-297-2774 is open to serve you Monday through Friday, 9 am to 5 pm (EST).

Warm regards,

*Kris Kimmell, LCSW, LCAC*  
Director: Clinical Services

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Gender **M** Age **46**  
Case Number \_\_\_\_\_ Test date \_\_\_\_\_

**Adult Male Profile**

Face Valid Alcohol	Face Valid Other Drugs	Symptoms	Obvious Attributes	Subtle Attributes	Defensiveness	Supplemental Addiction Measure	Family vs. Controls	Correctional
FVA	FVOD	SYM	OAT	SAT	DEF	SAM	FAM	COR
<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>

T Score \_\_\_\_\_ Percentile \_\_\_\_\_

**Rx Prescription Drug Scale**  
Rx1 **0** + Rx2 **0** = Rx Total **0**

**THE DECISION RULE:**

1. ANY rule answered "yes"? ☒ **HIGH PROBABILITY** of having a Substance Use Disorder  
Check if Rx is 3 or more \_\_\_\_\_ High Probability of Prescription Drug Abuse

2. ALL rules answered "no"? ☐ **LOW PROBABILITY** of having a Substance Use Disorder  
Check if DEF is 8 or more \_\_\_\_\_ Elevated DEF scores increase the possibility of the SASSI missing individuals with a substance use disorder. Elevated DEF may also reflect situational factors.

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**SASSI**  
RAP Random Answering Pattern  
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Check every rule, yes or no.

Rule 1: a. FVA 18 or more \_\_\_\_\_ Either ☐ yes ☒ no  
b. FVOD 16 or more \_\_\_\_\_ a or b? ☐ yes ☒ no

Rule 2: SYM 7 or more? ☐ yes ☒ no

Rule 3: OAT 8 or more? ☒ yes ☐ no

Rule 4: SAT 7 or more? ☒ yes ☐ no

Rule 5: a. SYM 5 or more ☒ Both ☒ yes ☐ no  
b. SAT 4 or more ☒ a and b? ☐ yes ☒ no

Rule 6: a. SYM 6 or more ☒ Both ☒ yes ☐ no  
b. DEF OR SAM 7 or more ☒ a and b? ☐ yes ☒ no

Rule 7: a. OAT 7 or more ☒ Both ☒ yes ☐ no  
b. SAT 6 or more ☒ a and b? ☐ yes ☒ no

Rule 8: a. FVA OR FVOD 3 or more ☒ All three ☒ yes ☐ no  
b. DEF 3 or more ☒ a, b and c? ☐ yes ☒ no  
c. OAT 9 or more ☒ All three ☐ yes ☒ no  
d. SAM 7 or more ☒ a, b and c? ☐ yes ☒ no

Rule 9: a. FVA 6 or more OR FVOD 4 or more ☒ All four ☒ yes ☐ no  
b. SAT 3 or more ☒ a, b, c and d? ☐ yes ☒ no  
c. DEF 4 or more ☒ All four ☐ yes ☒ no  
d. SAM 4 or more ☒ All four ☐ yes ☒ no

Rule 10: a. FVA 8 or more OR FVOD 5 or more ☒ All four ☒ yes ☐ no  
b. SAT 1 or more ☒ All four ☐ yes ☒ no  
c. DEF 4 or more ☒ All four ☐ yes ☒ no  
d. SAM 4 or more ☒ All four ☐ yes ☒ no



## Twenty Years at Camelot Celebration

The SASSI Institute was founded in 1988 with the release of the original SASSI. By 1993 the business had grown prompting the need to expand staff and facilities to accommodate ongoing research, clinical services, and added customer support. This growth set Dr. Glenn Miller and his wife, Margie, out on their quest to find a permanent home for the SASSI Institute.



In 1996 they found a peaceful and serene setting in the form of a camel farm sitting high atop a hill in Southern Indiana which Margie appropriately named “Camelot.” Using the existing 12,000 sq. foot barn and adjacent living quarters as a starting point, a unique two-year building project was initiated to transform Camelot into a new home for The SASSI Institute.

What originally started out as a dream initiated in Dr. Miller’s basement in Bloomington, had now seeded into a company that was able to facilitate drug screening as part of alcohol and substance use assessments throughout the U.S. and indeed other countries. Dr. Miller and his growing staff further developed the adult SASSI screening tool and added an adolescent version. Subsequently the adult tool underwent an additional revision, as did the adolescent tool. A Spanish version was added and later, screening tools to address screening among special populations such as those needing Vocational Rehabilitation and the Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

In the Fall of 2018, the staff, board members, and professionals in the area had a celebration luncheon in honor of the Millers’ long-held dream which came to fruition 20 years ago when The SASSI Institute moved into its permanent home. Today, as we continue to meet the goals of our mission, we also celebrate what a wonderful legacy the Millers’ have left for future generations. We invite you to stop by and visit our unique facility should your travels ever bring you this way, you will always be greeted warmly.

## The Ongoing Struggle

by Scarlett L. Baker

While the public data shows that professionals in the addiction field, along with government officials and medical professionals are making headway against the opioid epidemic, much work still needs to be done. This work includes preparations for the next battle that will come our way as sadly, there’s always another battle building up momentum.

The SASSI Institute has had the opportunity to interact with many of the individuals at conferences who are at the forefront of this current battle. We share a joint mission of ensuring everyone has the chance for a successful recovery. We give a special thanks to individuals who have shared their stories to help others. Individuals who have suffered at the hands of addiction can provide much-needed help and be a source of strength for others. One of my favorite short quotes from Fr. Richard Rohr that speaks to this is “transformed people, transform people.”

We are pleased to hear from users that our screening tools are aiding them in the identification of substance use disorders; even when someone is reluctant or unwilling to self-disclose. The insight into the client you get from administering the SASSI can help you open the door to their own recovery. If you have never had to opportunity to use the SASSI, we invite you to try it online for free with a few clients. Go to [www.sassi.com/try-it](http://www.sassi.com/try-it) and let us know your interest.

Regardless of the method, whether it’s through a Twelve-Step program, in or out-patient treatment, harm reduction, prevention, recovery coaching, etc., we remain grateful for everyone’s service and dedication.

Best regards,

*Scarlett L. Baker*

Director: Training Services  
Dissemination & Planning

## Screen your teen clients for FREE

Professionals in the U.S. who provide services to adolescents (13-18 years old) who might benefit from screening for alcohol or drug abuse are invited to take part in our Adolescent SASSI-A3 validation project. Your contribution of screenings to this research is vital to its success, and we welcome the inclusion of teens who you would not usually screen for SUD.

*No minimum number of screenings is required to participate.*

### Benefits of Study Participation:

- Conduct adolescent screenings on SASSI Online at no charge during the study period. Administer the research version of the instrument and receive the SASSI-A2 screening report at no cost for that client.
- Each participating teen will get to select a youth or pet-focused charity as the recipient of a \$5 donation made by The SASSI Institute.

[www.SASSI.com/A3](http://www.SASSI.com/A3)

## New Online Training on

On December 1, 2010, we launched [www.sassionline.com](http://www.sassionline.com) which is our web-based platform for the administration and analysis of SASSI questionnaires. Over the past eight years, this platform has proven to be of great value in providing SASSI users with a secure, convenient place to administer questionnaires, receive immediate scoring of clients' responses, and review client results and profile reports. In 2015, we began offering online training courses on SASSI screening tools with a welcome reception. Training online afforded the opportunity for SASSI users in rural areas to access quality training without the added cost of travel expenses and time away from the office.

In response to the overwhelming number of individuals who use, or have transitioned from paper administration to the web-based version, in January 2019 we will be offering the option of taking online training courses that focus on the users' preference of either paper & pencil or the web-based (SASSI Online) version. This offering will provide a more personalized interaction for SASSI users.

Our goal at The SASSI Institute is to ensure that our users are well equipped and comfortable using our screening tools. Please remember to use the toll-free clinical line if you need assistance with administration, scoring, or interpretation of any of our screening tools at 888.297.2774. This free assistance is available to all new, as well as seasoned users.

Thank you all for your dedicated and compassionate service to your clients.

## SASSI User Resource Channel

We are excited to let you know that we host a YouTube page where you can view videos related to our screening tools and various other topics of interest. We will be posting new videos on a frequent basis. To be sure you don't miss out, go to [youtube.com](http://youtube.com) and subscribe to The SASSI Institute page today!



## ~ Message ~ from the CEO

*Continued from page 1*

We have also updated our online NAADAC, APPA, TCBAP, and CACCF approved training offerings. Our goal continues to be to provide you with increased options for professional development in addition to enhanced service provision which have all been well received. Look for additional information on these new offerings later in this Newsletter. Once the Adolescent SASSI-A3 study is concluded, and our new adolescent instrument developed and validated, our training platform will be updated to include this newest version. The revised instrument will offer increased utility in identifying adolescent prescription medication and opioid abuse, in addition to alcohol and other drug use disorders. It will also concord with the DSM-5 criteria.

We have had an eventful and exciting year at The SASSI Institute. This includes the addition of new team members and adding a YouTube page. We also presented and/or participated in a total of thirty-nine national and local conferences, forums and networking venues, including the second Monroe County Opioid Summit in Bloomington, Indiana, and we co-sponsored the Southern Region Indiana Criminal Justice Association conference in Bloomington. In total, we exhibited our work in more than seven states and have initiated collaborations throughout the US and Canada. One other very important function that we hosted was our twenty year at SASSI celebration this past November. One highlight among many was our ability to pay tribute to Dr. Glenn and Margie Miller, their mission, where we stand presently, and where we hope to carry that vision in the years to come. Indeed, I want to thank our entire staff for their help in making all the preparations, and to all our attendees, many thanks for sharing this momentous occasion with us.

In closing, I want to thank the entire SASSI team for their diligence, teamwork and tireless efforts as we strive towards fulfilling our SASSI mission: supporting and responding to the needs of clinicians, research and justice professionals, consumers, and educators who work with those who are affected by substance abuse. We do indeed have an obligation to continue to serve those that need us most. Please continue to visit our recently revamped website ([sassi.com](http://sassi.com)) and our Facebook and LinkedIn pages for further updates as we continue to release new products and services. As always, we welcome and look forward to your comments, suggestions, questions, and requests. Please contact us as needed; we continue to be only a click away!

Sincerely,

*Nelson Jose Tiburcio, PhD*

## STAFF CORNER:

Please help us welcome two new employees. They are a great addition to the current staff and team here at SASSI.

### **Brad Burgess – Shipping & Receiving Coordinator**

Brad joined us in March. He has over 14 years' experience in Shipping & Receiving, and has an Associate's Degree in Computer Information Systems. He is married to his high school sweetheart, and they have five children. During Brad's free time he plays several musical instruments including piano, drums, and brass instruments. He also enjoys reading fantasy, science-fiction and crime novels.

### **Nathan Lowery – IT Network Administrator**

Nathan joined us in October. He has over 21 years of IT experience and has a degree in Electronics. When Nathan is not at work, he spends his time collecting vintage computers, model trains, playing the synthesizer, being a licensed amateur radio operator, and enjoying time with his wife and three children.

*Welcome*

*Come see what's new at....*



[www.sassi.com](http://www.sassi.com)

We are proud to announce the launch of our refreshed website! Changes include updates to the navigation menu and added buttons on the home page, for quick access to SASSI online, SASSI Training and our Newsletter. We have also improved the structure of our product pages and hope you find them easier to use. Among the many new features, the site now contains integrated social media buttons for Facebook, LinkedIn and email, to foster improved communication with our teams. We hope you find the new website easy to use and are as excited about it as we are! As always, if you need any help getting around, please feel free to reach out to our technical support team at 888.251.4147.