Community and Youth Collaborative Institute
School Experience Surveys

Technical Report: Social Skills
Middle/High School Student Version

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I. Definition of Construct
The Social Skills scale assesses students’ perceptions of their ability to engage in positive social interactions with others.

II. Relevance for Practice
Research has shown that youth’s development of social skills promotes overall positive youth development and that social relationships promote success in school (Lynch & Simpson, 2010; Parke, 1998).

III. Scale Description and Instructions
A. Items
1. I respect others.
2. I am responsible.
3. I work well with others.
4. I am a good friend.

B. Response Options
Response options for each item include the following:
1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neither Disagree or Agree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

C. Instructions for Respondents
The following questions ask you about your social skills. For each of the following statements, please fill in ONE circle that best represents your answer.

D. Instructions for Scale Administers
For complete instructions on how to administer the survey, reference the “Student Survey Directions” that are printed within the survey itself. Once each student has a survey, explain that the purpose of the survey is to learn more about their experiences at school. They should mark one answer per statement, selecting the choice that best reflects how they feel.

As students finish, look thoroughly through the surveys to make sure that they didn’t miss any items or questions. Please remember that students do NOT have to answer every question, but do encourage them to complete as much of the survey as possible. Remind students that their answers will help the school know how to best support them.
IV. Scoring Procedures

An average of the response scores from the 4 items should be calculated and used as an indicator of social skills, with higher scores reflecting greater levels of experienced social skills.

V. Psychometric Properties of the Scale

A. Description of Sample

Participants used to test the psychometric properties of the scale included 432 middle school (6-8th grade; 71.1%) and high school (9-12th grade; 28.2%) students from around the state of Ohio. The participants included 223 males (51.6%) and 203 (47.0%) females. The majority of students identified themselves as White/Non-Hispanic (87.5%), Mixed/Multi-Racial (7.9%), African American (2.5%), Latino/Latina (0.9%), or Asian (0.7%), and 36.8% indicated they received a free or reduced lunch. Data on these students were collected as part of a needs assessment within each school’s improvement planning process. Some data were collected using the on-line instrument, whereas others were collected via paper/pencil survey.

B. Basic Descriptive Statistics and Relevant Group Differences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Sample (N = 432)</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males (n = 223)</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females (n = 203)</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/Non-Hispanic (n = 378)</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (n = 54)</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-Type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School (n = 307)</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School (n = 122)</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Group specific data omits students who did not indicate their status. None of the groups were significantly different (p>.05), and the effect sizes (η²) for each comparison indicated that group membership accounted for less than 1% of the variance in the scores.

C. Maximum Value Percentages and Classification of Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentages</th>
<th>Classification of Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Value</td>
<td>½ SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82.4%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The max value percentages reflect the scale mean divided by the number of response options in the scale. This value allows the subscale to be compared with other measured constructs measured in the CAYCI surveys, thereby providing relative information regarding the extent to which students’ experiences are favorable across constructs. The classification of scores provides ranges of values based on the maximum value percentage plus or minus ½ SD percentage. Based on these cut points, schools may determine where they stand on students’ experiences of social skill relative to normed data.
D. Relationship between Social Skills scores and Other Student Perception Constructs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>( r = )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Motivation (^a)</td>
<td>.40*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Connectedness (^a)</td>
<td>.40*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Press (^a)</td>
<td>.32*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Reported Grades (^b)</td>
<td>-.30*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Learning (^c)</td>
<td>.35*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes. \(^a\) Average scores on the respective subscale from the Perceived School Experience Scale (Anderson-Butcher, Amorose, Iachini, & Ball, 2013). \(^b\) Students responded to the question “On average what grades do you get in school?” with response options ranging from 1 (mostly A’s) to 9 (mostly F’s). \(^c\) Average score on the Support for Learning Scale (Anderson-Butcher, Amorose, Iachini, & Ball, 2013). * relationship significant \((p<.01)\).

E. Factorial Validity

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducting using robust maximum likelihood estimation procedures in LISREL 8.71 (Scientific Software International, Inc., Chicago). The CFA model specified that the 4 items loaded on a single latent Social Skills factor. The factor variance was freely estimated, as was the uniqueness for each item. No covariances between uniquenesses were modeled. The data were input using the asymptotic covariance matrix.

The overall fit of the model to the data was reasonably good based on commonly recommended cut off values for evaluating model fit (see Hu & Bentler, 1999), \(S-B \chi^2 = 4.29, df = 2, p = .12\); RMSEA = .052 (90% CI = .00-.12), SRMR = .02; CFI = 1.00, TLI = .99. The table below presents the completely standardized factor loadings and uniquenesses for each item. Squared multiple correlations averaged .47. The modification indices did not suggest any major areas of local strain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Loading</th>
<th>Uniqueness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I respect others.</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am responsible.</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I cooperate well with others.</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am a good friend.</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VII. Past and Future Scale Development

An initial version of the Social Skills scale included 2 additional items: (1) “I am good at making friends” and (2) “I get along with others.” Results from preliminary analyses indicated that these items did not fit well with the other scale items. In addition, the original item “I cooperate well with others” has been changed to “I work well with others.” This change was made to preserve the meaning of the item while also facilitating Spanish translation and improve readability for youth of varying literacy levels. Thus, the current recommendation is to use the 4-item version of the measure as described at the beginning of this report. Future scale development work should verify that the small modification to one item did not undermine the psychometrics of the scale.

Further scale development work may include further modifying the items and/or adding items to increase the variability in the scores and tap other aspects of social skills, thus enhancing the overall quality of the measure. Finally, work is needed to validate the Spanish version of this scale.
VII. Summary
Overall, the results of the psychometric testing indicate initial support for the reliability and validity of the Social Skills scale with middle and high school students. The use of this measure could provide valuable information about how to enhance student’s positive youth development as well as higher success in school as a result of social relationships.

VIII. References

IX. Recommended Citation of Scale
When using the Social Skills scale for program evaluation or research purposes, we recommend using the following citation:


If this scale is used along with additional Community and Youth Collaborative Institute School Experience Surveys, then the following citation would be appropriate to cover all scales: