

Community and Youth Collaborative Institute  
School Experience Surveys – Technical Report

---



**CAYCI Activities Index**  
Parent/Caregiver Version

Produced By:  
Dawn Anderson-Butcher, Anthony J. Amorose, Aidyn Iachini, and  
Annahita Ball

**Community and Youth Collaborative Institute**  
**College of Social Work**  
**The Ohio State University**

## **ACTIVITIES**

### Parent/Caregiver Version

#### **I. Definition of Construct**

The *Activities* Index assesses the extent to which parents/caregiver are involved in extracurricular activities.

#### **II. Relevance for Practice**

Parent/caregiver involvement in education has been associated with a variety of positive academic outcomes, including enhanced academic performance, higher grade-point averages, lower dropout rates, fewer retentions, and fewer inappropriate special education placements (Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Miedel & Reynolds, 1999; Rumberger, 1995; Sheldon, Epstein, & Galindo, 2010). Parent/caregiver involvement can take on many different forms, each of which has distinct benefits for parents, students, and school communities at large (Epstein, 2001; Warren, Hong, Rubin, & Uy, 2009). By understanding the array of activities in which parents/caregivers participate, schools can maximize areas of strength and identify gaps in parent/caregiver involvement.

#### **III. Scale Description and Instructions**

*A. Items: How often do you attend the following activities at your school?*

1. English classes
2. Parenting classes
3. Preschool parenting classes
4. Financial literacy classes
5. Computer classes
6. Parent/teacher conferences
7. Family Learning Center activities
8. School performances (orchestra, choir, band, sports)
9. College and career readiness classes
10. Parent classes about special health needs, ADHD, autism, and other learning disabilities
11. Family nights
12. Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
13. School Community Council
14. General volunteering in school

*B. Response Options*

Response options for each item include the following:

- 1 = Not at All
- 2 = Occasionally
- 3 = Frequently
- \* "Does Not Exist in My School"

*C. Instructions for Respondents*

These questions ask about involvement in different activities at your child's school. For each of the following statements, please fill in ONE circle that best represents your answer.

*D. Instructions for Scale Administrators*

Surveys can be self-administered or administered to parents/caregivers in person or online. Explain that the purpose of the survey is to learn more about their perceptions about their student's school and their community. They should select one answer per request, and make a choice based on the answer that best reflects how they feel. They may submit the survey when they have completed it.

If administered in person, look through the finished surveys to make sure that parents did not miss any items or questions. Please remember that they do not have to answer every question, but do encourage them to complete as much of the survey as possible, reminding them their answers will help the school know how to best support its students and families.

#### IV. Scoring Procedures

The *Activities* items are not intended to act as a single scale as they do not, together, measure one unique construct. Instead, the items act as an index, meaning that they each measure a single related idea, in this case that being a single type of activity. There are a few ways to score this index based on what is of interest.

For example, average scores could be calculated for each of the 14 activities and compared with each other. Activities with a higher average are those which are garnering greater levels of parent and caregiver engagement. Activities with lower averages are those which, for some reason, are not garnering as much parent

Alternatively, divide the number of parents who respond “Not At All” or “Does Not Exist in my School” to every item by the number of parents who completed the survey. The resulting percentage will gauge the extent to which the school is engaging a larger proportion of parents and caregivers.

#### V. Psychometric Properties of the Scale

Because these items are not expected to behave as a scale, psychometric properties of the items were not tested.

#### VII. Past and Future Scale Development

Work is needed to test the acceptability of the Spanish translation of these items.

#### VIII. Summary

Research has shown the importance of parent/caregiver engagement in children’s education and school community. The *Activities* index can be used to further explore the relationship between parental/caregiver involvement and variant developmental trajectories among students. In the meantime, schools can use these items to better understand what outlets are most effectively engaging parents and where parent/caregiver efforts should be further enhanced.

#### VIII. References

- Epstein, J. L. (2001). *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Gutman, L. M., & Midgley, C. (2000). The role of protective factors in supporting the academic achievement of poor African American students during the middle school transition. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 29, 233–248.
- Miedel, W. T., & Reynolds, A. J. (1999). Parent involvement in early intervention for disadvantaged children: Does it matter? *Journal of School Psychology*, 37, 379–402.
- Rumberger, R. W. (1995). Dropping out of middle school: A multilevel analysis of students and schools. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32, 583–625.
- Sheldon, S. B., Epstein, J. L., & Galindo, C. I. (2010). Not just numbers: Creating a partnership climate to improve math proficiency in schools. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 9, 27-48.
- Warren, M. R., Hong, S., Rubin, C. L., & Uy, P. S. (2009). Beyond the bake sale: A community-based relational approach to parent engagement in schools. *Teachers College Record*, 111(9), 2209-2254.

## **IX. Recommended Citation of Scale**

When using the Activities Index for program evaluation or research purposes, we recommend using the following citation:

Anderson-Butcher, D., Amorose, A.J., Iachini, A., & Ball, A. (2013). Community and Youth Collaborative Institute School Experience Surveys: Activities Index for Parents/Caregivers. Columbus, OH: College of Social Work, The Ohio State University.

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:

Anderson-Butcher, D., Amorose, A.J., Iachini, A., & Ball, A. (2013). Community and Youth Collaborative Institute School Experience Surveys. Columbus, OH: College of Social Work, The Ohio State University.