

Community and Youth Collaborative Institute
School Experience Surveys - Technical Report



CAYCI Social Skills Scale
Elementary School Student Version

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SOCIAL SKILLS

Elementary School Student Version

I. Definition of Construct

The *Social Skills* scale assesses student 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 work well with others.
3. I am responsible.
4. I am a good friend.

B. Response Options

Response options for each item include the following:

- 1 = NO!
- 2 = No
- 3 = Yes
- 4 = YES!

C. Instructions for Respondents

The following questions ask you about your social skills. Please mark how strongly you feel about each sentence.

D. Instructions for Scale Administrators

For complete instructions on how to administer the survey, reference the "Student Survey Directions" that are printed on 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 more positive student experiences of their social skills.

V. Psychometric Properties of the Scale

A. Description of Sample

Participants used to test the psychometric properties of the scale included 2390 elementary school students from around the state of Utah. This included 1384 students in K-3rd grade and 994 students in 4th – 6th grade. The mean age of the students was 8.37 (SD = 2.13). Both males (50.1%) and females (48.6%) were represented. The students identified themselves as White/Non-Hispanic (42.4%), Latino/Latina (30.9%), Mixed/Multi-Racial (18.5%), African American (5.6%), or Asian (1.5%), and 27.0% 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. Data were collected using the on-line instrument.

B. Basic Descriptive Statistics and Relevant Group Differences

Sample	Mean	SD	Range	α
Full Sample ($N = 2390$)	3.60	.48	1-4	.76
Gender				
Males ($n = 1206$)	3.56	.51	1-4	.76
Females ($n = 1162$)	3.64	.45	1-4	.76
Race/Ethnicity				
White/Non-Hispanic ($n = 1014$)	3.63	.46	1-4	.74
Latino/Latina ($n=739$)	3.58	.49	1-4	.75
Other ($n = 637$)	3.58	.51	1-4	.79
Grade Level				
K-3 rd ($n = 1384$)	3.64	.47	1-4	.73
4 th -6 th ($n = 994$)	3.54	.49	1-4	.79

Note. Group specific data omits students who did not indicate their status. The groups were significantly different ($p < .05$); however, the effect sizes (η^2) for these comparisons indicated that group membership accounted for less 1% of the variance in the scores.

C. Maximum Value Percentages and Classification of Scores

Percentages		Classification of Scores		
Maximum Value	$\frac{1}{2}$ SD	Excelling	Emerging	Needs Improvement
90.0%	6.0%	96+	95-84	<84

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 $\frac{1}{2}$ SD percentage. Based on these cut points, schools may determine where they stand on students’ experiences of their social skills relative to normed data.

C. Relationship between Social Skill Scores and Other Student Perception Constructs

Construct	<i>r</i> =
Academic Motivation ^a	.41*
Academic Press ^b	.37*
Support for Learning ^b	.41*
School Connectedness ^b	.48*
Family and Community Connections ^b	.47*
Diversity ^b	.46*
Peer Relationships ^b	.57*

Notes. ^a Represents the students answer to the following item from the CAYCI surveys (Anderson-Butcher, Amorose, Iachini & Ball, 2013): “I work my hardest every day at school”, with response options ranging from 1 (NO!) to 4 (YES!). ^b Average score on the respective subscale scores from the CAYCI surveys (Anderson-Butcher, Amorose, Iachini & Ball, 2013). * relationship significant ($p < .01$).

D. 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 $\chi^2 = 2.31$, $df = 2$, $p = .05$; RMSEA = .01 (90% CI = .000-.042), SRMR = .01; CFI = 1.00, TLI = 1.00. The table below presents the completely standardized factor loadings and uniquenesses for each item. Squared multiple correlations averaged .45. The modification indices did not suggest any major areas of local strain.

Item	Loading	Uniqueness
I respect others.	.75	.44
I cooperate with others.	.65	.58
I am responsible.	.64	.59
I am a good friend.	.65	.58

VIII. Past and Future Scale Development

The current recommendation is to use the 4-item version of the measure shown in the beginning of this report. The second item has been changed from “cooperate” to “work well with” to preserve the meaning of the item while also facilitating Spanish translation and improve readability for younger youth. Future scale development work may consider potentially further modifying the items and/or response format to increase the variability in the scores. Finally, work is needed to validate the Spanish version of this scale.

IX. Summary

Overall, the results of the psychometric testing indicate initial support for the reliability and validity of the Social Skills scale with elementary students. The use of this measure could provide valuable information about how youth’s higher perception of social skills promotes successful positive youth development.

X. References

- Hu, L. & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling*, 6, 1-55.
- Lynch, S.A. & Simpson, C.G. (2010). Social skills: Laying the foundation for success. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, 38(2), 3-12.
- Parke, R.D. (1998). Social relationships and academic success. *Thrust for Educational Leadership*, 28(1), 32.34.

XI. Recommended Citation of Scale

When using the Social Skills scale 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: Social Skills Scale in Elementary School. 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.