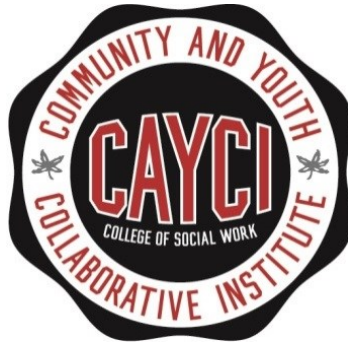


Community and Youth Collaborative Institute
School Experience Surveys



Technical Report: Student Social Skills
Teacher/Staff Version

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STUDENT SOCIAL SKILLS

Teacher/Staff Version

I. Definition of Construct

The Student Social Skills scale assesses teachers'/staff's perceptions of their students' ability to engage in positive social interactions with others.

II. Relevance for Practice

Research has shown that youth's development of social skills contributes to overall positive youth development and that positive social relationships promotes success in school (Lynch & Simpson, 2010; Parke, 1998).

III. Scale Description and Instructions

A. Items

1. My students are easy going and flexible.
2. My students ask others if they can be of help.
3. My students get along well with others.
4. My students have effective life skills.
5. My students have a sense of humor.
6. My students respect others.

B. Response Options

Response options for each item include the following:

- 1 = Almost never
- 2 = Sometimes
- 3 = Half of the time
- 4 = Frequently
- 5 = Almost always
- * "Do Not Know"

C. Instructions for Respondents

We are interested in learning about your perceptions of your students' social skills. For each of the following statements, please fill in the ONE circle that best represents your answer.

D. Instructions for Scale Administrators

Surveys can be self-administered or administered to teachers/staff in person or online. Explain that the purpose of the survey is to learn more about their perceptions about their students, school, and 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 teachers/staff didn't 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 personnel.

IV. Scoring Procedures

An average of the response scores from the 6 items should be calculated and used as an indicator of student social skills, with higher scores indicating that school personnel perceive that students more frequently engage in positive social behaviors.

V. Psychometric Properties of the Scale

A. Description of Sample

Participants used to explore the psychometric properties of the scale included 687 school staff members from various elementary schools (53.1%), middle schools/junior high schools (16.9%) and high schools (29.8%) around the state of Ohio. The majority of participants indicated at least part of their duties at the school included teaching (86.9%), with the remainder reporting non-teaching duties (e.g., support staff, administration). The amount of experience working at the school ranged from 1-10 (54.1%) or 11-20 (.6 .1%) to over 20 years (19.8%). Staff members (73.2% female) almost all identified themselves as Caucasian (94.5%). The participants varied in age with 10.9% reporting they were under 30 years of age, 42.2% indicated they were 30-44, and 46.9% were 45 years or older. Data on these staff members were collected as part of a needs assessment within each school's improvement planning process. Some data were collected using an online instrument, whereas others were collected via paper/pencil survey. School administrators informed teachers and school staff of the survey and distributed the surveys in a meeting or through mailboxes or provided the staff with a link to the online survey. All completed paper/pencil surveys were returned to a specified location in the building or to a person who was identified as the lead. All versions of the survey were anonymous. The final sample described above includes only those who completed all survey items, which means that 26 staff members who responded to one or more of the items with "Do Not Know" were omitted. Less than 2.9% of the staff members selected the "Do Not Know" response option for any of the scale items.

B. Basic Descriptive Statistics and Relevant Group Differences

Sample	Mean	SD	Range	α
Full Sample ($N = 687$)	3.62	.92	1.00-5.00	.92
Gender				
Males ($n = 145$)	3.43	.85	1.00-5.00	.90
Females ($n = 503$)	3.67	.93	1.17-5.00	.91
Age				
Less than 30 years ($n = 75$)	3.55	.77	1.83-5.00	.85
30-44 years ($n = 209$)	3.71	.88	1.33-5.00	.91
45 years and above ($n = 322$)	3.54	.99	1.00-5.00	.93
Amount of Experience at the School				
1-10 years ($n = 372$)	3.53	.90	1.17-5.00	.91
11-20 years ($n = 179$)	3.72	.94	1.00-5.00	.92
More than 20 years ($n = 136$)	3.69	.94	1.67-5.00	.92
Role as Staff Member				
Teaching ($n = 597$)	3.60	.93	1.00-5.00	.92
Non-Teaching (e.g., support staff, administrators) ($n = 90$)	3.68	.92	1.83-5.00	.91
School Level				
Elementary ($n = 365$)	3.80	.94	1.33-5.00	.92
Middles School/Junior High ($n = 116$)	3.39	.90	1.00-5.00	.92
High School ($n = 205$)	3.40	.84	1.17-5.00	.89

Notes. Group specific data omits staff who did not indicate their status. All group comparisons were significant ($p > .05$), with the exception of Role as a Staff Member and Age. The effect sizes (η^2) indicated that group membership differences accounted for less than 1.2% of the variance in the scores in all cases except School Level where group membership account for 4.8% of the variance. Follow-up comparisons showed that the elementary school staff reported higher scores than the other 2 groups which did not differ from one another.

C. Maximum Value Percentages and Classification of Scores

Percentages		Classification of Scores		
Maximum Value	½ SD	Excelling	Emerging	Needs Improvement
72.4%	9.2%	> 82	82 - 63	<63

Notes. 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 staffs' 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 staffs' experiences of the students' social skills relative to normed data.

D. Relationships between Student Social Skills Scale score and other Staff Perception Constructs

Construct ^a	r =
Student Academic Motivation	.588
Student School Connectedness	.494
Student Academic Press	.352
Student Internalizing Behaviors	.471
Student Psychological Well-Being	.758
Student Externalizing Behaviors	.543
Student Safety	.624
Support for Students' Basic Needs	.542
Families and Caregivers' Support for of Learning	.600
Family History	.390
Family Support for Prosocial Activities	.521
Services and Supports	.171
Community Supports for Positive Youth Development	.321
Learning Supports	.283
Student Physical Activity and Nutrition	.611

Notes. ^a Average score on the respective subscale scores from the CAYCI surveys (Anderson-Butcher, Amorose, Iachini, & Ball, 2013). All relationship are significant ($p < .01$).

E. Factorial Validity

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using robust maximum likelihood estimation procedures in LISREL 8.80 (Scientific Software International, Inc., Chicago). The CFA model specified that the 6 items loaded on a single latent Student 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 good based on commonly recommended cut off values for evaluating model fit (see Hu & Bentler, 1999), S-B $\chi^2 = 11.16$, $df = 9$, $p = .27$; RMSEA = .019 (90% CI = .000-.049), SRMR = .012; CFI = 1.00, TLI = 1.00. The table on the next page presents the completely standardized factor loadings and uniquenesses for each item. Squared multiple correlations averaged .65. The modification indices did not suggest any major areas of local strain.

Item	Loading	Uniqueness
My students are easy going and flexible.	.78	.38
My students ask others if they can be of help.	.73	.46
My students get along well with others.	.86	.26
My students have effective life skills.	.84	.30
My students have a sense of humor.	.76	.42
My students respect others.	.84	.29

VII. Past and Future Scale Development

An initial version of the Student Social Skills scale included 4 additional items: “My students are good at making friends,” “My students help other people,” “My students are responsible,” and “My students cooperate well with others.” Results from preliminary analyses indicated that this item did not fit well with the other scale items. Thus, the current recommendation is to use the 6-item version of the measure as described in this report. Future scale development work should involve testing the psychometric properties of the scale with a larger sample of non-teaching staff (e.g., school administrators, support staff). Additional work is also needed to validate the Spanish version of the tool.

VII. Summary

Overall, the results of the psychometric testing indicate initial support for the reliability and validity of the Student Social Skills scale. The use of this measure could provide valuable information about students’ social skills as perceived by teachers/school staff in order to inform efforts to promote positive youth development.

VIII. References

- Anderson-Butcher, D., Amorose, A. J., Iachini, A., & Ball, A. (2013). Community and Youth Collaborative Initiative School Community Surveys. Columbus, OH: College of Social Work, The Ohio State University.
- Anderson-Butcher, D., Amorose, A.J., Iachini, A., & Ball, A. (2012). The development of the Perceived School Experiences Scale. *Research on Social Work Practice, 2*(2), 186-194.
- 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.

IX. Recommended Citation of Scale

When using the 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 Community Surveys: Teacher/School Staff Student Social Skills Scale. Columbus, OH: College of Social Work, The Ohio State University.

If this scale is used along with additional Community and Youth Collaborative Institute School Community 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 Community Surveys. Columbus, OH: College of Social Work, The Ohio State University.