

Early Childhood Screening Assessment 24 (ECSA-24) At A Glance

Age range covered: 1 ½ -5 yrs

Languages: English, Spanish, and Romanian

Domains (Areas) screened: Emotional & Behavioral Development; Maternal Distress

Components:

Two versions:

1. Medical Home: 1 page 24 items (includes 2 questions relating to maternal depression (PHQ-2))
2. Child Care: 1 page 22 items

User Manual

Who completes it: Parents/caregivers complete questionnaires; trained professionals interpret them

Approximate time: Each questionnaire takes ~5 minutes to complete and less than 1 minute to score

Validity and reliability:

ECSA scores are strongly associated to scores on longer, established measures including the Child Behavior Checklist. The ECSA has appropriate ability to identify children who meet criteria for a psychiatric diagnosis (sensitivity = 89%) and to correctly identify children who don't have a diagnosis (specificity = 85%). It is reliable over multiple time points.

Instructions

Parents circle a "0", "1", or "2" to indicate the frequency of the behaviors described in the item. They are also asked to circle a "+" if they are "concerned about a behavior and want help with it".

Scoring

Score all items in order to get the most accurate score. The ECSA is not valid if more than 2 child items are skipped.

Child Score: the sum of the circled numbers of items 1-22, with a maximum score of 44. A score ≥ 9 suggests that the child may be at higher risk of having a mental health problem. A score of 9 or higher, any "+"s, or parental concern should trigger a conversation with the parent and consideration of further assessment or referral.

Parent depression score (items 23 and 24): Any response greater than zero is positive and should trigger further assessment and consideration of referral for parent.

Follow-up: Handouts the Bright Futures Website (www.brightfutures.org/mentalhealth/) or Zero to Three (www.zerotothree.org), Tulane Early Childhood Collaborative (www.tulane.edu/som/tecc) can be useful resources for parents.

Use of the ECSA: For updates or questions, please contact: Mary Margaret Gleason, MD, FAAP, Mgleason@tulane.edu, (504) 988 4653.

References:

- Gleason, M. M., Zeanah, C. H., & Dickstein, S. (2010). Recognizing young children in need of mental health assessment: development and preliminary validity of the early childhood screening assessment. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 31(3), 335-357.
- Gleason, M. M., Zamfirescu, A., Egger, H. L., Nelson, C. A., Fox, N. A., & Zeanah, C. H. (2011). Epidemiology of psychiatric disorders in very young children in a Romanian pediatric setting. *European child & adolescent psychiatry*, 20(10), 527.
- Fallucco, E. M., Wysocki, T., James, L., Kozikowski, C., Williams, A., & Gleason, M. M. (2017). The Brief Early Childhood Screening Assessment: Preliminary Validity in Pediatric Primary Care. *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics*, 38(2), 89-98.