

Devereux Student Strengths Assessment

Student information

Full name: _____

Assessment date: _____ School: _____

Age: _____ Grade: _____

Teacher: _____ Student ID number: _____

Instructions

This form describes a number of behaviors seen in children. Read the statements that follow the phrase: **during the past 4 weeks, how often did the child...** and place a check mark in the box next to the word that best describes how often you saw the behavior. Please answer each question carefully. There are no right or wrong answers. Please do not skip any items.

Never = 0, Rarely = 1, Occasionally = 2, Frequently = 3, Very frequently = 4

During the past four weeks, how often did the child:		0	1	2	3	4
1.	remember important information?					
2.	carry herself/himself with confidence?					
3.	keep trying when unsuccessful?					
4.	handle his/her belongings with care?					
5.	say good things about herself/himself?					
6.	serve an important role at home or school?					
7.	speak about positive things?					
8.	cope well with insults and mean comments?					
9.	take steps to achieve goals?					
10.	look forward to classes or activities at school?					
11.	get along with different types of people?					
12.	try to do her/his best?					
13.	seek out additional knowledge or information?					
14.	take an active role in learning?					
15.	do things independently?					
16.	say good things about his/her classmates?					
17.	act respectfully in a game or competition?					
18.	ask to take on additional work or responsibilities?					
19.	respect another person's opinion?					

During the past four weeks, how often did the child:		0	1	2	3	4
20.	encourage positive behavior in others?					
21.	prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events?					
22.	contribute to group efforts?					
23.	do routine tasks or chores without being reminded?					
24.	act as a leader in a peer group?					
25.	resolve a disagreement?					
26.	show creativity in completing a task?					
27.	share with others?					
28.	get things done in a timely fashion?					
29.	seek out challenging tasks?					
30.	say good things about the future?					
31.	cooperate with peers or siblings?					
32.	show care when doing a project or school work?					
33.	work hard on projects?					
34.	forgive somebody who hurt or upset her/him?					
35.	follow rules?					
36.	express high expectations for himself/herself?					
37.	follow the example of a positive role model?					
38.	compliment or congratulate somebody?					
39.	accept responsibility for what she/he did?					
40.	do something nice for somebody?					
41.	make accurate statements about events in her/his life?					
42.	show good judgment?					
43.	pay attention?					
44.	wait for her/his turn?					
45.	show appreciation of others?					
46.	focus on a task despite a problem or distraction?					
47.	greet a person in a polite way?					
48.	act comfortable in a new situation?					

During the past four weeks, how often did the child:		0	1	2	3	4
49.	teach another person to do something?					
50.	attract positive attention from peers?					
51.	perform the steps of a task in order?					
52.	seek advice?					
53.	think before he/she acted?					
54.	pass up something he/she wanted, or do something he/she did not like, to get something better in the future?					
55.	express concern for another person?					
56.	accept another choice when his/her first choice was unavailable?					
57.	ask questions to clarify what he/she did not understand?					
58.	show an awareness of her/his personal strengths?					
59.	ask somebody for feedback?					
60.	stay calm when faced with a challenge?					
61.	attract positive attention from adults?					
62.	describe how he/she was feeling?					
63.	give an opinion when asked?					
64.	make a suggestion or request in a polite way?					
65.	learn from experience?					
66.	follow the advice of a trusted adult?					
67.	adjust well to changes in plans?					
68.	show the ability to decide between right and wrong?					
69.	use available resources (people or objects) to solve a problem?					
70.	offer to help somebody?					
71.	respond to another person's feelings?					
72.	adjust well when going from one setting to another?					

Results

Domain	Raw score	T-Score	Percentile	Interpretation
Overall social emotional composite				Strong Typical Weak
Self awareness				Strong Typical Weak
Social awareness				Strong Typical Weak
Self management				Strong Typical Weak
Goal-directed behavior				Strong Typical Weak
Relationship skills				Strong Typical Weak
Personal responsibility				Strong Typical Weak
Decision making				Strong Typical Weak
Optimistic thinking				Strong Typical Weak
Additional comments				

Scoring instructions

Points are allocated according to the rating:

Never = 0, **Rarely** = 1, **Occasionally** = 2, **Frequently** = 3, **Very frequently** = 4

Calculate an overall (social emotional composite (SEC)) raw score by summing the total number of points over every question. Next, calculate a raw score for each of the 8 domains by summing the points from the corresponding set of questions:

Domain	Question numbers
Self awareness	Q41, Q49, Q57, Q58, Q59, Q62, Q63
Social awareness	Q8, Q11, Q17, Q19, Q22, Q25, Q27, Q31, Q34
Self management	Q43, Q44, Q46, Q48, Q51, Q53, Q54, Q56, Q60, Q67, Q72
Goal directed behavior	Q3, Q9, Q12, Q13, Q14, Q15, Q18, Q26, Q29, Q33
Relationship skills	Q38, Q40, Q45, Q47, Q50, Q55, Q61, Q64, Q70, Q71
Personal responsibility	Q1, Q4, Q6, Q20, Q21, Q23, Q24, Q28, Q32, Q35
Decision making	Q37, Q39, Q42, Q52, Q65, Q66, Q68, Q69
Optimistic thinking	Q2, Q5, Q7, Q10, Q30, Q36

Next, calculate T-scores for the overall score and for each of the eight domains. To interpret raw scores in a meaningful way, they must be turned into T-scores, which are based on the standardization sample ratings with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10. Use the formula $T = z \times 10 + 50$ (where z is the standard z score on the normal distribution).

T-scores range from 28 to 72. All DESSA reporting should use T-scores rather than raw scores. It can also be useful to calculate percentile scores using the appropriate norms table. Percentile scores can tell psychologists the percentage of children in the standardization samples who scored at or below the child's score.

Interpretations should be based on the T-score, as follows:

- **Strong:** T-score of 60+
- **Typical:** T-score of 41-59
- **Weak:** T-score of 40 or less

Reference

LeBuffe, P. A., Shapiro, V. B., & Robitaille, J. L. (2018). The Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) comprehensive system: Screening, assessing, planning, and monitoring. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 55, 62–70. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2017.05.002>

The Devereux Foundation. (2015). Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) single rating report. In *Apperson DataLink Evo*. https://www.acer.org/files/DESSA_Paulino_6-6-2014.pdf