Review of Social-emotional Screening Tools

Universal school-based social-emotional screening is the systematic but brief assessment of social-emotional risk of all students. The purpose is to identify those students who may benefit from additional social, emotional, and behavioral supports to increase well-being and improve readiness for learning. Ideally, this process includes a review of data from a screening tool or questionnaire ("screener"), in addition to a review of relevant extant school data (e.g., office discipline referrals, nurse visits, attendance, etc.) one to three times per year. Review of these data helps school staff and administrators better understand the needs of individual students as well as the overall school population, so they can provide appropriate tiered supports and track student progress over time.

Universal screening is most effective when conducted within a comprehensive tiered support system that is aligned with the larger vision and mission of the school and district, such as New Hampshire's Multi-Tiered System of Supports for Behavioral Health and Wellness (MTSS-B). This guidance document reviews five common social-emotional screeners used in schools, using the following criteria:

COMPREHENSIVENESS AND FIT WITH MTSS-B	FEASIBILITY	EVIDENCE BASE AND ESTABLISHED PSYCHOMETRICS
• Appropriate for K-12 students • Focuses on general well-being and skills rather than particular deficits or disorders • Assesses both internalizing and externalizing behaviors	• Low-to-no cost to administer • Brief, requiring 5 minutes or less per student • Teacher-rated, due to NH law requiring parent/guardian opt-in for non-academic student surveys	**Internal reliability:** consistency of screener scores across items within a measure **Validity:** evidence that the screener does in fact measure well-being and social-emotional risk **Sensitivity:** extent to which the screener accurately identifies at-risk students **Specificity:** extent to which the screener accurately identifies students *not* at-risk

Each screener is reviewed below in relation to the criteria described above:

	APPROPRIATE FOR K-12 STUDENTS	GENERAL WELL BEING & SKILLS	INTERNALIZING & EXTERNALIZING BEHAVIORS	LOW-TO-NO-COST	< 5 MINUTES	TEACHER-RATED	EVIDENCE BASE
BASC-3	✔	X	✔	X	X	✔	✔
DESSA	✔	✔	✔	X	✔	✔	✔
SAEBRS	✔	✔	✔	X	✔	✔	✔
SDQ	X	✔	✔	✔	X	✔	✔
SRSS	✔	✔	X	✔	✔	✔	✔
SRSS-IE	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
SSIS SEL	✔	✔	✔	X	✔	✔	✔

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BASC-3 Behavioral and Emotional Screening System (BASC-3 BESS)
(Kamphaus & Reynolds, 2015)

Domains: 25-30 items measuring behavioral and emotional strengths and weaknesses; captures internalizing and externalizing behaviors

Designed for: Grades PreK-12 | **Completed by:** Teachers, Parents

Time to complete per student: 10-30 minutes depending on form used

Availability & Cost: Administered by Pearson; kits for online administration and scoring range from $78.50-$441.50; kits for manual administration and scoring for 25 students range from $269.50 - $363.50

Psychometrics: Strong internal consistency reliability (α≥.80); additional psychometrics provided upon purchase of BASC-3 Manual

Other: Older students can self-assess; Pearson Qualification Level B required to purchase—see website for details

Reference:

Altmann R.A., Reynolds C.R., Kamphaus R.W., Vannest K.J. (2018) BASC-3. In: Kreutzer J., DeLuca J., Caplan B. (eds) Encyclopedia of Clinical Neuropsychology. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-56782-2_1524-2

Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA)
(LeBuffe, Shapiro, & Naglieri, 2009)

Domains: Includes the 72-item DESSA (K-8); DESSA-mini (K-8) with 8 items; 43-item DESSA High School Edition (9-12); 8-question DESSA High School Edition mini (9-12), and 55-item DESSA High School Edition Student Self Report (9-12). Aligned with CASEL™ social-emotional competencies of Self-Awareness, Social-Awareness, Self-Management, Goal-Directed Behavior, Relationship Skills, Personal Responsibility, Decision Making, Optimistic Thinking. DESSA minis correlate with composite score of full DESSA for the relevant age group.

Designed for: Grades K-12 | **Completed by:** Teachers, Parents, Students (DESSA HSE SSR)

Time to complete per student: DESSA: 5-8 minutes; DESSA mini: 1 minute; DESSA-HSE: 3-5 minutes; DESSA-HSE mini: 1 minute; DESSA HSE SSR: 5-7 minutes.

Availability & Cost: Kits of 25 paper forms for $120 (DESSA) or $110 (DESSA-mini). Aperture Education offers a web-based subscription service ranging from $5-12 per student depending on grade level and product with training/onboarding costs ranging 0-20% of license costs.

Psychometrics: DESSA has strong internal reliability (α=.87-.93) and acceptable to strong concurrent validity (.77-.92); DESSA-mini has strong internal reliability (α=.91–.92), strong concurrent validity (.91), acceptable to strong sensitivity (.62-.81) and strong to very strong specificity (.83-.98). DESSA HSE has strong internal reliability (.85-.98), good test-retest reliability (.80-.92), acceptable sensitivity and specificity, and strong convergent validity (.93-.94).

Other: The DESSA mini is designed to be used up to 4 times/year and followed by the full DESSA if the student is flagged.

References:

LeBuffe, P. A., Shapiro, V. B., & Naglieri, J. A. (2009/2014). The Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA): Assessment, technical manual, and user's guide. Charlotte, NC: Apperson, Inc.

Naglieri, J.A., LeBuffe, P. and Shapiro, V.B. (2011), Universal screening for social–emotional competencies: A study of the reliability and validity of the DESSA-mini. Psychol. Schs., 48: 660-671. doi:10.1002/pits.20586

Nickerson, Amanda & Fishman, Callen. (2009). Convergent and divergent validity of the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment. School Psychology Quarterly. 24. 48-59. 10.1037/a0015147.

Aperture Education www.apertured.com/dessa/ | Aperture Education www.apertureed.com/research/ | Aperture Education, DESSA-HSE-Manual Chapter 3, Psychometric Properties

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Social, Academic, and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS)
(Kilgus, Chafouleas, Riley-Tillman & von der Embse, 2013)

Domains: 19 items in 3 scales (Social Behavior, Academic Behavior, and Emotional Behavior) measuring both internalizing and externalizing behaviors

Designed for: Grades K-12	**Completed by:** Teachers

Time to complete per student: 1-3 minutes

Availability & Cost: Paper form available for free; online version administered by Fastbridge.org (contact Fastbridge.org for pricing)

Psychometrics: Acceptable to strong internal consistency reliability (α=.77-.94); acceptable to strong concurrent validity (.69-.93); strong sensitivity and specificity (≥.80-.90)

Other: Older students can self-assess online

References:

Kilgus, S.P., Chafouleas, S.M., & Riley-Tillman, T.C. (2013). Development and initial validation of the Social and Academic Behavior Risk Screener for elementary grades. School Psychology Quarterly, 28, 210-226.

Kilgus, S.P., Riley-Tillman, T.C., Chafouleas, S.M., Christ, T.J., & Welsh, M.E. (2014). Direct behavior rating as a school-based behavior universal screener: Replication across sites. Journal of School Psychology, 52, 63-82.

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)
(Goodman, 2001)

Domains: 25 items in 5 scales (emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity-inattention, peer problems, and prosocial behavior) measuring internalizing and externalizing behaviors

Designed for: Ages 3-16	**Completed by:** Teachers, Parents

Time to complete per student: 5-10 minutes

Availability & Cost: Online questionnaire download available for free at www.sdqinfo.com; online scoring available for $0.25-$0.75 per scoring, depending on number of informants

Psychometrics: Acceptable internal consistency reliability (α=.73); acceptable to strong concurrent validity (.68–.87); strong sensitivity (.81-.90); acceptable to strong specificity (.78-.84)

Other: Older students can self-assess online; available in over 60 languages

Reference:

Goodman, R. (2001). Psychometric properties of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 40(11), 1337–1345. https://doi.org/10.1097/00004583-200111000-00015

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Student Risk Screening Scale – Internalizing and Externalizing (SRSS; SRSS-IE)
(Drummond, 1994; Lane & Menzies, 2009)

Domains: The original SRSS has 7 items measuring externalizing behaviors; the SRSS-IE modifies the SRSS with the inclusion of 5 new items measuring internalizing behaviors

Designed for: Grades K-12	**Completed by:** Teachers

Time to complete per student: Teachers rate all students in a class at the same time; SRSS takes 10-15 minutes to rate all students in a classroom of 25; SRSS-IE takes 15-20 minutes to rate all students in a classroom of 25

Availability & Cost: Tool available online for free

Psychometrics: SRSS has acceptable to strong internal consistency reliability (α=.78–.86), strong validity for predicting internalizing behaviors (.80), strong validity for predicting externalizing behaviors (.95), strong sensitivity (.94), strong specificity (.95)

Other: SRSS-IE has preliminary evidence supporting reliability and demonstrates convergent validity with two other similar screening tools (SSBD & SDQ); one study showed medium to strong predictive validity with related externalizing behaviors/indicators

References:

Oakes, W. P., Wilder, K. S., Lane, K. L., Powers, L., Yokoyama, L. T. K., O'Hare, M. E., & Jenkins, A. B. (2010). Psychometric Properties of the Student Risk Screening Scale: An Effective Tool for Use in Diverse Urban Elementary Schools. Assessment for Effective Intervention, 35(4), 231–239. https://doi.org/10.1177/1534508410379796

Lane, K. L., Oakes, W. P., Ennis, R. P., Cox, M. L., Schatschneider, C., & Lambert, W. (2013). Additional Evidence for the Reliability and Validity of the Student Risk Screening Scale at the High School Level: A Replication and Extension. Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 21(2), 97–115. https://doi.org/10.1177/1063426611407339

Social Skills Improvement System Social-Emotional Learning Edition (SSIS SEL)
(Gresham & Elliott, 2017)

Domains: Assesses five CASEL-aligned SEL competencies: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills and Responsible Decision Making; and 3 academic competencies: Motivation to Learn, Reading Skills, and Mathematics Skills.

Designed for: Grades K-12	**Completed by:** Teachers, Parents

Time to complete per student: SSIS SEL Edition Screening/Progress Monitoring Scales: 1-2 minutes per student; SSIS SEL Teacher, Parent, and Student Forms: 10 minutes per student

Availability & Cost: Paper and online versions in English and Spanish. Online Screening and Progress Monitoring Scales: $2.40/student; Teacher/Parent/Student Rating Forms $4.00 per 1 form; online 1- year scoring packages (include 25 forms) range from $367 to $604; pack of 25 paper forms ~$50

Psychometrics: Factor analyses tested against CASEL competencies (external validity) show adequate fit for Parent and Student forms, mediocre fit for Teacher form. Strong concurrent validity with other established SEL screeners. Internal reliability adequate to strong (.70-.97) across form types. Sensitivity and specificity data limited.

Other: SSIS SEL Screening and Progress Monitoring Scales completed by teachers only to quickly screen entire class; SSIS SEL Teacher, Parent, and Student Rating Forms completed by teachers, parents, and students (age 8 and older) and results directly linked to SSIS SEL curriculum. Students 8 and older can self-assess.

References:
Gresham, F., Elliot, S., Metallo, S., Byrd, S., Wilson, E., Erickson, M. et al. (2018). Psychometric fundamentals of the social skills improvement system: Socialemotional learning edition rating forms. Assessment for Effective Intervention, 45(3), 194-209. https://doi.org/10.1177/1534508418808598