

Early Childhood Measurement and Evaluation Tool Review

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Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale 2nd Edition

Measurement Areas:

The Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale – Second Edition (Piers-Harris 2) is a 60-item self-report questionnaire (subtitled “*The Way I Feel About Myself*”) designed to assess self-concept in children between the ages of 7 and 18 years. The scale yields a general measure of the respondents overall self-concept (Total-TOT), but also includes six domain scales.

The domain scales are:

- Behavioral Adjustment (BEH),
- Intellectual and School Status (INT),
- Physical Appearance and Attributes (PHY),
- Freedom From Anxiety (FRE),
- Popularity (POP), and
- Happiness and Satisfaction (HAP).

This tool also includes two scales that assess the validity of the responses: Inconsistent Responding (INC) and Response Bias (RES).

The authors indicate that the Piers-Harris 2 is appropriate for use in research, educational and clinical settings. It can be used as an individual or group screening device to target those in need of further psychological evaluation.

Length and Structure:

Administration of the Piers-Harris 2 is usually completed in 10-15 minutes and is administered in two formats, paper and pencil or computer. It can be administered individually or to small group of students. It is important to note that students completing the Piers-Harris 2 should have at least a second grade reading level.

The tool consists of 60 items that require the respondent to respond by circling “Yes” or “No.” Raw scores are converted to standardized t-scores (mean = 50, standard deviation = 10) and percentile ranks. T-Score ranges for the TOT scale are: $\leq 29T$ is very low, 30T-39T is low, 40T-44T is low average, 45T-55T average, 56T-59T- is high average, 60T-69T is high and $\geq 70T$ is very high.

For the six subscales T-Score ranges $\leq 29T$ is very low, $30T-39T$ is low, $40T-44T$ is low average, $45T-55T$ is average and $\geq 56T$ is above average.

Materials:

The Piers-Harris 2 kit is available from the publisher for \$131 USD. The kit includes the manual and 40 autoscore record forms. Additional record form packs are available from the publisher as well as computer scoring software and Spanish language record forms.

Accessibility:

The Piers-Harris 2 is available in English and Spanish. The Piers-Harris 2 is a standardized instrument and therefore normative data are provided in the manual.

Administration, Scoring, and Interpretation:

There are several methods of scoring the Piers-Harris 2 available. These include Autoscore, in which the scales are scored manually with the use of specially designed carbon paper. Other methods include mail or fax in forms or a computer scoring program, which provides a print-out report. According to the manual, administration and scoring can be completed by individuals with minimal training. However, caution should be exercised during interpretation and use of the scores and should only be carried out by those with training in psychological assessment.

Subscales:

The Piers-Harris 2 measures six domain areas in addition to overall self-concept. The domain scales are:

- Behavioral Adjustment (BEH): 14-item scale that measures admission or denial of problematic behaviours.
- Intellectual and School Status (INT): 16-item scale that measures the child's evaluation of his or her own abilities in terms of intellectual and academic tasks.
- Physical Appearance and Attributes (PHY): 11-item scale that measures a child's assessment of his or her own physical appearance as well as their appraisals of certain personality attributes such as ability to express one's ideas and leadership abilities.
- Freedom from Anxiety (FRE): 14-item scale that measures anxiety and dysphoric mood.
- Popularity (POP): 12-item scale that captures the child's evaluation of his or her own social functioning.
- Happiness and Satisfaction (HAP): 10-item scale that measures a child's feelings of happiness and satisfaction with life.

Documentation:

The manual for the Piers-Harris contains procedures for administration, scoring, as well as a chapter on interpretation that includes case examples. The manual also has an extensive technical guide discussing the instrument's psychometric properties and various forms of validity and reliability. Information on the standardization sample is also included in the technical section of the manual.

Standardization Sample:

The Piers-Harris 2 was standardized using a U.S. sample of 1,387 children (49.7% male and 50.3% female) ranging from age 7 to 18 years. The sample was stratified according to the 2001 U.S.

census and included demographic variables such as age, sex, race/ethnicity, geographic region and head of household's education level. The sample consisted of seven race/ethnic backgrounds: Asian (1.2%), Black (18.4%), Hispanic/Latino (7.4%), Caucasian (68%), Native American (1.2%), Other (3.6%), and Not Specified (0.2%). The sample may be slightly under representative of the Hispanic/Latino Population. The manual contains detailed information regarding demographic information of the standardization sample.

Reliability:

Internal Consistency: An analysis of internal consistency yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .91 for the TOT scale, .81 for the BEH scale, .81 for the INT, .75 for the PHY scale, .81 for the FRE, .74 for the POP and .77 for the HAP scale.

Test-retest Reliability: Test-retest reliability data are not available for the second edition of the Piers-Harris 2. Reliability studies that have been performed on the original form of the Piers-Harris indicate acceptable test-retest reliability.

Validity:

The Piers-Harris 2 manual includes extensive information on test validity.

Content Validity: Content validity was determined by judges' rating whether the remaining items in each domain, after deleting item content (20 items were deleted from the original Piers-Harris when the second edition was developed), was representative of the content in the previous Piers-Harris. It was determined that the content validity would not be affected by the 20 item reduction from the Piers-Harris to the Piers-Harris 2.

Construct Validity: Construct validity was determined by inter-scale correlation analysis and factor analysis. Inter-scale correlation analysis provides evidence that domain scales on the Piers-Harris 2 demonstrate moderate to high correlations with each other. The domain scales also correlate strongly with the overall total score.

Factor analysis was conducted using the common factor approach followed by direct oblimin transformation. The factor analysis yielded six unique factors.

Convergent Validity: The manual discusses several validation studies to assess the Piers-Harris correlation to other kinds of psychological constructs such as measures of anger and aggression, symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder, and attitudes towards obesity. In general the results demonstrate that a positive self-concept is inversely related to measures that target psychological problems.

As the majority of reliability and validity studies were on the original form or the Piers-Harris, the authors note that further investigation of the properties of the Piers-Harris 2 are still required.

It should be noted that since the Piers-Harris 2 is a newly revised test with minimal outside academic reviews or analyses of this scale, this review is based predominately on information provided by the authors in the manual.

Publication Information:

The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale – Second Edition was developed by Ellen V. Piers, David S. Herzberg and Dale B. Harris. This review is based on the 2nd edition published in 2002 by Western Psychological Services.

Publisher's website: www.wpspublish.com

Materials Used for Tool Review:

- Manual
- Mental Measurements Yearbook

References:

Kelley, M.L. (2005). Review of the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale-Second Edition. *Mental Measurements Yearbook, 16*.

Oswald, D. P. (2005) Review of the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale-Second Edition. *Mental Measurements Yearbook, 16*.

Piers, E. V., & Herzberg, D. S. (2002). Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale-Second Edition Manual. *Western Psychological Services, Los Angeles, Ca.*

How to cite this document: This document was created for CUP. However to cite this document use the following:

Community-University Partnership for the Study of Children, Youth, and Families (2011). *Review of the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale 2nd Edition*. Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.