

## PEDIATRIC SYMPTOM CHECKLIST

Please mark under the heading that best fits your child:

	NEVER	SOMETIMES	OFTEN
1. Complains of aches or pains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Spends more time alone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Tires easily, little energy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Fidgety, unable to sit still	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Has trouble with a teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Less interested in school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Acts as if driven by a motor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Daydreams too much	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Distracted easily	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Is afraid of new situations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Feels sad, unhappy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Is irritable, angry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Feels hopeless	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Has trouble concentrating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Less interest in friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Fights with other children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Absent from school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. School grades dropping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Is down on him or herself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Visits doctor with doctor finding nothing wrong	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Has trouble sleeping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Worries a lot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Wants to be with you more than before	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Feels he or she is bad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. Takes unnecessary risks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. Gets hurt frequently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. Seems to be having less fun	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. Acts younger than children his or her age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. Does not listen to rules	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. Does not show feelings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. Does not understand other people's feelings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. Teases others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. Blames others for his or her troubles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. Takes things that do not belong to him or her	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. Refuses to share	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Procedures and Scoring criteria for the Pediatric Symptom's Checklist (PSC)

For children 4 and 5 years of age, responses to items 5,6,17, and 18 are not counted due to their emphasis on school issues which may not be relevant.

A value of 0 is assigned to "never," 1 to "sometimes," and 2 to "often." Add these values to obtain a score for the entire test.

The presence of significant behavioral or emotional difficulties is suggested when children ages 4–5 years receive 24 or more points, and when children 6–16 years receive 28 or more points.

To determine what kinds of mental health problems are present, determine the three factor scores on the PSC:

**PSC Attention Subscale** consists of these five items.

4. Fidgety, unable to sit still
8. Daydream Too Much
9. Distracted Easily
14. Has Trouble Concentrating
7. Acts As If Driven By Motor

Children who receive 7 or more points on these five items need a work up for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The American Academy of Pediatrics recently revised its recommendations on how to diagnosis ADHD, and the article is in the May 2000 issue of *Pediatrics*—a must read.

**PSC Internalizing Subscale** consists of these five items:

11. Feel Sad
13. Feel Hopeless
19. Is Down On Self
22. Worries A Lot
27. Seem To Have Less Fun

It is a screen for depression and anxiety. Children who receive 5 or more points on these five items need to be referred for counseling and may eventually need to be considered for anti-depressives, anxiolytics etc.

**PSC Externalizing Factor** consists of these seven items:

16. Fights With Other Children
29. Does Not Listen To Rules
31. Does Not Understand Others Feelings
32. Teases Others
33. Blames Others for his troubles
35. Refuse To Share
34. Take things that do not belong to him or her

It is a screen for conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, rage disorder, etc. Children who receive 7 or more points on these seven items need behavioral intervention.

**PSC Developmental/Academic Screening (33)**

If a child fails the whole test, also refer for academic/developmental assessment. Children with mental health problems almost invariably have academic problems, and children with developmental or academic problems are at high risk of mental health problems.

Parents whose children pass the PSC but endorse numerous items should benefit from in-office counseling. If this has been tried and not found to be successful, such families should be referred for such services as parent training classes and behavior intervention programs.

Those with academic failure and difficulties (whose parents endorse items about poor school performance, absence from school, etc.), whether or not the PSC is passed, should be referred for intellectual and educational testing.

Gardner W. *et al.* The PSC-17: A brief pediatric symptom checklist psychosocial problem subscales: A report from PROS and ASPN. *Ambulatory Child Health*. 1999;5:225-236