

# Screen for Child Anxiety Related Emotional Disorders Parent Version (SCARED Parent)

## Description

The Screen for Child Anxiety Related Emotional Disorders (SCARED) is a parent reported scale used to screen for anxiety disorders in children (aged 8-18 years), including generalised anxiety, separation anxiety disorder, panic disorder and social phobia (Birmaher et al., 1997). The parent is asked questions about their child, with the questions corresponding closely to the child version of the SCARED. The SCARED Parent consists of 41 items and has five factors that correspond with anxiety disorders outlined in the DMS-IV:

- 1) Somatic/panic
- 2) General anxiety
- 3) Separation anxiety
- 4) Social phobia
- 5) School phobia

The scale is designed to be used by clinicians as a screener for anxiety disorders in children, and can be used to track outcomes during the course of treatment.

It is recommended that both the parent and child version of the SCARED are administered due to the moderate correlation between the two versions.

## Validity

The 41 item version of the SCARED was developed by Birmaher and colleagues (1999). The scale was administered to 190 children and adolescents attending an outpatient mood/anxiety disorders clinic and their parents. The 190 children and adolescents were diagnosed with either an 'anxiety' (n = 45) or 'nonanxiety' (n = 145) disorder by a trained clinician.

Factor analysis yielded five subscales; (somatic/panic, general anxiety, separation anxiety, social phobia and school phobia). Moderate correlations were found between the parent and

child version (Birmaher et al., 1999).

The SCARED has demonstrated good discriminate validity. Findings indicated that the total score and score for each of the five factors of the child SCARED significantly differentiated children with anxiety disorders from children with other disorders. Similar results were found for the total score and the panic/somatic and separation anxiety factor scores of the parent SCARED. For the most part scales on both the parent and child version of the SCARED were also able to significantly differentiate between anxiety disorders (Birmaher et al., 1999).

Many studies have confirmed the validity and reliability of the SCARED in both clinical and community samples (Hale et al., 2011).

## Interpretation

Items are summed to obtain an overall total score and a score for each of the five subscales. A cut-off score for the total score and each subscale was suggested by the test developers and were chosen based on scores which yielded the highest sensitivity and specificity. A total score of 25 or more may indicate the presence of an anxiety disorder.

- Panic disorder or significant panic symptoms. Items 1, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 19, 22, 24, 27, 30, 34, 38. A score of 7 or above may indicate the presence of panic disorder or significant somatic symptoms.

- Generalised anxiety disorder. Items 5, 7, 14, 21, 23, 28, 33, 35, 37. A score of 9 or above ( may indicate the presence of panic disorder.

- Separation Anxiety. Items 4, 8, 13, 16, 20, 25, 29, 31. A score of 5 or above may indicate separation anxiety.

- Social Phobia. Items 3, 10, 26, 32, 39, 40, 41. A score of 8 or above may indicate social phobic disorder.

- School avoidance. Items 2, 11, 17, 36. A score of 3 or above may indicate school avoidance.

## Developer

Birmaher, B., Khetarpal, S., Cully, M., Brent, D., & McKenzie, S. (1995). Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, University of Pittsburgh.

## References

Birmaher, B., Khetarpal, S., Brent, D., Cully, M., Balach, L., Kaufman, J., & Neer, S. M. (1997). The Screen for Child Anxiety Related Emotional Disorders (SCARED): Scale construction and psychometric characteristics. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 36(4), 545–553.

Birmaher, B., Brent, D. A., Chiappetta, L., Bridge, J., Monga, S., & Baugher, M. (1999). Psychometric properties of the Screen for Child Anxiety Related Emotional Disorders (SCARED): a replication study. *Journal of the American academy of child & adolescent psychiatry*, 38(10), 1230-1236.

Hale WW, Crocetti E, Raaijmakers QA, Meeus WH. A meta-analysis of the cross-cultural psychometric properties of the Screen for Child Anxiety Related Emotional Disorders (SCARED). *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*. 2011 Jan;52(1):80-90.

## Instructions to Client

Below is a list of sentences that describe how people feel. Read each phrase and decide if it is “Not True or Hardly Ever True” or “Somewhat True or Sometimes True” or “Very True or Often True” for your child. Then, for each statement, check the box that corresponds to the response that seems to describe your child for the last 3 months. Please respond to all statements as well as you can, even if some do not seem to concern your child.