Trauma Assessment Measures

Standardized measures are an important tool to screen for history of abuse and trauma as well as to assess for level of emotional and behavioral symptoms in the child and caregiver. The use of standardized measures helps to:

- assess symptoms and pressing concerns;
- determine whether treatment is appropriate at this time;
- determine what type of treatment is best suited for this child/family;
- determine if trauma-focused treatment is indicated;
- develop the treatment plan and;
- assess progress in treatment over time

A variety of measures have been developed for these purposes. Section I below provides a list of measures that are brief, easy to administer and readily available. Section II provides some additional measures that may be useful for further assessment, depending on the needs of a particular child and family.

Section I: Brief Screening Measures

Trauma History and PTSD

UCLA PTSD-RI: screens for exposure to trauma and abuse. Clinical cut-off = 38


Child PTSD Symptom Scale (CPSS): Assesses posttraumatic stress symptoms. Child version (7-18 years) valid and reliable; Parent version, no reliability and validity established. 12+ = clinical

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For more information on the CPSS: http://www.nctsn.org/nctsn/nav.do?pid=msr_detail&id=5

Depressive Symptoms

Moods and Feelings Questionnaire (MFQ): quick screening measure to assess depressive symptoms. (7-18 years). 11+ = clinical


Behavior Problems

**Pediatric Symptom Checklist (PSC)**: Measures overall problems, externalizing, internalizing and attention problems. Parent completed for children 4-17 years.

- Total Score: 15 = clinical (sum all 17 items; range: 0 - 34)
- Internalizing: 5 = clinical (sum 5, 6, 9, 10, 11; range: 0 - 10)
- Attention: 7 = clinical (sum 1, 2, 3, 4, 7; range: 0 - 10)
- Externalizing: 7 = clinical (sum 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17; range: 0 - 14)

**Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire**: Brief screen for behavioral problems (ages 3-16)

**Alabama Parenting Questionnaire**: assess the frequency of certain types of parenting behaviors. The domains assessed by this measure include: parental involvement, positive parenting, poor monitoring/supervision, inconsistent discipline, and use of corporal punishment. There are no cut-off scores. Instead the measure is used to get an idea of where parents ‘fall’ along the different domains to help identify areas of focus for treatment.


### Section II: Additional Assessment Measures

Note: This list is not intended to be exhaustive; it just provides suggestions for some additional measures to consider, depending on the needs of a particular child/family.

**Children’s Depression Inventory**: measures depressive symptoms in children ages 8-13.

Child Behavior Problems

**Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL)**: measure of general behavioral and social maladjustment in children

**Trauma Symptom Checklist:** measures trauma-related symptoms among children and adolescents (ages 8-18) (anger, anxiety, dissociation, posttraumatic stress, and sexual concerns).


**Children’s Sexual Behavior Inventory (CSBI)** a 38-item, behavior checklist assessing sexual behavior in children 2-12 yrs old.


**Adult Assessment Measures**

**Brief Child Abuse Potential Inventory (CAPI):** brief version of the Child Abuse Potential Inventory (CAP; Milner, 1986), which is the most widely used and researched predictive measure of parental child abuse risk.

Risk cut-off score = 9
Clinical Cut-off score =12


**The Brief Symptom Inventory** (BSI; Derogatis, 1993) – assess adult psychological function. Used as a brief screening tool for depression, anxiety, and somatization (Derogatis, 2000)