

Common Measure: Workforce Preparation, High School (grades 9-12)

Instrument: Life Skills Development Scale-Adolescent Form

Subscale Name: Problem Solving/Decision Making

Source: Darden, C. A., Ginter, E. J., and Gazda, G. M. (1996). Life-skills development scale – adolescent form: the theoretical and therapeutic relevance of life-skills. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 18, 142-163.

Developers: C. A. Darden, E. J. Ginter, and G. M. Gazda. Contact information: C. A. Darden, Learning Disabilities Center, 343 Milledge Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-5554

Year: 1996

Language other than English available: No

Target Audience(s): Youth ages 13-20

Type of instrument: Attitudes and Behavior

Data collected: Quantitative

Data collection format: Self report-Pre and post

Reading Level: Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level: 8.9

Existence of test/technical manuals, user guides, supplemental materials:

Literature reference includes items from the entire instrument, subscales, information on scale development, psychometrics, administration, and scoring information. Enter reference into <https://scholar.google.com/> to locate journal article and scale.

Level of training necessary for administration/scoring/interpretation: No formal training necessary.

Widespread Use/Professional Endorsements: The primary purpose of this instrument is research and to inform intervention design, implementation and evaluation in clinical and educational settings. The inventory is endorsed by CYFERNet, Evaluating the National Outcomes for Children, Youth, Parent/Family, and Community.

Cost of use: No cost associated with this instrument; *must seek permission from developer to use the scale.*

Description:

- The Problem Solving/Decision Making subscale consists of 15 items related to effective problem solving/decision making behaviors and perceptions of competence.
- The subscale is part of the 60 item Life Skills Development Scale for Adolescents developed for use in clinical assessment, research, and evaluation of interventions.
- The larger instrument consists of 4 subscales: 1) Interpersonal Communication/Human Relations, 2) Problem Solving/Decision Making, 3) Physical Fitness/Health Maintenance Skills, and 4) Identity Development/Purpose in Life Skill.

Psychometrics:

Information on reliability and validity are provided below. If information on a particular psychometric was not found, it is indicated as "no information provided." It should be noted that this is not necessarily an indication of a lack of reliability or validity within a particular scale/instrument, but rather a lack of rigorous testing, for various reasons, by the developers or other researchers.

The Life Skills Development Scale is affected by the social desirability response style. The developers suggest that the instrument is administered along with a measure of social desirability when using the instrument to evaluate educational interventions.

Reliability: *A correlation of at least .80 is suggested for at least one type of reliability as evidence; however, standards range from .5 to .9 depending on the intended use and context for the instrument.*

Test-Retest: No information provided

Internal Consistency: .82

Inter-rater reliability: No information provided

Validity: *The extent to which a measure captures what it is intended to measure.*

Content/Face Validity: The Life Skills Development Scale was developed out to the taxonomy proposed by Brooks (1984), which sets forth life-skills descriptors, validated by expert opinion, to be necessary across the life span for successful human development.

Criterion Validity: No information provided

Construct Validity:

- Convergent validity indicated by positive correlation with score obtained on the Problem Solving Inventory (Heppner, 1988). Discriminant validity was not determined. There were significant correlations with instruments purported to not relate to problem solving/decision making skills (e.g., Miller Social Intimacy Scale, The Ego Identity Scale, and The Physical Self-Efficacy Scale). This suggests significant overlap between the constructs.
- No significant differences in scores across race/ethnicity.
- Interscale correlations were significant in the low to moderate range (.13 to .53).
- Factor analysis revealed an underlying general life skills construct; however, the four proposed dimensions were confirmed with a significant amount of uniqueness to be considered useful in defining specific components of life skills. It is thus recommended to use both total scale and subscale scores in comparing pre and post evaluation results.