

Acute Stress Checklist for Children (ASC-Kids)

Background and Purpose

- 29-item self-report checklist for children and teens (age 8 to 17).
- Assesses traumatic stress responses in the 1st month after a potentially traumatic event.

The ASC-Kids was developed to provide a reliable and valid child self-report measure of acute traumatic stress reactions within the first month after trauma exposure, and to evaluate DSM-IV diagnostic criteria for Acute Stress Disorder. The measure's brevity (approximately 5-10 minutes to complete) makes it practical for clinical and research settings.

Scoring

The ASC-Kids yields both a *symptom severity score* and a determination of the presence or absence of *diagnostic criteria for Acute Stress Disorder*.

Psychometric data

In a validation sample of 176 children with recent traumatic injury or other acute medical event, the ASC-Kids demonstrated strong internal consistency (total scale and symptom category subscales) test-retest reliability, convergent validity with another self-report measure of traumatic stress, and predictive validity in its association with PTSD symptom severity 3 months later. Further validation studies with the English- and Spanish-language versions are underway.

Reference: Kassam-Adams, N. (2006). The Acute Stress Checklist for Children (ASC-Kids): Development of a child self-report measure. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 19: 129-139.

ASD diagnostic criteria		ASC-Kids item(s)
A1	<i>The measure is designed to be given when a child has experienced a potentially traumatic event (this is not explicitly assessed).</i>	
A2	Subjective experience of fear / helplessness / horror	3 items
B	3 or more types of dissociation symptoms (from 5 types) ²	5 items
C	"Persistent" re-experiencing (at least 1 symptom)	5 items
D	"Marked" avoidance (at least 1 symptom)	4 items
E	"Marked" arousal (at least 1 symptom)	5 items
F	Symptoms (B,C,D,E) cause clinically significant distress or impairment	3 items
G	Symptoms last for 2 days – 4 wks (within 4 wks of event)	<i>Assumed when child is assessed between 2 days and 4 weeks post-trauma.</i>

Beyond these diagnostic criteria, four additional ASC-Kids items may be useful clinically: Subjective life threat, parental / family responses to the acute event, as well as interpersonal and internal coping resources (2 items).

Languages

The ASC-Kids was developed and initially validated in English. A Spanish-language version is now being validated. Other investigators have translated the measure into additional languages, and may be able to provide psychometric data regarding those versions. Contact Nancy Kassam-Adams with any translation / language questions.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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