

## **Child Behavior Checklist (Grade 7, Year 8 Update)**

**Fast Track Project Technical Report  
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### **Citation**

Instrument

Achenbach, T.M. (1991). Manual for the Child Behavior Checklist / 4 – 18 and 1991 Profile. Burlington, VT: University of Vermont Department of Psychiatry.

Report

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### **I. Scale Description**

The Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) is composed of 118 items designed to record, in a standardized format, behavioral problems and competencies of children aged 4 through 18, as reported by their parents or other primary caregivers. The CBCL allows for the calculation of raw scores and t-scores, normed separately for girls and boys, in 8 different behavioral domains: Withdrawn, Somatic Complaints, Anxious/Depressed, Social Problems, Thought Problems, Attention Problems, Delinquent Behavior and Aggressive Behavior. The domain of Sex Problems (items 5, 59, 60, 73, 96, and 110) is *not* scored for this age group of children (12+ years), although the items responses are available.

### **II. Report Sample**

This technical report is based upon Year 8, Cohort 1 data, including both High-Risk Control and Normative samples. With missing cases excluded, the total sample size (including an overlap of 65 respondents) is 389, with 321 Normative and 133 High-Risk Control subjects. The Normative sample consists of 157 (48.91%) males, with an ethnic breakdown of 137 (42.68%) Black, 172 (53.58%) White and 12 (3.74%) others. The High-Risk Control sample consists of 95 (71.43%) males, with an ethnic breakdown of 59 (44.36%) Black, 72 (54.14%) White and 2 (1.50%) other races. The total sample had slightly higher percentages of respondents from the two sites: Durham (28.79%) and Pennsylvania (28.02%) than for Nashville (21.08%) and Seattle (22.11%).

### **III. Scaling**

A parent or primary caregiver rates each item on a 3-step response scale: (0) - not true, (1) somewhat or sometimes true and (2) - very true or often true. The item responses are scored using a program which accompanies the instrument, providing both raw total scores and t-scores, normed by gender, for each domain. The items comprising each behavioral domain are:

Withdrawn: 42, 65, 69, 75, 80, 88, 102, 103, and 111.  
 Somatic Complaints: 51, 54, 56a, 56b, 56c, 56d, 56e, 56f, 56g, and, if applicable, 56h.  
 Anxious / Depressed: 12, 14, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 45, 50, 52, 71, 89, 103, and 112.  
 Social Problems: 1, 11, 25, 38, 48, 55, 62, and 64.  
 Thought Problems: 9, 40, 66, 70, 80, 84, and 85.  
 Attention Problems: 1, 8, 10, 13, 17, 41, 45, 46, 61, 62, and 80.  
 Delinquent Behavior: 26, 39, 43, 63, 67, 72, 81, 82, 90, 96, 101, 105, and 106.  
 Aggressive Behavior: 3, 7, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 27, 37, 57, 68, 74, 86, 87, 93, 94, 95, 97, and 104.

Additionally, the CBCL had three broad-band scores: Internalizing, Externalizing and Total Problems. The Internalizing scale is comprised of items from the Withdrawn, Somatic Complaints and Anxious / Depressed scales. The Externalizing scale is comprised of items from the Delinquent Behavior and Aggressive Behavior domains. The Total Problems scale is comprised of all items, except for items 2 and 4 (allergies and asthma).

The results of the reliability assessment (Cronbach's Alpha coefficient) for the 8 domains and three broad-band scores for both the Normative and High Risk Control samples are presented below:

	Normative n=321	High-Risk Control n=133
Withdrawn	.756	.702
Somatic Complaints	.697	.673
Anxious / Depressed	.870	.858
Social Problems	.708	.647
Thought Problems	.732	.688
Attention Problems	.799	.747
Delinquent Behavior	.789	.793
Aggressive Behavior	.902	.902
Internalizing	.892	.860
Externalizing	.915	.914
Total Problems	.955	.946

#### IV. Differences Between Groups

A series of independent t-tests were conducted to assess differences between the Normative and High-Risk Control samples. For these analyses, the Normative sample consisted of only Low-Risk respondents, excluding 65 High-Risk subjects previously included in the Normative sample. Results indicated statistically significant higher mean scores for the High-Risk sample in all domains and broadband scores:

Low-Risk Normatives (n=256) vs High-Risk Controls (n=133)

Scales	t-test	df	p-value	Means		
				Low-Risk Normative	High-Risk Control	
Withdrawn	-2.68	387	.0077	1.664	2.286	
Somatic Complaints	-2.11	230	.0363*	1.000	1.414	
Anxious / Depressed	-3.97	207	<.0001*	2.625	4.309	
Social Problems		-6.12	230	<.0001*	1.727	3.301
Thought Problems	-3.56	193	.0005*	0.445	1.015	
Attention Problems	-7.96	218	<.0001*	2.527	5.323	

Delinquent Behavior	-6.71	198	<.0001*	1.645	3.752
Aggressive Behavior	-7.23	212	<.0001*	5.992	11.248
Internalizing	-4.08	387	<.0001	5.125	7.722
Externalizing	-7.63	209	<.0001*	7.637	15.000
Total Problems	-7.08	215	<.0001*	19.555	35.534

\* T-test with Satterthwaite correction for degrees of freedom (df) given statistical inequality of variances.

#### V. Recommendations for Use

The CBCL provides a standardized, normative framework for evaluating a parent's or primary caregiver's observations of a child. It is applicable for intake and evaluation of children referred to mental health services; it can be used as a "take-off" point for interviewing by a clinician; for relating a parent's or primary caregiver's observations of a child with another person's observations of that same child; and, in considerations of a child's profile on the 8 domains and 3 broadband scores and DSM diagnoses. It can be used in outpatient and inpatient mental health services centers, guidance clinics, private practices, in rating school and home behavior, and in evaluating the behavior and background of child offenders referred to juvenile court.

#### VI. Scale Means and Standard Deviations (SD)

Descriptive indices for the 8 behavior problem domains and the 3 broadband scores are presented below. Note, that the data from the Normative sample reported below includes the 65 High-Risk subjects excluded from the group analyses reported above.

Scales	Normative (n=321)		High Risk Control (n=133)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Withdrawn	1.776	2.198	2.286	2.265
Somatic Complaints	1.078	1.697	1.414	1.939
Anxious / Depressed	2.950	3.658	4.308	4.330
Social Problems	2.031	2.329	3.301	2.541
Thought Problems	0.561	1.271	1.015	1.665
Attention Problems	3.100	3.234	5.323	3.526
Delinquent Behavior	1.972	2.418	3.752	3.251
Aggressive Behavior	6.903	6.120	11.248	7.368
Internalizing	5.611	6.071	7.722	6.510
Externalizing	8.875	8.028	15.000	9.819
Total Problems	22.377	19.693	35.534	22.772

#### VII. Scale Correlations

Normative sample (n=321) above diagonal, High-Risk Control sample (n=133) below diagonal.

Withdrawn	Somatic Complaints	Anxious/ Depressed	Social Problems
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Withdrawn	-	.401	.714	.570
Somatic Complaints	.163	-	.420	.372
Anxious / Depressed	.626	.347	-	.598
Social Problems	.473	.201	.516	-
Thought Problems	.481	.378	.693	.445
Attention Problems	.434	.287	.591	.573
Delinquent Behavior	.386	.138	.494	.337
Aggressive Behavior	.462	.289	.645	.465
Internalizing	.759	.569	.932	.536
Externalizing	.474	.262	.648	.460
Total Problems	.644	.429	.858	.664

	Thought Problems	Attention Problems	Delinquent Problems	Aggressive Behavior
Withdrawn	.425	.538	.422	.548
Somatic Complaints	.285	.379	.199	.369
Anxious / Depressed	.583	.657	.540	.653
Social Problems	.410	.688	.469	.613
Thought Problems	-	.546	.540	.486
Attention Problems	.566	-	.609	.669
Delinquent Behavior	.417	.523	-	.715
Aggressive Behavior	.503	.640	.659	-
Internalizing	.703	.602	.470	.645
Externalizing	.515	.654	.825	.969
Total Problems	.749	.781	.702	.859

	Internalizing	Externalizing	Total Problems
Withdrawn	.855	.545	.731
Somatic Complaints	.654	.341	.521
Anxious / Depressed	.926	.660	.851
Social Problems	.639	.609	.763
Thought Problems	.555	.533	.671
Attention Problems	.665	.694	.812
Delinquent Behavior	.502	.846	.747
Aggressive Behavior	.661	.978	.885
Internalizing	-	.655	.878
Externalizing	.640	-	.900
Total Problems	.875	.877	-