Observer Impressions (Parent-Youth Interaction Task)
Grade 5/Year 6

FAST Track Project Technical Report
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Citation

Instrument

Antony, J., Nelson, D., McMahon, R.J. & Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group. (1996). Observer Impressions [On-line]. Available: http://www.fasttrackproject.org/

Report

Doyle, S.R. & McCarty, C.A. (2000). Observer Impressions (Technical Report) [On-line]. Available: http://www.fasttrackproject.org

Data Sources

Raw: o6m

Scored: pct6

I.   Scale Description

Observer Impressions is a live rating system used to code the three observational tasks that children engage in with their Primary Caregiver: Daily Debriefing Task (4 minutes), Problem Solving Activity (7 minutes), and Planning a Positive Activity (5 minutes). The sequence of tasks is always the same, and occurs in the child's home, at grades 5 and 8. Observer Impressions is a 58-item measure that consists of three types of ratings completed by the child interviewer. The frequencies of various behaviors by parent and child are rated on a 3 point scales. For the most part, the same behaviors are rated for each of the tasks, except for 3 task-specific codes.

Categories of ratings are based in part on the Oregon Social Learning Center's Lab Task Impressions Rating Scale (5th Grade), which can be found online via OSLC's website (www.oslc.org).

II.   Report Sample

This technical report is based upon Year 6, Cohort 1 data, including both high-risk control and normative samples. With missing cases excluded, the total N (including overlap) was 382, with 318 normative and 127 high-risk control youth.

81 parent-child dyads (17% of cohort) were missing observations for the entire measure, including 69

normative youth (18%) and 28 high-risk youth (18%). Most of the missing data are assumed to have resulted from natural attrition from baseline at Year 1. The missing cases included 15 observations from the Durham site, 18 observations from Nashville, 25 observations from Pennsylvania, and 23 observations from Seattle. Data were missing for 32 girls and 49 boys. Ethnic breakdown for missing data was: 1 Asian, 25 Black, 2 Hispanic, 48 White, 5 Other. In addition, 17 cases were missing responses for entire tasks (n = 4) or for individual ratings (n = 13).

III. Scaling

Scales for the PCIT Observer Impressions Scale (Grade 5+) were obtained from exploratory factor analyses utilizing an Alpha extraction with an orthogonal rotation on responses from the Normative sample (n=318). Separate analyses were conducted on the Parent and Child items. Items 37, 56, 57, and 58 were excluded from the scaling. The results indicated 5 factors or scales for the Parent items and 6 scales for the Child items. Each scale score was calculated by taking an average of items comprising the scale if 50% or more of the item responses were available. The resulting scales, associated reliability estimates and descriptive indices for the Normative (Norm) and High Risk Control (HRC) samples are provided below. A more detailed discussion of the scaling procedure can be found in the addendum.

Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha

	Norm (n=318)	HRC (n=127)
Parent Scales		
PC - Positive Communication/Involvement (Items 1,3,4,15,19,21,22,33,38,40,41,52)	.71	.71
NB - Negative Behavior (Items 2,16,20,34,39,53)	.72	.83
ST - Staying on Task/Not Interrupting (Items 11,12r,29,30r,48,49r)*	.65	.71
PP - Positive Physical Contact (Items 6,24,43)	.65	.68
NP - Negative Physical Contact (Items 5,23,42)	.32	.23
* r – item scale reversed		
Child Scales		
NB - Negative Behavior (Items 7,18,25,36,44,55)	.76	.72
ST - Staying on Task/Positive Involvement (Items 13,17,31,35,50,54)	.71	.73
PP - Positive Physical Contact (Items 10,28,47)	.60	.57
NP - Negative Physical Contact (Items 9,27,46)	.58	.46
IN - Interrupting (Items 14,32,51)	.58	.63
AE - Appropriate Emotional Expression (Items 8,26,45)	.34	.26

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 the 62 High Risk subjects previously included in the Normative samples. Results indicated only one statistically significant higher mean score for the Low Risk Normative sample on the Parent scale of Positive Communication/Involvement.

Low-Risk Normatives (n=255) vs High Risk Controls (n=127)

Parent Scales	T-value	Pr > |t|
PC - Positive Communication/Involvement	2.46	0.014
NB - Negative Behavior	-0.20	0.841
ST - Staying on Task/Not Interrupting	0.85	0.398
PP - Positive Physical Contact	1.22	0.222
NP - Negative Physical Contact	-0.75	0.453

Child Scales	T-value	Pr > |t|
NB - Negative Behavior	-1.25	0.211
ST - Staying on Task/Positive Involvement	0.55	0.583
PP - Positive Physical Contact	0.28	0.776
NP - Negative Physical Contact	-0.47	0.636
IN - Interrupting	0.43	0.666
AE - Appropriate Emotional Expression	-0.79	0.430

V. Recommendations for Use

All scales used in this Technical Report aggregate similar items across the 3 tasks in which parent-child dyads participated. Analysts interested in task-related differences in behavior will need to consider an alternate scaling algorithm.

A note of caution that the Alpha coefficients for the Parent Negative Physical Contact and the Child Appropriate Emotional Expression scales are quite low. For the Parent Negative Physical scale, this is likely due to extremely low variability of the items that comprise that scale. Despite this circumstance, a decision to retain this scale was made on the basis that although infrequent, the presence of this behavior during the interaction may be very meaningful.

VI. Item and Scale Means and SD's

	Norm (n=318)		HRC (n=127)	
Parent Scales	Mean	Std	Mean	Std
PC - Positive Communication/Involvement	1.026	0.314	0.962	0.322
NB - Negative Behavior	0.132	0.254	0.136	0.289
ST - Staying on Task/Not Interrupting	1.923	0.185	1.911	0.212
PP - Positive Physical Contact	0.208	0.420	0.154	0.376
NP - Negative Physical Contact	0.020	0.091	0.026	0.108
Child Scales				
NB - Negative Behavior	0.219	0.343	0.257	0.354
ST - Staying on Task/Positive Involvement	1.722	0.339	1.716	0.344
PP - Positive Physical Contact	0.082	0.257	0.071	0.240
NP - Negative Physical Contact	0.018	0.112	0.018	0.105
IN - Interrupting	0.055	0.198	0.045	0.180
AE - Appropriate Emotional Expression	0.243	0.332	0.273	0.357

VII. Item and Scale Correlations

Normative Sample (n=318) above diagonal, High Risk Control (n=127) below diagonal

Parent Scales

	PC	NB	ST	PP	NP
PC	1.00	-.17	.30	.15	-.07
NB	-.15	1.00	-.05	-.04	.22
ST	.46	-.06	1.00	-.02	-.07
PP	.11	-.02	-.07	1.00	-.06
NP	-.21	.12	-.03	.10	1.00

Child Scales

	NB	ST	PP	NP	IN	AE
NB	1.00	-.22	.14	.39	.22	.14
ST	-.19	1.00	.08	-.03	-.16	.06
PP	.11	.04	1.00	.30	.08	-.00
NP	.27	-.01	.26	1.00	.07	-.00
IN	.16	-.21	.09	.28	1.00	.08
AE	.31	.06	-.01	.08	.07	1.00