

People in My Life
Grade 4/Year 5

Fast Track Project Technical Report
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October 2000

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Citation

Instrument

Cook, E., Greenberg, M. & Kusche, C. (1995). People in My Life: Attachment relationships in middle childhood. Presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development. Indianapolis, Indiana.

Report

Gifford-Smith, M. (2000). People in My Life (Technical Report) [On-line]. Available: <http://www.fasttrackproject.org>

Data Sources

Raw: c5r

Scored: pml5

I. Scale Description

The People in My Life measure utilized in Fast Track is a 30-item self-report instrument designed to measure attachment to parents and peers in middle childhood. It was derived from a longer, 76 item instrument (by the same name) developed by Cook, Greenberg, and Kusche (1995).¹ People in My Life was included in the child instrument battery in study years 5 & 6.

II. Report Sample

Initial exploration was conducted on Year 5, Cohort 1 data (the first year in which the instrument was used), including both high-risk control (n=155) and normative samples (n=387, including overlap; total N=463); treatment subjects were not included. Fifty-five students (12% of the cohort) were missing responses for the total scale including 36 normative students (8%) and 19 high-risk students (4%). Site, gender and racial differences in the number of non-respondents are summarized below:

Site: Durham-15, Nashville-10, Pennsylvania-18, Seattle-12
Gender: Boys-34, Girls-21
Race: African Americans-17, White-17, Asian-1, Hispanic-1, and Other-2

¹ An adolescent version of this measure, the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987), also exists but has not been used in Fast Track.

Finally, 5 students are missing responses for individual items; these students were omitted from analyses requiring those responses.

III. Scaling

The abbreviated version of People in My Life utilized by Fast Track contains only 30 of the measures' original items. All of the items pertaining to school and neighborhood have been eliminated as have several items pertaining to parent and peer relationships. Given the substantial changes this measure has undergone since its inception, exploratory factor analyses (using Harris-Keiser rotation) were conducted. Results reveal four eigenvalues greater than 1.0. Examination of the three and four factor solutions suggests that the three-factor solution minimizes dual loadings and provides the best conceptual fit to the data. These three factors and their corresponding items are listed below:

Positive representation of parents—RP1, RP2, RP3, RP4, RP5, RP6, RP7, RP8, RP9, RP15;
 Positive representation of peers—RF1, RF2, RF3, RF4, RF5, RF6, RF7, RF8, RF9, RF15;
 Negative representation of parents & peers—RP10, RP11, RP12, RP13, RP14, RF10, RF11, RF12,
 RF13, RF14

Cronbach alphas and subscale intercorrelations are included in the table below:

Scale Name	Scale alphas	Correlations among scales		
		Positive parent	Positive peer	Negative parent & peer
Positive parent	.81	1.0	.37	-.31
Positive peer	.86		1.0	-.29
Negative parent & peer	.73			1.0

IV. Differences between groups

A series of t-tests indicated significant differences at the .05 level between the high risk sample and the normative sample (excluding those students also in the high risk sample) on several individual items. Means were higher in the normative sample for item p2 (parents accept me) and item p6 (can talk to parents about problems). Conversely, the high risk sample scored significantly higher on items p10 (parents don't understand what I'm going through), p12 (feel angry with parents), p13 (hard to talk to parents), and f12 (feel angry with friends). Significant differences between the high risk and normative sample were also found for one of the three scale score--negative representations of parents and peers--with high risk children reporting more negative feelings toward significant others.

V. Recommendations for use

For most research purposes, scoring recommendations are to use the three scaled scores described above. Two additional scoring variations may be considered to answer certain research questions. First, research on the original version of People in My Life suggests that two broad band scales reflecting attachment to parent and attachment to peers (including items p1-p15 and f1-f15, respectively, with negatively toned items reversed scored) may be acceptable. These scaled scores are included in the SAS scoring program (pmIXpatt and pmIXfatt, respectively) and information regarding their internal consistency and sample differences can be found in Appendix A. Additionally, a four factor model in which the positive representation of

parents is further broken down into two subscales (positive communication, p5-p8, and acceptance, p1-p4, p9, p12, & p15) also provides an acceptable fit to the data.

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VI. Item and scale means and SD's

Item #	Content (paraphrased)	Normative sample (n=341)		High-risk controls (n=136)	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
c5rp1	My parents listen to me	3.30	0.895	3.166	0.924
c5rp2	My parents accept me	3.84	0.637	3.581	0.766
c5rp3	My parents care about me	3.90	0.426	3.875	0.446
c5rp4	My parents help me with my problems	3.65	0.662	3.588	0.755
c5rp5	My parents can tell when I'm upset	3.16	0.895	3.228	0.927
c5rp6	I talk to my parents about my problems	3.14	0.931	2.985	1.004
c5rp7	My parents ask if something is bothering me	3.26	0.872	3.257	0.894
c5rp8	I share thoughts and feelings with parents	3.05	0.944	3.066	1.048
c5rp9	My parents pay attention to me	3.42	0.839	3.346	0.889
c5rp10	My parents don't understand what I am going through	1.93	0.969	2.096	1.025
c5rp11	I get upset easily with my parents	1.89	0.984	2.015	1.089
c5rp12	I feel angry with my parents	1.67	0.828	1.807	0.173
c5rp13	Its hard for me to talk to parents	1.84	0.971	1.978	1.071
c5rp14	I feel scared at home	1.53	0.886	1.515	0.843
c5rp15	My parents are proud of me	3.51	0.853	3.412	0.915
c5rf1	My friends listen to me	2.97	0.979	2.912	1.022
c5rf2	My friends accept me	3.33	0.919	3.191	0.978
c5rf3	My friends care about me	3.25	0.949	3.184	0.975
c5rf4	My friends help me with my problems	3.11	0.994	3.118	1.033
c5rf5	My friends can tell when I'm upset	2.72	1.05	2.662	1.150
c5rf6	I talk to my friends about my problems	2.54	1.096	2.647	1.126
c5rf7	My friends ask if something is bothering me	2.72	1.083	2.846	1.095
c5rf8	I share thoughts and feelings with friends	2.64	1.033	2.618	1.165
c5rf9	My friends pay attention to me	3.11	0.921	3.074	0.924
c5rf10	My friends don't understand what I am going through	1.99	1.036	2.037	0.992
c5rf11	I get upset easily with my friends	1.91	0.998	2.044	1.108
c5rf12	I feel angry with my friends	1.60	0.782	1.838	0.960
c5rf13	Its hard for me to talk to friends	1.41	0.831	1.456	0.824
c5rf14	I feel scared at home	1.67	0.916	1.750	0.994
c5rf15	My friends are proud of me	3.02	0.995	3.015	1.054

Scale	Scale name	Normative sample		High-risk controls	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
pml5posp	positive representations of parents	3.413	0.494	3.350	0.528
pml5posf	positive representations of friend	2.942	0.658	2.926	0.705
pml5nego	negative representations of others	1.744	.501	1.854	0.514

VII. References

Armsden, Gay C; Greenberg, Mark T. (1987) The Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment: Individual differences and their relationship to psychological well-being in adolescence. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence*, 16, 427-454.

Cook, E., Greenberg, M. & Kusche, C. (1995). People in My Life: Attachment relationships in middle childhood. Presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development. Indianapolis, Indiana.

Appendix A. Supplemental scale scores for People in My Life.

Factor analyses on the original, 76 item version of People in My Life, conducted by Cook et. al. (1995), yielded 4 subscales including feelings about parents, feelings about peers, feelings about school and feelings about neighborhood with alphas of .88, .90, .90, .80 respectively. The abbreviated version of PML utilized by Fast Track contains only 30 of the measures' original items. All of the items pertaining to school and neighborhood have been eliminated as have several items pertaining to parent and peer relationships. Thus, the only factors from the original version relevant to the FT measure are the parent and peer subscales. Both subscales include both positive and negative items (reverse scored). The parent scale included 20 items, 15 of which have been retained on the present scale (RP1, RP2, RP3, RP4, RP5, RP6, RP7, RP8, RP9, RP10r, RP11r, RP12r, RP13r, RP14r, RP15). The peer scale included 27 items, 15 of which have been retained (RF1, RF2, RF3, RF4, RF5, RF6, RF7, RF8, RF9, RF10r, RF11r, RF12r, RF13r, RF14r, RF15). Mapping these scales onto the items available from the FT version of PML yields a parent factor with a cronbach alpha of .80 and a peer factor with an alpha of .83.

Significant differences between the normative and high risk sample on year 5 data were obtained for the positive parental attachment scale.