

Services Assessment for Children and Adolescents (SACA for Kids)

Grade 12/Year 13

Fast Track Project Technical Report

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Citation

Instrument

Stiffman, A. R., Horwitz, S. M., Hoagwood, K., Compton, W., Cottler, L., Bean, D. L., Narrow, W. E., & Weisz, J.R. (2000). The Service Assessment for Children and Adolescents (SACA): Adult and child reports. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 39(8), 1032-1039.

Report

Jones, D. E and Godwin, J. (2010). Services Assessment for Children and Adolescents (SACA for Kids) (Technical Report) [On-line]. Available: <http://www.fasttrackproject.org/>

Data Sources

Raw: c13bb

Scored: mhk13

I. Scale Description

Two versions of the SACA have been administered to Fast Track participants over time. During study years 11 through 13, youth received the *SACA for Kids* measure. During study years 14 and 15, participants received the *SACA for Young Adults*.

SACA for Kids:

The SACA for Kids is an extremely limited version of the original SACA (Stiffman et al., 2000). It collects self-reported information on the use of mental health services in the past 2 years. If the youth endorses receiving services, the measure collects the facility name, city and state. The services included are:

- Inpatient care for emotional, behavioral, or drug or alcohol problems
- Outpatient care for emotional, behavioral, or drug or alcohol problems
- Special education services at school
- Foster care
- Preservation services or other services delivered to families

In addition, the measure asks whether youth ever had any police or court contact. If yes, respondents are asked their age at first contact and more detailed questions about police/court contact in the past 12 months. The additional questions gather information on the following:

- Number of arrests
- Number of non-arrest police contacts
- Time spent in jail prior to trial or release
- Number of court appearances
- Number of conviction
- Offenses for which convicted
- Length of sentence in detention facilities and the names of those facilities

SACA for Young Adults:

Beginning in year 14, a new measure of self-reported service use was used that closely resembles the *SACA-Not So Brief* and *SACA-Not So Brief Revised* measures that were administered to parents. One key difference is that youth are asked about services received at different health care facilities in the past 2 years rather than the last 12 months. If a young adult indicates that a particular type of service was used, detailed follow-up questions about use in the past 2 years are asked (e.g., number of facilities, name and location of facilities, number of admissions/visits, number of nights admitted, who referred the youth to the service, and the source and amount of payment for the most recent admission/visit). If the provider is a general health provider, an additional question is asked to determine the proportion of admissions/visits that were for mental health reasons.

Inpatient service providers include:

1. Psychiatric hospital
2. General hospital
3. Residential treatment center
4. Group home
5. Foster home
6. Emergency shelter
7. Overnight in other facility

Outpatient service providers include:

1. Mental health center
2. Day treatment or partial hospitalization
3. Drug and alcohol clinic
4. In-home therapists or family preservation workers
5. Respite care (if the young adult has a child)
6. Counselors and therapists
7. Emergency room
8. Family doctor

In addition to service use, the measure also collects data on health care coverage, police/court contact, prescription drug use for mental health reasons, and special education services if youth attended secondary school in the past 2 years.

The health insurance coverage section asks whether the young adult currently has health insurance. If yes, the young adult is asked how long he/she has had coverage and the source of coverage. If no, the measure inquires about the length of time since he/she had coverage. All respondents are asked if they have ever been without insurance in past 2 years.

The prescription drug section asks whether youth received a written prescription for medication for mental health reasons in the past 2 years. If yes, the youth is asked more detailed questions about prescriptions for different mental health conditions (e.g., when medication was first prescribed, whether the youth filled the prescription, and when the youth stopped taking the medication). The measure asks about prescriptions for the following problems:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Anger
- ADHD
- Medications for other emotional, behavioral or substance abuse problems.

If youth attended secondary school in the past 2 years, he/she is asked a series of questions about special education services received including:

- Whether any services were received
- Whether the youth had a IEP
- Special education classification
- Whether he/she attended special school
- Whether he/she was referred to additional services

II. Report Sample

The explanatory analyses in this report were conducted on the Cohort 1 normative (n=387) and high-risk control samples (n=155, N=463 with overlap) in grade 12/year 13. One hundred twenty seven youth did not complete the entire measure (27% of the sample), including 109 from the normative sample (28% of the sample) and 53 from the high-risk control sample (34% of the sample). The youth who did not complete the measure include 21 from Durham (17%), 42 from Nashville (40%), 29 from Penn State (23%), and 35 from Seattle (32%).

III. Scaling

No scales were derived for this instrument.

IV. Differences Between Groups

Chi-Square tests of independence between the high-risk control and the low-risk normative sample were conducted on all items. The results for many of the tests, however, are questionable given the low frequency of use for many services. A test may not be valid if fewer than 5 respondents in a sample (normative or control) were expected to meet the service criteria. An * indicates that fewer than 5 respondents in both samples were expected to meet the criteria, while an ** indicates that fewer than 5 respondents in one sample were expected to meet the criteria.

The hypotheses of independence between risk category (high-risk control and normative) and item endorsement were rejected at the 0.05 significance level, indicating that the high risk control sample had higher rates of use than the lower risk normative sample for the following scales:

- Any Inpatient Services for Mental Health Reasons in Past 2 Years
- Any Outpatient Services for Mental Health Reasons in Past 2 Years
- Any Special Education Services in Past 2 Years
- Ever Arrested or Warned by Police
- Arrested During the Last 12 Months

- Appeared in Court During the Last 12 Months
- Spent Time in Jail or Prison in Past 12 Months**

The high-risk control and normative samples did not significantly differ in their use of other services.

Chi Square Test for Normative and Control for Dichotomous Scored Variables								
Variable		Percent Used Services		DF	N	Chi Square Statistic	P-value	
		Norm	Control					
Have you received inpatient services for emotional, behavioral, academic, drug or alcohol problems?	C13BB6	0.04	0.12	1	335	6.46	0.01	
During the last two years have you ever received outpatient services for emotional, behavioral, academic, drug or alcohol problems?	C13BB16	0.09	0.18	1	335	5.14	0.02	
During the last two years have you ever received special education services at school?	C13BB26	0.08	0.20	1	334	8.96	0.00	
During the last two years have you spent any time in foster care?	C13BB36	0.02	0.05	1	335	2.75	0.10	**
During the last two years have you or your family been involved in family preservation services or other services delivered to families having problems?	C13BB46	0.02	0.02	1	335	0.02	0.88	*
Have you ever been arrested, picked up, given a warning, placed in a police car, brought home by police for any reason, or appeared in court for something accused of doing?	C13BB56	0.31	0.47	1	334	7.08	0.01	
Arrested in last 12 Months	C13BB58r	0.08	0.21	1	332	11.82	0.00	
Appeared in court in last 12 Months	C13BB77r	0.12	0.24	1	334	8.07	0.00	
Spent Time in Jail or Detention Center in Last 12 Months	C13BB87	0.01	0.06	1	331	7.65	0.01	**

V. Recommendations for Use

The SACA for Kids provides basic service use information but little detailed information about the services used. In addition, the service use questions ask about past 2 years rather than past 12 months. Slightly more detailed information is available regarding contact with police and the court system

Analysts should examine how many participants positively endorsed receiving services before generating descriptive statistics or using outcomes in statistical models. In general, most items will have a high frequency of participants who report not receiving any services (i.e., zeros), so examination of individual response distributions is highly advised.