

NEW SEHS-S-2020 Administration and Scoring Resource

We have always supported and embraced collaborative efforts to make the SEHS-S-2020 widely accessible to school mental health researchers and practitioners. We appreciate when researchers, both professors and students, reach out to us for permission to adapt and use the SEHS-S-2020. We endorse these initiatives because they have led to a substantial body of evidence proving the SEHS-S-2020's psychometric properties and validity. These collaborations have fostered valuable research partnerships, [enriching our own research](#) with new perspectives and ideas.

If you are a researcher and want to use/adapt the SEHS-S-2020 (or other UCSB School Mental Health Collaborative assessments), [please contact us](#).

[School Mental Health Collaborative Publications](#)

The SEHS-S-2020 items are part of the California Healthy Kids Survey. The CHKS is conducted anonymously across schools in California by WestEd, a nonpartisan, nonprofit research and development agency, on behalf of the California Department of Education. WestEd offers an online administration platform, a dashboard, and various resources to support the use of the SEHS-S-2020 at the school, district, county, or statewide levels. If you wish to administer the SEHS-S-2020 anonymously to a large group of students, we recommend reviewing [WestEd's Social Emotional Health resources](#).

We are pleased that access to the SEHS-S-2020 has been well received; however, we have met challenges in making it available to school mental health practitioners. Practitioners can use either a paper form or create one in Google Docs. Unfortunately, these methods limit accessibility and lack a standardized approach.

We considered developing a self-scoring survey in Qualtrics, but ultimately decided against it due to several complications. Most importantly, using Qualtrics would require using the University of California's license, intended for research rather than applied clinical applications. Additionally, there are confidentiality concerns about storing SEHS-S-2020 responses in a cloud storage system.

To provide a standardized method for delivering the SEHS-S-2020 for individual use in school-based mental health, we introduce a new resource. The SEHS-S-2020 is now available through

[PsyPack](#), an online psychometric testing platform for behavioral health. This resource allows online administration, scores SEHS-S-2020 responses, produces a summary report, and helps track reactions over time. We are offering the SEHS-S-2020 royalty-free, enabling [PsyPack](#) to provide it at a reduced price for individual student use.

Social Emotional Health Surveys

Social Emotional Health Survey–Secondary

This document provides an overview of studies arranged chronologically, highlighting the psychometric properties of the Social Emotional Health Survey–Secondary.

Overview SEHS Development and Conceptual Foundations

Paz, J. L., & Kim, E. K. (2022). Cultivating Psychosocial Strengths and Well-Being. In K-A. Allen, M. J. Furlong, D. Vella-Broderick, & S. M. Suldo (Eds.), *Handbook of positive psychology in schools: Supporting process and practice* (pp. 38–55). Taylor & Francis.

This chapter highlights recent advancements in the Covitality framework, which integrates 12 positive psychological mindsets and has led to the development of the Social Emotional Health Survey (SEHS) to assess students' mental health. Key components include: (a) theoretical foundations, (b) the Covitality measurement model, (c) [research findings](#), and (d) school applications. It concludes with a discussion on diversity and how the SEHS promotes student well-being and success.

Social Emotional Health Survey–Secondary-2015

The first version of the Social Emotional Health Survey for Secondary Students (SEHS-S) was published in 2014. In 2020, we refined and further validated this survey, releasing it as the SEHS-S-2020. The original version is now referred to as the SEHS-S-2015. The [manual for the SEHS-S-2015](#) is available as an ERIC document.

Original SEHS-S-2015 Study California Sample

Furlong, M. J., You, S., Renshaw, T. L., Smith, D. C., & O'Malley, M. D. (2014). Preliminary development and validation of the social and emotional health survey for secondary school students. *Social Indicators Research*, 117(3), 1011-1032. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-013-0373-0>

The SEHS is an adaptation and expansion of the Resilience Youth Development Module (RYDM). This module is part of the assessments linked to the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) and serves as a tool for measuring youths' internal assets and external resources (Furlong et al., 2009; Hanson & Kim, 2007). The SEHS's items are based on a theoretical model comprising 12 core positive psychological building blocks that contribute to adolescents' positive mental health.

To create the initial item bank for the SEHS, we utilized existing items from the RYDM and other measures that evaluated the constructs included in our proposed model (a representation of the SEHS's subscales and their respective sources is available). While our primary goal was to develop and refine the SEHS as a high-quality measure, we also aimed to create an assessment tool that could be easily implemented in school settings. Therefore, we intentionally kept the content concise and selected only the top three items for each of the 12 core subscales.

For seven of the 12 subscales of the Social and Emotional Health Scale (SEHS)—namely, self-efficacy, self-awareness, family coherence, peer support, emotional regulation, empathy, and gratitude—we selected the three highest-loading items from each preexisting scale. This selection was based on the results of previously published, peer-reviewed factor analyses.

However, for the remaining five subscales—persistence, school support, self-control, zest, and optimism—there was insufficient information regarding their factor structure and item loading in previous research. Therefore, we initially included all items from each of these scales in our item bank. We subsequently selected the three highest-loading items for each subscale in the first stage of the factor analysis.

As a result, the original SEHS comprised 51 items. Following the initial factor analysis, a revised, shortened version of the SEHS was developed, comprising 36 items. This version contains three items from each of the twelve subscales, with a reliability coefficient (Cronbach's α) of 0.92 for the current sample. Table 1 presents the prompts, items, and response options for each subscale of the 36-item SEHS.

The items and response format are presented in this article's table:

Table 1 Standardized factor loadings for the Social and Emotional Health Survey

SEHS-S-2015 Cross-Validation and Adaptation Studies

Independent California Sample Validation Study

You, S., Furlong, M. J., Dowdy, E., Renshaw, T. L., Smith, D. C., & O'Malley, M. D. (2014). Further validation of the social and emotional health survey for high school students. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 9(4), 997-1015. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-013-9282-2>

For this study, we slightly modified the response options for 10 of the 12 subscales (excluding gratitude and zest) to create a more standardized instrument. These response options were: 1 = *not at all true of me*, 2 = *a little true of me*, 3 = *pretty much true of me*, and 4 = *very much true of me*. For the gratitude and zest subscales, the following response options were used, referring to the frequency of experience: 1 = *not at all*, 2 = *very little*, 3 = *somewhat*, 4 = *quite a lot*, 5 = *extremely*. The 36 SEHS items are shown in Table 1. For the total sample used in the present study, the internal consistency reliabilities for the four second-order latent traits were: belief-in-self (omega = .76), belief-in-others (omega = .81), emotional competence (omega = .78), and engaged living (omega = .87). The alpha for the combined 36-item total covitality Index was .91, which compares to .92 in a previous study (Furlong et al. 2013b).

Japanese Language Adaptation

Ito, A., Smith, D. C., You, S., Shimoda, Y., & Furlong, M. J. (2015). Validation and utility of the social emotional health survey—Secondary for Japanese students. *Contemporary School Psychology*, 19(4), 243. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40688-015-0068-4>

The SEHS-S has 12 subscales (three items per subscale) that map on to four latent traits: *belief-in-self* (self-awareness, persistence, and self-efficacy), *belief-in-others* (school support, family coherence, and peer support), *emotional competence* (emotional regulation, empathy, and behavioral self-control), and *engaged living* (gratitude, zest, and optimism; Renshaw et al. 2014). Ten of the 12 subscales use a four-point response option: 1 = not at all true of me to 4 = very much true of me. A five-point frequency response scale is used with the gratitude and zest subscales: 1 = not at all to 5 = extremely. The 36 SEHS items are shown in Table 1.

Korean Language Adaptation

Lee, Sy, You, S., & Furlong, M. J. (2016). Validation of the Social Emotional Health Survey–Secondary for Korean Students. *Child Indicators Research*, 9, 73–92.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-014-9294-y>

Social and Emotional Health Survey–Secondary (SEHS-S) The SEHS–S (Furlong et al. 2014) was translated into Korean by one of the authors (Lee) and three bilingual Korean graduate students. This process was completed for 33 of the 36 SEHS–S items. However, because of difficulties in identifying separate Korean words for three gratitude subscale items (grateful, thankful, appreciative), the Korean version used alternate items (the three highest-loading items: 1, 2, and 4) taken from the Gratitude Questionnaire-6 (GQ-6; McCullough et al. 2002). Therefore, the gratitude scale of the Korean version focused on general gratitude attitudes rather than on more immediate feelings of gratitude (since yesterday), as in the SEHS–S. Except for this change in the gratitude subscale, everything else remained the same as in the original SEHS–S. For the total sample used in the present study, the internal consistency reliabilities of the four first-order latent traits were: belief-in-self ($\alpha=0.84$), belief-in-others ($\alpha=0.85$), emotional competence ($\alpha=0.82$), and engaged living ($\alpha=0.88$). The alpha for the combined 36-item total civility score was 0.94, which compares to 0.92 (Furlong et al. 2014c) and 0.95 (You et al. 2014b) reported in previous studies. All subscales use a four-point response scale, except the gratitude and zest subscales, which use a five-point response scale. Table 1 shows the structure of the original SEHS–S and response options for each of the 12 subscales. A copy of the Korean version of the SEHS–S is available from the authors.

Turkish Language Adaptation

Telef, B. B., & Furlong, M. J. (2017). Adaptation and validation of the Social Emotional Health Survey-Secondary into Turkish culture. *International Journal of School & Educational Psychology*, 5, 255–265. [doi:10.1080/21683603.2016.1234988](https://doi.org/10.1080/21683603.2016.1234988)

This 36-item instrument is used with adolescents aged 13 to 18 years. For 10 of the 12 subscales, the students' self-reports are completed using a 4-point scale (1 = *not at all true of me*, 2 = *a little true of me*, 3 = *pretty much true of me*, and 4 = *very much true of me*). The gratitude and zest measured subscales use a 5-point response scale: (1 = *not at all*, 2 = *very little*, 3 = *somewhat*, 4 = *quite a lot*, 5 = *extremely*).

Spanish Language Adaptation (Spain)

Piqueras, J. A., Rodriguez-Jimenez, T., Marzo, J. C., Rivera-Riquelme, M., Martinez-Gonzalez, A., Falco, R., & Furlong, M. J. (2019). Social emotional health survey-secondary (SEHS-S): A universal screening measure of social-emotional strengths for Spanish-speaking adolescents. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(24)

<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16244982>

Social and Emotional Health Survey (SEHS-S). The 36 SEHS items are available in an Online Supplemental Material for this article. The description and the summary of the psychometric properties of SEHS-S were included in the introduction section. The internal consistency coefficients for S1 and S2 are presented in the Results section. The Spanish version of SEHS-S was developed in accordance with the guidelines of the International Test Commission, using an iterative-translation method that began with several independent translations. The item translations were then reviewed by a joint committee comprising translators with knowledge of the Spanish language and culture, and specialists in the field of assessment, who analyzed the adequacy of the adapted version. Any translation discrepancies arising were discussed, and appropriate corrections were made to the item translations. Consensus on translated item wording in Spanish was achieved. See the article's online supplemental materials for items and response format. The students' self-reports are completed using a 4-point scale (1 = not at all true of me, 2 = a little true of me, 3 = pretty much true of me, and 4 = very much true of me). The gratitude and zest measured subscales use a 5-point response scale: (1 = not at all, 2 = very little, 3 = somewhat, 4 = quite a lot, 5 = extremely).

Lithuania Language Adaptation

Petrulytė, A., Guogienė, V., & Rimienė, V. (2019). Adolescent social emotional health, empathy, and self-esteem: Preliminary validation of the Lithuanian version of the SEHS-S questionnaire. *Psychology in Russia: State of the Art*, 12(4), 196-209.

<https://doi.org/10.11621/pir.2019.0412>

This instrument (SEHS-S) was validated using samples of students from California (Furlong et al., 2014; You et al., 2015), Korea (Lee, You & Furlong, 2015), and Japan (Ito, Smith, You, Shimoda, & Furlong, 2015). M. Furlong emphasizes that this research is directed toward the optimal exploration of human functions based on the hypothesis that the combination of the first-order positive psychological dispositions (*belief-in-self*, *belief-in-others*, *emotional competence*, and *engaged living*) builds a second-order synergic meta-construct of “covitality,” which is a good tool for understanding the quality of teenagers’ and youth’s lives, as well as

predicting their success and well-being now and in later life (Furlong et al., 2014). The SEHS-S questionnaire includes 36 items. The students' self-reports are completed using a four-point scale (1 = not at all true of me; 2 = a little true of me; 3 = pretty much true of me; and 4 = very much true of me).

Validation with California Sample Students with SLD

Carnazzo, K., Dowdy, E., Furlong, M. J., & Quirk, M. P. (2019). An evaluation of the social emotional health survey—secondary for use with students with learning disabilities.

Psychology in the Schools, 56(3), 433-446. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.2219>

The SEHS measure in this study contains 36 items, with three items measuring each of the 12 positive psychological traits that form the four first-order positive mental health subdomains: *belief in self*, comprised of self-awareness, self-efficacy, and persistence; *belief in others*, comprised of school support, family coherence, and peer support; *emotional competence*, which includes emotion regulation, empathy, and self-control; and *engaged living*, including optimism, zest, and gratitude. Subdomain scores combine to create an overall strengths score, termed covitality. The factor structure with four first-order factors and a higher-order covitality factor has been established. Ten subdomains (excluding gratitude and zest) use a four-point response scale (1 = *not at all true of me*, 2 = *a little true of me*, 3 = *pretty much true of me*, and 4 = *very much true of me*). The gratitude and zest subdomains use a five-point response scale (1 = *not at all*, 2 = *very little*, 3 = *somewhat*, 4 = *quite a lot*, 5 = *extremely*).

Persian Language Adaptation

Taheri, A., Pourshahriari, M., Abdollahi, A., Hosseinian, S., & Allen, K. A. (2021). Psychometric assessment of the Persian translation of the social and emotional health survey-secondary (SEHS-S) with female adolescents. *International Journal of Mental Health*, 50(1), 16-32.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00207411.2020.1843965>

The Social and Emotional Health Survey (Furlong et al. 2014) is a measure with 36 indicators to assess the psychological foundations of positive mental health of adolescents, comprising four subscales (self-belief, other-belief, emotional competence, and engaged living). Of 36 indicators, 30 are rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all true) to 4 (very much true). The other six indicators are scored on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (extremely). The overall score is obtained by summing the scores, and a higher score indicates a higher level of social and emotional health. In a prior study conducted by Furlong et al. (2014), the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.92. The Brislin method, as already described for

the EPOCH measure, was used to translate this measure, and the results showed acceptable content validity (CVI = 0.83) and quantitative face validity (Quantitative face validity = 1.8). The result showed an acceptable reliability with an Alpha Cronbach of 0.91.

Social Emotional Health Survey–Secondary-2020

Between 2015 and 2020, we revised the Social Emotional Health Survey–Secondary with support from an Institute of Education Sciences grant. Collaborating with the California Department of Education and WestED, we refined item wording, standardized the response format, and collected new concurrent and predictive validity data. The revised SEHS-S and validity scales (e.g., the Mental Health Continuum-Short Form) were included in the California Healthy Kids Core Module and administered to a large random sample of California students in grades 6-12. The [manual describing the IES-funded SEHS-S revision](#) is available online as an ERIC document.

Original SEHS-S-2020 Study California Sample

Furlong, M. J., Dowdy, E., Nylund-Gibson, K., Wagle, R., Carter, D., & Hinton, T. (2021). Enhancement and standardization of a universal social-emotional health measure for students' psychological strengths. *Journal of Well-Being Assessment*.
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s41543-020-00032-2>

[This document has the SEHS-S-2020 items, response format, and scoring information.](#)

SEHS-S-2020 Cross-Validation and Adaptation Studies

California Spanish Language Validation

Hinton, T., Dowdy, E., Furlong, M. J., Nylund-Gibson, K., Carter, D., & Wagle, R. (2021). Examining the social emotional health survey--secondary for use with Latinx youth. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 39(2), 242-246. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0734282920953236>

The SEHS-S-2020 is a 36-item self-report measure that assesses positive psychosocial traits.

Prior

research has validated a higher-order factor structure with 36 items loading onto 12 subscales that

load onto four second-order positive social emotional subdomains: Belief in self (self-awareness, self-efficacy, and persistence), Belief in others (family coherence, peer support, and school support), Emotional competence (emotion regulation, self-control, and empathy), and Engaged living (optimism, zest, and gratitude).

California Middle School Student Validation

Furlong, M. J., Paz, J. L., Carter, D., Dowdy, E., & Nylund-Gibson, K. (2023). Extending validation of a social emotional health measure for middle school students. *Contemporary School Psychology, 27*(1), 92-103. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40688-022-00411-x>

The SEHS-S-2020 includes 36 items as described earlier in this manuscript (items shown in Supplemental Material Table 4). The items use a four-point response format (1 = *not at all true*, 2 = *a little true*, 3 = *pretty much true*, 4 = *very much true*). The mean item responses across all 36 items for Sample 1 were as follows: Grade 7 ($M = 3.03$, $SD = 0.59$, skewness = -0.49, kurtosis = -0.15) and Grade 8 ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 0.61$, skewness = -0.45, kurtosis = -0.09). The mean differences by grade, $t = 7.06$ (11,424), $p = 0.114$, represented a negligible effect size difference ($d = 0.13$).

Spanish Language Adaptation (Columbia)

Riaño-Hernández, D., Leenen, I., Ramírez-Conde, A., Atehortua-Rivera, P., & Piqueras, J. A. (2025). Validity evidence for assessing social-emotional psychological strengths in Colombian adolescents using the SEHS-S. *PLoS ONE, 20*(2), 17. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0314488>

The SEHS-S is a self-report questionnaire for adolescents aged 12 to 18. The 36 items are organized in 12 subscales (with each subscale consisting of three items and measuring one positive psychological component), which in turn are grouped in four domains of positive mental health: belief-in-self (with the subscales self-efficacy, self-awareness, and persistence), belief-in-others (school support, family coherence, peer support), emotional competence (emotional regulation, empathy, behavioral self-control), and engaged living (gratitude, zest, optimism). These four domains contribute to the overall construct of covitality. The response scale used a four-point Likert-type format (1 = "not at all true of me", 2 = "a little true of me", 3 = "more or less true of me", and 4 = "very much true of me"). We used Piqueras's [18] Spanish translation of the SEHS-S, with the adjustments by Furlong [33].

Slovak Language Adaptation

Gajdošová, E., Albertová, S. M., Furlong, M. J., Hannelová, K., Roľková, H., Newman, D., & Dvorská, B. (2025). Validation of the Social–Emotional Health Survey SEHS-S-2020 in Slovakia. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 2025(1), 9969895.

<https://doi.org/10.1155/cad/9969895>

The original covitality measure, the SEHS-S-2015, was developed for the California school wellness project. The current version SEHS-S-2020 has 36 items with a 4-point Likert response format (*not at all true, a little true, nearly true, and very much true*). The items form four domains. Each domain includes three psychological indicators: belief in self (self-awareness, self-efficacy, and perseverance); belief in others (family coherence, peer support, and school support); emotional competence (emotional regulation, empathy, and self-control); and engaged living (optimism, zest, and gratitude). Ten studies provided substantial evidence supporting the SEHS-S-2015's validity and reliability. The pilot Slovak translation validation of the SEHS-S-2015 demonstrated high reliability for the total covitality score (Cronbach alpha = 0.92).