



LiFE*sports*
LEARNING IN FITNESS AND EDUCATION

Technical Report: *LiFEsports* Survey Tools

The *LiFEsports* Initiative
College of Social Work
The Ohio State University

LiFEsports Survey Tools
Perceived Self-Control Scale



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Perceived Self-Control Scale

I. Definition of Construct

Self-control is defined as the ability to have control of one's self and own actions (Greshman & Elliot, 1990). When exhibiting self-control, youth have the tendency to avoid acts whose long-term costs surpass the immediate benefits (Hirschi & Gottfredson, 2001). Given positive social interactions with others are reliant upon one's ability to control his or her attitudes and behaviors, self-control is an important skill for youth to develop as they engage in social environments such as school and sport (Beelmann, Pfingsten, & Lösel, 1994; Hellison, 2003).

II. Relevance for Practice

Past research has identified that athletes with higher levels of self-control were better at controlling their aggression in sport settings (Manuel Sofia & Cruz, 2015). In fact, that a lack of self-control has been identified as a risk factor contributing to externalizing behaviors (Krueger, Caspi, Moffitt, & Loeber, 1996). While self-control theory (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990) postulates that youths' self-control results primarily from parental and caregiver influences, recently research has identified the influence that peer behavior has on shaping youths' self-control (Meldrum & Hay, 2012). As such the ability to measure this construct is important for youth workers in a variety of settings.

III. Scale Description and Instructions

A. *Items*

1. I am able to control my anger.
2. When something frustrates me, I am able to calm down easily.
3. I am able to control my temper.
4. I can walk away from a situation when I am angry.
5. When I have a problem, I think before I act.
6. I am able to walk away when someone annoys me.
7. When I am stressed, I can calm myself down.
8. I am able to calm down when something angers me.

B. *Response Options*

- 1.= Not at all true
- 2.= A little true
- 3.= Somewhat true
- 4.= Pretty true
- 5.= Really true

C. *Instructions for Respondents*

Please read each statement and decide if the statement is “not at all true” for you, “a little true” for you, “somewhat true” for you, “pretty true” for you, or “really true” for you. Fill in the circle that best shows your answer.

D. *Instructions for Scale Administrators*

Once each student has a survey, explain that the purpose of the survey is to learn more about their ability to control and manage their reactions and emotions. They should mark one answer per statement, selecting the choice that best reflects how they feel.

IV. Scoring Procedures

An average of the response scores from the eight (8) items should be calculated and used as an indicator of self-control, with higher scores reflecting greater levels of self-control.

V. Psychometric Properties of the Scale

The Perceived Self-Control Scale (PSCS) was originally developed for use in a sport-based positive youth development program to assess youths' perceptions of their ability to control and manage their reactions and emotions.

The factor structure of the scale was tested using data from 295 LiFE Sports camp participants. Results of an exploratory factor analysis suggest that the 8-item version of the PSCS possesses reasonable factorial validity. Specifically, results show that each of the 8 items loads on a single factor. Further, the factor loadings were all reasonably high (.67-.80), indicating each item reflects the latent self-control construct fairly well. The internal consistency of the scale was strong ($\alpha=.90$), suggesting the PSCS is reliable.

Positive and significant bivariate correlations between the PSCS and other variables, such as self-control in sport ($r=.56$) and social competence ($r=.39$), support the predictive validity of the scale.

VI. Summary

The results of the psychometric testing indicate support for the PSCS to measure self-control for practice and research youth development initiatives.

VII. Recommended Citation of Scale

When using the Perceived Self-Control Scale for program evaluation or research purposes, please use the following citation:

Anderson-Butcher, D., A. Amorose, Newman, T., & Lower, L. (2016). *Perceived self-control scale*. LiFEsports Initiative, Community and Youth Collaborative Institute, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH.

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LiFEsports is a university-wide Initiative at The Ohio State University focused on promoting quality youth development experiences through sport, recreation, and play. For more information, please visit our website at: www.osulifesports.org or contact us at LiFESports@buckeyes.ath.ohio-state.edu.