

Early Childhood Screening Guidance

Screening Tool	Age / Who is it meant for	Presenting Concern	What it screens for / description	Who uses it?	Link to Tool
HEADS-ED under 6	0 years -6 years	Eating difficulties, sleeping difficulties, aggression, social withdrawal, child-caregiver relationship issues, delayed milestones, separation distress, irritability, anxiety, sadness, emotional dysregulation, maladaptive behaviours, and disruptive behaviours.	Screens for mental health and developmental concerns across seven domains: (1) Home & Caregivers, (2) Eating & Sleeping, (3) Activities & peers, (4) Development, speech/language/motor , (5) Safety, (6) Emotions, behaviours, and (7) discharge or current resources.	The HEADs-ED is completed by the healthcare provider.	https://www.heads-ed.com/en/survey?survey_type=under6
The Pediatric Aces and Related Life-events Screener (child tool) PEARLS child tool [2]	0 years – 11 years.	Exposure to Adverse Childhood Experience(s)(ACEs) .	The PEARLS tool screens for two main categories of childhood stress: Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): Abuse, neglect, and household instability (like parental mental	Completed by the caregiver.	https://www.acesaware.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/PEARLS-Tool-Child-Parent-Caregiver-Report-De-Identified-English.pdf

Early Childhood Screening Guidance

			illness or substance use). • Social Determinants of Health: Environmental stressors like food insecurity, housing instability, bullying, and discrimination.		
CAST	4 years – 11 years.	Autism Spectrum Disorder.	Brief parental questionnaire to screen for behaviours linked to core features of autism spectrum conditions including social impairment, repetitive behaviours, and communication difficulties.	Completed by the caregiver.	https://response.novopsych.com/
SNAP-IV	5 years – 17 years.	ADHD	Parental, caregiver, or teacher report rating scale used to assess difficulties in behaviour regulation or attention. The items are based on DSM criteria for ADHD.	Completed by the caregiver or teacher.	https://www.caddra.ca/wp-content/uploads/SNAP-IV-26.pdf

Early Childhood Screening Guidance

CATS (caregiver report)	3 years – 6 years.	Trauma	CATS is based on DSM-5 criteria for 3–6-year-old PTSD symptom criteria. CATS includes a caregiver self-report as well as an interview.	Complete d by the caregiver.	https://istss.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/CATS-Pre-School-3-6.pdf
CASTER	0 years – 5 years.	Exposure to Trauma	CASTER screening helps to identify exposure to trauma and stress responses.	Complete d by the caregiver.	English: https://georgehullcentre.ca/institute/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/CASTER-Parent-Caregiver-Report-Children-ages-0-5.pdf French: https://georgehullcentre.ca/institute/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/CASTER-Parent-Caregiver-Report-Children-ages-0-5-French-FINAL.pdf
Preschool Anxiety Scale (PAS)	2.5 years – 6.5 years.	Anxiety	PAS is a scale completed by a parent/guardian to assess anxiety in the child. in addition to providing an overall measure of anxiety, PAS scores on five subscales: (1) Generalized anxiety, (2) Social anxiety, (3) Obsessive compulsive disorder, (4) Physical injury fears, and (5) Separation anxiety.	Complete d by the caregiver.	https://response.novopsych.com/

Early Childhood Screening Guidance

Parenting Stress Scale (PSS)	Parents or caregivers to children of any age.	Parents report feelings of stress, demands on resources, or other negative aspects of parenthood.	The PSS is an 18-item questionnaire used to assess parents' feelings about positive and negative aspects of parenthood.	Completed parent(s) or carers of children and young people of any age.	PSS: https://plct.files.wordpress.com/2019/01/parent-stress-scale.doc Fillable pdf version of PSS: https://www.corc.uk.net/media/2764/parent-stress-scale-fillable-pdf.pdf
Me as a Parent Scale (MaaPS-16)	Parent.	Used to understand parents' perceived efficacy of their role.	The MaaPS-16 is a 16-item questionnaire that screens for perceived parenting efficacy and self-regulation.	Completed by the parent.	https://parentingrc.org.au/tools/me-as-a-parent-scale/