Overview

The Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale for Children (CES-DC) is a student self-report measure to assess for depressive symptoms in children, adolescents, and young adults ages 6-23. The CES-DC was modified from the CES-D, an adult depression inventory, which was developed from other depression scales covering six major symptom areas, including depressed mood, feelings of guilt/worthlessness, a sense of helplessness/hopelessness, psychomotor retardation, loss of appetite, and sleep disturbance.

Focus Area
Depression/Mood

Purpose
Screening/Initial Evaluation
Progress Monitoring

Reporter
Student

Versions
Student, 20 items (for ages 6-23)

Subscales
N/A

Sample Items
- I felt like I was just as good as other kids
- I felt down and unhappy
- It was hard to get started doing things

Response Options
Not at all
A little
Some
A lot

Estimated Completion Time
Five to ten minutes

Languages
English
Spanish
Other

Cost
Free

Access the measure:
CES-DC

Summary compiled by CSMH (2017) for The SHAPE System (www.theSHAPEsystem.com)
**Scoring**

### Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale for Children (CES-DC)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible range</th>
<th>0-60</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item scores</td>
<td>Not at all (0) to A lot (3)</td>
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**Administration & scoring rules**

- To use the **CES-DC for screening and progress monitoring**:
  - Rate symptoms present in the past week
  - Reverse code* items 4, 8, 12, 16
  - Sum all items

*Reverse coding guidelines: (0=3, 1=2, 2=1, 3=0)

**Interpretation**

Scores of 15 and above in children and adolescents (and scores of 16 and above in young adults) may be suggestive of significant levels of depressive symptoms; however, this cutoff may not be as specific to depression and may pick up on broader concerns with psychological functioning. A score of 31 was recommended to be more specific to more severe depressive symptomatology.

The scale has limited reliability and validity in children age 6 to 11. Rather, the CES-DC has shown it is most appropriate for use in girls and youth age 12 to 18.