

School Refusal Assessment Scale Scoring – SRAS (Child and Parent versions)

(The SRAS can be found online)

Scoring: Transfer responses to the lines corresponding to the item numbers. Add the responses in each column to get four separate Total Scores. Divide each Total Score by 6 to get the Mean Scores. Then rank the four Mean Scores in order from highest (ranking of 1) to lowest (ranking of 4). Scores within .25- .50 of one another are considered equivalent. If you have more than one respondent (e.g., mother, father, child) you can average their responses per function or simply compare reports for similarities or differences.

Interpretation:

Function 1 = Child refuses school specifically because he or she is *distressed about something at school.*

Examples: school-related objects, places, or people that s/he wants to avoid; may have had negative experience(s) at school

Some mental health considerations: Panic disorder and/or Agoraphobia, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Specific Phobias, Depression, and Suicidal Behaviours

Function 2 = Child refuses school specifically because he or she *wants to avoid unpleasant social or performance situations at school.*

Examples: writing or speaking in front of others; meeting new people; interacting with aggressive peers; performing during recitals, tests, or athletic contests; or being in or approaching large groups of people.

Some mental health considerations: Social Anxiety Disorder, Depression, and Suicidal Behaviours

Function 3 = Child refuses school specifically because he or she *wants to get attention from a significant other*

Examples: you may see clinging, reassurance seeking, refusal to move, tantrums, interest in calling home, verbal demands for attention, guilt-inducing behavior, running away to get to a parent. Child may have had a negative experience that changes behaviour towards significant other.

Some mental health considerations: Separation Anxiety, Oppositional Defiant Disorder or noncompliance to most parental commands

Function 4 = Child refuses school specifically because he or she *wants to get tangible rewards from some source outside of school.*

Examples: time with friends, alcohol/drug use, TV/video games, play time, outings in community.

Some mental health considerations: Conduct-Disordered behaviours, Substance Abuse, Lack of Motivation

****Note:** Any of the mental health considerations described above could apply to any function of school refusal. The lists are only those most commonly associated with each function. There are others that can apply to any function, including ADHD, Learning Disorders, and Developmental Disorders.

General intervention goals for each function but more assessment may be needed before implementing these:

Function 1 = Reduce unpleasant physical symptoms, give child way to cope with uncomfortable situations, ease re-entry into school.

Function 2 = Build social skills that will solicit positive feedback from others, decrease social anxiety that interferes with going to school, change negative thinking patterns that hamper school attendance.

Function 3 = Give parents skills to address noncompliance to their commands, shift parent attention to positive behaviours such as going to school, put parents in charge of what is happening at home.

Function 4 = Reduce family conflict by providing a method of problem-solving, increase rewards for going to school, decrease rewards for missing school.

*****Usually a combination of the above needed and treatment from mental health may be needed*****