Family Empowerment Scale

We are pleased that you would like to use the **Family Empowerment Scale (FES)** in your research.

Citation: Koren P., DeChillo, N., & Friesen, B. (1993). Family Empowerment Scale (FES). Portland, OR: Research and Training Center on Family Support and Children's Mental Health, Portland State University.

The following are included in this PDF:

1) The FES instrument
2) The FES scoring guide
3) A list of published studies that have used the scale

Please cite properly, whether the citation be in printed form or on a website. We would be very interested to hear about your experiences and findings, and to receive a copy of any publication referencing the scale.

For further specific or technical information, contact Dr. Barbara Friesen at friesenb@pdx.edu.

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FAMILY EMPOWERMENT SCALE

These questions ask about several areas of your life–your family, your child's services, and your community. The questions include many different activities that parents may or may not do. For questions that do not apply to you, please answer "Not Applicable". Also, we know that other people may be involved in caring for and making decisions about your child, but please answer the questions by thinking of your own situation. Feel free to write any additional comments at the end.

ABOUT YOUR FAMILY...	NOT APPLIC-ABLE	NEVER	SELDOM	SOME-TIMES	OFTEN	VERY OFTEN
1. When problems arise with my child, I handle them pretty well.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. I feel confident in my ability to help my child grow and develop.	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. I know what to do when problems arise with my child.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. I feel my family life is under control.	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am able to get information to help me better understand my child.	0	1	2	3	4	5
6. I believe I can solve problems with my child when they happen.	0	1	2	3	4	5
7. When I need help with problems in my family, I am able to ask for help from others.	0	1	2	3	4	5
8. I make efforts to learn new ways to help my child grow and develop.	0	1	2	3	4	5
9. When dealing with my child, I focus on the good things as well as the problems.	0	1	2	3	4	5
10. When faced with a problem involving my child, I decide what to do and then do it.	0	1	2	3	4	5
11. I have a good understanding of my child's disorder.	0	1	2	3	4	5
12. I feel I am a good parent.	0	1	2	3	4	5

ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S SERVICES...	NOT APPLIC-ABLE	NEVER	SELDOM	SOME-TIMES	OFTEN	VERY OFTEN
13. I feel that I have a right to approve all services my child receives.	0	1	2	3	4	5
14. I know the steps to take when I am concerned my child is receiving poor services.	0	1	2	3	4	5
15. I make sure that professionals understand my opinions about what services my child needs.	0	1	2	3	4	5
16. I am able to make good decisions about what services my child needs.	0	1	2	3	4	5

	NOT APPLICABLE	NEVER	SELDOM	SOME-TIMES	OFTEN	VERY OFTEN
17. I am able to work with agencies and professionals to decide what services my child needs.	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. I make sure I stay in regular contact with professionals who are providing services to my child.	0	1	2	3	4	5
19. My opinion is just as important as professionals' opinions in deciding what services my child needs.	0	1	2	3	4	5
20. I tell professionals what I think about services being provided to my child.	0	1	2	3	4	5
21. I know what services my child needs.	0	1	2	3	4	5
22. When necessary, I take the initiative in looking for services for my child and family.	0	1	2	3	4	5
23. I have a good understanding of the service system that my child is involved in.	0	1	2	3	4	5
24. Professionals should ask me what services I want for my child.	0	1	2	3	4	5

ABOUT YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE COMMUNITY...	NOT APPLIC-ABLE	NEVER	SELDOM	SOME-TIMES	OFTEN	VERY OFTEN
25. I feel I can have a part in improving services for children in my community.	0	1	2	3	4	5
26. I get in touch with my legislators when important bills or issues concerning children are pending.	0	1	2	3	4	5
27. I understand how the service system for children is organized.	0	1	2	3	4	5
28. I have ideas about the ideal service system for children.	0	1	2	3	4	5
29. I help other families get the services they need.	0	1	2	3	4	5
30. I believe that other parents and I can have an influence on services for children.	0	1	2	3	4	5
31. I tell people in agencies and government how services for children can be improved.	0	1	2	3	4	5
32. I know how to get agency administrators or legislators to listen to me.	0	1	2	3	4	5
33. I know what the rights of parents and children are under the special education laws.	0	1	2	3	4	5
34. I feel that my knowledge and experience as a parent can be used to improve services for children and families.	0	1	2	3	4	5

COMMENTS_____

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Family Empowerment Scale (FES)

Scoring Directions

Scores for the subscales are simple means. Calculate the mean for each subscale by adding the scores for the subscale items that have NOT been answered "Not Applicable," and dividing by the number of questions that were answered "Never…Very Often" (1 through 5). If there are missing items (up to 3) in responses 1-5, add the scores for the subscale items, and divide by the number of answered questions.

You can add responses to all of the subscales for an overall score but be aware that each of the subscales addresses quite a different topic (Family, Service System, Community). Many published articles have employed the method of adding all items for an overall score. Examining each subscale score in relation to other variables of interest is another approach that may yield more specific information.

We suggest using only the subscales that are relevant to the information you want to gather, or that you predict might change as a result of an intervention (treatment, program, or training) that you are using. For example, if the intervention addresses only the first subscale (Family - how confident/efficacious the caregiver feels about his/her ability to meet the child's needs or intervene effectively), then adding the scores from all subscales together is likely to dilute any change because of lack of movement in areas not addressed by the intervention (Service System or Community).

Family Empowerment Scale (FES)

SECTION I: STUDIES USING THE FES

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