

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire cluster

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Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire cluster

Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type: Data Set Specification

METEOR identifier: 741161

Registration status: [Health, Standard 09/12/2022](#)

DSS type: Data Element Cluster

Scope: The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) collects data on 4-17 year olds for use in clinical assessment, screening, outcomes evaluation and epidemiology. The SDQ measures 25 initial items divided between 5 scales: emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity/inattention, peer relationship problems, and prosocial behaviour.

Additional questions apply depending on the consumer filling out the survey (parent, teacher or self), and whether the survey is being provided as an initial assessment or in a follow-up review.

Collection and usage attributes

Guide for use: The wording of the questions in each of the surveys differs slightly depending on the version being used as some versions are a self-assessment and some versions are an assessment of another (e.g., that person's child or student). The questions nevertheless measure the same concepts (e.g., how often the person loses their temper) so the description of the questions specified in the data elements contained in this cluster are general rather than being a verbatim copy of the questions from each of the survey versions.

Extensive support materials are available on the SDQ developers' website, including copies of the various versions of the instrument, background information and scoring instructions. See <https://www.sdqinfo.org> (YouthinMind 2022).

Collection methods: There are six versions (parent-report and youth-self report) of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) currently specified for National Outcomes and Casemix Collection (NOCC) reporting, with an additional four versions (teacher-report) that may be of use at the clinical level.

The "1" versions are administered on [admission](#) and are rated on the basis of the preceding 6 months. The "2" follow up versions are administered on review and discharge and are rated on the basis of the previous 1 month period. The versions specified for NOCC reporting are:

- PC1 – Parent Report Measure for children aged 4-10 years, Baseline version, Australian Version 1
- PC2 – Parent Report Measure for children aged 4-10 years, Follow up version, Australian Version 1
- PY1 – Parent Report Measure for children aged 11-17 years, Baseline version, Australian Version 1
- PY2 – Parent Report Measure for children aged 11-17 years, Follow up version, Australian Version 1
- YR1 – Youth Self-report Measure, 11-17 years, Baseline version, Australian Version 1
- YR2 – Youth Self-report Measure, 11-17 years, Follow up version, Australian Version 1

Please note that the item numbering in the SDQ versions is deliberately non sequential because it covers all items in all versions, both to indicate item equivalence across versions and to assist data entry, especially of translated versions.

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Reference documents: Goodman R, Scott S 1999. Comparing the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and the Child Behavior Checklist: Is small beautiful? Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, 27, 17-24.

YouthinMind 2022. SDQ Information for researchers and professionals about the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires. Viewed 27 July 2022
<https://www.sdqinfo.org>

Relational attributes

Related metadata references: See also [Collection occasion—measure completion status, mental health code N Health](#), Standard 09/12/2022

Implementation in Data Set Specifications: [National Outcomes and Casemix Collection NBEDS 2023-24 Health](#), Superseded 06/12/2023

Implementation start date: 01/07/2023

Implementation end date: 30/06/2024

Conditional obligation:

In the National Outcomes and Casemix Collection (NOCC) NBEDS, this data element cluster, representing Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), should be collected where:

Setting: inpatient, residential or ambulatory

Occasion: admission, review, and discharge*

Age group: adults or older persons

* Discharge ratings for the SDQ are not required by the ambulatory service or the consumer respectively, when the reason for the closure of the ambulatory episode is transfer to a bed-based treatment service setting of that organisation (i.e., psychiatric inpatient or community residential service).

Discharge ratings for the SDQ are not required for [brief ambulatory episode of mental health care](#) where the number of days between admission to and discharge from the episode of care is 14 days or less duration.

Consumers will be offered to complete the SDQ at the specified collection occasion but completion by the consumer is not mandatory. There are circumstances where offering such measures will not be appropriate and special considerations apply to the collection of consumer rated measures.

For more information on setting, occasion, or age groups, see the Mental Health National Outcomes and Casemix Collection, Technical specification of State and Territory reporting requirements <https://docs.validator.com.au/nocc/02.10/> (Australian Mental Health Outcomes and Classifications Network, 2022).

DSS specific information:

There are six versions (parent-report and youth-self report) of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) currently specified for National Outcomes and Casemix Collection (NOCC) reporting, with an additional four versions (teacher-report) that may be of use at the clinical level.

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- YR2 – Youth Self-report Measure, 11-17 years, Follow up version, Australian Version 1

Please note that the item numbering in the SDQ versions is deliberately non sequential because it covers all items in all versions, both to indicate item equivalence across versions and to assist data entry, especially of translated versions.

[National Outcomes and Casemix Collection NBEDS 2024-25](#)

[Health](#), Standard 06/12/2023

Implementation start date: 01/07/2024

Implementation end date: 30/06/2025

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- PY2 – Parent Report Measure for children aged 11-17 years, Follow up version, Australian Version 1
- YR1 – Youth Self-report Measure, 11-17 years, Baseline version, Australian Version 1
- YR2 – Youth Self-report Measure, 11-17 years, Follow up version, Australian Version 1

Please note that the item numbering in the SDQ versions is deliberately non sequential because it covers all items in all versions, both to indicate item

Metadata items in this Data Set Specification

Seq No.	Metadata item	Obligation	Max occurs
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1	Person—presence of behaviour, statement truth rating code N	Mandatory	25
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DSS specific information:

This data element is collected 25 times, and collects data for mental health assessment, evaluation or screening of persons 4-17 years old.

This data element represents the core Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) survey questions, which are questions 1-25 and which are used in every version of the questionnaire, and ask if the person is:

1. Considerate of other people's feelings
2. Restless, overactive, cannot stay still for long
3. Often complains of headaches, stomach-aches, or sickness
4. Shares readily with other children, for example toys, treats, pencils
5. Often loses temper
6. Rather solitary, prefers to play alone
7. Generally well behaved, usually does what adults request
8. Many worries or often seems worried
9. Helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill
10. Constantly fidgeting or squirming
11. Has at least one good friend
12. Often fights with other children or bullies them
13. Often unhappy, depressed or tearful
14. Generally liked by other children
15. Easily distracted, concentration wanders
16. Nervous or clingy in new situations, easily loses confidence
17. Kind to younger children
18. Often lies or cheats
19. Picked on or bullied by other children
20. Often volunteers to help others (parents, teachers, other children)
21. Thinks things out before acting
22. Steals from home, school or elsewhere
23. Gets along better with adults than with other children
24. Many fears, easily scared
25. Good attention span, sees chores or homework through to the end

Seq No.	Metadata item	Obligation	Max occurs
2	Person—assessment of overall functionality, 4-point difficulty scale code N	Mandatory	1

Conditional obligation:

If CODE 0 "no difficulties" is entered, please further complete [Person—period of difficulties experienced, time scale code N](#) with CODE 8 "not applicable"; if CODES 1-3 are entered use permissible values provided.

If CODE 0 "no difficulties" is entered, please further complete [Person—rating of difficulties experienced, 4 point magnitude scale code N](#) with CODE 8 "not applicable"; if codes 1-3 are entered use permissible values provided.

DSS specific information:

This data element is collected 1 time, and collects data for mental health assessment, evaluation or screening of persons 4-17 years old.

This data element represents question 26 on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) survey, which asks:

26. Overall, do you think that the individual has difficulties in any of the following areas: emotions, concentration, behaviour or being able to get along with other people?

3	Person—period of difficulties experienced, time scale code N	Conditional	1
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Conditional obligation:

Use of this data element is conditional on the version of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) ([Collection occasion—survey version, mental health code XX\[XXX\]](#)) being used. It should only be used when the version is one of:

- PC1 – Parent Report Measure for children aged 4-10 years, Baseline version, Australian Version 1
- PY1 – Parent Report Measure for children aged 11-17 years, Baseline version, Australian Version 1
- YR1 – Youth Self-report Measure, 11-17 years, Baseline version, Australian Version 1

If CODE 0 "no difficulties" is entered for [Person—assessment of overall functionality, 4-point difficulty scale code N](#), further complete this item with CODE 8 "not applicable".

If CODES 1-3 are entered for [Person—assessment of overall functionality, 4-point difficulty scale code N](#), further complete this item using permissible values provided.

DSS specific information:

This data element is collected 1 time, and collects data for mental health assessment, evaluation or screening of persons 4-17 years old.

This data element represents question 27 of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) survey, which asks:

27. How long has the individual been having difficulties?

Seq No.	Metadata item	Obligation	Max occurs
4	Person—rating of difficulties experienced, 4-point magnitude scale code N	Conditional	6
<p>Conditional obligation:</p> <p>If CODE 0 "no difficulties" is entered for question 27 (Person—assessment of overall functionality, 4 point difficulty scale code N), further complete this item with CODE 8 "not applicable".</p> <p>If CODES 1-3 are entered for question 27 (Person—assessment of overall functionality, 4 point difficulty scale code N), further complete this item using permissible values provided.</p> <p>DSS specific information:</p> <p>This data element is collected 6 times, and collects data for mental health assessment, evaluation or screening of persons 4-17 years old.</p> <p>This data element represents questions 28-33 of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) survey, which ask:</p> <p>28. Do the difficulties upset or distress the individual?</p> <p>Do the difficulties interfere with everyday life in the following areas:</p> <p>29. Home life</p> <p>30. Friendships</p> <p>31. Classroom learning</p> <p>32. Leisure activities</p> <p>33. Do the difficulties put a burden on the individual or the family as a whole?</p>			
5	Person—effect of service on overall well-being, rating of change code N	Conditional	1
<p>Conditional obligation:</p> <p>Use of this data element is conditional on the version of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Collection occasion—survey version, mental health code XX[XXX]) being used. It should only be used when the version is one of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PC2 – Parent Report Measure for children aged 4-10 years, Follow up version, Australian Version 1 • PY2 – Parent Report Measure for children aged 11-17 years, Follow up version, Australian Version 1 • YR2 – Youth Self-report Measure, 11-17 years, Follow up version, Australian Version 1 <p>DSS specific information:</p> <p>This data element is collected once, and collects data for mental health assessment, evaluation or screening of persons 4-17 years old.</p> <p>This data element represents question 34 of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) survey, which asks:</p> <p>34. Since coming to the service, are the individual's problems: ...</p>			

6 [Person—usefulness of service, 4-point magnitude scale code N](#)

Conditional 1

Conditional obligation:

Use of this data element is conditional on the version of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) ([Collection occasion—survey version, mental health code XX\[XXX\]](#)) being used. It should only be used when the version is one of:

- PC2 – Parent Report Measure for children aged 4-10 years, Follow up version, Australian Version 1
- PY2 – Parent Report Measure for children aged 11-17 years, Follow up version, Australian Version 1
- YR2 – Youth Self-report Measure, 11-17 years, Follow up version, Australian Version 1

DSS specific information:

This data element is collected once, and collects data for mental health assessment, evaluation or screening of persons 4-17 years old.

This data element represents question 35 of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) survey, which asks:

35. Has coming to the service been helpful in other ways, e.g., providing information or making the problems more bearable?

7 [Person—complaints about behaviour, 3-point magnitude scale code N](#)

Conditional 3

Conditional obligation:

Use of this data element is conditional on the version of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) ([Collection occasion—survey version, mental health code XX\[XXX\]](#)) being used.

Questions 36-38 apply to versions:

- PC1 – Parent Report Measure for children aged 4-10 years, Baseline version, Australian Version 1
- PY1 – Parent Report Measure for children aged 11-17 years, Baseline version, Australian Version 1

Questions 39-42 apply to version:

- YR1 – Youth Self-report Measure, 11-17 years, Baseline version, Australian Version 1.

DSS specific information:

This data element is collected 3 times, and collects data for mental health assessment, evaluation or screening of persons 4-17 years old.

This data element represents questions 36-42 of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) survey, which ask:

36. Have teachers complained of: fidgetiness, restlessness or overactivity?

37. Have teachers complained of: poor concentration or being easily distracted?

38. Have teachers complained of: acting without thinking, frequently butting in, or not waiting for the individual's turn?

39. Has family complained of having problems with overactivity or poor concentration?

40. Do teachers complain about problems with overactivity or poor concentration?

41. Does family complain about the individual being awkward or troublesome?

42. Do teachers complain about the individual being awkward or troublesome?