

Scoring Key for Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey

(2025–26)

WestEd

Updated: October 2025

Elementary CHKS Scoring Key

The California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) is the largest statewide survey of resiliency, protective factors, risk behaviors, and school climate in the nation. Across California, the CHKS has led to a better understanding of the relationship between students' health behaviors and academic performance, and is frequently cited by state policymakers and the media as a critical component of school improvement efforts to help guide the development of more effective health, prevention, and youth development programs.

The CHKS assesses student resiliency, protective factors, and school environment using scales, sub-domains, and domains. Described below is the scoring key for scales and domains in the Core and Social Emotional Health Modules (Elementary CHKS).

This scoring key documents how scores for the scales, sub-domains, and domains are computed. The scale scores are calculated by averaging the percentage of respondents who report select response categories on the survey questions that comprise each scale. For example, a value of 60 on the "School Connectedness" scale means that on average, students report "Agree" or "Strongly agree" on three of the five "School Connectedness" survey questions.

Scores for subdomains are computed by averaging the scale scores that comprise each subdomain, and domain scores are based on the average of subdomain scores.

Survey questions, select response categories used to calculate the scale, and the required number of items for each scale are listed in the following tables. Response options of the survey questions and the corresponding numeric codes are listed in the footnotes.

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Core Module

Table 1. Total School Environment Domain and Subdomains

Domain	Response Range
Total School Environment (<i>requires all subscales</i>)	
Caring adults in school	
High expectations—adults in school	
Meaningful participation at school	
Subdomains and Scales	
Caring adults in school (<i>requires 2–3 items</i>)	
<i>Do the teachers and other grown-ups at school...</i>	
care about you?	1–4
listen when you have something to say?	1–4
make an effort to get to know you?	1–4
High expectations—adults in school (<i>requires 2–3 items</i>)	
<i>Do the teachers and other grown-ups at school...</i>	
tell you when you do a good job?	1–4
believe that you can do a good job?	1–4
want you to do your best?	1–4
Meaningful participation at school (<i>requires 6–7 items</i>)	
Are you given a chance to help decide school activities or rules?	1–4
Do the teachers and other grown-ups at school ask you about your ideas?	1–4
Do the teachers and other grown-ups give you a chance to solve school problems?	1–4
Do you get to do interesting activities at/when you participate in school?	1–4
Are you given a chance to help decide class activities or rules?	1–4
Do your teachers ask you what you want to learn about?	1–4
Do you do things to be helpful at/in school?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

Table 2a. School Connectedness Scale (In-School Only)

Scale	Response Range
School Connectedness	
School connectedness scale questions (requires 4–5 items)	
Do you feel close to people at school?	1–4
Are you happy to be at this school?	1–4
Do you feel like you are part of this school?	1–4
Do teachers treat students fairly at school?	1–4
Do you feel safe at school?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

Table 2b. School Connectedness Scale (Remote Only)

Scale	Response Range
School Connectedness	
School connectedness scale questions (requires 3–4 items)	
Do you feel close to people from school?	1–4
Are you happy to be with this school?	1–4
Do you feel like you are part of this school?	1–4
Do teachers treat students fairly?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

Table 3. Academic Motivation Scale

Scale	Response Range
Academic Motivation	
Academic motivation scale questions (<i>requires 3–4 items</i>)	
Do you finish all your school assignments?	1–4
When you get a bad grade, do you try even harder the next time?	1–4
Do you keep working and working on your schoolwork until you get it right?	1–4
Do you keep doing your schoolwork even when it’s really hard for you?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

Table 4. Social and Emotional Learning Supports Scale

Scale	Response Range
Social and Emotional Learning Supports	
Social and emotional learning supports scale questions (<i>requires 3–4 items</i>)	
<i>Does your school...</i>	
help students resolve conflicts with one another?	1–4
teach students to understand how other students think and feel?	1–4
teach students to feel responsible for how they act?	1–4
teach students to care about each other and treat each other with respect?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

Table 5. Fairness Scale

Scale	Response Range
Fairness	
Fairness scale questions (requires 3–4 items)	
Do teachers treat students fairly?	1–4
Are the school rules fair?	1–4
Do teachers and other grown-ups at school treat students with respect?	1–4
Are students treated fairly when they break school rules?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

Table 6a. Positive Behavior Scale (In-School Only)

Scale	Response Range
Positive Behavior	
Positive behavior scale questions (requires 3–4 items)	
Do you follow the classroom rules?	1–4
Do you follow the playground rules at recess and lunch times?	1–4
Do you listen when your teacher is talking?	1–4
Are you nice to other students?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

Table 6b. Positive Behavior Scale (Remote Only)

Scale	Response Range
Positive Behavior	
Positive behavior scale questions (<i>requires 2–3 items</i>)	
Do you follow the classroom rules?	1–4
Do you listen when your teacher is talking?	1–4
Are you nice to other students?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

Table 7. Violence Victimization Scale (In-School Only)

Scale	Response Range
Violence Victimization	
Violence victimization scale questions (<i>requires 2–3 items</i>)	
<i>Do other kids...</i>	
hit or push you at school when they are not just playing around?	1–4
at/from school spread mean rumors or lies about you?	1–4
at/from school call you bad names or make mean jokes about you?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, some of the time,” “Yes, most of the time,” or “Yes, all the time.”

Table 8. Antibullying Climate Scale

Scale	Response Range
Antibullying Climate	
Antibullying climate scale questions (<i>requires 2–3 items</i>)	
Do the teachers and other grown-ups make it clear that bullying is not allowed?	1–4
If you tell a teacher that you’ve been bullied, will the teacher do something to help?	1–4
Do students at/from your school try to stop bullying when they see it happening?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

Table 9. High Expectations—Adults at Home Scale

Scale	Response Range
High Expectations—Adults at Home	
High expectations—adults at home scale questions (<i>requires all items</i>)	
<i>Does a parent or some other grown-up at home...</i>	
believe that you can do a good job?	1–4
want you to do your best?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

Table 10. Parent Involvement in Schooling Scale

Scale	Response Range
Parent Involvement in Schooling	
Parent involvement in schooling scale questions (<i>requires 4–5 items</i>)	
<i>Does a parent or some other grown-up at home...</i>	
care about your schoolwork?	1–4
ask if you did your homework/schoolwork?	1–4
check your homework/schoolwork?	1–4
ask you about school?	1–4
ask you about your grades?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

Social Emotional Health Module

Table 11. Covitality Domain and Subdomains

Domain
Covitality (<i>requires all subscales</i>)
Belief in self
Belief in others
Emotional competence
Engaged living
Subdomains
Belief in self^A (<i>requires all subscales</i>)
Self-efficacy
Persistence
Belief in others^B (<i>requires all subscales</i>)
School supports
Peer supports
Emotional competence^C (<i>requires all subscales</i>)
Empathy
Engaged living^D (<i>requires all subscales</i>)
Optimism
Gratitude
Zest

Source of survey questions: Core Module, Social Emotional Health Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: ^ASee Table 12 for the Belief in Self subdomain;

^BSee Table 13 for the Belief in Others subdomain;

^CSee Table 14 for the Emotional Competence subdomain;

^DSee Table 15 for the Engaged Living subdomain.

Table 12. Belief in Self Subdomain and Scales

Subdomain	Response Range
Belief in Self (<i>requires all subscales</i>)	
Self-efficacy	
Persistence ^E	
Scales	
Self-efficacy scale questions (<i>requires 2–3 items</i>)	
Can you do most things if you try?	1–4
Can you work out your problems?	1–4
Are there many things you do well?	1–4
Persistence^E scale questions (<i>requires 3–4 items</i>)	
Do you finish all your school assignments?	1–4
When you get a bad grade, do you try even harder the next time?	1–4
Do you keep working and working on your schoolwork until you get it right?	1–4
Do you keep doing your schoolwork even when it’s really hard for you?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, Social Emotional Health Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

^EData are from Core Module. Sample is limited to respondents with data in Social Emotional Health Module.

Table 13. Belief in Others Subdomain and Scales

Subdomain	Response Range
Belief in Others (<i>requires all subscales</i>)	
School supports ^E	
Peer supports	
Scales	
School supports^F scale questions (<i>requires 2–3 items</i>)	
<i>Do the teachers and other grown-ups at school...</i>	
tell you when you do a good job?	1–4
listen when you have something to say?	1–4
believe that you can do a good job?	1–4
Peer supports^G scale questions (<i>requires 2–3 items</i>)	
<i>I have a friend my age who...</i>	
really cares about me.	1–4
helps me when I am having a hard time.	1–4
talks with me about my problems.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Core Module, Social Emotional Health Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: ^EData are from Core Module. Sample is limited to respondents with data in Social Emotional Health Module.

^FSurvey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4). Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

^GSurvey response options are “Not at all true” (1); “A little true” (2); “Pretty much true” (3); and “Very much true” (4). Scale is based on average reporting of “Pretty much true” or “Very much true.”

Table 14. Emotional Competence Scale

Scale	Response Range
Empathy	
Empathy scale questions (<i>requires 2–3 items</i>)	
Do you try to understand how other people feel?	1–4
Do you feel bad when someone else gets their feelings hurt?	1–4
Do you try to understand what other people go through?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Social Emotional Health Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

Table 15. Engaged Living Subdomain and Scales

Subdomain	Response Range
Engaged Living (<i>requires all subscales</i>)	
Optimism	
Gratitude	
Zest	
Scales	
Optimism scale questions (<i>requires 3–4 items</i>)	
When you have a problem at school, do you think it will get better in the future?	1–4
Do you expect that you will feel happy during class time?	1–4
Do you feel positive that good things will happen to you at school?	1–4
Do you feel positive that you will have fun with your friends at school?	1–4
Gratitude scale questions (<i>requires 2–3 items</i>)	
Do you feel thankful to go to your school?	1–4
Are you thankful when you get to learn new things at school?	1–4
Are you thankful to have nice teachers at your school?	1–4
Zest scale questions (<i>requires 2–3 items</i>)	
Do you get really excited when you learn something new at school?	1–4
Do you wake up in the morning excited to go to school?	1–4
Do you get excited about your schoolwork?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Social Emotional Health Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

Table 16. Growth Mindset Scale

Scale	Response Range
Growth Mindset	
Growth mindset scale questions (requires 2–3 items)	
Challenging myself won't make me any smarter. ^H	1–4
There are some things I am not capable of learning. ^H	1–4
If I am not naturally smart in a subject, I will never do well in it. ^H	1–4

Source of survey questions: Social Emotional Health Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Not at all true” (1); “A little true” (2); “Pretty much true” (3); and “Very much true” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “A little true” or “Not at all true.”

^HResponse options are reverse-coded in computing the scale score.

Table 17. Collaboration Scale

Scale	Response Range
Collaboration	
Collaboration scale questions (requires 2–3 items)	
Do you get along or work well with students who are different from you?	1–4
Do you enjoy working with other students?	1–4
Do you listen to other students' ideas?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Social Emotional Health Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

Table 18. Problem Solving Scale

Scale	Response Range
Problem Solving	
Problem solving scale questions (requires 2–3 items)	
Do you know where to go for help with a problem?	1–4
Do you try to work out your problems by talking or writing about them?	1–4
When you need help, do you find someone to talk with about it?	1–4

Source of survey questions: Social Emotional Health Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “No, never” (1); “Yes, some of the time” (2); “Yes, most of the time” (3); and “Yes, all the time” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Yes, most of the time” or “Yes, all the time.”

Table 19. Social Emotional Distress Scale

Scale	Response Range
Social Emotional Distress	
Social emotional distress scale questions (requires 6–7 items)	
I feel lonely.	1–4
I am unhappy.	1–4
Nobody likes me.	1–4
I worry a lot.	1–4
I have problems sleeping.	1–4
I feel scared.	1–4
I worry when I am at school.	1–4

Source of survey questions: Social Emotional Health Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Never” (1); “Sometimes” (2); “Often” (3); and “Always” (4).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Often” or “Always.”

Table 20. Life Satisfaction Scale

Scale	Response Range
Life Satisfaction	
Life satisfaction scale questions (<i>requires 3–4 items</i>)	
<i>I would describe my satisfaction with...</i>	
my family life as...	1–6
my friendships as...	1–6
my school experience as...	1–6
myself as...	1–6

Source of survey questions: Social Emotional Health Module, Elementary California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS).

Notes: Survey response options are “Very dissatisfied” (1); “Dissatisfied” (2); “A little dissatisfied” (3); “A little satisfied” (4); “Satisfied” (5); and “Very satisfied” (6).

Scale is based on average reporting of “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied.”