



BASC-4 Behavioural and Emotional Screening System (BESS)

BASC-4 Behavioural and Emotional Screening System (BESS)

In addition to evaluating students' abilities to regulate their behaviours and emotions, the BASC™-4 Behavioural and Emotional Screening System can help identify children and adolescents with less obvious internalising problems. Administration is brief and flexible; **forms** are completed by **teachers, parents, and students**. They can be administered using a **paper form** or **digitally** using Q-global® or Review360®.



Why screening matters

Early insight can support better outcomes.

Behavioural and emotional screening can help identify students displaying early signs of behavioural health problems. **Early detection** of risk gives teams an opportunity to respond sooner, support students' wellbeing, and help lessen the long-term impacts of common challenges on their learning and social wellness.

A **systematic, universal screening** process also helps schools and providers make more informed decisions about who may need additional support, allowing them to use their time and resources more effectively.



Why the BASC-4 BESS?

Fast, practical screening for real-world settings

The BASC-4 BESS consists of brief forms with 21 to 30 items completed by teachers, parents, and students. Designed for quick, efficient screening in schools, pediatric practices, behavioural health settings, and research environments, use **the BASC-4 BESS to:**

- Enable highly reliable and accurate screening that is quick and efficient
- Gather input from students, parents and teachers with items used in millions of administrations
- Identify potential behavioural and emotional risk early and promote youth behavioural health
- Support prevention and early intervention efforts in alignment with local and state mandates and legislation



A structured path from screening to support

Implementing a four-stage process using the BASC-4 BESS and the BASC™-4 can be an effective way to identify, evaluate, and address behavioural and emotional concerns.

1. Screening

The BASC-4 BESS addresses Stage 1 by systematically screening large groups of children and adolescents for behavioural and emotional problems. The Teacher, Parent, and Student

Forms differentiate between those at normal risk for problems and those at elevated or extremely elevated risk for problems with those in the latter group referred for additional assessment.

2. Confirmation of Screening Results

Stage 2 involves confirmation of the Stage 1 screening results for those with positive screens; scores in the elevated or extremely elevated risk ranges. Forms administered during Stage 1 are

readministered within a brief time period (e.g., a few weeks) to confirm or disconfirm the presence of risk.

Elevated scores at Stage 2 may identify children who will likely benefit from Tier 1 or Tier 2 supports (e.g., those found in the Behavioural and Emotional Skill Building Guide; Vannest et al., 2015b and the BASC SWSS Student Skill Builder; Reynolds et al., 2023). Use discretion when evaluating extreme scores resulting from Stage 1 or Stage 2; such scores may warrant moving directly to Stage 3, particularly when accompanied by other information that indicates problematic levels of behavioural or emotional functioning (e.g., teacher concerns, sudden changes in a child's behavior).



3. Comprehensive Assessment

Stage 3 involves further assessment of individuals identified in previous stages as at risk for developing behavioural and emotional problems. During Stage 3, a comprehensive measure of behavioural and emotional functioning can determine the presence of potential problems. Behaviour rating scales such as the BASC™-4 Teacher Rating Scales (TRS), Parent Rating Scales (PRS), and Self-Report of Personality (SRP) are practical choices because of their relatively low cost in terms of professional time and materials (Benson et al., 2019; Hart & Lahey, 1999). Comprehensive rating scales also provide detailed information about specific behavioural areas, enabling practitioners to design and implement targeted intervention plans.

Stage 3 may also involve implementing intervention techniques and monitoring their effects on subsequent behavioural health and wellness. After implementing interventions

(e.g., those found in the BASC™-3 Behaviour Intervention Guide; Vannest et al., 2015a), practitioners must frequently monitor behaviour levels to improve decision-making accuracy and to determine whether the intervention is having a positive effect on behaviour (i.e., response to intervention). Instruments like the BASC-4 TRS, PRS, and SRP, BESS, or other progress-monitoring forms can help document behaviour changes during intervention. At least three evaluation data points are necessary to determine the impact of an intervention or treatment program (e.g., preintervention, postintervention, and follow-up evaluation). Adding a mid-intervention assessment (i.e., pre-, mid-, post-, follow-up) would yield even more reliable progress information. Behavioural observation tools used at school, like the BASC™-4 Student Observation System (SOS) may also be used to assess changes in behaviour.

4. Diagnostic Decision Making, Intervention, and Monitoring

At Stage 4, children whose behavioral or emotional problems did not improve with short-term interventions or therapies may require additional evaluation. This evaluation can result in an educational classification or mental health diagnosis that may lead to

eligibility for special-education services or more intensive behavioural health services. Interventions used in Stage 3 remain appropriate in this stage and typically become more intensive and are used for a longer period of time.



Actionable results for understanding risk

The BASC-4 BESS provides an overall index and subindexes to help professionals better understand behavioural and emotional functioning.

Behavioural and Emotional Risk Index (BERI):
Overall index.

Subindexes:

- ✓ Externalising Risk Index (ERI)
- ✓ Internalising Risk Index (IRI)
- ✓ Adaptive Skills Risk Index (ARI)
- ✓ Self-Regulation Risk Index (SRI; Student Form)
- ✓ Personal Adjustment Risk Index (PRI; Student Form)

Flexible administration options

The BASC-4 BESS can be administered using a paper form or digitally using the **Q-global** or **Review360** platforms for **automated form delivery, scoring, and report** generation.

Validity indexes

Identify response patterns that may affect score interpretation.

F Index	Consistency Index	Response Pattern Index
Identifies whether overall responses are excessively negative	Detects cases where the respondent gives different answers to items that are usually answered similarly	Identifies forms that may be invalid because of patterned (rather than content-based) responding

Designed for use across settings

The BASC-4 BESS is designed for use in a range of professional settings.

-  **Schools**
Quickly screen entire student groups.
-  **Mental health centers**
Reliably identify behavioural and emotional concerns.
-  **Pediatric practices**
Provide standardised information on child development.
-  **Health centers and research institutions**
Track trends and support intervention studies.

Technical information

- **Qualification level:** B
- **Age range:** 3:0–18:11 years
- **Administration time:** 5 minutes individual, 15 minutes group
- **Administration:** Paper; Digitally via Q-global or Review360
- **Scoring:** Digitally via Q-global

Explore **BASC-4 BESS** and bring early insight to your screening process.

+61 3 7045 0074 | PearsonClinical.com.au

© 2026 Pearson Education, Inc. or its affiliates. All rights reserved.

Pearson, BASC, Q-global, and Review360 are trademarks,
in the US and/or other countries, of Pearson plc.

Contact us

Give your training the
recognition it deserves.

Follow us on

[Speak to our team](#)

