



PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING MEASURE DIFFERENCES

A brief guide to differences between the NIH Toolbox® Psychological Well-Being instruments:

ADULT	PEDIATRIC	PARENT REPORT
NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction CAT Ages 18+ v3.0	NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction CAT Ages 13-17 v3.0	NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction Parent Report FF Ages 3-12 v3.0
NIH Toolbox Meaning and Purpose CAT Ages 18+ v3.0	NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction FF Ages 8-12 v3.0	NIH Toolbox Positive Affect Parent Report CAT Ages 3-7 v3.0
NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Ages 18+ v3.0	NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Ages 13-17 v3.0	NIH Toolbox Positive Affect Parent Report CAT Ages 8-12 v3.0
NIH Toolbox Domain-Specific Life Satisfaction FF Ages 18+ v2.0	NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Ages 8-12 v3.0	NIH Toolbox Domain-Specific Life Satisfaction Parent Report FF Ages 3-12 v2.0
NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction FF A Ages 18+ v2.0	NIH Toolbox Domain-Specific Life Satisfaction FF Ages 8-17 v2.0	NIH Toolbox Positive Affect Parent Report FF Ages 8-12 v2.0
NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction FF B Ages 18+ v2.0	NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction FF Ages 13-17 v2.0	NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction Parent Report FF Ages 3-12 v2.0*
NIH Toolbox Meaning and Purpose CAT Ages 18+ v2.0	NIH Toolbox Positive Affect FF Ages 13-17 v2.0	NIH Toolbox Positive Affect Parent Report CAT Ages 3-7 v2.0*
NIH Toolbox Meaning and Purpose FF Ages 18+ v2.0	NIH Toolbox Positive Affect FF Ages 8-12 v2.0	NIH Toolbox Positive Affect Parent Report CAT Ages 8-12 v2.0*
NIH Toolbox Positive Affect FF Ages 18+ v2.0	NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction CAT Ages 13-17 v2.0*	
NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction CAT Ages 18+ v2.0*	NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction FF Ages 8-12 v2.0*	
NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Ages 18+ v2.0*	NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Ages 13-17 v2.0*	

*Retired Measure

CAT = Computer Adaptive Test, FF = Fixed Form

ABOUT PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

The NIH Toolbox Life Satisfaction, Meaning and Purpose, and Positive Affect instruments are in the domain of Psychological Well-Being. Life Satisfaction is an assessment of the participant’s cognitive evaluation of life experiences and whether the participant likes his or her life. Meaning and Purpose is one’s feelings around whether life has purpose and there are good reasons for living, including hopefulness, optimism, and goal-directedness. Positive Affect is feelings of pleasurable engagement with the environment, such as happiness, joy, excitement, enthusiasm, and contentment.

Psychological Well-Being measures are available for adults (ages 18+), pediatric self-report (ages 8-17) and for parents serving as proxy reporters for their child (youth ages 3-12).

Measures are appropriate for the general population and individuals with chronic health conditions. The measures are universal rather than disease-specific.

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INTRODUCTION TO ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

There are two administration options for assessing Psychological Well-Being: fixed forms and computer adaptive tests (CATs).

Fixed Form

In a fixed form, respondents answer all of the items (i.e., questions or statements) presented.

CAT

In a CAT, items are tailored to the respondent. A minimum number of items (e.g., 4) must be answered in order to receive a score for the Psychological Well-Being CAT. The response to the first item will guide the system's choice of the next item for the respondent. The response to the second item will dictate the selection of the following item, and so on. As additional items are administered, the potential for error is reduced and confidence in the respondent's score increases. The CAT will continue until either the standard error drops below a specified level (e.g., on the T-score metric 3.0), or the participant has answered the maximum number of questions (e.g., 12), whichever occurs first. Although items differ across respondents completing a CAT, scores are comparable across respondents.

Fixed Form versus CAT

For both fixed forms and CATs, scores are based in Item Response Theory (IRT), a family of statistical models that link individual items to a presumed underlying trait or concept of Psychological Well-Being represented by all items in the item bank. Some administrators may prefer to ask the same questions of all respondents or of the same respondent over time, to enable a more direct comparability across people or time. In these cases, or when paper administration is preferred, a fixed form would be more desirable than a CAT. In cases where brevity and measurement precision are priorities, CATs are likely a better fit.

VERSION DIFFERENCES BETWEEN V2.0 AND V3.0

Some NIH Toolbox domains have multiple versions of measures (e.g., v2.0, v3.0). Generally, **it is recommended that you use the most recent version available which can be identified as the measure with the highest version number**. The following information describes differences between versions of measures.

In 2023, NIH Toolbox v3.0 replaced NIH Toolbox v2.0. In most (but not all) cases, NIH Toolbox v2.0 and v3.0 measures include the same items. However, there are three main differences between v2.0 and v3.0. These are:

1. Different item administration engines. V3.0 includes new features to allow more flexibility in CAT stopping rules and uses streamlined code. Measure scoring is the same.
2. Different CAT stopping rules (see CAT Stopping Rules below).
3. V2.0 measures previously administered as fixed forms are now administered as CATs in v3.0.

Scores from NIH Toolbox v2.0 measures are comparable to scores from the equivalent v3.0 measure when v2.0 and v3.0 use the same items or item banks (as they do in most cases). In the case of Psychological Well-Being, please see specific version differences outlined below.

Adult

- The NIH Toolbox Meaning and Purpose CAT Ages 18+ v3.0 is the same as the PROMIS Item Bank v1.0 – Meaning and Purpose; the items and scoring are identical. Thus, scores from the NIH Toolbox Meaning and Purpose FF Age 18+ v2.0 cannot be compared to scores from the NIH Toolbox Meaning and Purpose CAT Ages 18+ v3.0.
- The NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction CAT Ages 18+ and NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Ages 18+ measures contain the same items or item banks between NIH Toolbox 2.0 and NIH Toolbox V3, although the



scoring engine and stopping rules have been updated between versions for the CATs. These are the names as they appear in the respective app:

NIH Toolbox v2.0 Measure	Corresponding NIH Toolbox v3.0 Measure	
	Name in NIH Toolbox v3.0 App	Name in NIH Toolbox v3.0 App
NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction CAT Age 18+ v2.0	General Life Satis. CAT Ages 18+	NIH Toolbox General Life Satis. CAT Ages 18+ v3.0
NIH Toolbox Meaning and Purpose CAT Ages 18+ v2.0	Meaning and Purpose CAT Ages 18+	NIH Toolbox Meaning and Purpose CAT Ages 18+ v3.0
NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Age 18+ v2.0	Positive Affect CAT Ages 18+	NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Ages 18+ v3.0

- The following Adult measures were removed in NIH Toolbox v3.0:

NIH Toolbox v2.0 Measure	Corresponding NIH Toolbox v3.0 Measure	
	Name in NIH Toolbox v3.0 App	Name in NIH Toolbox v3.0 App
NIH Toolbox Domain-Specific Life Satisfaction FF Ages 18+ v2.0	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)
NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction FF A Age 18+ v2.0	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)
NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction FF B Ages 18+ v2.0	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)
NIH Toolbox Meaning and Purpose FF Age 18+ v2.0	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)
NIH Toolbox Positive Affect FF Age 18+ v2.0	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)

Pediatric and Parent Report

- The NIH Toolbox Positive Affect FF Ages 8-12 v2.0 was based on an item bank of 9 items. It was replaced by the NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Ages 8-12 v3.0. It uses the same 9 items, but administers them as a CAT. Consequently, respondents will answer a variable number of items. See CAT Stopping Rules below for details.
- The NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction CAT Ages 13-17, NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction FF Ages 8-12, NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction Parent Report FF Ages 3-12, NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Ages 13-17, NIH Toolbox Positive Affect Parent Report CAT Ages 3-7, and NIH Toolbox Positive Affect Parent Report CAT Ages 8-12 measures contain the same items or item banks between NIH Toolbox 2.0 and NIH Toolbox V3, although the scoring engine and stopping rules have been updated between versions for the CATs. These are the names as they appear in the respective app:

NIH Toolbox v2.0 Measure	Corresponding NIH Toolbox v3.0 Measure	
	Name in NIH Toolbox v3.0 App	Name in NIH Toolbox v3.0 App
NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction CAT Ages 13-17 v2.0	General Life Satis. CAT Ages 13-17	NIH Toolbox General Life Satis. CAT Ages 13-17 v3.0
NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction FF Ages 8-12 v2.0	General Life Satis. FF Ages 8-12	NIH Toolbox General Life Satis. FF Ages 8-12 v3.0



NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction Parent Report FF Ages 3-12 v2.0	General Life Satis. Parent Report FF Ages 3-12	NIH Toolbox General Life Satis. Parent Report FF Ages 3-12 v3.0
NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Ages 13-17 v2.0	Positive Affect CAT Ages 13-17	NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Ages 13-17 v3.0
NIH Toolbox Positive Affect FF Ages 8-12 v2.0	Positive Affect CAT Ages 8-12	NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Ages 8-12 v3.0
NIH Toolbox Positive Affect Parent Report CAT Ages 3-7 v2.0	Positive Affect Parent Report CAT Ages 3-7	NIH Toolbox Positive Affect Parent Report CAT Ages 3-7 v3.0
NIH Toolbox Positive Affect Parent Report CAT Ages 8-12 v2.0	Positive Affect Parent Report CAT Ages 8-12	NIH Toolbox Positive Affect Parent Report CAT Ages 8-12 v3.0

- The following Pediatric and Parent Report measures were removed in NIH Toolbox v3.0:

NIH Toolbox v2.0 Measure	Corresponding NIH Toolbox v3.0 Measure	
	Name in NIH Toolbox v3.0 App	Name in NIH Toolbox v3.0 App
NIH Toolbox Domain-Specific Life Satisfaction FF Ages 8-17 v2.0	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)
NIH Toolbox Domain-Specific Life Satisfaction Parent Report FF Ages 3-12 v2.0	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)
NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction FF Ages 13-17 v2.0	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)
NIH Toolbox Positive Affect FF Ages 13-17 v2.0	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)
NIH Toolbox Positive Affect Parent Report FF Ages 8-12 v2.0	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)	N/A (v3.0 unavailable)

CAT Stopping Rules

Measure	CAT Stopping Rules
NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction CAT Ages 18+ v3.0 NIH Toolbox Meaning and Purpose CAT Ages 18+ v3.0 NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Ages 18+ v3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum = 4 items Stop when one of these occurs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 items are administered OR The standard error is below 0.224 on the theta metric
NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction CAT Ages 13-17 v3.0 NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Ages 13-17 v3.0 NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Ages 8-12 v3.0 NIH Toolbox Positive Affect Parent Report CAT Ages 3-7 v3.0 NIH Toolbox Positive Affect Parent Report CAT Ages 8-12 v3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum = 4 items Stop when one of these occurs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 items are administered OR The standard error is below 0.3 on the theta metric



<p>NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction CAT Age 18+ v2.0</p> <p>NIH Toolbox General Life Satisfaction CAT Ages 13-17 v2.0</p> <p>NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Ages 13-17 v2.0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minimum = 4 items• Stop when one of these occurs:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 10 items are administered OR○ The standard error is below 0.3 on the theta metric
<p>NIH Toolbox Meaning and Purpose CAT Age 18+ v2.0</p> <p>NIH Toolbox Positive Affect CAT Age 18+ v2.0</p> <p>NIH Toolbox Positive Affect Parent Report CAT Ages 3-7 v2.0</p> <p>NIH Toolbox Positive Affect Parent Report CAT Ages 8-12 v2.0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minimum = 4 items• Stop when one of these occurs:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 12 items are administered OR○ The standard error is below 0.3 on the theta metric