

Strengths and Weaknesses of ADHD Symptoms and Normal Behavior Rating Scales (SWAN)

Overview

The Strengths and Weaknesses of ADHD symptoms and Normal behavior rating scale (SWAN) is based on DSM-5 criteria for ADHD diagnosis measuring inattentive, hyperactive, and impulsive behaviors. The SWAN is a revised version of the SNAP, in which wording of the 18 ADHD symptoms was adapted to measure positive attention and impulse regulation behaviors in the normal population. Psychometrically identical to the original SWAN and SNAP, this updated SWAN “short” has the same distribution of individuals. The SWAN “short” is psychometrically sound, easier for informants to use, and simple to interpret. This ADHD symptom-specific rating scale effectively discriminates between children with and without ADHD, and accurately predicts subtypes.

The psychometric properties and clinical utility of the SWAN has been demonstrated in studies and described in multiple journal articles since its initial introduction¹. The psychometric properties and clinical utility for the SWAN was reconfirmed via recent clinical studies and published in 2012 and 2013.^{2,3}

- 18 Items Based on DSM-5 Criteria for Inattention and Hyperactivity/Impulsivity Symptoms
- Preferred Rating Scale to Measure Positive Attention and Impulse Regulation Behaviors
- Normative Data used to Provide a Single Score for Each Informant
- DefiniPoint Integrates Multiple Scores to Provide Single Result

Positive Attention and Impulse Regulation

The SWAN is the preferred rating scale designed to measure positive attention and impulse regulation behaviors based on DSM criteria.

Use in Determining Treatment Outcomes

In addition to being used for initial evaluations, the SWAN can be used to systematically obtain objective behavioral information from parents and teachers to monitor improvements and inform treatment decisions. The SWAN can be completed in approximately 5 minutes, making it ideal to easily gather information on a routine basis.

SWAN RATING SCALE

The wording of DSM-5 criteria is adapted for measuring the child’s attention on a continuum, from positive attention skills to attention problems, in this 18^{4,5} question rating scale. Various studies have validated the use of the SWAN rating scale for both home and school settings.¹

¹ Swanson JM, Schuck S, Porter MM, Carlson C, Hartman CA, Sergeant JA, Clevenger W, Wasdell M, McCleary R, Lakes K, and Wigal T. Categorical and Dimensional Definitions and Evaluations of Symptoms of ADHD: History of the SNAP and the SWAN Rating Scales. The International Journal of Educational and Psychological Assessment April 2012, Vol. 10(1) 51-69.

² Arnett AB, Pennington BF, Friend A, Willcutt EG, Byrne B, Samuelsson S, Olson RK. The SWAN captures variance at the negative and positive ends of the ADHD symptom dimension. J Atten Disord. 2013 Feb;17(2):152-62.

³ Lakes KD, Swanson JM, Riggs M. The reliability and validity of the English and Spanish Strengths and Weaknesses of ADHD and Normal behavior rating scales in a preschool sample: continuum measures of hyperactivity and inattention. J Atten Disord. 2012 Aug;16(6):510-6.

⁴ Hay DA, Bennett KS, Levy F, Sergeant J, Swanson J. A twin study of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder dimensions rated by the strengths and weaknesses of ADHD-symptoms and normal-behavior (SWAN) scale. Biol Psychiatry. 2007 Mar 1;61(5):700-5. Epub 2006 Sep 7.

⁵ Polderman TJ, Derks EM, Hudziak JJ, Verhulst FC, Posthuma D, Boomsma DI. Across the continuum of attention skills: a twin study of the SWAN ADHD rating scale. J Child Psychol Psychiatry. 2007 Nov;48(11):1080-7.



The SWAN Rating Scale

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Frequency Code: Not at All, Just a Little, Quite a Bit, Very Much

Number

Question

Please rate each item over the last 6 months

- | | |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Give close attention to detail and avoid careless mistakes |
| 2 | Sustain attention on tasks or play activities |
| 3 | Listen when spoken to directly |
| 4 | Follow through on instructions & finish school work/chores |
| 5 | Organize tasks and activities |
| 6 | Engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort |
| 7 | Keep track of things necessary for activities |
| 8 | Ignore extraneous stimuli |
| 9 | Remember daily activities |
| 10 | Sit still (control movement of hands/ feet or control squirming) |
| 11 | Stay seated (when required by class rules/social conventions) |
| 12 | Modulate motor activity (inhibit inappropriate running/climbing) |
| 13 | Play quietly (keep noise level reasonable) |
| 14 | Settle down and rest (control constant activity) |
| 15 | Modulate verbal activity (control excess talking) |
| 16 | Reflect on questions (control blurting out answers) |
| 17 | Await turn (stand in line and take turns) |
| 18 | Enter into conversations & games (control interrupting/intruding) |
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