

# Family Experiences in Childhood Scale (FECS)

*Anabel Gonzalez, Dolores Mosquera & Andrew M. Leeds, 2010*

## *Important question for interviewers and therapists*

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This scale contains many items regarding early trauma and attachment disruptions. To read and score these items can be very difficult for severely traumatized people. Other people may seem apparently comfortable or compliant, but during or after filling out the scale, they can be overloaded by traumatic memories they are not prepared to cope with.

It is the therapist's or interviewer's responsibility to choose the right moment for the patient to answer this scale, and to give them the adequate containment and support (during and after). This scale shouldn't be used as a routine screening without clinical control.

# Family Experiences in Childhood Scale (FECS)

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*These questions refer to the people that have taken care of you from your date of birth to the age of 15. If some else that was not your parents, has been your tutor please briefly explain who took care of you in that period of time. Answer the initial questions regarding to those people.*

*Answer these questions regarding only to the people who took care of you or the people that you lived with. Don't include relatives or any other kind of relationship, (except in some items when it's specifically marked).*

*If you have been taken care by various people during different times of this 15 year period, consult the therapist about how to score this scale.*

*To answer, circle the percentage that represents your experience.*

*Some of these questions refer to difficult situations, which you may have experienced. If answering any of these questions is overwhelming for you, please let your therapist know so s/he will help you to approach these issues in the best way possible. Don't force yourself in anyway.*

Name ..... Date.....

Who did you grow up with? .....

I was separated from my parents or the people that usually took care of me: Yes  No

Length of period (approximately).....days, months or years.....

How old were you when the separation happened? .....

Have the people that you lived with, when you were a child, varied? .....

Please explain the reasons for this (if you know)? .....

If it was so, how old were you? .....

**1. My family frequently showed me how much they loved me.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**2. A good child never speaks badly about her/his parents.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**3. I can't remember anything about my childhood since the age of 5**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**4. When I was a child I was responsible for taking care of my parents or my family.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**5. I was always given praise when I did things right.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**6. An important family member died before I was 5 years old.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**7. I don't feel good talking about what happened in my family with other people.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**8. Nobody noticed what was happening to me or how I was feeling.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**9. My family made me feel important and special.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**10. I was reprimanded for almost anything.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**11. I never knew what they were expecting from me.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**12. There were so many things going on in my home, that I tried to be invisible.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**13. I was the favorite child for my parents in comparison to my siblings and other children.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**14. My relatives were frequently sick.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**15. At home there were laughs and we enjoyed ourselves.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**16. I really didn't have a childhood.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**17. I was unjustly punished.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**18. In my family there was more concern about their needs than mine**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**19. I was excessively protected by my family.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**20. As a child I was sick frequently**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**21. As much as I tried to do things right, it was never enough for my family.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**22. At home we usually kissed and hugged each other; love was expressed in a physical way.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**23. There are a lot of things about my childhood that I can't or I don't want to talk about.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**24. I was frequently called: useless, stupid, lazy or things like that.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**25. I have always been treated worse than my siblings or other children.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**26. They use to hit me when I did something wrong.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**27. They use to hit me without a reason.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**28. In my family they argued so much with each other that they couldn't take care of me.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**29. I had to take care of my brothers and sisters.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**30. I spent part of my childhood in a boarding school or institution.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**31. Even though my parents or the people who took care of me were at home, they were emotionally absent.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**32. They made me feel guilty.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**33. In my family we certainly know how to enjoy life.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**34. My family members were always anxious or troubled about everything. So I always tried to help and not make them worry about me.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**35. One of my parents or the people that I lived with was a very violent person.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**36. At home they were shouting all the time.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**37. At home, I have always done what I wanted and got my own way.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**38. I had to earn love from my family.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**39. I had to assume a lot of responsibility for my age.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**40. Somebody in my family used to hit me or physically abused me.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Was it a relative that took care of you or that lived with you Yes \_\_ No \_\_

I am not sure about if this happened or not.

**41. I was sexually abused.**

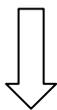
Yes  No

I am not sure about if this happened or not

Circle the percentage that reflects how close the person who sexually abused you was to you.

S/he was an absolute stranger

S/he was a close family member (father, mother or primary caregiver)



0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**42. There were people in my family who made me feel important and special.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**43. In my family they encouraged me when I made mistakes or when things turned out badly**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**44. When I was a child I spent little time with my family, I spent a lot of time in nursery school, with babysitters and other people that were not family members.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**45. I felt loved when I was a child.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**46. I felt respected when I was a child.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**47. My family=worried about me and-showed interest when something happened to me.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**48. At home we spoke about feelings openly.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**49. When I was child I could allow myself to be sad or angry.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**50. When I had a problem, I talked about it when I got home.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**51. When I had something important to say, my family always listened to me, they paid attention to me.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**52. I know my family loved me, but they had so many problems that they couldn't take care of me.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**53. An important family member died before I was fifteen.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**54. My family didn't like me.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**55. My family thought that I couldn't do things on my own.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**56. My family was too concerned about me.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**57. They were always comparing me with my siblings or other children.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**58. My family loved me, no matter what I did.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**59. Sometimes I felt confused about what I was feeling because the adults told me I was feeling something different.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**60. My family made me feel ridiculous when I expressed my thoughts or emotions.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**61. At home problems were solved in a calm way.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**62. When I expressed my feelings, someone in my family tended to get upset**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**63. At home I knew what to expect, reactions from others were predictable for me.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**64. Family rules changed frequently.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**65. I only got attention when I got good grades or stood out in an activity.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**66. I was taught to learn from my mistakes. When I made a mistake, they explained how to do things the right way.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**67. At home silence was used as a punishment.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**68. During my childhood I often felt invisible.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**69. I learned to take care of myself since I was very young (to cook and do the chores in the house for example).**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**70. When I went to my friend's house, I used to think: Why can't my family be like this?**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**71. Since I was small, I felt that my concerns were relevant to other people.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**72. It was hard for me to know when people in my family were angry or sad.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**73. As a child I tried to get attention from my family even though I knew I could be punished.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**74. I felt very insecure when I was a child.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**75. I had to apologize frequently even though I was not doing anything wrong .**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**76. For many years I tried to be “the perfect child”.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**77. My family encouraged me to solve problems on my own, and I had their support when I needed it.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**78. My family tended to solve problems for me.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**79. An adult in my family often got drunk or abused drugs.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**80. I didn't go to school because I had to take care of others or do housework.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**81. I saw someone in my family self-harm**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**82. I felt uncomfortable at home because I had to watch excessive affectionate and/or sexual behaviors.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**83. I felt that they only loved me when I behaved and obeyed them.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**84. At home I couldn't talk about the worst things that happened to me as a child.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**85. Adults told me their problems.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**86. The person who took care of me was severely depressed or mentally disturbed during my childhood.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**87. I was frequently in the middle of adult arguments or problems during my childhood.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**88. Adults would give me contradictory messages, they would emotionally say one thing but transmitted the opposite**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**89. There was no agreement among the adults regarding the norms at home or how I should react**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**90. I felt protected by my family.**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

**91. Please write below any experience that you had as a child or a teenager that was not taken into account in the previous questions.**

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**92. Please write below any adverse or positive experiences outside your family that could be relevant in any way.**

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