

Empathy/Systemizing Quotient for Children (EQ-SQ)

The child EQ-SQ is an observer-rated questionnaire, usually completed by a parent, designed to assess two dimensions of cognitive style described by the empathizing-systemizing theory in children aged 4 to 11: empathy, that is, the ability to identify and understand other people's mental and emotional states and to respond to them appropriately, and systemizing, that is, interest in regularities, rules, categories, and how systems work. The tool comprises 55 items mixing the two dimensions in order to limit response bias. It is mainly used in research and as a complementary clinical measure of the socio-cognitive profile, particularly in exploring developmental particularities and neurodevelopmental disorders, including autism.

Number of questions	55 questions
Estimated duration	10 minutes
Language	English
Original name	Empathy/Systemizing Quotient for Children
Target audience	Children aged 4-11
Authors	Bonnie Auyeung, Sally Wheelwright, Carrie Allison, Matthew Atkinson, Nelum Samarawickrema, Simon Baron-Cohen (2009)
Category	Autism spectrum, Childhood

Preview of the 55 questions

My child likes to look after other people.

Definitely agree | Slightly agree | Slightly disagree | Definitely disagree

My child often doesn't understand why some things upset other people so much.

Definitely agree | Slightly agree | Slightly disagree | Definitely disagree

My child doesn't mind if things in the house are not in their proper place.

Definitely agree | Slightly agree | Slightly disagree | Definitely disagree

My child would not cry or get upset if a character in a film died.

Definitely agree | Slightly agree | Slightly disagree | Definitely disagree

My child enjoys arranging things precisely (e.g. flowers, books, music collections).

Definitely agree | Slightly agree | Slightly disagree | Definitely disagree

Administer your questionnaires online

Send your patient a link: they answer from their phone or computer, and you receive the scored results by email.

View the questionnaire on mentaal.org ›

Scoring & interpretation

Each item has 4 response options. For items keyed in the direction of the trait assessed, "definitely agree" scores 2 points, "slightly agree" 1 point, and both disagree responses 0 points. For reverse-worded items, scoring is reversed. The empathy total is calculated separately over 27 items, with a maximum score of 54, and the systemizing total over 28 items, with a maximum score of 56. A high EQ score indicates more empathic behaviors, while a high SQ score indicates a stronger orientation toward rules, details, categories, and systems. Interpretation focuses mainly on the comparative profile of the two scores rather than on a single diagnostic cutoff. A standardized difference score can also be calculated to identify an empathizing, balanced, or systemizing style.

Are you a psychologist?

With Mentaal, get meaningful insights to support your patients.

- Standardized tests
- Automatic scoring
- Results sent by email

Try it for free | See all questionnaires

★★★★★

“I've been using Mentaal for 2 months now, and this tool has revolutionized the way I see care, and my schedule!”

Romane L. - Online CBT Psychologist