SDSC

Sleep Disturbance Scale for Children (SDSC)

The SDSC for ages 4 to 16 is a screening questionnaire for sleep disorders in children and adolescents, completed by a parent or caregiver based on observations over the past six months. The validated French version has 25 items and explores five clinically useful dimensions: insomnia, parasomnias, nocturnal breathing problems, nonrestorative sleep, and excessive daytime sleepiness. The tool is particularly relevant in psychology, child psychiatry, and pediatric consultations, and in identifying difficulties associated with neurodevelopmental disorders and with emotional, attentional, or behavioral difficulties.

Number of questions	25 questions
Estimated duration	10 minutes
Language	English
Original name	Sleep Disturbance Scale for Children
Target audience	Children aged 4-16
Authors	Oliviero Bruni, Salvatore Ottaviano, Vincenzo Guidetti, Manuela Romoli, Margherita Innocenzi, Flavia Cortesi, Flavia Giannotti (1996)
Category	Adolescent care, Childhood, General

Preview of the 25 questions

In the past 6 months:

How many hours of sleep does your child get on most nights?

9-11 hours | 8-9 hours | 7-8 hours | 5-7 hours | Less than 5 hours

In the past 6 months:

How long after going to bed does your child usually fall asleep?

Less than 15 minutes | 15-30 minutes | 30-45 minutes | 45-60 minutes | More than 60 minutes

In the past 6 months:

The child goes to bed reluctantly

Never | Occasionally (once or twice per month or less) | Sometimes (once or twice per week) | Often (3 or 5 times per week) | Always (daily)

In the past 6 months:

The child has difficulty getting to sleep at night

Never | Occasionally (once or twice per month or less) | Sometimes (once or twice per week) | Often (3 or 5 times per week) | Always (daily)

In the past 6 months:

The child feels anxious or afraid when falling asleep

Never | Occasionally (once or twice per month or less) | Sometimes (once or twice per week) | Often (3 or 5 times per week) | Always (daily)

Scoring & interpretation

Each item is scored from 1 to 5, with a higher score indicating a more marked disturbance. The total score is the sum of the 25 items, ranging from 25 to 125. In the French validation for ages 4 to 16, a total score above 45 suggests a clinically significant sleep disorder. Five subscores are calculated: insomnia with items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, and 9, cutoff above 21; parasomnias with items 6, 10, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19, cutoff above 17; breathing problems with items 7, 11, 12, 13, and 14, cutoff above 12; nonrestorative sleep with items 20, 21, and 22, cutoff above 11; excessive daytime sleepiness with items 23, 24, and 25, cutoff above 5. Interpretation should remain a clinical screening and be cross-checked with the interview, the history, and ideally a sleep diary.