

Guidelines for “Item Shopping”

The documents in this section present calibrations for items that were piloted in the NCSEAM National Item Validation Study. For each scale, items that fall within the same band, as demarcated by alternating background shading, have calibrations that are not significantly different from one another.

For each scale, NCSEAM has selected a set of items from the overall bank to create survey forms for Part B (ages 5+) and Part C that will yield scales with minimum estimated reliabilities of 0.90. Agencies that wish to customize their surveys by selecting different subsets of items need to choose items from across as much of the entire range of variation as possible, so that the full range of the scale’s quantitative metric is represented. Prior to use for accountability purposes, the selected subset of items should be scaled using data from the National Item Validation Study (presented in the Technical Manual) to estimate the expected reliability.

Approximately 25 items, representing the whole range of the scale, are needed to yield the minimum required reliability.

New items can be added to the item bank at any time. Agencies that wish to incorporate new items should include these *in addition to* the 25 or so items selected from the existing item bank for each scale. When families’ responses to these new items are available, the new items can be calibrated and, depending on statistics that indicate how well the items behave in relation to the other items, integrated into the system. They will then become available for general use.

Compared to the number of items that NCSEAM piloted with regard to the Part B School Efforts scale, the Part B Quality of Services scale, and the Part C Family-Centered Services scale, the number of items piloted for the Part B Parent Participation scale and the Part B and Part C Impact on Family scales was small. This variability in number of items reflects the open-ended and unconstrained nature of the development process, which relied primarily on stakeholder input.

The consequence of having fewer items in the validated item set is that for the Impact on Family scale, the subset of items selected by NCSEAM [[link to form](#)] includes most of the available items.

In contrast, the number of items piloted for the Parent Participation scale was actually smaller than the number of items we are recommending be used. Therefore, NCSEAM created several additional items that fit conceptually with the construct of parent participation. Data from the coming year’s administration of the survey will be used to calculate calibrations for these items, which can then move into the available item pool.