

Drinking Context Scale (DCS)

BRIEF DESCRIPTION	The DCS measures the self-reported likelihood of drinking excessively in three contexts: convivial circumstances, intimate circumstances, and coping with negative emotion. The original version has 23 items; there is also a 9-item version.
TARGET POPULATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adults <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adolescents (over 16 years) Groups for which this instrument might be especially helpful? Designed for college students (18 to 25), but may also be suitable for non-college cohorts
ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES	Number of items: <i>23 (original) or 9</i> Number of subscales: <i>3</i> Format(s): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pencil-and-paper self-administered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interview <input type="checkbox"/> Observation <input type="checkbox"/> Computer self-administered <input type="checkbox"/> Other Time required for administration: <i>5 to 10 minutes</i> Administered by: <i>Any professional</i> Training required for administration? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no
SCORING	Time required to score/interpret: <i>Immediately</i> Scored by: <i>Respondent or professional</i> Scoring key? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no Computerized scoring or interpretation available? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no Norms available? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no Instrument normed on subgroups? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no Comments: <i>Used with college students. Subscale means can provide a benchmark for comparison. See O'Hare 1997 for subscales.</i>

PSYCHOMETRICS

Have reliability studies been done? yes no

What measure(s) of reliability was used?

Test-retest

Split half

Internal consistency

Have validity studies been done? yes no

What measures of validity have been derived?

Content

Criterion (predictive, concurrent, "postdictive")

Construct

CLINICAL UTILITY OF INSTRUMENT

The DCS can be used as an initial screen to estimate the likelihood of young persons drinking excessively in certain circumstances, an important consideration since the consequences of youthful problem drinking are highly dependent on context.

RESEARCH APPLICABILITY

The DCS is suitable for testing hypotheses about drinking behavior and drinking context. As part of a survey or evaluation instrument battery, the DCS-23 and DCS-9 both provide a brief, valid, reliable, and useful way to capture high-risk drinking in college-age young people.

SOURCE, COST AND COPYRIGHT ISSUES

Copyright: yes no

Cost: *None*

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SOURCE REFERENCE

O'Hare, T. (1997) Measuring excessive alcohol use in college drinking contexts: the Drinking Context Scale. *Addictive Behaviors*, 22, 469-477.

SUPPORTING REFERENCES

O'Hare, T. (2001) The Drinking Context Scale: a confirmatory analysis. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*, 20, 129-136.

O'Hare, T. (1998) Alcohol expectancies and excessive drinking contexts in young adults. *Social Work Research*, 22, 44-50.

O'Hare, T. & Sherrer, M.V. (1997) Drinking problems, alcohol expectancies and drinking contexts in college first offenders. *Journal of Alcohol and Drug Education*, 43, 31-45.