

Development, Reliability, and Validity of a Child Dissociation Scale

Frank W. Putnam, Karin Helmers, and Lisa A. Horowitz

Laboratory of Developmental Psychology, National Institute of Mental Health, Bethesda, MD, USA

Penelope K. Trickett

Department of Psychology, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, USA

Abstract—Dissociation is a complex psychophysiological process that ranges along a continuum from minor, normal dissociation to Axis I psychopathology. High levels of dissociation are associated with increased self-destructive behaviors and other symptoms. Although several validated measures of dissociation exist for adults, no measures are available for children. The Child Dissociative Checklist (CDC) was developed to meet the need and is a reliable and valid observer report measure of dissociation in children. The CDC had a 1-year test-retest reliability coefficient of $\rho = .69$ ($N = 73$, $p = .0001$) in a sample of normal and sexually abused girls. The CDC had high discriminant validity among four test samples including: normal control girls, sexually abused girls, boys and girls with dissociative disorder NOS, and boys and girls with multiple personality disorder. The CDC is not designed to be used as a diagnostic instrument.