

Employability/Life Skills Assessment (ELSA) Format for Families

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Child / Youth First Name: _____ Age: _____ Date of Assessment: _____

Family Member Name: _____ Relationship to Child / Youth: _____

What are Employability Life Skills?

Employability Life skills are personal-social behaviors, self-determination skills and daily living habits identified by employers as expected and essential for obtaining competitive integrated employment. Employability and Life skills must be taught with rigor and to the same high standards as academic skills. The development of Employability and Life Skills is a lifelong process. A person's ability to perform is relative to many factors: age, experience, environment, expectations, etc.

It is never too early or too late to focus on employability and life skills. This assessment can be used with children, youth and adults of any age – with or without a disability. These skills are expected of all adults. Competence as an adult with skills assessed by ELSA are expected of ALL people. This assessment is used to gauge the child/youth's ability to perform Employability/Life Skills against the standards expected of adults. It is likely that children and youth will fall short in some areas, as they are still learning ELSA skills. These skills are important for all aspects of a meaningful life: Living, Learning and Working in the community.

What is New?

If you have used ELSA in the past, you will notice some revisions and updates. ELSA has been a paper/pencil form and now is designed as a downloadable and fillable form. There is still the option to print it out. Another change to ELSA is that there are two versions instead of the previous four versions. The two versions are: Format for Transition Team Member and Format for Family Member. ELSA had four versions that were identical in the skills assessed and provided two age ranges, 6 – 13 and 14 – 21. There was Parent Form and a Teacher Form for each age range. Now for the two revised versions, the age of the youth can be listed and updated, eliminating the need for two age range documents.

Who Can Use ELSA?

There is only one requirement for using ELSA, and that is to have firsthand interaction with the youth. ELSA is a criterion referenced assessment. That means that the youth's performance for each of the skills is compared to the adult expectation of that skill, from the viewpoint of the rater. Each assessor, family member or professional will have a different relationship with the youth and different expectations for performing each of the 24 skills. Different raters interact with the youth in varying environments, with unique expectations. The type of relationship and the environment influence the view of the rater's expectations.

How Do You Use ELSA?

The two formats of ELSA ask the same questions for each of the 24 skills assessed. The sentence tag for each skill rating is phrased to reflect two distinct perspectives: that of a family member and that of transition team professionals.

Professionals who are members of a youth's team can include teachers, related service providers, paraprofessionals, SSAs and other County Board of Developmental Disabilities personnel, counselors from Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD), Provider agencies and other agency partners. Family members include the parents, family members, relatives and other trusted adults. The composition of the transition team will vary for each youth.

It is difficult to assess and quantify many personal-social skills through formal assessments. ELSA data is generated by thinking about the youth's performance in a variety of environments, from a variety of perspectives. This type of performance data, gained through observation and interaction with the youth, is not easily quantified across the viewpoints of multiple raters. ELSA is a tool that bridges those variables and transforms the opinions and viewpoints of the raters into authentic data that can be used in transition assessment, baseline data for IEP goals, plans for improvement in areas the family wishes to work on and maintain, and in official agency processes and documents.

How Do Individual Raters Use and Score ELSA?

At the top of the first page, enter the FIRST name only of the child/youth that will be assessed. Enter the child/youth's age at the time of assessment. Enter the date of assessment. Enter the name of the person using ELSA and their relationship to the child/youth.

For each skill area, the rater reads the statements and assigns a rating based on their observation, opinion and experience with the youth. Keep in mind that 'independence' does not mean the absence of ALL supports. Supports such as technology, schedules, mobility devices, prompts, smart phones, to name a few, are integrated into everyday life and used by many people. These types of supports should not be considered as reflecting a 'lack of independence' by the child/youth.

The rating scale is as follows: 3 = Usually; 2= Sometimes; 1 = Seldom; 0 = Never. For each skill set, add up the ratings for that area and put those in the Total box. After rating all of skill sets, enter the total score on the graph on the last page of the document by clicking the number cells in the graph that matches the total score for each skill set, creating a column graph. The graph shows the youth’s relative strengths and weakness in the 9 skill sets in ELSA. The graph affords the team a tool for prioritizing skills to address. An example follows:

Example of Scoring ELSA for a 14-year-old Youth

III. Task Related Skills

Meets family expectations for ability to Care for Tools, Materials, and Work Area by:

- a. using school materials, tools, equipment for the job, kitchen appliances etc. safely and appropriately.
- b. locating and returning tools to proper storage area.
- c. following procedures to maintain a safe, clean work area.

Age	14					
a	2					
b	1					
c	3					
Total	6					

Meets family expectations for Practicing Safety Rules by:

- a. following safety rules appropriate for the situation, activity and conditions.
- b. using household/ kitchen tools, equipment materials for their specified purpose.
- c. utilizing safety procedures for emergency situations such as calling 911, basic first aid, severe weather, etc.).

Age	14					
a	2					
b	2					
c	3					
Total	7					

This example is of how to score two skills sets, Cares for Tools, Materials, and Work Area and Practicing Safety Rules under the broader area of Task Related Skills. Look at sample scoring box above, Cares for Tools, etc.

Here’s how it works:

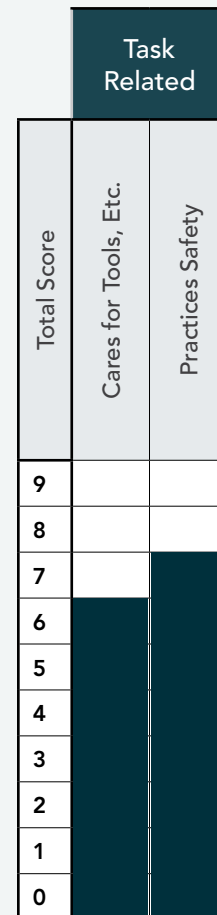
Each rater thinks about what they know and have observed about the youth performing each of the skills in ELSA, and assigns a score, using the scoring rubric at the top of the page. Each rating (or score) is entered into the corresponding numbered row in the score box.

In this example shows the ratings provided by one family member for Cares for Tools, Materials, and Work Area,

The scoring box indicates that for ‘using school materials, tools..... safely and appropriately’, the rater felt that this happened “Sometimes”, a score of ‘2’. For the next item, “locating and returning tools”, the score is ‘1’ or “Seldom”. The last statement in this skill set reflects that “following procedures....” happens “Usually” or a ‘3’. The total for this skill set is 6, entered into the last row of the scoring box.

A rater would score Practices Safety Rules, using the same thought process.

After scoring each of the 24 skill sets in ELSA in the same way, the scores can be graphed on the last page of this document to show the child/youth’s relative strengths and needs. Ideas about how to analyze and use the scores are on the last page of the document.



Scoring Rubric: 3 = Usually, 2 = Sometimes, 1 = Seldom, 0 = Never

I. Self Help Skills

Meets family expectations for *Personal Hygiene and Grooming* for:

- a. cleanliness.
- b. good grooming, hair combed, shirt tucked in, etc.
- c. consistent, independent personal hygiene and grooming.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets family expectations for *Dressing Appropriately* by:

- a. choosing clothes to wear appropriate for the weather/ activity/social custom.
- b. identifying when clothes should not be worn (dirty, ill fitting, etc.).
- c. wearing clothes that are in good condition, clean, with detail given to appearance.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets family expectations for *Independence with Mobility and Travel Skills* by:

- a. walking/riding to school, work, and in the community following safety/pedestrian rules.
- b. getting around school, work sites and community destinations.
- c. safe use of ride share app/ public transportation.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets family expectations for *Communicating Effectively* by:

- a. using effective listening skills, including eye contact.
- b. expressing self, answering and asking questions.
- c. conversational skills (turn taking, choice of appropriate topic, etc.).

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

II. General Work Habits

Meets family expectation for *Attending Regularly and Arriving on Time* by:

- a. having no unexcused absences from school or for agency meetings, activities or services.
- b. arriving at school, work and appointments on time.
- c. following school, employer/ agency procedures when late or absent.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets family expectations for *Stays on Tasks* by:

- a. attending to task a sufficient amount of time
- b. completing tasks without distractions
- c. returning to task after breaks or interruptions.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Scoring Rubric: 3 = Usually, 2 = Sometimes, 1 = Seldom, 0 = Never

Meets family expectations for Works Independently by:

- a. locating appropriate materials, tools and equipment for a task.
- b. beginning a task promptly.
- c. knowing when to ask peers/family questions about a task at the appropriate time.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

III. Task Related Skills

Meets family expectations for Ability to Care for Tools, Materials, and Work Area by:

- a. using school materials, tools, equipment for the job, kitchen appliances etc. safely and appropriately
- b. locating and returning tools to proper storage area.
- c. following procedures to maintain a safe, clean work area.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets family expectations for Practicing Safety Rules by:

- a. following safety rules appropriate for the situation, activity and conditions.
- b. using household/kitchen tools, equipment materials for their specified purpose.
- c. utilizing safety procedures for emergency situations such as calling 911, basic first aid, severe weather, etc.).

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

IV. Quantity of Work

Meets family expectations for Completing Work on Time by:

- a. completing tasks, chores without repeated reminders.
- b. using supports typically used by the child/youth such as visual schedules, smart phone apps, timers etc.
- c. working a speed acceptable for the task, chore to complete it by a deadline.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets family expectations for Stamina by:

- a. finishing tasks within a time frame appropriate to the child/youth's age.
- b. maintaining an acceptable pace without tiring.
- c. maintaining consistent speed and quality throughout a task.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Scoring Rubric: 3 = Usually, 2 = Sometimes, 1 = Seldom, 0 = Never

Meets family expectation for Adapts to Increased Demands in Workload by:

- a. responding to being assigned additional tasks in a positive manner.
- b. attempting new tasks or asking for help without demonstrating frustration.
- c. showing flexibility by adapting to more work using time management and efficiency while maintaining quality.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

V. Quality of Work

Meets family expectations for Makes Appropriate Choices and Decisions by:

- a. choosing, on their own, an appropriate solution when given options.
- b. making decisions with family input and guidance.
- c. using a problem-solving process to thoughtfully respond to a problem situation with reasonable alternative solutions.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets family expectations for Recognizes and Corrects Mistakes by:

- a. checking assignment or work for errors/mistakes before considering it complete.
- b. using self-check methods to evaluate work.
- c. making corrections or asking for help once an error has been identified.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

VI. Relationship to Supervisor, Parent, or Adult

Meets family expectations for Accepts Constructive Criticism from a Family Member or Work Supervisor by:

- a. listening to constructive criticism with respect and patience.
- b. making changes based on constructive criticism.
- c. identifying that changes have been made and that performance has improved.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets family expectations for Follows Directions from Family Members by:

- a. correctly completing tasks following verbal directions.
- b. correctly completing tasks following written directions.
- c. communicating and accepting consequences for not following directions.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Scoring Rubric: 3 = Usually, 2 = Sometimes, 1 = Seldom, 0 = Never

Meets family expectations for *Seeks Help when Needed* by:

- a. identifying when help is needed.
- b. asking for assistance when help is needed.
- c. using requested information to remedy the problem.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

VII. Relationship to Peers

Meets family expectations for *Cooperates with Peers* by:

- a. working well with others.
- b. seeking help from co-workers.
- c. directing co-workers without being overbearing.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets family expectations for *Shows Respect for the Rights and Property of Others* by:

- a. asking permission to use another's property.
- b. treating borrowed property with respect.
- c. acknowledging and accepting the consequences of not following directions

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets family expectations for *Uses Appropriate Language and Manners with Peers by Meeting Parent Expectation* for:

- a. shows respect and uses everyday manners (please, thank you).
- b. avoiding teasing/ridiculing or bullying others.
- c. using language appropriate for a given situation.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Scoring Rubric: 3 = Usually, 2 = Sometimes, 1 = Seldom, 0 = Never

VIII. Work Attitudes

Meets family expectations for *Develops and Seeks Personal Goals* by:

- a. demonstrating short term personal goals such as completing daily work and chores.
- b. making and following through with plans for leisure time
- c. seeking and developing personal goals that are viable and consistent with preferences, interests, needs and skills/strength

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets family expectations for *Shows Initiative by Meeting Parent Expectation* for:

- a. beginning a task when requested to do so.
- b. beginning a task without prompting or prodding.
- c. asking for additional work or directions once a task is completed.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets family expectations for *Accepts Societal Values and Rewards* by:

- a. responding to various types of rewards for work well done (verbal praise, incentives, rewards, bonuses, etc.).
- b. recognizing when good work has been done.
- c. identifying changes to make to improve performance.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Meets family expectations for *Takes Pride in Working* by:

- a. modestly sharing accomplishments with others.
- b. modestly sharing accomplishments with others.
- c. being a team player and contributing to the common good of the group.

Age						
a						
b						
c						
Total						

Child/Youth First Name: _____

Age: _____

Date: _____

Scoring Rubric: 3 = Usually, 2 = Sometimes, 1 = Seldom, 0 = Never

How Is the Graph Created?

Use the list of Employability/Life Skills below to write in the total score for each skill set. This will make it convenient for entering the scores into the scoring table and creating the graph. Indicate on the graph the total score for each skill area by clicking the number of cells that matches the score (i.e.g.; click 6 cells on the score table to show a score of 6). Once all the scores are entered into the scoring table, a column graph is created. The higher the column, the more that skill is a relative strength and vice versa.

How Does a Team Use ELSA Data?

During a team meeting, discuss each rater's total scores for each skill set and their view of the youth's relative strengths and weaknesses across all the skill sets (using the graph). Discuss similarities and difference across raters. Come to a team consensus for relative strengths and weaknesses to target for improvement.

The team may choose to prioritize specific areas that were consistently rated lower across all ratings. Or to target skills to maintain or extend for areas of relative strength. Where there are significant differences about scores for the same skill area, discuss as a team the underlying reasons. It might be that individual team members have higher or lower expectations than others. Or perhaps the youth exhibits lower or higher skills in different environments. The reasons for discrepancies in ratings assists the team to decide how, where and when interventions, supports, instruction, etc. should be put in place. The team should also look for data from other assessment sources that assess similar skills to see how it provides insight into the underlying reasons discussed by the team.

