

# Juvenile Detention Exam



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## Juvenile Detention Exam

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Test Features

The Juvenile Detention Exam (JDE) is designed for juvenile risk and needs assessment. The JDE consists of 109 items and can be completed in 15 to 20 minutes or less. The JDE contains five scales: Truthfulness, Antisocial, Violence, Alcohol, and Drugs.

Many detention centers are overcrowded with limited facilities for juvenile assessment. These conditions set realistic assessment parameters. Tests must be short and provide meaningful information for juvenile supervision, treatment, and rehabilitation. The JDE was designed to meet these needs.

### FIVE JDE SCALES OR MEASURES

#### 1. Truthfulness Scale

A Truthfulness Scale is considered necessary, if not essential, in any objective assessment instrument. In most detention and juvenile settings, many juveniles are cooperative. However, it would be naive to assume all juveniles answer assessment questions truthfully. All interview and self-report test procedures are subject to the dangers of untrue answers due to defensiveness, guardedness, or deliberate faking. The Truthfulness Scale measures how truthful the juvenile was while completing the JDE. This scale detects guardedness, defensiveness or deliberate falsification. **It detects minimization and faking.**

## **2. Violence Scale**

The Violence (Lethality) Scale measures the tendency of a juvenile using physical force to injure, damage, or destroy. Measures anger, hostility and violence potential. This scale establishes whether or not the juvenile is a danger to self or others.

Although conflict and its consequences are inescapable parts of human existence, individuals differ widely in both the ease in developing conflict, and in the nature and severity of its results. The Violence Scale identifies the extreme, i.e., the juvenile that is considered dangerous or potentially lethal. Pathologically violent juveniles are a threat to themselves and society.

## **3. Antisocial Scale**

The Antisocial Scale measures antisocial behavior, e.g., chronic lying, failure to pay debts, uncaring about others, irresponsibility and seemingly inability to maintain school attendance. The term antisocial usually means harmful to society, unsociable and hostile. Antisocial individuals seem to be chronically in trouble with society. Antisocial tendencies manifest themselves in lack of loyalty, problems with authority, and problems with society in general.

## **4. Alcohol Scale**

The Alcohol Scale measures the juvenile's alcohol proneness and alcohol-related problems. Alcoholism is a significant problem in our society. Woolfolk and Richardson noted in "Stress, Sanity and Survival" that alcoholism costs industry over 15.6 billion annually due to absenteeism and medical expenses. These numbers have dramatically increased over the years. The harm associated with alcohol abuse--mental, emotional and physical--is well documented. The cost and pain associated with alcohol problems are staggering. The Alcohol Scale measures the juvenile's alcohol use and abuse. Alcohol proneness, alcohol-related problems and alcohol abuse are evaluated. Alcohol refers to beer, wine and other liquors.

## **5. Drug Scale**

The burgeoning awareness of the impact of illicit drugs emphasizes the need for any meaningful assessment to differentiate between licit and illicit drugs. The Drug Scale is an independent measure of the juvenile's drug-related problems. Without this type of scale, many drug abusers would remain undetected. The JDE differentiates between "alcohol" and "drug" use and abuse.

The national outcry in the 1980's concerning cocaine momentarily obscured the fact that a number of other substances are also being abused, including marijuana, crack, cocaine, amphetamines, barbiturates, LSD, ecstasy, heroin, etc. This scale provides insight into areas of inquiry that may need to be pursued in counseling or even treatment. The Drug Scale measures the severity of drug abuse and drug-related problems. Increased public awareness of drug abuse emphasizes the importance of the Drug Scale in the JDE.

## **Reports**

In brief, JDE reports summarize the probationer's self-reported history, explain what attained scale scores mean and contain specific score-related recommendations. Within 2 ½ minutes of test data entry automated (computer scored) 3 page reports are printed on-site. These reports summarize a lot of information in an easily understood format. Emphasis is placed on

meaningful reports that are helpful and easily understood. An example JDE report is presented at the end of this booklet.

### **Control of JDE Reports**

The JDE report is designed for staff use. Although juveniles may discuss JDE reports with staff, it is not recommended that JDE reports be given to the juvenile to read or take back to their room. **It is not recommended that juveniles take any JDE materials (test booklet or answer sheet), including the computer generated report out of the testing office.**

**It is recommended that JDE results be explained, without giving the juvenile the report to read.** Results should be discussed within the context of the juvenile's overall situation. It should be emphasized that no juvenile decision is based solely on JDE results. The JDE is used in conjunction with experienced staff judgment.

### **Expanding Database**

**A database is a large collection of data in a computer, organized so that it can be expanded, updated and retrieved rapidly for statistical analysis or annual summary reports.** A database of test-related information can be very useful.

Test data is downloaded into the JDE expanding database. Annual database analysis ensures ongoing research and accuracy of assessment. And, the JDE database enables ongoing test program summary. These reports describe the population that was tested in terms of demographics, court history, assessment accuracy and much more.

### **Test Data Input Verification**

This procedure allows the person that is inputting the test data from the answer sheet into their computer to verify the accuracy of their data input. **In brief, the test data is input twice and any inconsistencies between the first and second data entries are highlighted until corrected.** When the first and second data entry match (or are the same) you may continue. This data input verification procedure is optional.

### **Delete Juvenile Names (Confidentiality)**

**You have the option to delete juvenile names.** If you use this option, remember that once you delete juvenile names -- they are gone and can not be retrieved. We recommend you use this option. Deleting juvenile names does not delete demographic or test data. **This option is provided to protect juvenile confidentiality.** Once the names have been deleted, there is no way for you to retrieve them. This proprietary name deletion procedure involves a few keystrokes and insures client confidentiality and HIPAA (federal regulation 45 C.F.R. 164.501) requirement compliance.

### **Staff Efficiency**

With the Juvenile Detention Exam (JDE), staff time required for data gathering, interviews, ratings, scoring, and interpretation is significantly reduced -- with no compromises in the quality of juvenile assessment.

The JDE computer software handles all of the scoring, calculations, and interpretations within three minutes. These JDE scoring and interpretive procedures ensure objectivity, reliability, and accuracy. **Few detention staff would have the time, let alone the inclination, to repetitively acquire and process such a vast amount of information.** Yet, JDE reports do provide space for staff input and comments. Thus, in one document (JDE report) we have the juvenile's self-report, objective and empirically based assessment, staff recommendations, and juvenile risk, as well as needs assessment. **In other words, staff report writing, substantiation of decision making and record keeping needs are met with JDE reports.**

### Juvenile Detention Exam Scale Interpretation

There are several levels of scale interpretation ranging from viewing a test as a self-report to interpreting scale elevations and inter-relationships.

The following table is a starting point for interpreting Juvenile Detention Exam (JDE) scale scores.

**SCALE RANGES**

<b>Risk Category</b>	<b>Risk Range Percentile</b>	<b>Total Percentage</b>
Low Risk	0 - 39%	39%
Medium Risk	40 - 69%	30%
<b>Problem Risk</b>	<b>70 - 89%</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Severe Problem</b>	<b>90 - 100%</b>	<b>11%</b>

A problem is not identified until a scale score is at the 70th percentile or higher. **Elevated scale scores** refer to percentile scores that are at or above the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile. **Severe problems** are identified by scale scores at or above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile. Severe problems represent the highest 11 percent of juveniles evaluated with the Juvenile Detention Exam.

### SCALE INTERPRETATION

**Truthfulness Scale:** measures how truthful the juvenile was while completing the test. It identifies guarded and defensive youth's who attempt to minimize their problems or attempt to "fake good." Truthfulness Scale scores at or below the 89<sup>th</sup> percentile mean that all Juvenile Detention Exam (JDE) scale scores are accurate. Scale scores in the Problem Risk (70 to 89<sup>th</sup> percentile) range are accurate because they have been Truth-Corrected. This Truth-Correction procedure is similar to the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) K-scale methodology. Truthfulness Scale scores at or above the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile means that all Juvenile Detention Exam (JDE) scales are inaccurate (distorted or invalid) because the juvenile was in denial, overly guarded, minimized problems, attempted to "fake good," or read things into test items that aren't there. Juveniles with reading impairments might also score in the 90 to 100<sup>th</sup> percentile range.

If not consciously deceptive, juveniles with elevated Truthfulness Scale scores fail to understand test items (reading impairment), are resistant and uncooperative or have a need to appear in a good light. The Truthfulness Scale is particularly important because it shows whether-or-not the juvenile answered Juvenile Detention Exam (JDE) test items honestly. **Truthfulness Scale scores at or below the 89<sup>th</sup> percentile indicate that all other Juvenile Detention Exam (JDE) scale scores are accurate.** One of the first things to check when reviewing a Juvenile Detention Exam report is the Truthfulness Scale score.

**Violence (Lethality) Scale:** identifies the juveniles that are a danger to themselves and others. Violence has been defined as “the expression of hostility and rage through physical force.” Violence is aggression in its most extreme and unacceptable form. Elevated (70<sup>th</sup> percentile and higher) scorers can be sensitive to perceived criticism, demanding, and insightful about how they express anger and hostility. **Severe problem scorers (90<sup>th</sup> percentile and higher) should not be ignored as they are a danger to themselves and others.**

A particularly unstable and perilous situation involves an elevated (70<sup>th</sup> percentile and higher) Violence Scale score with elevated Antisocial, Alcohol or Drugs Scale scores. Substance (alcohol and/or drugs) abuse and antisocial attitudes can exacerbate violence. The higher these scale scores the worse the prognosis. And, the more of these scales that are elevated with the Violence Scale the worse prognosis.

A severe (90<sup>th</sup> percentile and higher) problem Violence Scale score is a malignant sign with or without other scale elevation and is descriptive of a dangerous person. The Violence Scale score can be interpreted independently or in combination with other Juvenile Detention Exam scale scores.

**Antisocial Scale:** measures antisocial attitudes. “Antisocial” is defined as “opposed to society or existing social organizations and moral codes.” Antisocial behavior refers to aggressive, impulsive, and sometimes violent actions that flout social and ethical codes such as laws, property rights, etc. This antisocial behavior pattern often begins in early adolescence as a conduct disorder involving lying, cheating, stealing, fighting, cruelty, truancy, vandalism, substance abuse, etc. **Elevated Antisocial Scale scores are often associated with non-internalization of recognized conventions.** Many high scorers manifest a seeming inability to profit from experience.

An elevated Antisocial Scale score in conjunction with an elevated Alcohol, Drugs, or Violence Scale score would be a malignant sign. Elevated Alcohol and Drugs Scale scores in conjunction with an elevated Antisocial Scale score is particularly perilous and alarming because substance (alcohol and/or illicit drug) abuse can intensify and further increase antisocial thinking. Severe or (90<sup>th</sup> percentile and higher) Antisocial Scale and Violence Scale scores can externalize or focus much of the youth’s hostility, angst and heinous intentions on society, the government and others. In summary, the Antisocial Scale can be interpreted independently or in combination with other Juvenile Detention Exam (JDE) scales.

**Alcohol Scale:** measures alcohol use and the severity of abuse. Alcohol refers to beer, wine and other liquors. An elevated (70 to 89<sup>th</sup> percentile) Alcohol Scale score is indicative of an alcohol problem in its early stages. An Alcohol Scale score in the severe problem (90 to 100<sup>th</sup> percentile) range identifies established and serious drinking problems.

Several alcohol admission items are printed in the “significant items” section of the Juvenile Detention Exam on page 3 of the report. The Multiple Choice items also are printed on page 3 of the report (#98 to 109) present the juvenile’s answers, with all their biases. These juvenile answers allow comparison of the juvenile’s subjective opinions with empirically based objective findings. Many of these multiple choice items refer to juvenile drinking and drug usage.

**There are two “alcohol recovering” items (#53 and #102) that give the juveniles an opportunity to clarify whether-or-not they are a “recovering alcoholic.”** This is an important area of inquiry, particularly when the juvenile has an elevated (70<sup>th</sup> percentile and higher) Alcohol Scale score.

In detention, court, probation, and treatment settings, the juvenile’s Alcohol Scale score helps staff work through juvenile denial. Most juveniles accept the objective and standardized Alcohol Scale score as accurate. This is especially true when it is explained that elevated scores do not occur by chance. And Alcohol Scale scores are based upon thousands of juveniles Alcohol Scale scores.

An elevated Alcohol Scale score in conjunction with other (Violence, Antisocial and Drugs) elevated Juvenile Detention Exam Scale scores is noteworthy because alcohol can magnify or act as a triggering device for more intense violent, antisocial and substance abuse behavior.

As the number of elevated scale scores increases the prognosis decreases. And the higher the scales elevations the worse the risk becomes.

When both the Alcohol Scale and the Drugs Scales are elevated, the higher score represents the juvenile’s substance of choice. When both scale scores are in the severe problem range explore polysubstance abuse. The Alcohol Scale can also be interpreted independently.

**Drugs Scale:** measures drug use and severity of drug abuse. Drugs refer to illicit drugs like marijuana, cocaine, crack, amphetamines, ice, ecstasy, barbiturates, heroin, etc. An elevated (70 to 89<sup>th</sup> percentile) Drugs Scale score is indicative of a drug problem in its early stages. A Drugs Scale score in the severe problem (90 to 100<sup>th</sup> percentile) range identifies serious and established drug problems.

Similar to the Alcohol Scale, a history (court, prior arrests, treatment, etc.) of drug-related problems could result in an abstainer (drug history but not currently using or abusing drugs) attaining a score above zero but in the low risk range. Precautions have been built into the Juvenile Detention Exam (JDE) for correctly identifying “recovering” drug abusers.

Several drug admission items are printed in the “significant items” section of the Juvenile Detention Exam on page 3 of the report. Multiple Choice items (#98 to 109) also are printed on page 3 of the report. These Multiple Choice answers represent the juvenile’s answers, with all

their biases. Multiple choice answers allow comparison of the juvenile's subjective opinions with empirically based objective findings.

**There are two “drug recovering” items (#72 and #102) that give the juveniles an opportunity to clarify whether-or-not they are a “recovering drug abuser.”** This is an important area of inquiry, particularly when the juvenile has an elevated (70<sup>th</sup> percentile and higher) Drugs Scale score.

In detention, court, probation, and treatment settings, the juvenile's Drugs Scale score helps staff work through juvenile denial. Most juveniles accept the objective and standardized Drugs Scale score as accurate. This is especially true when it is explained that elevated scores do not occur by chance. And Drugs Scale scores are based upon thousands of juveniles Drugs Scale scores.

An elevated Drugs Scale score in conjunction with other (Violence, Antisocial, and Alcohol Scale) elevated Juvenile Detention Exam Scale (JDE) scores is a malignant sign. Drug abuse can exacerbate or magnify violent and antisocial thinking and polysubstance abuse behavior. The higher these multi-scale scores the worse the prognosis. And the more elevated scales that are involved the worse the risk.

When both the Drugs Scale and the Alcohol Scales are elevated, the higher score represents the juvenile's substance of choice. When both the Drugs Scale and the Alcohol Scale are in the severe problem range explores polysubstance abuse. The Drugs Scale can also be interpreted independently.

## **CONCLUSION**

There are several levels of Juvenile Detention Exam (JDE) scale interpretation ranging from viewing the test as a self-report to interpreting scale elevation ranging from viewing the test as a self-report to interpreting scale elevations and scale relationships. Due in part to space and time limitation we shall conclude this Juvenile Detention Exam scale interpretation.

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