

Adolescent Discrimination Distress Index

© 2000 Fisher, Wallace, & Fenton

Fisher, C. B., Wallace, S. & Fenton, R. (2000). Discrimination Distress in Adolescence. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence*, 29, 679–695.

See for additional updated information on the use and scoring of the ADDI

Fisher, C. B., Tao, X., and Jaber, R. (2026). Adolescent Discrimination Distress Index: Contributions and Challenges in the Measurement of Ethnic and Racial Discrimination. In T. Yip (Ed). *Cambridge Handbook of Ethnic and Racial Discrimination and Youth Development* (pp 172 – 2050). NY: Cambridge Press.

After each statement, tell us how often you have experienced each of the following types of discrimination because of your race or ethnicity. Remember we are only interested in occasions when racial-ethnic discrimination was at least partly responsible for your experience.

	Have you experienced this? Yes / No*	If you had this experience, did it upset you?				
		1 not at all	2 slightly	3 moderately	4 considerably	5 extremely
1. You were discouraged from joining an advanced level class.	Yes / No	1	2	3	4	5
2. You were wrongly disciplined or given after-school detention.	Yes / No	1	2	3	4	5
3. You were given a lower grade than you deserved.	Yes / No	1	2	3	4	5
4. You were discouraged from joining a club.	Yes / No	1	2	3	4	5
5. Others your age did not include you in their activities.	Yes / No	1	2	3	4	5
6. People expected more of you than they expected of others your age.	Yes / No	1	2	3	4	5
7. People expected less of you than they expected of others your age.	Yes / No	1	2	3	4	5
8. People assumed your English was poor.	Yes / No	1	2	3	4	5
9. You were hassled by police.	Yes / No	1	2	3	4	5
10. You were hassled by a store clerk or store guard.	Yes / No	1	2	3	4	5
11. You were called racially insulting names.	Yes / No	1	2	3	4	5
12. You received poor service at a restaurant or store.	Yes / No	1	2	3	4	5
13. People acted as if they thought you were not smart.	Yes / No	1	2	3	4	5
14. People acted as if they were afraid of you.	Yes / No	1	2	3	4	5
15. You were threatened.	Yes / No	1	2	3	4	5

***For the Distress Score:** Individuals responding “No” should receive a score of 0 for “Distress”. Individuals responding “Yes” are given a distress score of 1–5 based on their response to the 5-point scale. *See the next page for additional scoring information.*

Subscales Calculations Based on Factor Structure

Educational Discrimination Stress Subscale:	Mean score of items 1, 2, 3, 6
Institutional Discrimination Distress Subscale:	Mean score of items 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14
Peer Discrimination Distress Subscale:	Mean score of items 4, 5, 8, 11, 15

Additional Optional Questions

Overall, how much has **racial-ethnic** discrimination interfered with the things you want to do in life?

1. A lot 2. Some 3. A little 4. Not at all

Overall, how much harder has your life been because of **racial-ethnic** discrimination?

1. A lot 2. Some 3. A little 4. Not at all

Scoring of Discrimination Events

- Individuals may not experience all the discriminatory events described in the scale. The scale allows one to identify which experiences the individual has experienced or by adding up the “yes” responses to know how many of the events have been experienced. This can be computed for the subscales or for the total scale.
- If a goal is to understand the frequency of specific events experienced over say a period of 3 months, a scale can be added that records: “Never, one time, once a month, once a week, almost daily.” This scale can be adjusted by the evaluator for the time-period of interest.

Scoring of Discrimination Distress

- Individuals may not experience all the discriminatory events. For each event, if the response is “no,” a distress score of 0 should be given. Only those events the individual has experienced should receive a distress score of 1 (not at all) – 5 (extremely).
- If the goal is to understand the average degree of distress experienced across subscales or the full scale, only the distress scores from the “yes” events should be averaged. The rationale is that even if few events are experienced, they can be highly distressful and including 0 scores for events that did not occur might mask the actual level of distress.