

# The Arc's Self-Determination Scale Adolescent Version

The **Arc's Self-Determination Scale-Adolescent Version** is a student self-report measure of self-determination designed primarily for use by, and normed with, adolescents with cognitive and developmental disabilities. The scale has two primary purposes:

- To provide students and educators a tool that assists them to identify student strengths and areas of support and instructional need in self-determination; and
- To provide a research tool to examine the relationship between and among self-determination and factors that promote/inhibit self-determined behavior, to evaluate the efficacy of interventions to promote self-determination, and for use with related research activities

The scale has 72 items and is divided into four sections. Each section examines a different **essential characteristic** of self-determined behavior: **Autonomy, Self-Regulation, Psychological Empowerment** and **Self-Realization**. Each section has unique directions that should be read before completing the relevant items. Scoring the scale (see [Procedural Guidelines](#) for scoring directions) results in a total self-determination score and subdomain scores in each of the four **essential characteristics** of self-determined behavior. [The Arc's Self-Determination Scale Procedural Guidelines](http://www.beachcenter.org/education_and_training/self-determination/default.aspx) ([http://www.beachcenter.org/education\\_and\\_training/self-determination/default.aspx](http://www.beachcenter.org/education_and_training/self-determination/default.aspx)) provides information for administration and scoring the measure and a discussion about the use of self-report measures in general. The scale **should not be used** until the administrator is thoroughly familiar with these issues.

The Arc's Self-Determination Scale-Adolescent Version was developed by Michael Wehmeyer and Kathy Kelchner at The Arc of the United States with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), under Cooperative Agreement #H023J20012. Questions used in [Section One](#) (Autonomy) were adapted, with permission from the authors, from the [Autonomous Functioning Checklist](#). Questions used in [Section Four](#) (Self-Realization) were adapted, with permission from the author, from the short form of the [Personal Orientation Inventory](#). Appropriate citations for both instruments are available in [The Arc's Self-Determination Scale Procedural Guidelines](#). The Arc gratefully acknowledges the generosity of these researchers.

By Michael Wehmeyer, Ph.D., Principal Investigator  
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Self-Determination Assessment Project

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's name \_\_\_\_\_



# Section One

## Autonomy

**Directions:** Check the answer on each question that **BEST** tells how you act in that situation. There are no right or wrong answers. Check only one answer for each question. (If you have a disability that limits you from actually performing the activity, but you have control over the activity by using a personal care attendant, answer like you performed the activity.)

### 1A. Independence: Routine personal care and family oriented functions.

1A. Subtotal \_\_\_\_\_

1. I make my own meals or snacks.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
2. I care for my own clothes.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
3. I do chores in my home.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
4. I keep my own personal items together.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
5. I do simple first aid or medical care for myself.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
6. I keep good personal care and grooming.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance

### 1B. Independence: Interaction with the Environment.

1B. Subtotal \_\_\_\_\_

7. I make friends with other kids my age.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
8. I use the post office.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
9. I keep my appointments and meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
10. I deal with sales people at stores and restaurants.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance

**1C. Acting on the basis of preferences, beliefs, interests and abilities: Recreational and leisure** **1C. Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_

11. I do free time activities based on my interests.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
12. I plan weekend activities that I like to do.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
13. I am involved in school-related activities.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
14. My friends and I choose activities that we want to do.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
15. I write letters, notes, or talk on the phone to friends and family.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
16. I listen to music that I like.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance

**1D. Acting on the basis of preferences, beliefs, interests and abilities:**  
**Community Involvement and interaction**

**1D. Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_

17. I volunteer in things that I am interested in.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
18. I go to restaurants that I like.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
19. I go to movies, concerts, and dances.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
20. I go shopping or spend time at shopping centers or malls.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
21. I take part in youth groups (like 4-H, scouting, church groups).	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance

**1E. Acting on the basis of preferences, beliefs, interests and abilities: Post-school directions****1E. Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_

22. I do school and free time activities based on my career interests.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
23. I work on school work that will improve my career chances.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
24. I make long-range career plans.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
25. I work or have worked to earn money.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
26. I am in or have been in career or job classes or training.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
27. I have looked into job interests by visiting work sites or talking to people in that job.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance

**1F. Acting on the basis of preferences, beliefs, interests and abilities: Personal Expression****1F. Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_

28. I choose my clothes and the personal items I use every day.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
29. I choose my own hairstyle.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
30. I choose gifts to give to family and friends.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
31. I decorate my own room.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance
32. I choose how to spend my personal money.	<input type="checkbox"/> I do not even if I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do sometimes when I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do most of the time I have the chance	<input type="checkbox"/> I do every time I have the chance

# Section Two

## Self-Regulation

**Directions:** Each of the following questions tells the beginning of a story and how the story ends. Your job is to tell what happened in the middle of the story, to connect the beginning and the end. Read the beginning and ending for each question, then fill in the **BEST** answer for the middle of the story. There are no right or wrong answers. Remember, fill in the answer that you think **BEST** completes the story.

### 2A. Interpersonal cognitive problem-solving.

33. **Beginning:** You are sitting in a planning meeting with your parents and teachers. You want to take a class where you can learn to work as a cashier in a store. Your parents want you to take the Family and Child Care class. You can only take one of the classes.

**Middle:**

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**Ending:** The story ends with you taking a vocational class where you will learn to be a cashier.

Story Score \_\_\_\_\_

35. **Beginning:** Your friends are acting like they are mad at you. You are upset about this.

**Middle:**

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**Ending:** The story ends with you and your friends getting along just fine.

Story Score \_\_\_\_\_

34. **Beginning:** You hear a friend talking about a new job opening at the local bookstore. You love books and want a job. You decide you would like to work at the bookstore.

**Middle:**

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**Ending:** The story ends with you working at the bookstore.

Story Score \_\_\_\_\_

36. **Beginning:** You go to your English class one morning and discover your English book is not in your backpack. You are upset because you need that book to do your homework.

**Middle:**

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**Ending:** The story ends with you using your English book for homework.

Story Score \_\_\_\_\_

37. **Beginning:** You are in a club at school. The club advisor announces that the club members will need to elect new officers at the next meeting. You want to be the president of the club.

**Middle:**

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**Ending:** The story ends with you being elected as the club president.

Story Score \_\_\_\_\_

38. **Beginning:** You are at a new school and you don't know anyone. You want to have friends.

**Middle:**

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**Ending:** The story ends with you having many friends at the new school.

Story Score \_\_\_\_\_

## 2B. Goal setting and task performance

**Directions:** The next three questions ask about your plans for the future. Again, there are no right or wrong answers. For each question, tell if you have made plans for that outcome and, if so, what those plans are and how to meet them.

39. Where do you want to live after you graduate?

I have not planned for that yet.

I want to live \_\_\_\_\_

List four things you should do to meet this goal:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

40. Where do you want to work after you graduate?

I have not planned for that yet.

I want to work \_\_\_\_\_

List four things you should do to meet this goal:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

41. What type of transportation do you plan to use after graduation?

I have not planned for that yet.

I plan to use \_\_\_\_\_

List four things you should do to meet this goal:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_

# Section Three

## Psychological Empowerment

**Directions: Check the answer that BEST describes you. Choose only one answer for each question. There are no right or wrong answers.**

42.  I usually do what my friends want...or  
 I tell my friends if they are doing something I don't want to do.

43.  I tell others when I have new or different ideas or opinions...or  
 I usually agree with other peoples' opinions or ideas.

44.  I usually agree with people when they tell me I can't do some thing...or  
 I tell people when I think I can do something that they tell me I can't.

45.  I tell people when they have hurt my feelings...or  
 I am afraid to tell people when they have hurt my feelings.

46.  I can make my own decisions...or  
 Other people make decisions for me.

47.  Trying hard at school doesn't do me much good...or  
 Trying hard at school will help me get a good job.

48.  I can get what I want by working hard...or  
 I need good luck to get what I want.

49.  It is no use to keep trying because that won't change things...or  
 I keep trying even after I get something wrong.

50.  I have the ability to do the job I want...or  
 I cannot do what it takes to do the job I want

51.  I don't know how to make friends...or  
 I know how to make friends.

52.  I am able to work with others...or  
 I cannot work well with others.

53.  I do not make good choices...or  
 I can make good choices.

54.  If I have the ability, I will be able to get the job I want...or  
 I probably will not get the job I want even if I have the ability.

55.  I will have a hard time making new friends...or  
 I will be able to make friends in new situations.

56.  I will be able to work with others if I need to...or  
 I will not be able to work with others if I need to.

57.  My choices will not be honored...or  
 I will be able to make choices that are important to me.

**Section 3 Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_

# Section Four

## Self-Realization

**Directions:** Tell whether each of these statements describes how you feel about yourself or not. There are no right or wrong answers. Choose only the answer that **BEST** fits you.

58. I do not feel ashamed of any of my emotions.

Agree

Disagree

66. I don't accept my own limitations

Agree

Disagree

59. I feel free to be angry at people I care for.

Agree

Disagree

67. I feel I cannot do many things.

Agree

Disagree

60. I can show my feelings even when people might see me.

Agree

Disagree

68. I like myself.

Agree

Disagree

61. I can like people even if I don't agree with them.

Agree

Disagree

69. I am not an important person.

Agree

Disagree

62. I am afraid of doing things wrong.

Agree

Disagree

70. I know how to make up for my limitations.

Agree

Disagree

63. It is better to be yourself than to be popular.

Agree

Disagree

71. Other people like me.

Agree

Disagree

64. I am loved because I give love.

Agree

Disagree

72. I am confident in my abilities.

Agree

Disagree

65. I know what I do best.

Agree

Disagree

**Section 4 Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_



### Scoring Step 1:

Record the raw scores from each section:

#### Autonomy

1A =

1B =

1C =

1D =

1E =

1F =

Domain Total:

#### Self-Regulation

2A =

2B =

Domain Total:

#### Psychological Empowerment

3 =

Domain Total:

#### Self-Realization

4 =

Domain Total:

#### Scoring Step 2:

Sum each Domain Total for a Total Score:

#### Self-Determination

Total =

### Scoring Step 3:

Using the conversion tables in Appendix A, convert raw scores into percentile scores for comparison with the sample norms (Norm Sample) and the percentage of positive responses (Positive Scores):

Norm Sample      Positive Scores

#### Autonomy

1A =

1B =

1C =

1D =

1E =

1F =

Domain Total:

#### Self-Regulation

2A =

2B =

Domain Total:

#### Psychological Empowerment

3 =

Domain Total:

#### Self-Realization

4 =

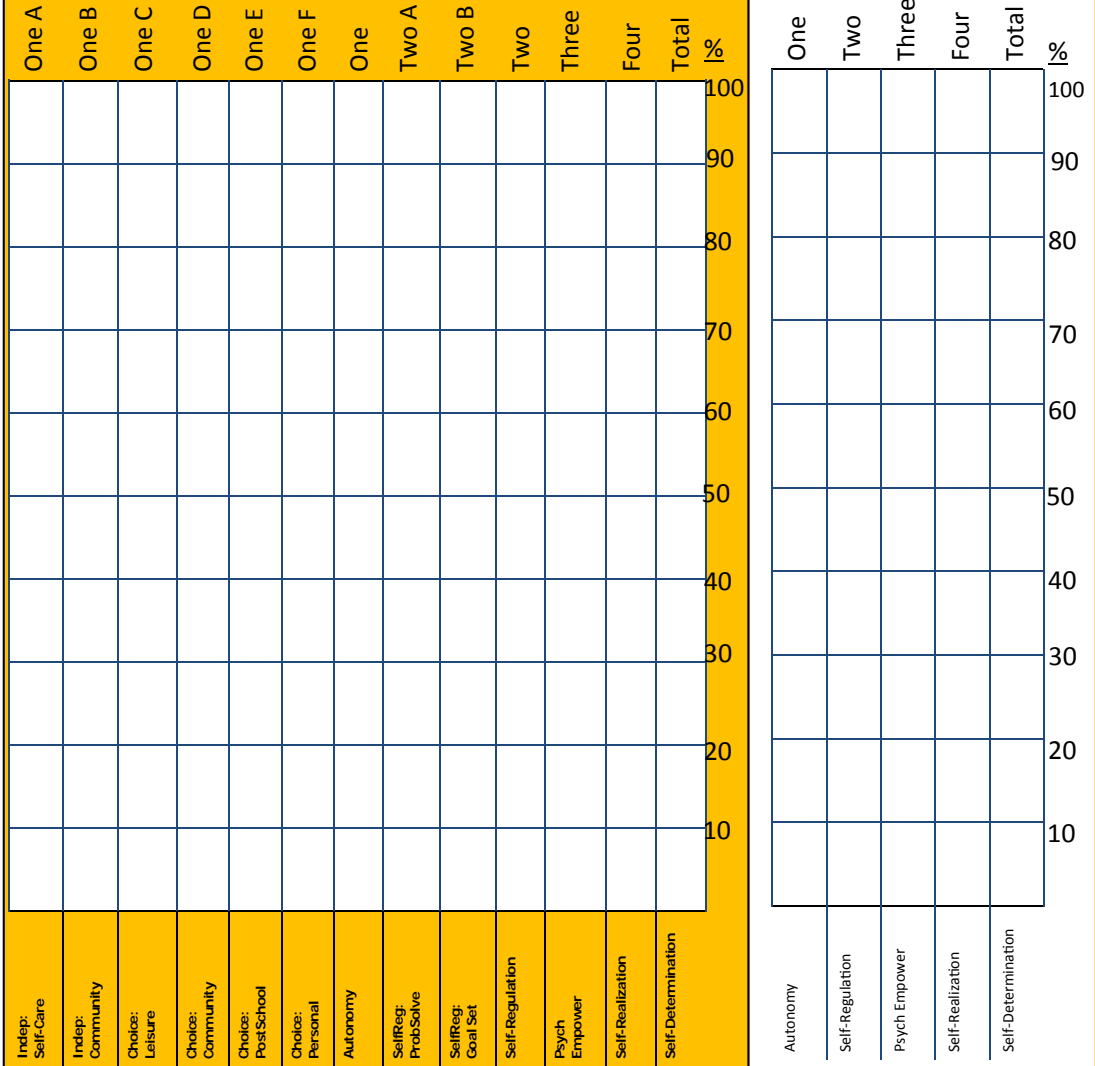
Domain Total:

#### Self-Determination

Total Score =

### Scoring Step 4:

Fill in the graph for the percentile scores from the norming sample. From the appropriate percentile down, darken the complete bar graph (See example in Scoring Manual):



### Scoring Step 5:

Fill in the graph for the percentile scores indicating the percent positive responses.