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14 Psychological Tests for Parental Alienation

PASG PAI Newsletter – 01/2020

5 Factor Model:

Parental Alienation – The Five Factor Model by Bill Bernet, Amy Baker, Philip M. Koszyk, MD et. al.

The five-factor model provides us with one consistent and coherent evidence-based model to conceptualize and understand the presence and indicators of parental alienation dynamics in a family at a given moment in time. More importantly, it helps us to differentiate between PA and true estrangement thus, privileging the welfare and safety of children and young people.

The five-factor model presents an opportunity for professionals across the social, legal and mental health professions to achieve clarity regarding what parental alienation is and what it looks like in a simple and straight forward evidence-based manner. It provides us with a common framework to inform our practice with families and young people.

1. Contact refusal.
2. Positive relationship prior to contact refusal.
3. Absence of abuse or neglect on the part of the alienated parent.
4. Alienating behaviors of the preferred parent.
5. Child manifesting symptoms of Parental Alienation.

Baker Strategies Questionnaire. Baker and Chambers (2012) developed the BSQ, a standardized measure that could be used to collect reliable and valid information about the specific alienating behaviors that a child had been exposed to and/or a parent was currently engaging in. After several rounds of piloting, the BSQ was developed, which measures 17 primary alienating behaviors.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/26904586.2021.1960231?journalCode=wjcc21>

Baker Alienation Questionnaire. Baker, Burkhard, and Albertson-Kelly (2012) introduced the BAQ, which is intended to identify alienated children using a paper-and-pencil measure that is short, easy to administer, and easy to score objectively. In their pilot study, Baker et al. found that children who had been court-ordered for reunification therapy—specifically for PA—

consistently responded in a polarized fashion in which one parent was denigrated and the other was idealized. Baker et al. found that the BAQ discriminated well between alienated and nonalienated children.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/26904586.2021.1960231?journalCode=wjcc21>

Bricklin Perceptual Scales. The BPS, which were developed specifically for use in child custody evaluations, define and quantify children's attachment to and perceptions of their parents (Bricklin, 1984). Estranged children are likely on the BPS to manifest ambivalence toward both parents. Alienated children, on the other hand, are likely to see the preferred parent as totally good and the rejected parent as totally bad. Although Bricklin did not use the term "splitting" in his discussion of the BPS, that appears to be what he was measuring. . <https://village-publishing.com/cep/bricklin-perceptual-scales>

Dr. Richard Gardner identified 8 behaviors to distinguish alienated from abused children. His work was the pre-cursor that helped show a pattern of behaviors related to parental alienation, <https://parentalalienation.eu/awareness/8-symptoms-of-parental-alienation/>

Parental Acceptance–Rejection Questionnaire. The PARQ is a questionnaire that children complete regarding their perceptions of their mothers' and fathers' accepting–rejecting behaviors (Bernet, Gregory, Reay, & Rohner, 2018). A study of the PARQ Gap (the absolute difference between the child's PARQ: Mother and PARQ: Father scores) found that this test was 99% accurate in distinguishing alienated from nonalienated children (Bernet, Gregory, Rohner, and Reay, in press).). <https://csiar.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/494/2021/08/Introduction-to-Interpersonal-Acceptance-Rejection-Theory-IPARTheory-and-Evidence.pdf>

Red Flag Behaviors, Color Coded Calendar and 3 Strikes YOU'RE OUT! Program.

Created by Joan T. Kloth-Zanard with the assistance of Linda Gottlieb, Brian Ludmer, Catherine MacWillie and Xiaojie Zheng. These tools use numbers and colors to help show a pattern of behavior. One is called Red Flag Behaviors and the other is called Color Coded Calendar. These coupled with a program called 3 Strikes YOU'RE OUT! Help the courts to determine if there is a pattern of behavior and whether a parent is going to cooperate with the courts orders or not. [Kloth-Zanard, Joan, 2012, Where Did I Go Wrong? How Did I Miss the Signs? 2nd Edition. Lulu Press.](#)

Rowland Parental Alienation Scale

Created by Gena A. Rowlands. The RPAS is a questionnaire for parents designed to capture the manifestations of PA in their children, which had previously been described in the literature (Rowlands, 2018). Six significant factors were extracted representing the eight traditional behavioral symptoms of PA. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2018-60478-001>, Article: [Parental Alienation: A Measurement Tool](#)

The remaining list is in alphabetical order:

Alienated Family Relationship Scale. Kathleen Laughrea (2002) developed the AFRS, which is administered to children. A factor analysis and reliability analysis confirmed that the two alienation scales (father alienating against mother and mother alienating against father) were reliable. Scores on this scale were related to other measures in a theoretically consistent manner indicating good validity of the measure.

https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1300/J035v17n01_05

Bene-Anthony Family Relations Test. Blagg and Godfrey (2018) administered the BAFRT to a population of children in the United Kingdom. The BAFRT (developed by Eva Bene and E. James Anthony in the 1950's) is a projective test that explores indirectly children's perceptions of their relationship with family members. Blagg and Godfrey concluded that "children in the alienated group who had not been abused or neglected by their target parent expressed almost exclusively negative (hostile) feelings towards them, while also expressing almost exclusively positive (affectionate) feelings towards their preferred parent."

<https://pasg.info/app/uploads/2018/12/Blagg-2018-Family-Relations-Test.pdf>

Hands-Warshak Scale of Alienating Behaviors. Hands and Warshak (2011) adapted the PABS by adding 14 additional questions which tap "the subjects' perceptions of additional aspects of parental alienating behavior" and "subjects' attitudes toward each parent." They concluded, "Parental alienating behaviors, and the phenomenon of a child becoming alienated from a parent after divorce, are departures from the norm and worthy of attention and concern."

<https://nebula.wsimg.com/5fa5dc1bdd3675232926282e8dcc22e6?AccessKeyId=82C5CAB9CA79C92AC751&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory–2. The MMPI-2 is well-established psychological test, which is commonly used in parenting time evaluations. Siegel and Langford (1998) found that alienating mothers were more likely to complete MMPI-2 questions in a defensive manner, striving to appear as flawless as possible. Gordon, Stoffey, and Bottinelli (2008) found that parents who induced alienation in their children manifested higher scores (in the clinical range) on the MMPI-2 than control mothers and fathers (scores in the normal range), indicating primitive defenses such as splitting and projective identification. The scores of targeted parents were mostly similar to the scores of control parents.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK557525/> (ONE ISSUE WITH THIS TESTING IS THAT UNLESS THE EVALUATOR IS SPECIFICALLY TRAINED IN ALIENATION, ALIENATORS ARE REALLY GOOD AT WORKING THIS TEST TO THEIR ADVANTAGE. NOT SURE IF WE NEED TO MENTION ANYTHING ON THIS OR NOT.)

Parental Alienating Behaviors Scale. Braver, Coatsworth, and Peralta (n.d.) described and tested the PABS, although this work was not published in a journal. The PABS, which consists of 6 items regarding each parent, was administered to mothers, fathers, and adult children to determine the presence of parental alienating behaviors.

https://archive.uea.ac.uk/swp/iccd2006/Presentations/tues_pm/ps12%20High%20conflict%20&%20Enforcement/Braver%20summary.pdf

Parental Alienation Scale. Cunha Gomide, Camargo, and Fernandes (2016) developed the PAS, a questionnaire to be completed by evaluators familiar with the family. The questions pertain to both the parents' and the child's activities and behaviors. This test distinguished alienating parents from target parents and alienated children from nonalienated children.).

<https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2016-50448-003>