

INFORMATION SHEET for the GQ-ASC (Original - 2011)

The (Girls) Questionnaires for Autism Spectrum Conditions (Q-ASC) was developed by Attwood, Garnett, and Rynkiewicz in 2011 to identify behaviours and abilities consistent with the female presentation of autism to support positive psychosocial outcomes and prognosis for girls into adulthood. There are two questionnaires, one for girls aged 5 – 12 years old, and one for 13 to 19 years old.

GQ-ASC 5-12 years Questionnaire

GQ-ASC 13-19 years Questionnaire

These two questionnaires were the world's first screeners for what we called at the time the “female presentation” of autism and the results of our pilot were published in the Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, February 2018.

Ormond, S., Brownlow, C., Garnett, M. S., Rynkiewicz, A., & Attwood, T. (2018). Profiling autism symptomatology: An exploration of the Q-ASC parental report scale in capturing sex differences in autism. *Journal of autism and developmental disorders*, 48(2), 389-403.

Please note: The Q-ASC is still in a pilot stage of development and is not diagnostic but provides very useful **qualitative** information for a diagnostician. **The Q-ASC yields descriptive information that will be helpful to take along to GP, Psychologist or Psychiatrist – to date, there are no clinical cut-offs/quantitative scoring template available.** The measure should be used in conjunction with validated screeners, e.g., The Autism-Spectrum Quotient (AQ; Baron-Cohen et al. 2001) to determine if a referral is warranted. For helpful autism assessment tools, please see: Autism Research Centre

The Q-ASC response format

GQ-ASC 5-12 years Questionnaire

- Questions 1 – 51 (1 = Definitely Disagree, 2 = Slightly Disagree, 3 = Slightly Agree, 4 = Definitely Agree)
- Questions 52 - 54 or (Yes or No)

GQ-ASC 13-19 years Questionnaire

- Questions 1 –54 (1 = Definitely Disagree, 2 = Slightly Disagree, 3 = Slightly Agree, 4 = Definitely Agree)
- Questions 54-58 - (Yes or No)

Where higher scores are generally associated with an Autistic presentation*

** To capture answers from both boys and girls, the questionnaire was grammatically amended for research purposes, therefore, all gendered behaviour items (e.g., Does or did s/he prefer to play with boys' toys?) may need to be considered/reversed depending on gender.*

The Q-ASC Research

In 2018, research piloted the Q-ASC with parents of 238 children with a clinical diagnosis of ASD-Level 1 (without intellectual or language impairment). The aim of this study was to conduct an exploratory investigation of presenting autism characteristics within a clinical setting, with a focus on refining a preliminary profile for female children and adolescents with autism. Data analysis from the first statistical investigation revealed 8 interpretable and reliable components of the Q-ASC using Principle Components analysis (See article: page 396):

1. Gendered Behaviour
2. Sensory Sensitivity
3. Compliant Behaviour
4. Friendships & Play
5. Social Masking
6. Imagination
7. Imitation
8. Talents and Interests

Comparisons across age and gender groups found statistically significant mean differences of parent-reported characteristics. Parents reported a greater degree of behaviours and abilities in girls with ASD, compared to boys with ASD, across the following Q-ASC components:

- Gendered Behaviour issues
- Sensory Sensitivity
- Social Masking
- Use of Imagination and Imitation characteristics, and;
- Appeal of certain Talents and Interests

The findings from this study aim to identify improvements in the Q-ASC towards the future assessment of the sensitivity and diversity of presentations of autism among female children and adolescents.

In 2019-2021, further psychometric evaluation was undertaken looking at the predictive utility of the Q-ASC using clinical (ASD) and community (neurotypical) samples. The results of this research are currently In Press with the Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders.

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