

Title of Measure: Family Function Style Scale (FFSS) (Cristina Alfaro Díaz, PhD, RN)

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Website: There is currently no website

Reference for original article describing how the measure was developed and tested:

- Deal, A. G., Trivette, C. M., & Dunst, C. J. (1988). Family functioning style scale: An instrument for measuring strengths and resources. CJ Dunst, CM Trivette & AG Deal, Enabling and empowering families: Principles and guidelines for practice. Brookline Books. MA: Cambridge.

Purpose/Background:

- The instrument developed by Dunst, Trivette, and Deal (1988) measures positive aspects of family functioning or family strengths. The FFSS instrument assesses the beliefs that a family holds regarding its strengths, abilities, and competencies, and how these are used to mobilize its resources and support networks in order to meet its needs in response to a crisis and/or stress.
- This scale consists of 26 items that refer to 12 categories that define a strong family. These twelve categories are organized into three dimensions that, according to the authors, represent diverse, although not independent, aspects of family functioning style: Family Identity, Shared Information among all its members, and Mobilization of resources and coping strategies.
- The dimension of Family Identity integrates and evaluates five aspects of family strengths:
 - Commitment to the well-being and optimal development of each individual and the family as a whole.
 - Appreciation of the big and small things that family members do well and the degree of encouragement to do better.
 - Time spent together doing formal or informal activities as a family.
 - Purposefulness in addressing problems and moving forward during difficult times.
 - Consistency among family members in using resources to meet family needs.
- The dimension of Shared Information integrates and evaluates only two aspects of family strengths:
 - Positive communication with other family members.
 - Family rules, values, and beliefs that shape expectations of what is desirable and acceptable.
- Finally, the dimension of Mobilization of resources and coping strategies integrates and evaluates five aspects of family strengths:
 - Repertoire of coping strategies and available social support to face normative or non-normative life events.
 - Skills in problem-solving and evaluating different options to meet needs.
 - Optimism, understood as perceiving the positive aspects of life, including the ability to see crises and problems as opportunities for learning and growth.
 - Flexibility and adaptability in roles necessary to obtain sufficient resources to meet needs.
 - Balance between using internal and external family resources to learn and adapt to the life cycle.

Scoring procedure:

- The scale can be completed by an individual family member or by the entire family and includes statements that the participant must respond to based on how characteristic each statement is of their family. Each item of the instrument

is rated on a Likert-type scale. In total, it includes 26 items that are answered on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (not like my family) to 5 (very much like my family). To obtain a scale score, each question is rescaled to a range of 0 to 100, and each of the five categories is calculated as the mean of the questions involved in the category.

Psychometrics:

- The reliability and validity of the scale were established in a study of 241 parents of preschool-aged children. Both split-half reliability ($r = .85$) and average correlations among the 26 items (.92) indicated an internally consistent measure. Validity analyses indicated that the instrument is measuring the intended constructs associated with family strengths (Dunst, Trivette, and Deal, 1988).
 - In the study developed by Faarup et al. (2019), the internal consistency of the FFSS was positive, as the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the total scale was 0.81.

Norms/Comparative Data: No comparative data available

Populations the measure has been used with:

- Parents of preschool-aged children
- Families of children with functional motor limitations
- Families of patients with glioblastoma multiforme
- Mothers of young children

Languages the measure is available in:

- English
- Danish
- Turkish
- Spanish
- German
- Portuguese
- Chinese
- Korean

Strengths and Limitations of the measure

- **Strengths:**
 - Comprehensive assessment: The measure comprehensively assesses various aspects of family functioning, including family identity, shared information, and mobilization of resources and coping strategies. It provides a multi-dimensional perspective on family strengths and areas for improvement.
 - Validity and reliability: Several studies have demonstrated the validity and reliability of the family functioning style measure. For example, Dunst, Trivette, and Deal (1988) reported strong internal consistency and test-retest reliability for the scale.
 - Culturally adaptable: The measure has been translated and adapted for use in different cultural contexts, allowing for the assessment of family functioning across diverse populations.
 - Practical application: The measure can be completed by individual family members or the entire family, making it flexible and convenient for use in research and clinical settings. It provides a standardized framework for assessing family functioning and moreover, it has the advantage of being a self-report instrument that is appropriate to be used with different age groups ranging from adolescents to elderly (Danışman & Tiftik, 2014).
- **Limitations**
 - Self-report bias: The measure relies on self-reporting, which may be subject to biases, such as social desirability bias or individual

interpretations of family functioning. Different family members may have different perceptions of family dynamics, which can introduce variability in the responses.

- Limited cultural specificity: While the measure can be adapted for different cultural contexts, the original development and validation may have been primarily based on Western cultural norms. This may limit its sensitivity to cultural variations in family functioning.
- Lack of predictive validity: While the measure assesses various aspects of family functioning, it may not have strong predictive validity for specific outcomes or behaviors. Additional measures or assessments may be needed to explore the relationship between family functioning and specific outcomes of interest.

Citations for articles by IFNA members and others who have used the measure:

- Copur, Z., Boylu, A. A., & Oztop, H. (2013). Investigation of the factors influencing family functions style. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science*, 2(3), 2147-4478. DOI: [10.20525/ijrbs.v2i3.69](https://doi.org/10.20525/ijrbs.v2i3.69)
- Danişman, I. G., & Tiftik, N. (2014). Measuring family strengths and capabilities: Reliability and validity of the Turkish version of the Family Functioning Style Scale. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 114, 346-350. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.12.709>
- Dunst, C. (2021). A meta-analytic investigation of the relationships between different dimensions of family strengths and personal and family well-being. *Journal of Family Research*, 33(1), 209-229. <https://doi.org/10.20377/jfr-578>
- Dunst, C. J., Trivette, C. M., & Deal, A. G. (1988). *Enabling and empowering families: Principles and guidelines for practice*. Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books.
- Faarup, I., Lauridsen, J. T., Lütgen, K., Nørregaard, A., Poulsen, F. R., & Østergaard, B. (2019). Do family health conversations impact patients with glioblastoma multiforme and their family members?. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 28(9-10), 1695–1707. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jocn.14777>
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- Nelson, D. B. (2003). Family functioning measures: convergent and discriminant validity. *Journal of Theory Construction & Testing*, 7(1), 1
- Pirila, S., Van Der Meere, J., Seppänen, R. L., Ojala, L., Jaakkola, A., Korpela, R., & Nieminen, P. (2005). Children with functional motor limitations: the effects on family strengths. *Child Psychiatry and Human Development*, 35(3), 281–295. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10578-004-6462-1>
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- Trivette, C. M., Dunst, C. J., Deal, A. G., Hamer, A. W., & Propst, S. (1990). Assessing family strengths and family functioning style. *Topics in Early*

Childhood Special Education, 10(1), 16-35.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/027112149001000103>

- Yeung, J. W. (2021). Family processes, parenting practices, and psychosocial maturity of Chinese youths: a latent variable interaction and mediation analysis. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(8), 4357. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18084357>