



Devereux Student Strengths Assessment Second Edition (DESSA 2)
Grades K-8
Scales and Associated Items

Optimistic Thinking (OT): The belief and demonstration of confidence, hopefulness, and positive thinking regarding oneself, others, and one's life situations in the past, present, and future.

- 3. accept that making mistakes is part of learning?
- 7. view negative outcomes as a learning opportunity?
- 15. seek out challenging tasks?
- 23. focus on the positive aspects of a situation?
- 27. speak positively about their future potential?
- 34. express high expectations for themselves?
- 40. believe they can achieve their goals?

Self-Awareness (SA): The ability to understand emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence one's behavior; recognize strengths and limitations; and develop healthy identities and a sense of purpose.

- 1. show an awareness of their personal strengths?
- 6. describe the emotion they were feeling?
- 8. ask questions when they did not understand something?
- 21. show a willingness to examine their beliefs and opinions?
- 25. demonstrate a sense of who they are and what is important to them?
- 29. work to develop their personal strengths?
- 32. explain what caused their emotions?

Self-Management (SM): The ability to manage emotions and behaviors across different situations and environments and to demonstrate agency as one works to set and achieve personal and collective goals.

- 5. stay focused despite a distraction?
- 14. keep trying when unsuccessful?
- 20. think before they acted?
- 22. work carefully on projects or schoolwork?
- 30. persist to achieve a goal?
- 37. stay calm when faced with a challenge?
- 39. contribute to group or team goals?

Social Awareness (SO): The understanding of social norms for behavior; the ability to empathize with, respect, and take the perspectives of others; and the feeling of connection and belonging with family, peers, schools, and community groups.

- 9. respect a person's right to have a different perspective?
- 11. show appreciation of others?
- 16. respond to others' feelings in kind and safe ways?
- 19. contribute to creating a positive learning environment?
- 26. recognize others' emotions?
- 33. make others feel welcome or included?

Relationship Skills (RS): The ability to establish and maintain healthy and positive relationships including effective communication, collaborative problem-solving, negotiating conflict, and demonstrating helpful and supportive behaviors.

- 4. get along well with different types of people?
- 12. interact positively with classmates?
- 17. encourage others?
- 24. listen to others?
- 28. stand up for a friend or classmate?
- 35. cooperate with others to solve a problem?
- 38. resolve conflicts positively?

Responsible Decision Making (RDM): The ability to make careful, reliable, and constructive choices about personal and social behavior that are appropriate across diverse situations; to consider the personal, social, and collective impact of one's actions; and to demonstrate curiosity and an open-mindedness to learning.

- 2. prepare for school, activities, or upcoming events?
- 10. demonstrate openness to new situations, experiences, and people?
- 13. show a willingness to update their thinking?
- 18. gather information before making an important decision?
- 31. do the right thing in a difficult situation?
- 36. accept responsibility for their actions?