

Overview of Inventory of Personal Skills for Achievement,  
Action Skills, Interpersonal Skills, and Mental Attitudes Between  
Academic Achievers, Normal, & At-Risk Middle School Students

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ABSTRACT

This study indicates the Inventory of Personal Skills for Achievement was further subdivided into three cohesive groups and labeled Achievement Inventory Measure, AIM, for ease of understanding the overall concepts and grouped the scales to reveal achievement action skills, interpersonal skills and mental attitudes. AIM is a valid self-report measure that differentiates between higher academic achievers, normal achievers, and academically at-risk middle school students. The subjects for this study consisted of 4176 students with teacher of academically identified high achievers (n=502), normal achievers (n=3065), and academically at-risk (n=575) students. These students were from grades 5, 6, 7 and 8 from 26 schools in 8 states from the North, South, Central, and South Regions of the United States. AIM contains 189 items which were analyzed with a principle components factorial analysis with varimax rotation to determine factor structure. This resulted in 9 scales distributed between 3 main categories as determined by: 1) subjective and objective evaluations of each scale's item correlations with the scales total; and 2) the face validity of each item compared to the overall scale's theme. Ten additional scales were generated by selecting from a subset of the original factors or by a rater grouping according to the items content. The correlations between the final 10 scales ranged from .11 to .89 with the majority falling below .50. The internal consistency of AIM was .95 on 189 questions. The first 1) group of scales was related to Achievement action (A) skills and behaviors and were titled: 1) Motivation & Supported (AMS,  $\alpha = .90$ ); 2) Work Skills of Focused vs. Unfocused (AWM,  $\alpha = .86$ ); 3) Energized vs. Defeated (AES,  $\alpha = .78$ ); 4) Peer Influence (API,  $\alpha = .71$ ); 5) Leadership Skill (ALI,  $\alpha = .61$ ); and 6) Red Flag Behavior (ARF,  $\alpha = .82$ ). The second group of scales were related to interpersonal skills, behavior, and interactions (I) and consisted of the following: 1) Teacher Comfort, (ITC,  $\alpha = .58$ ); 2) Anger Management/ Aggressive vs. Deference, (IAM,  $\alpha = .81$ ); 3) Assertive vs. Shy (IAS,  $\alpha = .78$ ); 4) Peer Support & Satisfaction (IPS,  $\alpha = .75$ ); 5) Peer Empathy and Outgoing (IPE,  $\alpha = .82$ ); 6) Family Support and Satisfaction (IFS,  $\alpha = .87$ ); and 7) Family Compliance and Participation (IFC,  $\alpha = .66$ ). The third groups of scales addressed the student's mental attitudes (M) and self-talk and consists of the following: 1) School Attitude (MSI,  $\alpha = .70$ ); 2) Idealistic vs. Realistic (MIR,  $\alpha = .78$ ); 3) Self-Satisfaction, perceived need to change (MSS,  $\alpha = .80$ ); 4) Locus of Control, Internal vs. External (MLC,  $\alpha = .85$ ); 5) Self-Reliant (MSR,  $\alpha = .82$ ); and 6) Stress Management (MSM,  $\alpha = .78$ ). To determine if significant differences existed between the AIM scales the Univariate analysis of variance was used with a test of significance P values of less than Bonferoni adjusted p of .0031 (alpha divided by the number of univariate tests). The AIM scales did differentiate between higher academic achievers, normal achievers and academically at-risk middle school students with interaction significance ( $[,001$ ) on 18 of the 19 scales. Only the Idealist vs. Realistic scale  $p = .0123$  was not significant which indicated that academic achievement did not result in different attitudes of being more realist or idealistic. The AUM scales differentiated between the group of Free Lunch, Reduced Lunch and Normal Lunch on all 19 scales at  $P = .0000$ . IPSA/AIM appears to be a valid and reliable test to utilize with youth in grades 5, 6, 7 and 8.

## Overview of Inventory of Personal Skills for Achievement, Action Skills, Interpersonal Skills, and Mental Attitudes Between Academic Achievers, Normal, & At-Risk Middle School Students

The school environment mirrors the growing epidemic of possession of drugs and weapons by an increasing number of students (Walker, Colin, Ramsey, 1994). America's news broadcasts reflect society's problems and often report violent youth behavior and situations in schools where students have threatened the physical safety of other students, teachers, or authorities. School drops outs consistently continue to occur. Recent national publications have reported that America has neglected its adolescents and children age 10 to 14 (Teenage wasteland, 1995; Wulf, 1995).

Although the major focus of schools is education, many schools have had to: hire policemen for safety patrol; initiate programs which teach conflict management; create specific classes and sometimes even schools for behavioral and emotionally at-risk students; and increase their special education services (Short & Talley, 1994). How have these issues affected the students? Will America quantify, define, and/or measure these problems from a student's point of view? Do schools know how to be proactive and recognize the extent of their future problems before they occur?

Can self-identification be utilized by the schools before the occurrence of academic failure, dangerous or negative behavior or dropping-out of school? This research has focused on assisting youth, ages 10 through 16, to evaluate how they view their own behavior, school performance, interpersonal skills, and mental self-talk. This research looks at a multimodal approach to four environmental elements of teens: their school, their home, friends and their internal mental self-talk. This approach can start to chart trends of behavior and social influences that affect not only the student but also a school, a city, a county, a state or any regional individual and social issues that will affect our nation's future. Can we afford to only look at academic issues when there are other influences that affect our youth and their future, especially when it is already known how to remediate many interpersonal and self-talk deficits.

### Historical Base

In order to evaluate youth, a theoretical base was framed on traits that differentiate achieving and fully functioning individuals from those functioning at marginal cognitive and social levels. These traits were gathered from the creator of the Inventory of Personal Skills for Achievement through research, experiential observation as a teacher and counselor, and assisted by educational and psychological theory from Adler, 1963, Goldstein, 1939, Wintler, 1986, and others. Some theories indicated that accomplished individuals had high self-esteem and self-acceptance accompanied by the ability to risk and accept new challenges with drive and motivation to grow (Kaplan & Sadock, 1985, Maslow, 1970). The achievers' personality characteristics were reported to consist of a desire to continually strive to learn and accomplish, a willingness to grow and change, positive behavioral control, and healthy interpersonal skills (Green, 1987; Maddi, 1980; Rogers, 1980). Looking at the opposite, at-risk students, those with lower academic performance, and at times academic failure, it was noted that they have poor decision making skills, and behaviors that resulted in self-damaging actions or negative behavioral consequences. The critical age for intervention with at-risk students

has been targeted as soon as birth with the WICKs program for appropriate nutrition for mothers and their early developing babies, and Head

Start for early kindergarten intervention. There are also early elementary programs to identify and place children into smaller classroom, have aides in the classroom and to allow a student to go into special education smaller classes. Still academic problems exist. The next critical developmental period that sends youth into crisis and change is puberty and middle or junior high school. This critical time of rapid growth has had few changes in academic curriculum or educational focus other than creating new classes or building new behavioral structured alternative schools for the students who are behaviorally out of control.

This research focuses on this critical time in a youth's life, the ages from 10 to 17. This is the time when many students drop out, are arrested, run away, and/or start families. This is also a developmental time significantly different from children or adults. During this age period youth are differentiating from their families and defining their own values, morals; developing more sophisticated interpersonal skills; and reinforcing their ability to control their behavior, have a new group of friends outside of their neighborhood and perform successfully in school. When youth are rapidly growing and developing into physiologically mature adults, most will be changing to a generally larger school with more teachers and class changes; meeting peers from areas outside of their neighborhood; and in many situations having increased freedom or less supervision. Yet the schools have few changes in the academic structure or course content.

In order to remediate academic and behavioral problems this researcher recommends that the following areas be addressed: 1) definition of what problems exist; 2) identification of which youths have problems; 3) ask each student to identify their own strengths and weaknesses so as to not miss the quiet withdrawn students; and 4) define the extent to which each school evidences these academic and behavioral strengths and/or weaknesses. Learn where the deficits exist: in academic skills, intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, and behavioral problems in adolescents affecting academic achievement? Find out if new course content could be introduced during these developing social years. Have in instrument to test intervention successes.

### Test Development

Initially there was an extensive review of the literature to identify which research and theories identified achieving vs. non-achieving students. Then there was an extensive review of evaluation tools to utilize with adolescent age children that appeared to have the same descriptors indicating achievement. It was discovered that one evaluation had already been developed and utilized with this age of youth and had scales identifying self-actualization measures. This was identified as the Personal Skills Map - Adolescent Version, PSM-A. The PSM was developed in 1979 by Nelson and Low. The PSM was initially an adult evaluative measure which assisted in the identification of the presence or absence of healthy personality and behavioral characteristics and was utilized for marriage counseling and individual self-actualization counseling. As a second step, the PSM was simplified for high school adolescents and re-named the PSM-A. The PSM and PSM-A evaluated

eleven domains of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and life management skills (Table I.). These instruments were found to differentiate between successful vs. unsuccessful populations in college, the work place and in marriages. The PSM-A and PSM assisted in intervention strategies with incarcerated adolescent males, adult college students, and distressed married couples (Link, 1982; Turnquist, 1980; and Webb, 1989).

The authors, Nelson and Low were contacted to use this instrument and reported that this test was no longer in print nor was it being utilized due to fraudulent use by a fellow co-researcher. Therefore they gave permission for this researcher to use any part of the questions or concepts. Hence the PSM-A was utilized as a building block from the original 13 conceptual areas. Some questions were dropped, some added, all items were shortened and simplified to read at a third grade reading level. In addition this research believed youth function differently in different location and with or without certain peers or adults present. Each group of questions was broke down into four domains in which the students functioned (their school, their family, their friends, and internal self-talk).

The initial research tool was developed in 1988 and 1989 and was name the Inventory of Personal Skills for Achievement, IPSA, then to allow ease of interpretation was subdivided in 1994 into three subgroups A (Achievement Skills), I (Interpersonal Skills) and M (Mental Self-Talk or Intrapersonal Skills). The original PSM had 300 questions with IPSA-AIM utilizing 168 or those sentences concepts. (Table I). The first field test was in a one on one environment in a school counselor's office or in community health settings. Any confusing items were rewritten. After the first round of field tests 21 high risk behavior items were added to evaluate common acting out and other high-risk behaviors of youth. In addition the test was found to need to be offered as read to the student due to the first tests observed student difficulty in the high risk youth with concentration issues, times issues, and comprehension of the written word issues. To allow the students to identify with the reader a male and a female teen alternated reading groups of questions with the final test lasting around 30 minutes. This was recorded in a sound studio. This would also allow future research to have consistent stimulus to gain reliable results. IPSA-AIM was then field tested with students between ages 8 to 17 in settings of the community and local schools. This final version was field test in 4 schools with a group of students and no subsequent changes were made.

The taped dialogue of IPSA was administered in a pilot test in an urban, blue collar, mixed-ethnic junior high. The students were randomly selected from low, middle, and high ability classes by their respective guidance counselor. After the final pilot test only minor wording was changed and again the instructions were re-recorded to be used in the final version. Observations showed that high academic achievers and fast readers preferred to read the test at their own pace which was faster than the taped instructions. These students finished the test in 25 to 30 minutes whereas the recorded test took 37 minutes. This time does not contain the demographic information sheet. Only a minimal number of students would lose focus and need the tape to be stopped in order to catch up; they appeared easily distracted and were unable to stay focused. These students would need to be in a smaller setting with the ability to stop and restart the tape. The majority of average students appeared to read along and listen while they answered the questions. The low level ability student seemed to prefer to listen and answer. This recorded version is encouraged since it is presented at a consistent

moderate pace and this encourages the students to not over think any question. This recording also expedites the test time to a defined limit. Utilization of a male and female in teen voices lowers resistance and transference issues and is over all more user friendly.

IPSA questions address a youth's ability to resolve today's life challenges successfully. The purpose of this current study was to describe how IPSA was further refined with new scales reliability, internal consistency and validity. Could IPSA-AIM different populations (Leaseburg, 1990)? This paper appraised a further refinement of the initial 9 AIM scales along with an addition of 10 more scales. This paper looks at the more refined 19 scales to test their validity to detect significant differences between: 1) academic achievement (reflected by grades and achievement levels); 2) socioeconomic status (as measured by school lunch costs -normal, reduced or free cost); and 3) between school differences. Can AIM reflect that certain schools have more at-risk students than others on measures other than academic performance? An analysis was conducted as to the correlation between scales.

#### Subjects and Procedure

The subjects for this study consisted of 4176 students: from grades 5, 6, 7 and 8; from 26 schools in 8 states from the North, South, Central, and South Regions of the United States. Both rural and urban schools were represented with populations of White, Black, Hispanic, Oriental, and Native Americans or Eskimos (see Table 2). The students were classified by their teacher, counselor or by academic ratings to be in one of the following groups: of academically identified high achievers (n=502), normal achievers (n=3065), and academically at-risk (n=575) students. To look at possible effects of socioeconomic status the school lunch cost was divided and found: 2747 students who received normal cost lunch, 699 who received free lunch and 300 who received reduced cost lunch. Students were tested in classroom settings with an auditory tape of IPSA played while the students followed along in their test booklets. The questions took approximately 37 minutes when listening to the tape or reading along and listening to the tape. The extensive information sheet took about 20 minutes and some teacher assistance was needed with some students to complete the demographic sheet.

#### Statistical Analysis

In order to shorten the original set of items and to facilitate the creation of subscales within IPSA, the data was analyzed using a principal components analysis with a vaimax rotation. The total 189 IPSA responses were answered as "Yes", "Sometimes Yes and Sometimes No," or "No". The questions were judged in three ways: 1) as healthy and weighted with 3 points by subjective judgment as well as statistically significant majority score, 2) a "Sometimes" weighted as 2 points; and 3) an unhealthy answer weighted as 1 point. Each student's data was hand entered into a program by hired programmers, and then rechecked by another program before the final analysis. The weight of the items was assigned by the test originator (Leaseburg, 1991) then checked against the final evaluation to see if the weight was correctly assigned. Seven of the items had been rated in reverse weight, so were changed on each students test during final analysis and the data was again run. The University

of Oklahoma (first) and then the University of Houston's (second) main frame computers were utilized to run the analysis. This was required due to the sample size. In the final version the majority of healthy students' answers were checked against the weighting to confirm the point weighting as correct. The varimax factor analysis was conducted of all 189 items to identify if the grouped similar to the original Personal Skills Map – Adolescent version. The subsequent scales were evaluated for internal consistency with Chronbach's alpha. Univariate analysis of variance was then used to determine if significant differences existed between the AIM scales and different populations: academic achievers. The population lunch cost, academic achievement and urban vs. rural populations. The correlations among the final 19 scales was evaluated as was the internal consistency of the items.

### Findings

The varimax factor analysis indicated that the original 14 subscales of PSM-A did not group into the before labeled concept scales, but in fact regrouped into 9 new significant concept scales. Any items with combined content not cohesive or cognitively congruent were dropped. An additional 10 subjectively defined scales were added to reflect the researched trends of at-risk behaviors, attitudes and past researched concepts of fully functioning individuals. The internal consistency of AIM was .95 on 189 questions. The scales were evaluated for internal consistency with Chronbach's alpha resulting in a range of alpha from .58 to .90 on nineteen separate scales (Table 3.). The scree plot of the Eigen values was examined. It indicated that between 8 and 19 components should be retained. Next, the rotated loadings for these 19 solutions were examined for strength and interpretability. The components with fewer than five loadings of at least .30 were dropped. Large loadings were used to define the content of the remaining components, e.g., a component with several large loadings for items about familial supportiveness would be called "Family Support". The highest loading items from each component were retained and scales were created by unit weighting of the items. The factors are listed in Table 3. The initial phase was completed in 1990 (Leaseburg, 1990), and the last refinement of the test was completed in the fall of 1995 (Table III).

The initial statistical findings (Table I) found heavy item loading in Factor 1 analysis, Achievement Skills and low loadings on the last four factors; hence IPSA was further refined by statistical and subjective analysis. To develop the soundest, reliable scales, the nine original factors had item by item analysis to: 1) determine each scales item correlation with the scale total and 2) to develop the soundest, reliable scales, the nine original factors had item by item analysis: 1) subjective and objective evaluation of each scale's item correlation with the scale total and 2) the face validity of each item compared to the overall scale's theme. Items which had moderate to low correlation with the scale total, but which did not seem similar in content to the rest of the scale items were deleted. Most of the scales created in this way had adequate to excellent alpha and good face validity. Factor 9 from the original group was dropped due to low alpha. The initial factors 1 and 5 were split into two because of the apparent mixed content in the items. Additionally, five scales which had been created a priori were evaluated and refined. These were labeled School Attitude, Teacher Comfort, Energized Worker, Locus of Control, and Self-Reliant.

The correlations among the final 19 scales ranged from .11 to .89 with the majority falling below .50 (Table IV). The resulting scales (Table III) were divided into three subgroups based on their correlations as well as a subjective conceptualization of domains of behavior, interpersonal skills, and mental self-talk (AIM) for ease of interpretation. The first groups of scales were related to achievement actions (A) skills and behaviors and were as follows: Motivation-Supported, AMS,  $\alpha = .90$ ; Work Skills of Focused vs. Unfocused, AWM,  $\alpha = .86$ ; Energized vs. Defeated, AES,  $\alpha = .78$ ; Peer Influence, API,  $\alpha = .71$ ; Leadership Skill, ALI,  $\alpha = .61$ ; and Red Flag Behavior, ARF,  $\alpha = .82$ . The second group of scales were related to interpersonal skills, behavior, and interactions (I) and consisted of the following: Teacher Comfort, ITC,  $\alpha = .58$ ; Anger Management/ Aggressive vs. RE: Deference, IAM,  $\alpha = .81$ ; Assertive vs. Shy, IAS,  $\alpha = .78$ ; Peer Support & Satisfaction, IPS,  $\alpha = .75$ ; Peer Empathy and Outgoing (IPE),  $\alpha = .82$ ; Family Support and Satisfaction, IFS,  $\alpha = .87$ ; and Family Compliance and Participation, IFC,  $\alpha = .66$ . The third groups of scales addressed the student's mental attitudes (M) and self-talk and consists of: School Attitude, MSI,  $\alpha = .70$ ; Idealistic vs. Realistic, MIR,  $\alpha = .78$ ; Self- Satisfaction, perceived need to change, MSS,  $\alpha = .80$ ; Locus of Control, Internal vs. External, MLC,  $\alpha = .85$ ; Self-Reliant, MSR,  $\alpha = .82$ ; and Stress Management, MSM,  $\alpha = .78$ .

Univariate analysis of variance was then used to determine if significant differences existed between the AIM scales and different populations: academic achievers (Table V), SES / lunch costs (Table VI) and overall school populations and urban vs. rural (Table VII), and item population differences (Table VIII). The test of significance used the p values of less than a Bonferoni adjusted p of .0031 (alpha divided by the number of univariate tests). The AIM scales did differentiate between high academic achievers (n = 502), normal academic achievement (n = 3065), and students academically at-risk (n = 575) with interaction significant ( $p < .0001$ ) on 18 of 19 scales. Only the Idealist vs. Realistic scale  $p = .0123$  was not significant, which indicated that academic status did not result in different attitudes of being more realistic or idealistic. The AIM scales differentiated between Free Lunch, Reduced Lunch and Normal Lunch on all 19 scales at  $p = .0001$ . In looking at SES, the regular priced lunch students were higher on all scales. The free lunch students scored higher than the reduced lunch students on Motivation & Support, Leadership Skills, Assertive vs. Shy, Idealistic vs. Realistic, and Self-Reliant.

In subjectively evaluating racially mixed student populations (Table VII to IX) from five urban schools and six rural schools and comparing their AIM scale profiles, there were observable differences between the populations. In Table VII this urban school shaded in gray represented a sample of every at-risk student identified by school personnel from a middle school outside of a large metropolitan southwestern United States city. This urban at-risk population of 65 students was in the bottom tenth percentile or below on all but their perceived areas except for higher skills in Leadership Skills (64), Assertiveness (92), Highly Realistic Attitude (96), and Self-Satisfaction or no significant need to change attitude (64). This is subjectively logical in that the identified students were more assertive, had some leadership skills, and did not think they needed to change in most areas.

Table VIII, where the shaded section of rural schools from the southwest was historically significant because the state had identified them as a district with a failure to achieve academically. Following this evaluation year over 50% of the staff were fired due to the students' lack of improved testing scores. The state perceived that the teachers were not performing according to the state requirements. However, when looking at the school profile, the overall percentile scores reflect improvement from fifth and sixth grade to seventh and eighth grade. It is important to note the students' low percentile ranks in the ensuing categories: Family Support (10 and 25); Shyness (3 and 32); Self-Satisfaction (3 in grades 5 & 6); External Locus of Control (14 & 25); and Anger Management problems (17 & 21). Achievement Action percentile scores in this rural area reflect low in the following areas: Motivation and Support (10 & 28); difficulty staying focused and managing work (7 & 14); struggling energy (25 & 10); high negative Peer Influence (17 & 28) and high reported Red Flag Behavior (21 & 25).

Table IX compares a rural vs. urban school with a variety of levels of student's abilities. In a subjective comparison of the scales the students in the urban settings reported less motivation and support, being more energized, having less peer influence, having higher leadership skills, having greater teacher comfort, being more assertive, less outgoing and assertive with their peers, higher family compliance and more self satisfied. The rural students reported higher peer influence, less leadership skills, less teacher comfort, being less assertive, greater peer empathy, much lower family compliance, higher realistic expectations, lower self satisfaction, greater self reliance. Both rural and urban students overall had similar: work management skills, risky behavior actions, anger management skills, perceived peer support, perceived family support, locus of control, school attitude and stress management skills.

Table X shows a sample of an item's difference between races, sexes, urban vs. rural, and lunch costs on the 4176 students. This statistical analysis yielded significant results between some populations on some items. This table is just 5 of the 189 items and was used to show the power of IPSA for intervention. These items were included to give the power of statistical analysis by item as well as the other Tables which indicated the statistical difference between scale scores. Administrators are only limited by the depth and breadth of their analysis of their individuals, school or districts population and their knowledge of their community populations, family support structure, and income background.

### Conclusion

Adolescence is a time when students confront a variety of issues reflective of the actions and values of society, school, family, and peers. Today's school issues have expanded to include an increasing knowledge explosion in science and technology, changing family structures and work habits, and more observable exposure to violence, gangs, and drugs. In the middle school years students are often bused into new schools and mingled with different student populations with friends at times separated. This action begins in the majority of schools in fifth or sixth grade. At the same time most students enter puberty which is accompanied by unpredictable growth patterns and increasing mood instability. In addition to these physical changes, new environments, and different

friends, they are now given more teachers, complex schedules with multiple class changes, and more responsibility for their work. The middle school teachers generally have over 100 new students of whom they know very little, including a lack of awareness about pertinent historical data such as: 1) Has this student has repeated a grade? 2) Can they read or write? and 3) Can they hear or see sufficient to participate in class? If a student has been falling behind in reading or math skills, then beginning in third grade and compounded with each school year, the difference between achievement levels becomes more pronounced.

In this research study, the majority of students interviewed knew they were having difficulty in many areas of their lives, but they were unaware of how to improve either academically or socially. Some identified high risk students were not even aware of the importance of their need to change as indicated by the MSS or Self Satisfaction or perceived need to change scale. After the evaluation of one school population of at-risk youth, two came forward to ask for help because prior to middle school they had above average to excellent grades and were now failing. They did not know why they were failing or what to do differently. Adolescents redefine their ego/identity over a number of years. If they successfully master this task with positive healthy feelings about themselves and find some measure of success and achievement academically, then their young life starts on a sound basis. If the adolescent years are met with restriction, chaotic or dysfunctional environmental factors, and academic frustration and failure, then do these youth have a chance to achieve in life? Can our country continue to fail students especially those 25 per cent known who drop-out? One Midwestern state estimated drop-outs cost their tax payers \$17.12 billion annually (Robledo, 1986). Yet this financial cost does not consider the emotional cost or the future economic loss to our children and our country or the load carried by our tax payers, prison systems, and state and national treasuries.

This study showed that youth from ages 10 through 16 are able to identify strengths and weaknesses concerning their own academic achievement, peer and family interactions, behaviors, attitudes, and skills. Academically successful student have significantly higher IPSA-AIM scale scores, than at-risk students on 18 of the 19 scales. SES measured in the form of cost of lunch tickets indicates that income level has a significant effect on all 19 scales of AIM. This study also shows that schools have profiles of strengths or weaknesses that can alter the overall success rate of educational outcomes. These scales reflect life management skills affecting a school or teachers' success rates for academic learning and productivity. Corporations and companies teach their managers these life skills. Who will teach our youth these skills? Intelligence and socioeconomic status influence our students' success, but our students can be given a greater opportunity for success if they know how to communicate, manage work, focus, manage stress and anger, be self-reliant, and increase empathy and compliance.

IPSA measures areas which reflect behaviors, social support, and mental attitude. Although a student cannot change the actions of other people in their lives, they can change their view of their situations, affect attitude shifts, and learn new coping mechanisms. These IPSA-AIM scales reflect skills that schools can remediate: Stress Management, Work Management Focusing, and Communication Skills of Anger Management and Assertiveness and Teacher Support. A student can learn to look at life so they have an internal locus of control, and they can learn to be more self-

reliant. The life management skills identified by IPSA-AIM can be learned. If a student's home or academic environment does not recognize these areas, then education needs to teach students to identify personal strengths and weaknesses in life skills, and to learn or remediate their weak areas in self management areas. Self-esteem may occur naturally due to social support but when that is not present then self-esteem can also be nurtured and taught. There is more to academic performance than intellectual levels, and teacher skills.

The IPSA-AIM Inventory can also be utilized as a pre-post intervention tool to verify if the specific scale areas that are being remediated are improved by the intervention. Whatever remediation works needs to be shared through some kind of network besides meetings on the state, or national level because only a small representative sample of teachers can attend the state and national meetings. By utilizing the computer and a common web site, a shared data base could be developed to indicate statistically successful interventions. This will increase our chances to identify and help our children and ensure the success rate of our future adults. This can save money at multiple levels of future intervention needed due to high risk behavior, poor academic skills, and inadequate coping skills or self-reliance.

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Table I  
Original Item Changes from Personal Skills Map - Adolescent, PSM-A, into  
Inventory of Personal Skills for Achievement, IPSA, Utilizing 4 Domains

Scales	Scales PSM-A & IPSA	PSM-A IPSA / IPSA				Home	School	Peers	Self-Talk
		<u>n</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>n</u>				
<u>Intrapersonal Skills</u>									
	Decision Making	12	12	=	3	+	3	+	3
	Drive Strength	30	12	=	3	+	3	+	3
	Growth Motivation	11	12	=	3	+	3	+	3
	Self-Motivation	76	12	=	3	+	3	+	3
<u>Interpersonal Skills</u>									
	Empathy	12	12	=	3	+	3	+	3
	Interpersonal Awareness	12	12	=	3	+	3	+	3
	Leadership\Sales Ability	12	12	=	3	+	3	+	3
<u>Life Management Skills</u>									
	Stress Management	30	12	=	3	+	3	+	3
	Time Management	12	12	=	3	+	3	+	3
	Communication Styles								
	Aggression	21	12	=	3	+	3	+	3
	Deference	21	12	=	3	+	3	+	3
	Assertiveness	21	12	=	3	+	3	+	3
<u>Personal Change Orientation</u>									
	Need to Change	11	12	=	3	+	3	+	3
New Scales and Items Added to IPSA									
	Red Flag Scale		9						
	Lie Scale		14						
<u>Total Items In each Test</u>		300	189						

Table II

Subject Demographics

<u>Gender</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>n</u>
Male	Rural	1819	White	2864
Females	Urban	2357	Black	341
Missing			Hispanic	696
			Oriental	47
			Ind/Alask	81
			Missing	147

  

<u>Grade</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>Lunch Cost</u>	<u>n</u>
5	624	Free	699
6	1504	Reduced	300
7	1281	Regular	2747
8	727	Missing	430
Missing	136		

Table III

IPSA-AIM, Original Factors, Refined Factors and New Scales

<u>SCALES</u>		Original		New or Refined/	
		Items	Alpha	Items	Alpha
		<u>n</u>		<u>n</u>	
AMS	Motivation Supported	70	0.98	20	0.90
AWM	Work Management	11	0.81	17	0.86
AES	Energized vs. Defeated			9	0.78
API	Peer Influence			7	0.71
ALS	Leadership Skill			10	0.61
ARF	Risky Behavior	6	0.65	15	0.82
ITC	Teacher Comfort			5	0.58
IAM	Anger Management	10	0.57	9	0.81
IAS	Assertive vs. Shy			14	0.78
IPS	Peer Support/Satisfaction	9	0.73	10	0.75
IPE	Peer Empathy/Outgoing	6	0.63	13	0.82
IFS	Family Support/Satisfaction			16	0.87
IFC	Family Compliance/Participation			8	0.66
MSA	School Attitude	11	0.53	9	0.70
MSS	Self Satisfaction	11	0.80	11	0.80
MLC	Locus of Control			24	0.85
MSR	Self-Reliant			20	0.82
MSM	Stress Management	14	0.82	12	0.78
MIR	Idealistic vs. Realistic			7	0.78

Table IV.

Pearson Correlation Coefficients / Prob > |R| under Ho: Rho=0 Subjects = 4176 - Ages 10 - 16

	ACHIEVEMENT SKILLS						INTERPERSONAL SKILLS							
	AMS	AWM	AES	API	ALS	ARF	ITC	IAM	IAS	IPS	IPE	IFS	IFC	
AMS	1.00													
Prob														
AWM	0.646	1.00												
Prob	0.0001													
AES	0.796	0.715	1.00											
Prob	0.0001	0.0001												
API	0.420	0.674	0.446	1.00										
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001											
ALS	0.325	0.187	0.227	0.054	1.00									
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0005										
ARF	0.561	0.846	0.607	0.733	0.040	1.00								
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.1100									
ITC	0.574	0.467	0.454	0.346	0.282	0.401	1.00							
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001								
IAM	0.445	0.577	0.524	0.557	0.0800	0.705	0.295	1.00						
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001							
IAS	0.238	0.386	0.184	0.314	0.349	0.261	0.501	0.071	1.00					
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001						
IPS	0.284	0.460	0.213	0.399	0.313	0.395	0.479	0.241	0.670	1.00				
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001					
IPE	0.606	0.348	0.503	0.260	0.449	0.299	0.427	0.379	0.218	0.327	1.00			
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001				
IFS	0.889	0.652	0.631	0.476	0.322	0.590	0.544	0.416	0.523	0.425	0.503	1.00		
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001			
IFC	0.602	0.437	0.542	0.334	0.087	0.458	0.327	0.422	0.098	0.162	0.384	0.523	1.00	
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001		
MIR	0.272	0.296	0.360	0.182	0.061	0.249	0.121	0.233	0.103	0.039	0.177	0.210	0.269	
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0120	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	
MSS	0.235	0.522	0.213	0.381	0.253	0.385	0.305	0.189	0.582	0.549	0.134	0.382	0.107	
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	
MLC	0.831	0.816	0.770	0.674	0.374	0.718	0.573	0.513	0.397	0.468	0.550	0.811	0.507	
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	
MSR	0.800	0.503	0.624	0.364	0.468	0.424	0.633	0.352	0.301	0.355	0.672	0.721	0.455	
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	
MSA	0.709	0.777	0.794	0.470	0.245	0.661	0.496	0.477	0.291	0.341	0.429	0.635	0.428	
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	
MSM	0.456	0.670	0.387	0.518	0.226	0.598	0.414	0.363	0.545	0.590	0.220	0.648	0.337	
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	
	AMS	AWM	AES	API	ALS	ARF	ITC	IAM	IAS	IPS	IPE	IFS	IFC	

Table IV - continued.

Pearson Correlation Coefficients / Prob > |R| under Ho: Rho=0 Subjects = 4176 - Ages 10 – 16

	INTERPERSONAL SKILL							MENT	AL	ATTI TUDE			
	ITC	IAM	IAS	IPS	IPE	IFS	IFC	MIR	MSS	MLC	MSR	MSA	MSM
ITC	1.00												
Prob													
IAM	0.295	1.00											
Prob	0.0001												
IAS	0.501	0.071	1.00										
Prob	0.0001	0.0001											
IPS	0.479	0.241	0.670	1.00									
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001										
IPE	0.427	0.379	0.218	0.327	1.00								
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001									
IFS	0.544	0.416	0.523	0.425	0.503	1.00							
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001								
IFC	0.327	0.422	0.098	0.162	0.384	0.523	1.00						
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001							
	INTERPERSONAL SKILL							MENT	AL	ATTI TUDE			
	ITC	IAM	IAS	IPS	IPE	IFS	IFC	MIR	MSS	MLC	MSR	MSA	MSM
MIR	0.121	0.233	0.103	0.039	0.177	0.210	0.269	1.00					
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0120	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001						
MSS	0.305	0.189	0.582	0.549	0.134	0.382	0.107	0.119	1.00				
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001					
MLC	0.573	0.513	0.397	0.468	0.550	0.811	0.507	0.248	0.429	1.00			
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001				
MSR	0.633	0.352	0.301	0.355	0.672	0.721	0.455	0.156	0.239	0.766	1.00		
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001			
MSA	0.496	0.477	0.291	0.341	0.429	0.635	0.428	0.261	0.368	0.773	0.579	1.00	
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001		
MSM	0.414	0.363	0.545	0.590	0.220	0.648	0.337	0.189	0.713	0.640	0.380	0.528	1.00
Prob	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	
	ITC	IAM	IAS	IPS	IPE	IFS	IFC	MIR	MSS	MLC	MSR	MSA	MSM

\* The high number of subjects, N, will have increased probability that the same correlation is significant between subjects. The important number to note is the correlation between scales

Table V

Academic Achievement vs. Normal/No-Category Achievement vs. At-Risk, IPSA-AIM Scales, Means, Standard Deviations, and Analysis of Variance

<u>SCALES</u>	<u>n = 502</u>		<u>n = 3065</u>		<u>n = 575</u>		<u>Pr &gt; F</u>
	<u>Academic Achievement</u>		<u>No-Category Normal</u>		<u>Academically At-Risk</u>		
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	
AMS	25.11	4.21	24.47	3.98	23.10	4.12	0.0001
AWM	24.75	3.72	22.87	4.03	20.87	3.88	0.0001
AES	23.79	4.27	22.47	4.26	20.34	4.36	0.0001
API	25.29	3.69	24.21	4.12	22.93	4.47	0.0001
ALS	22.05	3.38	21.44	3.22	21.08	3.28	0.0001
ARB	26.42	3.01	24.98	3.54	22.96	4.08	0.0001
ITC	25.20	4.24	24.61	4.08	23.69	4.03	0.0001
IAM	24.86	4.10	23.37	4.55	21.09	5.12	0.0001
IAS	22.29	3.66	21.64	3.77	21.74	3.70	0.0021
IPS	25.26	3.74	24.08	3.90	23.19	3.78	0.0001
IPE	23.97	3.97	23.59	3.88	22.68	3.99	0.0001
IFS	25.42	4.15	24.59	4.07	23.38	4.10	0.0001
IFC	23.67	3.69	23.44	3.83	22.55	4.12	0.0001
MSA	25.30	3.33	23.66	3.59	21.73	3.81	0.0001
MSS	21.68	4.54	20.14	4.70	19.51	4.51	0.0001
MLC	25.43	3.11	24.44	3.17	23.07	3.25	0.0001
MSR	25.10	3.47	24.61	3.16	23.84	3.10	0.0001
MSM	23.61	4.04	22.23	4.11	21.26	4.02	0.0001
MIR	23.78	4.36	23.48	4.39	22.98	4.55	0.0123

Table VI.

SES, IPSA-AIM Scales, Means, Standard Deviations, and Analysis of Variance

<u>SCALES</u>	<u>Free Lunch</u>		<u>Reduced Lunch</u>		<u>Normal Lunch</u>		<u>Pr &gt; F</u>
	<u>n =</u> <u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n =</u> <u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>n =</u> <u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	
AMS	47.57	8.02	47.49	8.87	49.17	8.01	0.0001
AWM	36.89	6.52	37.44	6.74	39.52	6.87	0.0001
AES	21.59	4.37	21.76	4.18	22.56	4.34	0.0001
API	25.34	4.83	26.11	4.95	27.23	4.84	0.0001
ALS	47.87	6.24	47.74	6.57	49.63	6.30	0.0001
ARB	35.76	5.35	36.15	5.52	37.83	5.38	0.0001
ITC	11.91	1.98	12.03	2.03	12.42	2.06	0.0001
IAM	22.89	4.76	23.17	4.63	23.93	4.78	0.0001
IAS	47.81	6.24	47.74	6.57	49.63	6.30	0.0001
IPS	22.79	4.04	23.76	3.64	24.63	3.73	0.0001
IPE	56.60	7.36	56.91	7.93	59.27	7.69	0.0001
IFS	11.91	1.98	12.03	2.03	12.42	2.06	0.0001
IFC	22.89	4.76	23.17	4.63	23.93	4.78	0.0001
MSA	20.33	3.35	20.60	3.33	21.52	3.29	0.0001
MSS	20.33	3.35	20.60	3.33	21.52	3.29	0.0001
MLC	56.60	7.36	56.91	7.93	59.27	7.69	0.0001
MSR	47.81	6.24	47.74	6.57	49.63	6.30	0.0001
MSM	25.34	4.83	26.11	4.95	27.23	4.84	0.0001
MIR	44.92	9.40	45.73	8.95	47.37	8.47	0.0001

Table VII.

Inventory of Personal Skills for Achievement, IPSA, Percentile Scale Scores Between Schools

URBAN SCHOOLS

	C. SW	C. SW	C. SW	C. SW	
AMS	21	42	39	3	Achievement Skills
AWM	35	32	25	3	
AES	28	46	32	3	
API	64	67	50	7	
ALS	39	67	50	64	
ARF	53	46	39	3	
ITC	32	67	53	7	Interpersonal Skills
IAM	57	64	35	3	
IAS	39	53	25	92	
IPS	50	60	57	35	
IPE	28	53	57	7	
IFS	28	35	39	3	
IFC	53	57	14	3	
MIR	46	60	67	96	Mental Attitude
MSS	28	57	53	64	
MLC	32	53	42	3	
MSR	17	60	46	7	
MSA	32	35	28	3	
MSM	60	42	50	10	
	C. SW	C. SW	C. SW	C. SW	

\* Shaded gray indicates a population of identified at-risk students from a specific school.

Table VIII.

Inventory of Personal Skills for Achievement, IPSA, Percentile Scale Scores Between Schools

	RURAL			SCHOOLS			
	C. SE	C. SE	C. SE	SW	SW		
AMS	7	14	75	10	28	AMS	Achievement Skills
AWM	17	28	60	7	14	AWM	
AES	14	17	60	25	10	AES	
API	10	32	39	17	28	API	
ALS	17	53	75	14	35	ALS	
ARF	7	42	75	21	25	ARF	
ITC	3	42	75	14	60	ITC	Interpersonal Skills
IAM	7	42	89	17	21	IAM	
IAS	14	42	35	3	32	IAS	
IPS	3	53	85	14	39	IPS	
IPE	3	60	92	21	39	IPE	
IFS	7	17	82	10	25	IFS	
IFC	7	21	89	25	32	IFC	
MIR	10	92	42	75	85	MIR	Mental Attitude
MSS	39	42	60	3	46	MSS	
MLC	7	28	78	14	25	MLC	
MSR	3	35	78	32	42	MSR	
MSA	14	25	64	17	10	MSA	
MSM	14	46	67	7	39	MSM	
	C. SE	C. SE	C. SE	SW	SW		

\* Shaded gray indicates a population of identified at-risk students from a specific school.

Table IX.

Inventory of Personal Skills for Achievement, IPSA, Percentile Scale Scores Between Schools

URBAN VS. RURAL SCHOOLS NEITHER AN AT RISK SCHOOL					
		U. E.C.	R. E.Cnt.		
AMS	AMS	50	57	AMS	Achievement Skills
AWM	AWM	57	53	AWM	
AES	AES	50	42	AES	
API	API	57	78	API	
ALS	ALS	89	71	ALS	
ARF	ARF	64	67	ARF	
ITC	ITC	85	64	ITC	Interpersonal Skills
IAM	IAM	46	50	IAM	
IAS	IAS	82	64	IAS	
IPS	IPS	78	75	IPS	
IPE	IPE	64	82	IPE	
IFS	IFS	64	67	IFS	
IFC	IFC	46	10	IFC	
MIR	MIR	50	71	MIR	Mental Attitude
MSS	MSS	82	71	MSS	
MLC	MLC	67	64	MLC	
MSR	MSR	67	75	MSR	
MSA	MSA	53	50	MSA	
MSM	MSM	75	71	MSM	

URBAN E.C. R. E.Cnt.

Table X.

Percentile of Students that Answered Each Question in a Certain Manner with Significant Between Populations represented by Chi Square N=4176 Analysis and the Probability This Will Occur ( $p$ ).

11. When I am with friends they can push me to try new and scary things, even if I don't want to do it.

$p$		Yes	Sometimes	No
	White	11.9	28.4	59.8
	Black	10.5	27.3	62.2
	Hispanic	11.5	28.3	60.2
	Oriental	10.6	27.7	61.7
	Am. Indians	10.0	31.3	58.8
0.9928	TOTAL	11.6	28.3	60.1
	Male	13.9	28.7	57.4
0.0000	Female	9.6	28.7	62.6
	Age 11	11.5	25.6	62.9
0.0028	Age 14	12.0	33.8	54.2
	Urban	10.4	28.1	61.9
0.0000	Rural	15.6	28.9	55.4

84. I haven't got a chance in school, I have given up hope.

$p$		Yes	Sometimes	No
	White	7.3	9.8	82.9
	Black	14.0	9.2	76.8
	Hispanic	11.6	13.8	74.6
	Oriental	4.3	6.4	89.4
	Am. Indians	16.3	15.0	68.8
0.0000	TOTAL	8.8	10.5	80.7
	Male	10.9	11.4	77.5
0.0000	Female	6.5	9.6	83.8
	Age 11	8.2	9.4	82.4
0.8094	Age 14	9.1	9.8	81.1
	Urban	9.5	11.5	79.0
0.3975	Rural	8.5	10.9	80.6

TABLE 5. (continued)

Percentile of Students that Answered Each Question in a Certain Manner with Significant Between Populations represented by Chi Square N=4176 Analysis and the Probability This Will Occur ( $p$ ).

151. When I am with my friends I do whatever they want, even if it might be wrong.

$p$		Yes	Sometimes	No
	White	7.4	26.7	65.9
	Black	6.4	24.3	69.4
	Hispanic	8.2	26.9	64.9
	Oriental	4.3	12.8	83.0
	Am. Indians	14.8	25.9	59.3
0.0624	TOTAL	7.5	26.3	66.1
0.0000	Male	8.8	28.8	62.4
	Female	6.4	24.1	69.4
0.0039	Age 11	7.2	22.6	70.1
	Age 14	9.2	29.3	61.4
0.0000	Urban	6.6	24.8	68.6
	Rural	9.1	29.0	61.9

177. I feel so trapped and hopeless that I don't care what happens to me.

$p$		Yes	Sometimes	No
	White	12.7	26.5	60.8
	Black	17.6	23.1	59.4
	Hispanic	14.8	29.3	55.9
	Oriental	8.7	23.9	67.4
	Am. Indians	21.3	28.8	50.5
0.0173	TOTAL	13.6	26.7	57.7
0.1225	Male	13.7	25.1	61.2
	Female	13.6	27.9	58.5
0.0481	Age 11	14.6	23.7	61.7
	Age 14	12.6	29.6	57.8
0.5869	Urban	13.7	27.3	59.0
	Rural	13.8	25.8	60.3

179. Whenever I need help, I have an adult who will be there for me.

<i>p</i>		Yes	Sometimes	No
	White	33.4	30.3	36.2
	Black	37.0	25.1	37.9
	Hispanic	27.0	30.0	42.9
	Oriental	44.4	28.9	26.7
	Am. Indians	32.5	26.3	41.3
0.0044	TOTAL	32.7	29.7	39.5
	Male	35.7	32.5	31.7
0.0004	Female	39.5	26.8	33.7
	Age 11	38.2	31.0	30.8
0.9563	Age 14	37.7	31.7	30.6
	Urban	31.8	29.4	38.8
0.0902	Rural	34.2	30.2	35.6