# An Animation-Based Resource for Screening Emotional and Behavioural Distress in Children Aged 6 to 12

**Authors :** Zoe Lynch, Kirsty Zieschank

**Abstract :** There are several factors that compromise the utility and wide-spread use of existing emotional and behavioural distress screening instruments. Some of these factors include lengthy administration times, high costs, feasibility issues, and a lack of self-report options for children under 12 years of age. This animation-based resource was developed to overcome as many of these factors as possible. Developed for educators and medical and mental health professionals, this resource offers children a self-guided mechanism for reporting any current emotional and behavioural distress. An avatar assistant, selected by the child, accompanies them through each stage of the screening process, offering further instruction if prompted. Children enter their age and gender before viewing comparative animations conveying common childhood emotional and behavioural difficulties. The child then selects the most relatable animations, along with the frequency with which they experience the depicted emotions. From a perspective of intellectual development, an engaging, animated format means that outcomes will not be constrained by children's reading, writing, cognitive, or verbal expression abilities. Having been user-tested with children aged 6 to 12, this resource shows promising results as a self-guided screening instrument.

**Keywords :** animation-based screening instrument, mental health, primary-aged children, self-guided
**Conference Title :** ICAE 2018 : International Conference on Animations for Education
**Conference Location :** Sydney, Australia
**Conference Dates :** December 03-04, 2018