The Responsibility and Independence Scale for Adolescents (Salvia, Neisworth, & Schmidt, 1990) is an individually administered, norm-referenced device intended to assess the adaptive behavior of adolescents between the ages of 12 and 19 years. The scale contains 136 items, in question format. A respondent (for example, a parent or, in the case of older adolescents, a spouse), answers each question with yes or no, to indicate whether the adolescent performs various actions. To facilitate comprehension of the questions, each item is illustrated by a line drawing that is shown to the respondent as the question is asked. These drawings (with the question written at the bottom) are spiral-bound into a book. Although no specialized training is required to administer RISA, the authors provide practice exercises for individuals who are not experienced in the use of this type of instrument.

The 136 items are arranged in two subtests named Responsibility and Independence. Items assessing maladaptive behavior are not included. Responsibility consists of 52 items that assess "a broad class of adaptive behaviors that meet social expectations and standards of reciprocity, accountability, and fairness that enable personal development" (p. 2). The items are clustered in three areas. Self-management contains 17 items that deal with topics such as resisting peer pressure, using constructive criticism, and following household rules (for example, regarding phone use). Social maturity contains 21 items dealing with topics such as friendships and appropriate public behavior. Social communication contains 14 items dealing with listening politely and
speaking, asking permission to borrow things, and using the telephone to obtain information.

Independence consists of 84 items that assess "behaviors that allow individuals to live separately and free from the control or determination of others, and to conduct themselves effectively" (p. 2). The items are clustered in five areas: The domestic skills area contains 9 items dealing with such topics as following laundry-care labels, maintaining a supply of frequently used foods, and using safety equipment and clothing when necessary. Money management contains 23 items dealing with such topics as realistically estimating the cost of common household items, saving money for the future, using coupons, and using unit pricing. Citizenship contains 5 items related to voting, political awareness, and civic responsibility. Personal organization contains 15 items dealing with topics such as using lists, making preparations for the future, and taking actions to improve personal health. The transportation skills area contains 18 items dealing with behavior related to driving safely, asking for directions when lost, and using public transportation. The career skills area contains 14 items dealing with job training, employment, and career advancement.

Scores

Responsibility, Independence, and total scores can be converted to percentiles and standard scores (mean = 100; standard deviation = 15). A table is also available to convert differences between Responsibility and Independence standard scores.
**Norms**

A two-stage cluster sampling technique was used to select the normative sample. First, the United States was divided into four regions (Northeast, North Central, West, and South), and clusters of communities within regions were identified. Several community characteristics guided selection: degree of urbanization (central cities, urban fringe, cities with populations between 2,500 and 49,999 located at least 50 miles from the central city, and rural communities with populations less than 2,500); community educational attainment; community income; community employment status; and community occupational type. Seventy target communities that were broadly representative of the United States at the 1980 census were selected. Adolescents were selected at random from public and private schools and agencies that served high, middle, and low socioeconomic sections of their communities. The norms are based on the ratings of 1,900 adolescents from nine age groups. The largest sample ($N = 291$) consisted of 15-year-olds, and the smallest sample ($N = 124$) consisted of 19-year-olds. Each age group was weighted (using gender, community size, educational attainment of parents, and geographic region) so that the standardization sample closely approximated the most recent census data available at the time. Students with disabilities were included in the norms for each age group, although their proportions are not reported.

**Reliability**
Three types of reliability data are presented. Corrected split-half estimates of reliability are presented for each age and are based on the ratings of the adolescents who were the normative sample. All subtest reliabilities equaled or exceeded .90 at every age except for Responsibility at age 14, where $r_{xx}$ equaled .83. Corrected split-half estimates for the total exceeded .90 at every age. Test–retest correlations were computed to estimate stability for three age groups: ages 12 and 13 ($N = 40$), ages 15 and 16 ($N = 45$), and ages 18 and 19 ($N = 34$). All subtest and total-score coefficients exceeded .90. The reliability of the difference between Independence and Responsibility scores was also estimated. These estimates ranged from a low of .76 (at age 19) to a high of .89 (at both 12 and 13). Thus, differences between subscales are not sufficiently reliable to allow use of the subscales in making important educational decisions.

\textit{Validity}

Evidence for content, criterion-related, and construct validity is presented in RISA's technical manual. The authors can lay some claim to content validity based on their careful generation and selection of items. Moreover, most of the test's items assess behavior that would be appropriate for high school students or young adults. Correlations with two other measures of adaptive behavior (the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scale and the Scales of Independent Behavior) are presented as evidence for RISA's concurrent validity. Total scores on these other two measures correlate as well with RISA total scores as they do with each other (that is, about .50).
Finally, several studies support RISA's construct validity. First, RISA scores increase with age. Second, the factor analysis supports the use of the two subtests, and the factors identified are consistent with those identified in studies of other adaptive behavior measures. Third, there is a relative absence of differences in the performances of different racial and ethnic groups. Last, adolescents previously and independently identified as having mental retardation earned substantially lower scores than nonhandicapped peers.

Summary

RISA, a scale intended for use only with adolescents, assesses two major components of adaptive behavior: Responsibility and Independence. The technical manual provides clear evidence of a representative norm group and reliability. Some evidence of the scale's validity is also presented.