

# Abusive Behavior Inventory (ABI)

**Purpose:** To understand the extent of intimate partner violence occurring within a relationship. The ABI is a self-report, 30-item screening tool that asks participants on a Likert scale (1-5) to report the frequency of abusive behaviors during a 6 month period. The ABI understands violence through the framework of control, with the 30 items divided into categories of:

- **Psychological abuse** (20 items)
  - Emotional
  - Isolation
  - Intimidation
  - Threats
  - Use of male privilege
  - Economic abuse
- **Physical abuse** (10 items)
  - Physical acts
  - Sexual abuse

**Population:** Pregnant women and families/parents of children between the ages of 0-5 years old.

**When to Administer:**

- Week 3 of the intake process
- Annually based on first screening date

**Time Required:** 30 minutes

## Administration

The ABI should take no more than 30 minutes to administer and score. You will ask mothers to circle the number (1-5) that best represents approximately how often each of the listed behaviors have happened within the past six months. If needed, you may read along and guide the mother through the screening tool, but otherwise information is obtained via self-report.

## Scoring & Interpretation

Add the numbers that have been circled by the mother, and divide the sum by 30 to determine their ABI score. If a mother has left some of the items blank, add up the numbers that have been circled by the mother, and divide the sum by the number of questions she answered. (For example, if she skipped 2 questions, divide the sum by 28.) Higher scores reflect more abusive relationships. In this project, a score of 2.3 or greater indicates that a referral needs to be made.

## Entering the Score into DCRS

Scores for the ABI are entered into the Assessments tab in DCRS. Enter the date the assessment was completed and the status of the assessment at the top of the page. The ABI Score should be entered under the “Abusive Behavior Inventory (ABI)” heading. Scores will be entered twice to protect against data entry errors. DCRS will indicate a high level of risk if the score is 2.3 or greater. A copy of the mother’s completed ABI should be uploaded in the Documents section at the bottom of the Assessments tab.

Postmus, J. L., Stylianou, A. M., & McMahon, S. (2015). The Abusive Behavior Inventory-Revised. *Journal of interpersonal violence*.

Shepard, M. F., & Campbell, J. A. (1992). The abusive behavior inventory a measure of psychological and physical abuse. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 7(3), 291-305.