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CHILDREN'S EMOTION REGULATION INVENTORY (CHERI): MEASURE DEVELOPMENT, ITEM DOMAINS AND SUMMARY PROFILES

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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Angela Dawn Callear (nee Macfarlane)

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In loving memory of Grandad and Uncle Max –
Expert joy-makers

ABSTRACT

Skilful emotion regulation in childhood plays a vital role in a raft of developmental accomplishments, including social competence, academic success and mental well-being. However, researchers and clinicians currently have no unified framework for examining children's emotion regulation and few straightforward yet detailed assessment measures. Here, a series of studies was undertaken which identified a collection of observable children's emotion regulation strategies, then organised and grouped the strategies into cohesive domains and profiles. First, a goal-directed model of emotion regulation was outlined. Next, current research measures, clinical measures and focus group data were used to construct a 103-item inventory of behavioural emotion regulation strategies. Multidimensional scaling was then used to calculate and display inter-item relationships after they had been objectively sorted by lay-people and experts. This step also enabled item refinement and inventory reduction. One hundred and fifty one parents of 6-12 year old children then ranked the resulting 85-item Children's Emotion Regulation Inventory (ChERI) in relation to their child using a three-phase Q-sort procedure. Multidimensional scaling, factor analysis and cluster analyses were applied to the responses. Nine fundamental domains of children's emotion regulation were found, interpreted as *Outward Engagement*, *Inward or Somatic Focus*, *Disengagement*, *Disruptive*, *Impulsive/Labile*, *Social Connectedness/Compliance*, *Generating Closeness/Intimacy*, *Establishing Order* and *Generating Disorder*. Individual scores across these nine domains were clustered to generate five summary Profiles of children's emotion regulation. Results are compared and contrasted with current literature and discussed in terms of potential usefulness of the ChERI for research or clinical applications.

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
CONTENTS	v
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	ix
LIST OF FIGURES.....	x
LIST OF TABLES.....	xi
LIST OF APPENDICES	xii
PROLOGUE	xv
Introduction.....	xv
Perspectives of Emotion Regulation: From Evolution to Temperament.....	xvi
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
Emotion Regulation Literature Review.....	1
Emotion.....	1
Emotion Regulation: Issues of Definition	3
Emotion Regulation versus Similar Concepts.....	7
Terminology	9
Models of Emotion Regulation	10
Children's Emotion Regulation	11
Development of Emotion Regulation	12
The Role of Children's Emotion Regulation.....	15
Emotion Regulation and Internalising and Externalising.....	17
The Suppression/Reappraisal Binary.....	18
The Physiology of Children's Emotion Regulation.....	19
Patterns of Children's Emotion Regulation.....	21
Key Variables in Understanding Emotion Regulation	23
Parenting and Emotion Regulation	23
Emotion Regulation Summary	26
Research Statement.....	28

CHAPTER TWO.....	29
A Framework for This Research.....	29
The Importance of Understanding Emotion Regulation.....	29
Introduction to the Studies	31
Research Aims	31
Study One: Item Development.....	32
Study Two: Measure Development.....	33
Study Three: Emotion Regulation Domains and Summary Profiles	34
A Model of Emotion Regulation.....	35
Introduction	35
The Goal-Directed Model of Emotion Regulation	36
The Event	38
The Emotion.....	38
Characteristics of the Individual	40
Intrapersonal.....	40
Contextual.....	42
Interpersonal.....	42
Emotion Regulation	43
Five Elements of Emotion Regulation.....	44
Goal.....	47
Linking the Model Features.....	48
Model Summary	49
CHAPTER THREE.....	51
Study One: Item Development	51
Children: Definition and Rationale	51
Assessment Approach: How to Measure Children’s Emotion Regulation	53
Focus Groups: Definition and Rationale	55
Method.....	55
Participants	57
Procedure.....	57
Data Collection, Transcription and Analysis.....	58
Results	61
Discussion	64
Links to the Literature	65
Links with the Goal Directed Model of Emotion Regulation	67

Limitations.....	70
Summary	71
CHAPTER FOUR	73
Study Two: Measure Development.....	73
Introduction	73
Objective Mapping.....	76
Method.....	78
Participants	78
Phase One	78
Phase Two	78
Materials	78
Procedure.....	79
Data collection & analysis.....	80
Results	81
Phase One.....	81
Phase Two.....	81
Phase One and Two Compared	82
Auxiliary Study.....	83
Method	84
Participants.....	84
Materials.....	84
Procedure.....	84
Data Collection & Analysis	85
Results	85
Map Interpretation.....	86
Item Reduction and Construction of the ChERI (Children's Emotion Regulation Inventory)	88
Discussion	93
Links with Other Measures.....	93
Links with Theory.....	96
Limitations and Implications	98
CHAPTER FIVE	101
Study Three: Emotion Regulation Domains and Summary Profiles	101
Introduction	101
Subjective Profiling	101

The “Hotspot” Model	102
Method.....	104
Participants	104
Materials.....	106
Procedure.....	107
The Method of Successive Sorts (MoSS).....	107
Data Collection and Analysis	108
Subjective Profiling.....	108
Demographics Data.....	112
Results	112
Hotspots and Interpretation	112
Hotspot Descriptions.....	114
Emotion Regulation Profiles and Interpretation	114
Discussion	121
Hotspots.....	121
Profiles.....	127
CHAPTER SIX.....	129
Implications and Conclusions	129
Research Summary.....	129
Implications, Limitations and Opportunities for Future Research.....	130
Bicultural Considerations.....	131
Implications for Future Research and Clinical Practice.....	133
Conclusions.....	134
REFERENCES.....	137
APPENDICES.....	159

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	– Anterior Cingulate Cortex
ANCOVA	– Analysis of Covariance
ANOVA	– Analysis of Variance
BERS	– Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale
CBCL	– Child Behavior Checklist
CCQ	– California Child Q-Set
ChERI	– Children’s Emotion Regulation Inventory
EEG	– Electroencephalograph
ERC	– Emotion Regulation Checklist
ERICA	– Emotion Regulation Index for Children and Adolescents
ERP	– Event-Related Potentials
ERQ-CA	– Emotion Regulation Questionnaire for Children and Adolescents
fMRI	– Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging
GOPA	– Grouping, Opposites, Partitioning and Addition (Sorting Method)
GPA	– Generalised Procrustes Analysis
Hotspot Labels	ENG – Outward Engagement
	SOM – Inward or Somatic Focus
	DNG – Disengagement
	DRT – Disruptive
	IMP – Impulsive/Labile
	SOC – Social Connectedness/Compliance
	INT – Generating Closeness/Intimacy
	ORD – Establishing Order/Control
	DRD – Generating Disorder
MDS	– Multidimensional Scaling
MoSS	– Method of Successive Sorts
PCA	– Principal Component Analysis
PFC	– Prefrontal Cortex
PSDQ	– Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire – Short Version (adapted)

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1:	Goal-directed model of emotion regulation.....	36
Figure 2:	Multidimensional map of dimensions and clusters observed in the final culled ChERI map	92
Figure 3:	Mean hotspot scores of all cases clustered into Profiles One and Two	117
Figure 4:	Mean hotspot scores of all cases clustered into Profile Three	117
Figure 5:	Mean hotspot scores of all cases clustered into Profiles Four and Five.....	118

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1:	103 Item Inventory of Children’s Emotion Regulation Strategies Organised by Domain Themes	62
Table 2:	Final 85-Item Children’s Emotion Inventory (ChERI)	90
Table 3:	Hotspot Labels and Their Highest Loading ChERI Items.....	113
Table 4:	Summary Characteristics and Description of Five Clusters of Profiles	116
Table 5:	Summary of Analyses of Variance Results Comparing Mean Children’s Emotion Regulation Inventory (ChERI) Hotspot Scores by Five Emotion Regulation Profiles	119
Table 6:	Mean, (Standard Deviation) and Significant Profile Differences of Each Emotion Regulation Profile’s Hotspot Scores	120
Table 7:	Comparison of Parkinson and Totterdell’s Adult Classification of Affect Regulation with ChERI Hotspot with Key Items	125

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:	Letter of Invitation: Study One	160
APPENDIX B:	Information Sheet: Study One.....	161
APPENDIX C:	Consent Form: Study One.....	164
APPENDIX D:	Recording Sheet: Study Two	165
APPENDIX E:	Information Sheet: Study Two – Lay People	166
APPENDIX F:	Information Sheet: Study Two – Experts	168
APPENDIX G:	Consent Form: Study Two	170
APPENDIX H:	Participant Instructions: Study Two	171
APPENDIX I:	Nine Items Added for Auxiliary Study	172
	Thirty-Five Item Set for Auxiliary Study	172
APPENDIX J:	Recording Sheet: Auxiliary Study	173
APPENDIX K:	Information Sheet: Auxiliary Study	174
APPENDIX L:	Consent Form: Auxiliary Study	176
APPENDIX M:	Multidimensional Scaling Poles and Key Items	177
APPENDIX N:	Mean Linkage Dendrogram from 112-Item GOPA.....	178
APPENDIX O:	Multidimensional Map Cluster Headings and Items	180
APPENDIX P:	Information Sheet: Study Three – Parent Version.....	182
APPENDIX Q:	Information Sheet: Study Three – Child Version.....	184
APPENDIX R:	Consent Form: Study Three.....	185
APPENDIX S:	Instructions for the Card Sorting Task and the Parenting Questionnaire.....	186
APPENDIX T:	Hand Sort Task Instructions Layout Page for MoSS.....	187
APPENDIX U:	Screen Shots of Online MoSS Card Sort.....	188
	First Sort.....	188
	Second Sort.....	188

	Third Sort.....	189
	Not Sure Pile Review	189
	Review Pop-Up	190
APPENDIX V:	Dendrogram from 151-Case MoSS Sort.....	191
	Ward’s Agglomeration Schedule	192
APPENDIX W:	Supplementary Research Chapter	196
APPENDIX X:	Instructions and Items for the Parenting Styles and Dimensions Questionnaire: Short Version (PSDQ – Adapted).....	253
APPENDIX Y:	Results Tables for Supplementary Research Chapter.....	255
	Demographics by Parenting	255
	Demographics by Hotspots.....	260
	Demographics by Profiles	264
	Profiles by Parenting.....	266