

Psychoeducational Assessment While there are many moving parts to the assessment of a child's



learning profile, the resulting information allows for highly directed and structured support that can provide accelerated improvements over no intervention at all and in some cases, even prevent further social-emotional decline in some students. Recommendations and accommodations that stem from the interpretation of the results help teachers, therapists and families ensure the child can live up to their full potential. Helping a child to understand their own strengths places them in a position of power and more capable to take care of their own solutions instead of always waiting and being told, which often undoes much good support and remediation, making the child reliant instead of self-sufficient. Each individual should be empowered and able to create and live up to their own success

What is Psychoeducational Assessment? Psychoeducational assessment is a process of using tests, interviews, observations and analysis of background information and reports to determine an individual's learning strengths and areas in need of support. Each evaluation is tailored to each individual in order to answer questions about the person's learning profile. This process is typically carried out by a Clinical Psychologist or Educational Psychologist and can include assistance from Psychometrists in the administration of some assessment procedures. Interviews can be carried out in school, in the clinic and in some cases at the home or other special location. Direct assessments are usually carried out in our clinic but can be carried out at other locations on a case-by-case basis.

Assessments are appropriate when a student struggles to work up to their full potential in some aspect of learning such as reading, writing, arithmetic, memory, attention, organisational skills, time management issues and processing speed. Learning has many components and can be affected by a range of learning, behavioural and emotional issues.

Comprehensive evaluations can ensure that any learning issues are not misdiagnosed and the complex cause and effect relationships can be better understood for remedial purposes. It is important to know strengths and understand how each individual learns in order to best design strategies to support areas in need of further development and specialist skillset training. The correct choice for any intervention and therapy relies on this. This can direct strategies for intervention for more effective and directed intervention and less time wasting. These evaluations are necessary to enjoy special benefits and supports at all levels of education and can assist psychiatrists for the dispensing of any medications that could support a child's functioning and enable them to better access educational experiences and capitalise on those opportunities. Results supporting a diagnosis would be necessary to justify accommodations such as extended time, coloured paper, text reader, and so on, to be made available during examinations and during standardised testing situations such as with the SAT, ACT, GCSE's, and similar.



Main Components...

1. Cognitive Ability & Intellectual: Intelligence and ability testing provides a measure of a student's overall abilities in order to support realistic and effective expectations. This helps to identify learning potential with scores split between verbal and non-verbal intellectual functioning.

2. Academic Achievement: Academic knowledge and functioning in Reading, Writing and Maths, including their subcomponents are assessed by academic achievement tests specially designed to measure each component and avoid biases, focusing more on the skills that lead to effective learning in these subjects.

3. Information Processing: Potentially the most useful and informative part of the assessment, this looks for why a student may be having difficulties and what areas could be supported more effectively to improve it. Areas assessed include; Visual, Auditory Processing, Tactile Processing, Memory, Attention Span and Executive Functioning.

4. Social-Emotional: Coexisting with academic issues, social-emotional issues can include the existence of any clinical issues such as depression, anxiety and behavioural concerns by inspecting the existence and level of social functioning including awareness, information processing, reciprocal social communication, anxiety and any avoidances or presence of any autistic spectrum issues.



5. Adaptive functioning: Inspected here are abilities and daily living skills, socialisation motor skills.

Five Step Assessment Process:

1. Initial Consultation: The background and history is taken with current queries highlighted in order to select the most relevant tests with regards to age, language, existing needs, etc and assessments are also completed by parents and teachers in order to provide the most complete picture.

2. Testing Sessions: Direct individual testing of the child's abilities are carried out over two to three sessions depending on the number of and types of assessments required and any existing issues. Additional steps can include observations in the school environment and interviews with teachers in some instances where specific behavioural concerns merit the additional input prior to making interpretations.



3. Test Scoring and Interpretation: Results of the scores obtained in testing, including patterns and consistencies, the questionnaires from parents and teachers and any observations are integrated in order to develop a learning profile for that individual child.

4. Feedback Session: The information, results, strengths and areas in need of support will be discussed with parents including strategies for improvement and support and a written report is usually provided 4-6 weeks later.

5. Follow-up consultation: Often a secondary meeting at a later date can be a helpful way to review results with teachers, to monitor progress and meeting up with older children and teens can help them feel more involved in and included in the process and solution.

Recommendations Each student's unique pattern of strengths and needs will guide any recommendations made for home and school settings and can include regular school work accommodations, assessment accommodations, examination alterations to best allow the student to both access information and fairly demonstrate any learning achieved. Medication and any assistive technology would also be made as a part of this area of reporting.

If a diagnosis of learning issues has been given then a complete re-evaluation is often recommended within three to five years depending on the age of the child and issues concerned. It is important to monitor and document areas of improvement and identify any areas in further need of support in order to effectively provide for these on a continuing basis where necessary. More advanced standardised tests require updated evaluations to justify continuing accommodations.