

Why should I have my child evaluated?

You should consider an evaluation if your child:

- Is struggling academically
- Has difficulty focusing in the classroom or on homework
- Has poor time management or organizational skills
- Does not complete standardized tests within the allotted time frame
- Has difficulty learning to read
- Has difficulty mastering math facts and concepts
- Is at risk for grade retention
- Seems anxious, sad or is constantly in trouble
- Recently went off to college and is having difficulty keeping pace with the academic demands

Other reasons you may consider an evaluation include:

- You are unsure if your child is ready for kindergarten
- You wonder if your child is gifted
- There is a family history of learning problems
- You wonder if your child is achieving up to his/her full potential
- An assessment is required for admission into private school
- Your child has been diagnosed with ADHD and continues to struggle academically, behaviorally, or socially
- You want to better understand your child's learning profile, including his/her academic and cognitive strengths and weaknesses

What does the evaluation process involve?

Step 1: The Initial Meeting

Evaluations begin with a comprehensive intake interview with the child's parents. During this face-to-face meeting, Dr. Walinsky gathers relevant information regarding the current concerns, the history of the presenting problems, relevant medical information, a thorough developmental history, and details about the child's academic strengths and weaknesses.

As a part of this meeting, Dr. Walinsky will discuss with parents how they can best prepare the child for the evaluation.

Step 2: The Assessment

Dr. Walinsky meets with your child for a minimum of 2 testing sessions. The length of the session is determined by the child's age and attention span. Dr. Walinsky believes it is important to break an evaluation into at least 2 testing sessions so she can tailor the assessment to most accurately address the underlying concerns.

Typically, a comprehensive evaluation includes assessments of mental status, memory and learning, cognitive abilities, language development, academic achievement (including all areas of reading and math), social-emotional development and attention/focus.

Behavioral observations and analyses of a child's response styles (i.e., types of errors) are carefully considered when interpreting results.

Evaluations are conducted in a quiet, child-friendly office with minimal environmental distractions. Breaks are encouraged to help optimize a child's performance. Developmentally appropriate games and activities can be incorporated into the evaluation.

Standardized rating scales and questionnaires are used as part of the evaluation. Input from parents, teachers, and the child's own self-report help conceptualize current concerns. Telephone conversations with teachers and other professionals are a critical component of the assessment process.

Step 3: The Results

After the assessment is completed, written and verbal feedback is provided to parents. Dr. Walinsky personally sits down with parents to review the results of the evaluation. Behavioral observations, test scores, and clinical impressions are shared. The child's strengths and weaknesses are outlined. If a diagnosis is warranted, it is explained during this feedback session.

Dr. Walinsky may also meet with the child (if appropriate) to discuss the results. Alternatively, she will help parents understand how they can best explain the results to the child in a developmentally appropriate way.

A comprehensive personalized report is generated that reviews and conceptualizes all of the results, diagnoses (if applicable), clinical impressions and recommendations.

Post-Evaluation Services

After the completion of an evaluation, Dr. Walinsky can remain available to help with the next steps.

Additional services may include:

- Working with parents and/or child to help ensure they fully understand the test results, the child's areas of strengths and weaknesses, and recommended treatment options
- Educating parents and/or the child on the diagnoses
- Educating parents about IEPs and Section 504 Plans
- Developing or clarifying treatment goals
- Making referrals to medical specialists, tutors, psychologists, or other professionals
- Accompanying parents to school meetings to help ensure appropriate accommodations and supports are put in place
- Working with the child to help him/her understand his/her strengths and weaknesses
- Follow-up evaluations

www.clevelandpsychologicalassessments.com

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