

### PARENT'S GUIDE TO THE PEDIATRIC NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

#### What Is A Neuropsychological Assessment?

Neuropsychological assessment is a series of tests that evaluate how a child learns and behaves in comparison to what is expected for the child's age level. These tests are non-invasive, meaning they do not involve needles, X-rays/scans, or being attached to machines. Through these tests, we can better understand your child's:

- Intellectual functioning
- Achievement skills
- Executive skills
- Attention
- Learning and memory
- Language
- Visual-spatial skills
- Auditory-processing
- Motor speed
- Behavior
- Emotion
- Social skills

#### Why Does My Child Need This Assessment?

Children are referred for neuropsychological assessment when they have cognitive, emotional, behavioral, adjustment, or learning problems after having a traumatic brain injury, sickle cell, stroke, epilepsy or other diagnoses related to a medical or developmental condition.

#### What is Different from the School or Clinical Psychologist Assessment?

The purpose of school-based assessments is to qualify children for special education programs and/or therapies to enhance school performance, whether or not a medical condition is present. Neuropsychologists may use some of the same tests a clinical or school psychologist uses, but neuropsychologists interpret the results using their special expertise in brain-behavior relationships. The clinical/school psychologist is primarily interested in the score the child obtains but the neuropsychologist is interested in how the child obtained a score as well as the pattern of scores across different tests. The neuropsychologist may also look at a broader range of skills that are not usually included in the clinical or school psychologist's assessment.

## Information Needed / What to Prepare for the Appointment

1. Please have your ***medical insurance information*** available when you call to schedule the appointment.
2. Please bring ***copies of previous psychological or neuropsychological assessments*** your child has completed.
3. Please bring copies of your child's current ***Individual Educational Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan***.
4. You may want to bring anything that will help you answer questions about your child's medical history, early childhood development, social history, and school/learning history.
5. Bring glasses, hearing aids, or other adaptive equipment your child uses on a daily basis.
6. Children ages 3-6 years may want to bring their favorite toy with them like a security blanket or small stuffed animal – please don't bring toys with small parts or toys that will be distracting.
7. Medication should be taken as directed the day of the evaluation.
8. ***Make sure your child gets a good night's sleep and has eaten before the assessment.***

## How to Prepare Your Child for the Neuropsychological Assessment

You can share the following explanation with your child: *The biggest reason you are going to see a neuropsychologist is so that you can start feeling better and doing things better. A pediatric neuropsychologist is a doctor who will help you and your parents find out what you are good at and what may be causing problems at home or at school. You will not have any shots or painful procedures during the assessment. You will do a bunch of different things including listening and talking, playing with blocks or puzzles, building things, and drawing. Some things will be like school where you do reading and math. You will be able to take breaks to go to the bathroom when needed.*

## What Happens Next?

After the assessment, the pediatric neuropsychologist interprets the results and writes a report about your child's brain organization, medical history, and developmental stage. You will be invited back for another appointment, usually within two (2) weeks, to sit down and go over the results and recommended intervention plan. You may be referred to a clinical psychologist, other behavioral health provider, or community agency for ongoing help to meet your child's needs. With your permission, current teachers/in-home tutors and therapists will be provided with information about how your child is learning so they can use the results in their teaching or therapeutic approach.

## TGH Pediatric Neuropsychology Staff

Pediatric Neuropsychologist: Sakina Butt, Psy.D.

Scheduling/Referrals: Christiane Keys, Patient Access Specialist

When you have a prescription from your doctor or ARNP provides a prescription, call our office at (813) 844-7719, ext. 1. Our staff will verify your insurance benefits and schedule the assessment.

**TGH Psychology/Neuropsychology Services • phone (813) 844-3541 • fax (813) 844-4283**

01/2013