

# THERAPEUTIC COLLABORATIVE ASSESSMENT

## Information Sheet for Caregivers & Guardians

Why is my child struggling to get along with others?

Why is school so hard for my child?

How can I best support my child?



### How can an Assessment help?

An assessment is a process where we work together to answer specific questions you have by using data we obtain from interviews, questionnaires, and tests, along with your understanding of your child. We will review the assessment findings together to explore how they are relevant to your questions. You are the expert on your child, so collaboration is key to the process.

### What happens during an assessment?

#### Phase 1

#### Developing Assessment Questions and Gathering Information

- We start by thinking together about questions that would be helpful to answer in the assessment process. These questions will be the focus of the entire assessment.
- We will meet to gather information about your child's history, your family's background, and to review previous testing and other documents. We can think together about how to introduce the assessment process to your child.

## Phase 2

### Psychological Testing

- We will complete a series of measures that will help us understand how your child thinks and feels. Sessions take place at least once a week for 2-3 hours at a time. We aim to have at least one session take place in the clinic.
- Throughout the process, we review the findings and our observations with you in to have a collaborative conversation about what we are learning about your child. Your personal and cultural context is essential to understanding the findings.
- When the testing is done, we will take a pause to review the data and write up the results.

## Phase 3

### Written and Verbal Feedback

- Feedback session(s): The assessor meets with you and your child to review the findings and recommendations. The number of feedback sessions will depend on your needs and questions - we want to ensure that you have a clear understanding of the findings. You decide if there is anyone else in your child's life that would benefit from participating in the feedback session(s).
- Written feedback: You will receive written feedback that uses the assessment findings to answer your questions. This can be adapted for schools or other providers.
  - Your child may receive feedback in the form of a story or letter aimed to answer their specific questions.
  - The results offer concrete recommendations tailored to your needs to support your child at home, school, social situations, etc..

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What will you do with my child?

- We use standardized tests to answer your assessment questions. This means the tests were provided to a large group of individuals to identify how most people respond to the task. This allows us to compare how your child performs compared to others their same age or grade.
- The tests include a variety of activities depending on what we are trying to evaluate. For example, if there is concern about memory, then the assessor may use verbal, visual, short-term, and long-term memory tests to more thoroughly understand your child's memory skills.



## How do you decide what to do with my child?



We work together to identify assessment questions. Caregivers and children ask their own questions. Some children prefer to keep their questions confidential. We believe it is important to respect their decision as long as there are no safety concerns.

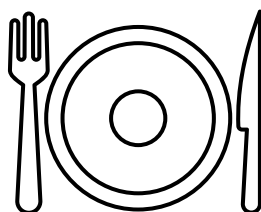
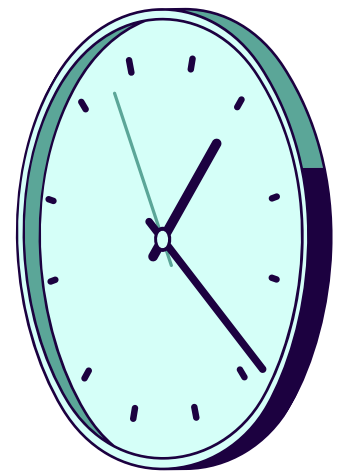
Examples of questions that caregivers may ask include the following:

- Why doesn't my child follow directions?
- Why is school so hard for them? How can we help them?
- Why is my child misbehaving at home but not at school?
- Why does my teen seem so angry/sad/lonely/etc.?
- I'm having a hard time understanding what might be going on with my kid.

## How long will the process take?

The process varies depending on your assessment questions. This is what we ask from children and their families in order to complete an assessment.

- Children must participate in weekly 2-3 hour long sessions.
- At least three testing sessions are scheduled at the start of the assessment, but more sessions may be needed.
- Ideally, at least one testing session would be in the clinic in Fruitvale, Oakland. The assessor may determine that more in-clinic sessions would be beneficial.
- A child might need to miss school a couple of times for the testing appointments. We are happy to provide a doctor's note to share with the school's attendance office.



## How do I prepare for the assessment?

- As much as possible, support your child in getting a good night's sleep and eating beforehand so that they are well-rested and prepared for the session.
- Gather any previous assessments (including from school), current or previous IEP's, report cards, court reports, and bring them to the first meeting with the assessor.

## What will be my commitment as a caregiver?

- Caregivers are critical in the assessment process. Assessors typically meet with caregivers at the start of the assessment for 1-2 hours. What you share with us informs assessment goals and helps us understand your child's history and context.
- We will need copies of previous assessments, current IEPs, court reports, etc.
- We might need your help to connect with other service providers such as the school.
- Caregivers are typically asked to complete questionnaires about their child - you can complete them independently if you wish or the assessor can complete it with you.
- Caregivers are contacted throughout the process to share progress and to ask for their perspective on how results compare to their observations.
- Caregivers meet with the assessor for the feedback session(s) when the assessment is completed.



## What should I expect in the first meeting and throughout the assessment process?

- To help us better understand your child, it is important for us to ask questions about your child's history, current functioning, and your family's context. While we understand that this may feel overwhelming, this information - in combination with assessment data - helps us better answer your assessment questions.
- When people engage this fully in the assessment process, sometimes seeing or hearing what lies behind behaviors can feel intense. Participating in an assessment may feel immediately helpful, but it can also raise issues that cause distress. If you notice changes in your child's behavior after an assessment session, please let us know. We work hard to support children and families as they go through the assessment.
- We want to explain results in understandable language. If you are unclear about anything during the assessment process, please tell your assessor.

### Who we are

We are a staff of psychologists who are all fully licensed or license eligible. The clinicians have been trained extensively in assessment practice and have received specialized training in the collaborative assessment technique. We have a team of predoctoral interns who are also skilled and well-supervised in their work.

### For more information, please contact:

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