



# true balance

## COUNSELLING

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### Understanding Psychoeducational Assessments

#### What is a psychoeducational assessment?

Psychoeducational assessments are specialized assessments that are aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of an individual's capabilities in a variety of different ways including cognitive, academic/achievement, functional living skills, emotional, psychological and behavioral. Psychoeducational assessments are used to inform appropriate individualized accommodations and adaptations to support student's success.

#### Who does the psychoeducational assessment?

Psychoeducational assessments are completed by a Registered Psychologist with specialized training and experience providing assessments and supports for individuals and students in schools.

#### What does it involve?

A typical psychoeducational assessment includes:

- **Consent:** As a parent/guardian you will be asked to provide consent to have this assessment completed.
- **School visit(s):** Depending on the age of your child, an observation of them in their classroom environment may be done. A review of their cumulative school record as well as speaking with teachers and other professionals may also be part of the assessment.
- **Individualized assessment:** The next step is a one-to-one meeting with your child to complete standardized assessments in order to gain information about their cognitive, academic and behavioral capabilities.
- **Questionnaires:** Since a small amount of time is spent one-to-one with your child, parents/guardians, school staff, and sometimes the student themselves will be asked to complete questionnaires. This helps give a bigger picture and to better understand your child's strengths and struggles.
- **Write up and follow-up meeting:** After meeting with your child and receiving all of the forms back, a report of the observations and findings will be completed. This report will be shared with you and the school (if the assessment was requested by the school) with a follow-up meeting where the results, recommendations, and the best supports for your child's learning and well-being will be discussed.

### **Are there any risks to having my child assessed?**

Some individuals may experience test-related anxiety or performance anxiety before or during an assessment. To ease this anxiety, ample time, as well as a comfortable space will be provided for students who may experience discomfort or distress. Assessment results may be surprising and reveal unanticipated areas of difficulty or concern. All assessment reports will be reviewed in detail with the school if they are the ones who requested the assessment. Parents/guardians will also be invited to the school meeting. If the Psychologist was hired privately by parents/guardians, the review meeting will only be offered to parents/guardians and the document will belong to them. They can then choose to share the document with whom they feel necessary. The document will review recommendations and there will be an opportunity to ask questions or discuss any concerns you may have during this review meeting.

### **What are the benefits of having my child assessed?**

If your child has been referred for an assessment it means you and/or the school have noticed your child is struggling academically, behaviorally and/or emotionally. The primary purpose and benefit of a psychoeducational assessment is to obtain a more in depth and detailed understanding of your child's relative strengths and difficulties. This understanding will better inform individualized recommendations for supporting your child's success. The information obtained from assessment reports can also be used to support school accommodations, access programs and services, guide medical and mental health professionals in their provision of services, and aid in personal understanding

### **Who may be involved in the assessment process?**

- Parents or Caregivers
- The Student
- Teachers
- Psychologists
- School support staff
- Principal
- Learning Support Teacher
- Director of Learning

### **What comes after the report is complete?**

During the follow-up meeting, there will be an opportunity to brainstorm and strategize what types of supports may be useful in setting your child up for success. If the school has hired the Psychologist to complete the assessment, your child's school will keep a copy of the assessment in your child's cumulative record so future teachers and support staff will also know how to best support your child. The parent/guardian will also be provided a copy of the assessment. All assessment materials at True Balance Counselling will be kept for 10 years after the assessment is complete.