Understanding Your Child’s Psychoeducational Assessment Report

With Orit Goldhamer, PsyD

April 9, 2013
Our Guest:

Orit Goldhamer, Psy.D., a child, adolescent, and young adult NYS Licensed Psychologist in NYC, provides psychotherapy and psychoeducational testing as a private practitioner. She also is the Middle School Psychologist at The Churchill School and Center, is an adjunct Professor at Manhattanville College and adjunct Supervisor at Ferkauf Graduate School of Psychology at Yeshiva University. Dr. Goldhamer consults with other special education schools in Manhattan, providing workshops for students and parents. She received her doctorate degree at Ferkauf in School and Clinical Psychology. She also worked in the Speech, Language, Learning and Hearing Department of the NYC International Center for the Disabled and as the Crisis Residence and Residential Treatment Facility psychologist at the Children’s Village in Dobbs Ferry, NY.
Overview of the Session

- Reasons for assessment
- Components of a Psychoeducational Evaluation
- Understanding test scores
- Following up on recommendations
- Questions
Session Goals:

You’ve had a comprehensive evaluation of your child’s functioning….now what?! In this webinar, we will review the different areas of a typical psychoeducational assessment report.

The goal is to help parents understand the different areas assessed, including cognitive, academic, language, executive processes, and social-emotional functioning.

Additionally, we will discuss how to digest and use the information that is provided to help your child.
Reasons for assessment

• Do you have a “feeling” that something is not right?
• Has a teacher pointed out a concern in one or more area?
• Has your child demonstrated difficulties with: learning, language, attention, memory or behavior?
• Does your child have a history of developmental delays or neurological difficulties?
Reasons for assessment

- Has your child been exposed to toxins (e.g. lead poisoning) or had a traumatic brain injury?
- Is there a large discrepancy between your child’s potential/effort and how they are performing in school?
- Do you suspect that your child is gifted?
- Have you ruled out environmental causes for concerns?
What will an assessment report tell me about my child?
What are some benefits and drawbacks?
Understanding the process

- Initial contact - typically by phone
- Intake session(s)
- Testing sessions
- Data retrieval from multiple sources
- Data scoring and analysis
- Feedback session(s)
- Report
Components of a Psychoeducational report

- Reason for the referral
- Historical information
- Behavior observations
- Measures utilized
- Previous testing (if applicable and available)
- Cognitive abilities ("intelligence")
- Academic functioning
- Social-emotional functioning
- Other domains generally included: language, memory, attention, executive functioning, visual-motor, adaptive behavior.
Understanding the components

- Reason for the referral
  - Describes the presenting concerns

- Historical information-Background information
  - Pregnancy and birth information, if available
  - Infant development and milestone timeline
  - Medical and family history
  - Educational history
Understanding the components, ctd.

- Behavior observations
  - Describes what was observed during the testing process

- Previous testing (if applicable and available)
  - Summary of past assessments
## Examples of common measures

### Cognitive Measures
- **Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence-Fourth Edition (WPPSI-IV)**
- **Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, Fourth Edition (WISC-IV)**
- **Wechsler Individual Achievement Test-Third Edition (WIAT-III)**
- **Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, Fourth Edition (WAIS-IV)**
- **Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale-V**
- **Differential Ability Scales, Second Edition (DAS-II)**
- **Cognitive Assessment System (CAS)**
- **Academic Batteries and Specific Tests**
  - Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, Third Edition (WIAT-III)
  - Nelson-Denny Reading Test
  - Woodcock-Johnson, Tests of Achievement, Third Edition (WJ-III)
  - Test of Written Language, Fourth Edition (TOWL-4)
  - California Verbal Learning Test, Second Edition (CVLT-II)
  - Woodcock Reading Mastery Test
  - Gray Oral Reading Test, Fifth Edition (GORT-V)
  - Gray Silent Reading Test (GSRT)
  - Peabody Individual Achievement Test-Revised-Normative Update (PIAT-R/NU)
  - Wide Range Achievement Test, Fourth Edition (WRAT-4)
  - Key Math Diagnostic Assessment, Third Edition

### Neuropsychological tests (Executive Functioning, Attention, etc)
- **Continuous Performance Test-II (CPT-II)**
- **Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning, Second Edition (WRAML2)**
- **NEPSY-II**
- **Delis-Kaplan Executive Function System (DKEFS)**
- **Wisconsin Card Sorting Test**
- **Wechsler Memory Scale, Fourth Edition (WMS-IV)**
- **Children’s Memory Scale (CMS)**

### Visual Motor
- **Rey Complex Figure Test**
- **The Beery-Buktenica Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration, 6th Edition (Beery VMI)**
- **Bender Visual-Motor Gestalt Test, Second Edition (Bender-Gestalt II)**

### Language
- **Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals, Fourth Edition (CELF-4)**
- **Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP)**
- **Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language**
- **Test of Pragmatic Language, Second Edition**
- **California Verbal Learning Test, Second Edition**

### Social-Emotional
- **Sentence Completion Test**
- **Projective Drawings**
- **Thematic Apperception Test**
- **Roberts Apperception Test**
- **Rorschach**

### Parent, Teacher and Self Rating Scales- Behavioral, Emotional, Social, Adaptive Behavior, Autism Spectrum
- **Behavior Assessment System for Children-Second Edition (BASC-2)**
- **Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function (BRIEF)**
- **Conners’ 3**
- **Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales-II**
- **Adaptive Behavior Assessment System-II**
- **Children’s Depression Inventory-II**
- **Revised Children’s Manifest Anxiety Scale**
- **Gilliam Autism Rating Scale, Second Edition**
- **Childhood Autism Rating Scale, Second Edition**
Understanding the components, ctd.

• **Cognitive abilities**
  - **What is this construct we call intelligence?**
    - Insight into a child’s strengths and weaknesses with problem-solving, acquisition of verbal knowledge, ability to reason verbally and visually, ability to process information quickly, ability to hold and manipulate auditory information, etc.

• **What other types of intelligence does your child have strengths in?**
Academic functioning

Describes what academic skills and content your child has mastered and what areas they are behind

- Core content areas:
  - Reading
  - Writing/Spelling
  - Math
Understanding the components, ctd.

• Social-emotional functioning
  • Describes your child’s:
    • Relationships with peers and adults
    • Typical mood and underlying emotions that are impacting behavior
    • Positive and negative coping skills

• Adaptive behavior
  • Conceptual skills
  • Social skills
  • Practical skills
Understanding the components, ctd.

- **Language**
  - Expressive language skills-output
  - Receptive language skills-input
  - Phonological processing
  - Pragmatic language skills
Understanding the components, ctd.

- **Memory**
  - Long-term
  - Short-term
  - Working
  - Visual
  - Verbal
    - Narrative vs short language
    - Complex vs simple
    - Multistep vs one step
Understanding the components, ctd.

Attention and Executive Functioning

- Sustained attention
- Distractibility
- Impulsivity
- Inhibition
- Hyperactivity
- Initiation
- Problem solving
- Setting and managing goals
- Metacognition

- Planning
- Cognitive flexibility
- Organization
- Material management
- Critical thinking
- Self-monitoring and reflection
- Time management

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Academic Problems Linked to Executive Functions

**Activation**
- Organizing, prioritizing, and activating to work

**Focus**
- Focusing, sustaining focus and shifting focus to tasks

**Effort**
- Regulating alertness, sustaining effort and processing speed

**Emotion**
- Managing frustration and modulating emotion

**Memory**
- Utilizing working memory and accessing recall

**Action**
- Monitoring and self-regulating action

Understanding the components, ctd.

- **Visual and Motor Skills**
  - Visual-motor integration
  - Fine motor
  - Gross motor
  - Visual perceptual skills
    - Visual discrimination
    - Visual memory/sequential memory
    - Visual-spatial
    - Visual form constancy
    - Visual figure ground
    - Visual closure
### Understanding test scores

#### Percentage of Scores within Each Standard Deviation

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#### Sample Standard Score (Mean = 100, SD = 15)

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#### Percentile Rank

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#### Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE)

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Understanding test scores

- Percentiles
  - The percentile scores refer to the percentage of children the same age that your child performs equal to or better than on each particular task.
  - For example, the 50\(^{th}\) percentile would indicate that your child scored better than 50\% of his/her peers, thus falling in the Average range.

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• **Grade Equivalents**
  
  • Means that a student’s raw score on a test corresponds to the Average performance for a child at a particular grade level
  
  • For example: a 4\textsuperscript{th} grader obtains a G.E. of 6.7. How do you interpret this? Has the child mastered 6\textsuperscript{th} grade material?
Wrapping it all up

• Summary

• Diagnosis

• Recommendations
Resources

National Center for Learning Disabilities
www.nclld.org

Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
http://www.chadd.org/

Child Mind Institute
http://www.childmind.org/

American Psychological Association
www.apa.org

NYU Child Study Center
www.aboutourkids.org

Autism Speaks
www.autismspeaks.org

NYC Department of Education
http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/SEP/evaluation/default.htm

Autism Society of America
http://www.autism-society.org/

National Institute of Mental Health
http://www.nimh.nih.gov/

Developmental Disabilities

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
http://www.nichd.nih.gov/
Questions?
Upcoming Hidden Sparks Without Walls Sessions

| Tuesday 5/21/13 8:30-9:30pm | Memory  
With Karen Kruger |

For more information visit: www.hiddensparks.org
Contacting Hidden Sparks

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