



PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Building Confidence. Identifying Strengths.

I was motivated to schedule an evaluation because my son, who appears to be pretty bright, was falling further behind in school each year. He was having a crisis of confidence, so he thought he couldn't do anything right and didn't want to try.

MICHELLE

Finance Professional, Child tested in 5th grade

WHAT IS PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT EXACTLY?

Jordan is in the 3rd grade. He is struggling academically. He appears to be bright, but clearly isn't reaching his potential. On the surface the symptoms include a lack of focus and understanding, and a general lack of interest, but his mom is unsure why. While the problem goes unidentified, Jordan is losing confidence. He's feeling inferior, so why try?

Psychological assessment provides a comprehensive picture of how a person thinks and feels. Understanding how a child learns best entails understanding the child.

- Is Jordan following the main idea of the lesson or getting caught up in details?
- Is Jordan using study strategies that work best for him?
- Are social or emotional factors distracting him?

Educational assessment provides detailed information regarding how a person performs on academic tasks. Understanding academic strengths and weaknesses is the key to providing personalized instruction.

- Is Jordan reading material but not really comprehending it?
- Does Jordan seem to know his math facts but doesn't do well when there is a time constraint?
- Is Jordan only writing a minimal amount instead of elaborating on his ideas?

Psycho-educational assessment provides a complete picture and helps drive the most appropriate interventions. Jordan may just need some helpful organizational tools, or he may need to learn some stress-reduction strategies, or he may require academic accommodations. Don't guess. Psycho-educational assessment provides answers and direction.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT + EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT = PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT



THE JOURNEY

Finding the guidance and ideas to address your child's individual needs can be complicated. Understanding the role of schools, understanding when and where you need to step in, and understanding which resources and interventions would be best can be confusing. As parents, all of us want the best for our children. We want them to reach their full potential and want them to feel confident, capable, and proud of themselves.

As the parent of a child with Autism and Apraxia, I have personally experienced the benefits of psycho-educational assessment. As a clinician and evaluator, I recognize the importance of identifying a child's strengths and weaknesses to identify the best learning approaches and educational tools. As a parent, I understand what it's like to have more questions than answers. Psycho-educational assessment has been highly beneficial in helping my husband and I best allocate our time and resources.

TINA M. ROEMERSMA, PH.D.

A young boy with light brown hair, wearing a bright green puffer jacket and blue jeans, stands outdoors. He is looking to his right and touching a tree trunk with his right hand. The background is a blurred natural setting with trees and ground covered in leaves and twigs. An orange semi-transparent banner is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the title text.

A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

Three Indicators of Good Assessments:

1. See The Complete Picture of Your Child:

Emotional as well as educational insights

2. Strengths Based Approach:

Develop strategies around your child's strengths

3. Tangible Application: Assessment-driven instruction and practical interventions

The primary goal of assessment is to determine areas of strengths and weaknesses. Once these areas are understood, it becomes clear which academic approaches and interventions work best to help the child be happier and more successful.



SEE THE COMPLETE PICTURE OF YOUR CHILD: EDUCATIONAL AS WELL AS EMOTIONAL INSIGHTS

**Finding Solutions Counseling Centers
are unique from most private practices
in offering the opportunity to have
a Psychologist and an Educational
Diagnostician work together with
your child.**

Having experts from two different fields provides a thorough and comprehensive picture. Dr. Roemersma's expertise in cognitive abilities, emotional factors, and behaviors are coupled with Kim Petz's expertise in academic assessment and knowledge of curriculum-based interventions.



TINA ROEMERSMA

Emotional Factors
Social Factors
Behavioral Perspective
Cognitive Abilities
Doctorate in Psychology

PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL
ASSESSMENT

KIM PETZ

Academic Assessment
Educational Diagnostics
Processing and Comprehension
Reading/Writing/Math
Masters in Curriculum

IS IT ANXIETY OR ADHD?

Anxiety and ADHD can present very similarly. Both can contribute to difficulties in concentration and learning and can cause restless behaviors.

If there is a learning disability present, what specific areas is it affecting and how does it affect a child's self-esteem?

Could there be other factors impacting learning?


Bullying, shyness, and poor sleep patterns can also lead to poor academic performance, but these factors are identified and resolved very differently than a learning disability.

If giftedness is present, does the child have the motivation and maturity for the demands of specialized programs? While doing well academically, is the child perfectionistic and putting too much pressure on him or herself?

Don't misdiagnose—Avoid false positives.

Psycho-educational evaluations can avoid trial and error medication testing. For example, don't treat the child for a learning disability when he or she is actually in the early stages of depression. Get the full picture.

Go beyond the grade—You are your child's advocate and know your child best. Grades only give partial academic insight. If you think your child could be getting better grades and working more efficiently to complete assignments, or you worry something might be hindering him or her in a specific area, learn how to bring out the best in your child.

A close-up photograph of a child's hand holding a red pencil with white polka dots. The hand is positioned over a worksheet that features a grid with numbers 1 through 12 in red. To the right of the grid is a drawing of a plant with colorful flowers. The background is a blurred wooden surface.

It's better to know where the problems are in order to address them sooner. Waiting to see 'how it plays out' can delay doing things that could help now. And, it doesn't make you a bad parent if your kid is struggling with something. It makes you a good parent for recognizing it and doing something about it.

MELISSA

Business Executive, Child tested in 4th grade



STRENGTHS BASED APPROACH: STRATEGIES TO DRAW ON YOUR CHILD'S STRENGTHS

Assessment identifies areas of strengths and weaknesses. Drawing upon someone's strengths to overcome weaker areas helps them be more successful. Identifying these strengths is the key to obtaining strategies and methods that speak to your child.

This also helps foster the one ingredient we believe is the key to improving academic progress—confidence. Regardless of the type of difficulty a child has, confidence is the crucial ingredient to turning things around; it not only provides the child with methods for learning but provides he or she with the courage and purpose to apply themselves.

Every child has strengths. They just need to be identified, communicated to parents, fostered in children, and when applicable, shared with schools.

A Strengths Based Approach Means:

- Learn how to play to their strengths
- Understand your child's learning style
(e.g. stop using flash cards if the child is not wired to learn that way)
- Create strategies to help them organize themselves well
- Develop more efficient study skills
- Improve executive functions
- Build confidence
- Support the child through changes
- Guide tutors and supporting cast on what strengths to encourage and leverage

Helping a child reach their potential means understanding what they are good at, so that each minor victory will lead to more confidence, which builds to larger victories.



TANGIBLE APPLICATION: APPLY EVALUATION INSIGHTS DIRECTLY TO CURRICULUM AND OTHER CHANNELS

Let's assume a psycho-educational evaluation has been completed with your child. Now that you have educational and emotional insight, we will collaborate with you to customize strategies to help your child build confidence and make progress. Results of the evaluation will direct what kind of interventions, services, or accommodations may be helpful. Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- Working privately with a tutor or educational specialist
- Requesting a meeting with the school to discuss concerns
- Individual or family therapy
- Computer-based home study programs
- Healthy eating and exercise regimens
- Medication management of symptoms
- Behavioral therapy

But what if you need collaboration and accommodations from the school? What do you ask for? Who is the best person to approach? How long will it take? What if your child falls further behind while you wait? How do you balance getting school support with protecting the child's self-esteem?

Tina and Kim walk you through the answers to these questions and bring it all together.



WE BRING IT ALL TOGETHER

Dr. Roemersma is a psychologist with a background in clinical psychology and education studies.

She has worked extensively with adolescents with behavioral and emotional challenges. She also worked as a research assistant at Princeton University on a project examining environmental and behavioral factors for at-risk youth. The insight and experience she brings drives a deep understanding of the whole person, and understanding that is necessary for tangible application.

Kim is a nationally certified teacher, which means she has intimate knowledge of K-12 curriculum.

After 18 years of experience in the public schools,

she has a deep understanding of special education process and procedures. Beyond this experience she is a veteran in diagnostic and prevention services who tailors assessment to better understand individual strengths and weaknesses. While this information is important in and of itself, Kim also has the expertise necessary to offer prescriptive recommendations to promote student growth and success.

Kim particularly excels in guiding students towards improvements in reading, writing, and math. Over the last nine years, Kim has successfully completed over 500 evaluations.

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