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Jewish Family Service

Psychological Testing for Children- Tips for a Positive Experience and Optimum Success

There are several things you can do to help yourself, and your child, feel more relaxed and confident as you begin the evaluation process.

What is my role, as a primary caregiver, in the testing process?

You are the expert on your child. The information you provide is important in allowing for the Psychologist to provide the best possible assessment. You can best participate by offering **insight, honesty and your best effort** throughout the evaluation process. Outlining your specific concerns to the Psychologist prior to testing will aid in the assessment and final report.

What Can I do to ensure the best possible testing?

- ✓ **Medication management**- If your child takes medication, make sure that it has been taken according to instructions on the day of testing. If your child has not taken their medication as prescribed, please tell the Psychologist.
- ✓ **Report physical/emotional state**- If your child's physical condition or emotional state is compromised or not 'normal' for your child, on the day of testing, please inform the Psychologist. For example: feeling under the weather; taking medication that would make one drowsy; a poor night's sleep prior; a death in the family, etc. This can affect your child's performance during their evaluation.
- ✓ **Be rested and alert**- Help your child to get a good night's sleep prior to testing. Being sleepy during testing can affect overall concentration on timed tasks in particular.
- ✓ **Eat well before testing**- Encourage your child to have a complete and healthy breakfast. It is suggested to bring a healthy snack as testing sessions generally run approximately four hours.
- ✓ **Monitor the pace**- Your child should take breaks when offered and ask for breaks if needed. Testing can feel tiresome. We will offer scheduled breaks during long appointments. Breaks are a good time to eat a snack, use the restroom, or for young children spend time playing with a favorite game or toy.

How can I prepare my child by explaining the testing process?

Many children may wonder why they are having so many tests and wonder if it means there is something wrong with them. Listen to your child's concerns and feelings about the evaluation and answer your child's questions as straightforwardly as possible. The goal is to help your child be as comfortable, relaxed and motivated on the day of testing. Answering any questions your child may have in advance, can assist in the smooth running of the evaluation.

In explaining to your child why he/she is being tested:

- Emphasize that the testing is not because the child has been bad or has done anything wrong.
- Offer reassurance that the information gathered from the testing will help you and other people better understand his/her experiences, what kinds of things he/she has been "having trouble with" and what types of things he or she is "really good at or not so good at doing".
- Explain that psychological testing is not unusual and other children participate in testing.

Proper preparation will help your child do his/her best and allow for a pleasant testing experience. When a child is relaxed and comfortable the Psychologist can gather the most reliable results.

Can my child go back to school that day after they have completed the testing?

The testing process can take anywhere from 4-12 hours, which will occur over several sessions. Testing may occur in the morning which would allow a child to return to school after lunch, however; children may feel tired after testing and need time to rest. For both of these reasons, your child will likely have to miss some school in order to complete testing.

For More Information:

Jewish Family Service
Psychological Testing
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