

Education Matters! A Webinar Series for Family and Youth Peer Advocates

Webinar 3: Special Education Evaluations and Assessments. What Do All Those Numbers Mean?

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June 28, 2021

Please submit any questions you have to the chat box throughout the presentation!



Education Matters Series

RTI, 504 and IEP
June 15th

IDEA: An Overview
June 25th

Special Education Evaluations and Assessments
June 28th



Bringing Together Expertise from Across the State!

The Community Technical Assistance
Center (CTAC)

Families Together in New York State (FTNYS)

Starbridge

Long Island Advocacy Center (LIAC)

Vibrant Emotional Health

Northern Regional Center for Independent Living (NRCIL)

Special Education Evaluations and Assessments:

What do All Those Numbers
Mean?

Evaluations

Students must be evaluated in ALL areas of suspected disability

physical



cognitive



social/behavioral



educational

How to Refer to CSE and Request Evaluations

1. Submit the request in writing to a Special Education administrator in your school district.
2. Include your child's name, grade and school they attend.
3. Provide a brief explanation of why you are requesting evaluations and specify which evaluations you are requesting.
4. Make a copy before sending the letter to save for your records.
5. Follow up with the school district within 5 days to ensure they received your request.
6. ***School districts are legally required to provide bilingual evaluations for students who are English Language Learners AND must provide all documentation and information to the parent in their preferred language.***

From: _____
 Your Name _____
 Street Address _____
 Town, State Zip Code _____
 Date: _____

To: _____
 Name of Special Education Administrator/Director _____
 Name of Your School District _____
 Mailing Address or Email Address of Administrator/Director _____

Dear _____
 Name of Special Education Administrator/Director _____

My child, _____ (DOB: _____) attends the _____ grade at _____
 Name of School _____

Because I am concerned about my child's educational progress, I am requesting a referral to the committee on special education. I am requesting that the district conduct a full and comprehensive psycho-educational evaluation and for a full CSE meeting to be scheduled to review the evaluations. I understand that these evaluations must be completed within 60 calendar days of receipt of this request which includes the summer months as well as during the school year. I would appreciate sufficient written notice of the CSE meeting once scheduled and a copy of all evaluations in advance of the meeting.

Your prompt attention to this matter is greatly appreciated.

Very truly yours, _____

How Do You Know Which Evaluations to Request?



If you have concerns about your child's ability to express themselves:

- their thoughts, feelings, and ideas;
- understand and process what's being said to them;
- follow and execute multi-step directions;
- speak clearly; and/or
- produce spoken words in a way that makes sense

You have the right to request a **Speech and Language Evaluation** to have your child's "receptive" and "expressive" language skills specifically assessed to determine whether or not their language skills are impacting their ability to be educated.



If you have concerns about your child's physical abilities:

- Big muscle movements like walking, running, jumping, skipping
- Small muscle movements like grasping small objects
- Balance
- Coordination
- Sensory processing

You have the right to request an **Occupational Therapy** or a **Physical Therapy** evaluation to assess your child's physical abilities and how any of those delays could be impacting their ability to access their education



What does that test assess?

Most commonly used Cognitive Testing for IQ

- Weschler's Intelligence Scale for Children-5 (WISC-5)
- Weschler's Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence-4 (WPPSI-4)
- Weschler's Adult Intelligence Scale-4 (WAIS-4)
- Kaufmann Brief Intelligence Test-2 (KBIT-2)
- Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales

Most commonly used Academic Achievement testing

- Weschler's Individual Achievement Test-3 (WIAT-III)
- Kaufmann Test of Educational Achievement-3 (KTEA-3)
- Kaufmann Test of Educational Achievement Brief-3 (KTEA-3 Brief)



BEWARE THE BRIEF!

Schools will often substitute the brief version of a test when the full version is needed in order to fully assess skills. Make sure you know which version is being used!

Neuropsychological Evaluations

When to consider a
Neuropsychological Evaluation:

- when you feel additional information is necessary to understand your child's specific learning disability, their educational needs, and the services or interventions they require in school,
- if you suspect there are multiple disabilities impacting your child and you are concerned the school isn't addressing each one appropriately, or
- if just aren't sure what is going on with your child and the existing evaluations and data doesn't explain or show why your child is having so much difficulty with academic learning



Neuropsychological evaluations help you understand the extent of your child's disability, to confirm or exclude the presence of another disability, and to have a specialist tease out the impact each separate disability is having on your child and the impact the combined disabilities are having on your child.

Behaviors in School? We've got you covered.

Behavior Assessment System for
Children
(BASC)

Connors Rating Scale-Revised
(CRS-R)

Functional Behavior
Assessments
(FBA)



Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC)

A comprehensive set of rating scales and forms, BASC-3 helps you understand the behaviors and emotions of children and adolescents.

- rating scales are completed by teachers, parents, and the student (age-appropriate)
- helps to provide clinical insight as to what could be "behind" the behaviors
- allows the team to compare information about the child from different perspectives and find areas of concern which overlap

The BASC asks questions to find out information about different symptoms. When the responses are analyzed, a report is generated to show how much each symptom is impacting, or not impacting, the student.

Clinically Significant
the symptom is impacting the student at a level which is much higher and atypical compared to other students.

At-Risk
the student experiences these symptoms slightly more than other students.

Average
the symptom is not seen in this student any more or less than other students of the same age.

Clinically Significant or At-Risk Symptoms Endorsed by Parent or Guardian

Inattention
Low Self Esteem
Impulsivity
Depression
Anxiety
Learning Problems
Hyperactivity

Clinically Significant or At-Risk Symptoms Endorsed by Student

Attitude to School
Attitude to Teachers
Inattention
Learning Problems
Hyperactivity
Impulsivity
Low Self Esteem

Clinically Significant or At-Risk Symptoms Endorsed by Teachers

Attitude to School
Attitude to Teachers
Learning Problems
Aggression
Hyperactivity
Impulsivity
Low Self Esteem

Clinically Significant or At-Risk Symptoms Endorsed by ALL

Inattention
Low Self Esteem
Learning Problems
Impulsivity
Hyperactivity

Connors Rating Scale-Revised (CRS-R)

The CRS-R is a questionnaire that is used to better understand certain behavioral, social, and academic issues in children between 6 and 18 years old. It is often used to help diagnose Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

- the Connors can be completed by parents, teachers, and students (age-appropriate)
- helps to identify and measure symptoms related to ADHD and other co-morbid disorders
- questions ask about all areas of life: home, school, work, social gatherings, etc. to try and find a pattern regarding where behaviors exist and to determine if there are symptoms related to ADHD driving those behaviors

Functional Behavior Assessment

Do you receive phone calls/emails from your child's teacher about their behavior;

Does your child receive multiple detentions, in-school or out-of-school suspensions for behavioral reasons?

Does your child's report cards and progress reports reflect certain challenges during the school day such as:

- social skills,
- impulse control,
- compliance, or
- following instructions/directions?

If you answered yes those questions or have experienced similar concerns for your child, today is your lucky day!

It's time to talk about the FBA.

WHO?

No one person is solely responsible for conducting the FBA. Typically the school psychologist is the point person, but data should be collected by classroom teachers, school counselors, social workers, paraprofessionals, and information can be provided by the parent to assist with the process.

WHAT?

An ongoing and continuous assessment of student's behavior. An FBA is used to identify the possible cause(s) of target behaviors, observe the frequency of the behaviors, and discuss a hypothesis about the behaviors.

WHEN?

An FBA should be conducted over several weeks. Data should be collected on different days and at various times throughout each day of data collection.

WHERE?

Data and information should be collected from a variety of settings within the school buildings: academic classrooms, specialty classrooms (structured settings), in addition to hallways, lunch time, and recess (unstructured settings)

WHY?

It is impossible to stop or prevent behaviors if you don't know what is causing them. The information collected from an FBA is used to identify patterns of behaviors and what happened right before the behaviors. If you can eliminate the "trigger", you can eliminate the behavior.

THE NOTORIOUS Behavior Intervention Plans

USE THE RESULTS FROM YOUR CHILD'S FBA TO CREATE YOUR CHILD'S BIP


Behavior Intervention Plans:

- address the individual behavioral needs of any student whose behavior interferes with his/her learning or the
- must include positive behavioral intervention strategies and supports,
- provide a roadmap for how to reduce problem behavior, and
- guides treatment and ensures that everyone responds to behaviors consistently.

If you have concerns about your child's **social-emotional well-being**, or if your child is exhibiting some of the following:

- an inability to wake up in the morning;
- a lack of interest or desire to go to school;
- somatic complaints (stomach aches, nausea, headaches), mostly when it's time to go to school or throughout the school day;
- lack of, or decrease in, participation with extracurricular activities or social interaction with peers from school; and/or
- behaviors which result in disciplinary action (ie out of school suspensions)

Symptoms of mental illness very often look different in children than they do in adults, oftentimes symptoms of mental illness in children is mistaken for laziness, lack of motivation, defiance, and "typical adolescent behaviors".



You have the right to request a **Psychiatric Evaluation** through the Committee on Special Education to determine if there is an *underlying emotional disability which is impacting your child's ability to appropriately access their education.*

Assistive Technology




Image: Assistive Technology Resource Center of Hawaii

"What is it that we expect the student to be able to do within the educational program that he/she isn't able to do because of his/her disability?"

- AT Specialist should be consulting with the team to look into areas that the student needs support
- Team determines what supports might be beneficial (SETT Framework)
- Trail and data collection to see if it's working
- Formalize plan and regular check ins

This Data is Great, but What Does it Mean?

Understanding the Subtests

Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children-5 (WISC-V)

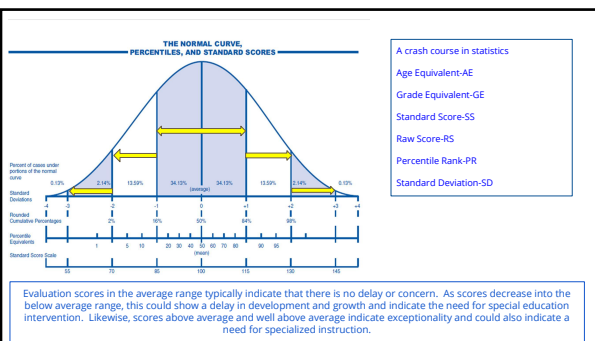
- Verbal Comprehension
- Visual Spatial
- Fluid Reasoning
- Working Memory
- Processing Speed

How the child thinks, processes information and remembers what has been previously taught.

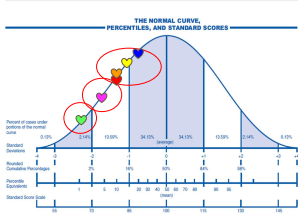


Weschler Individual Achievement Test-3 (WIAT-3)

- Oral Language Composite
- Total Reading Composite
- Reading Comprehension and Fluency
- Written Expression
- Math
- Math Fluency



That's great! What do I do with that?



Weschler Intelligence Scales for Children-3

Verbal Comprehension- 84 SS

Fluid Reasoning- 88 SS

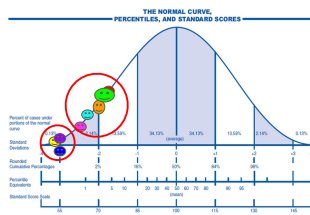
Visual Spatial Reasoning- 78 SS

Working Memory- 87 SS

Processing Speed-77 SS

Full Scale Intelligence Quotient- 73 SS

What does this look like in real time? Academic Testing



Kaufmann Test of Educational Achievement-3 (KTEA)

Letter and Word Recognition-53 SS

Math Computation-76 SS

Math Computation-75 SS

Math Concepts and Applications-68 SS

Reading Composite-59 SS

Reading Comprehension-48 SS

Spelling-55 SS

Full Scale IQ (From WISC-5)-73 SS

The Big Picture...

WISC-V

VC-111

VS-117

FR-97

WM-83

PS-83

FSIQ-100

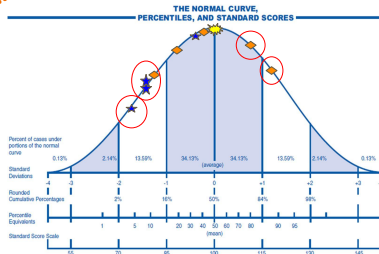
WIAT-3

Reading-75

Math-96

Written Language-82

Oral Language-81



🔑 If it doesn't make sense, ASK QUESTIONS!

The Bottom Line about Scores

Look for what doesn't make sense

- **Discrepancies:** do the different scores look similar or are there noticeable gaps from test to test?
- **Does it match what you're seeing in the classroom?** If the student is struggling, but testing "looks" ok...
- **Trust your instincts.** Ask yourself: what's missing from the picture?
- **Can't quite put your finger on it?** Now is the time to request additional testing, if needed

I Disagree with the Testing? What Can I Do?

Independent Educational Evaluations

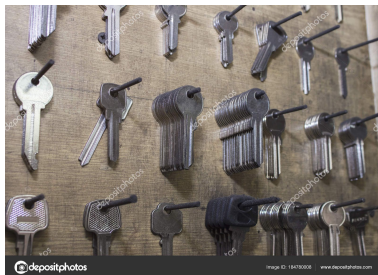
- Disagree with any evaluation that were performed for the student
- Put it in writing (Independent Educational Evaluation "at public expense")
- List of evaluators from the school district
- Compare IEE to the original evaluation



<p>Your Name _____</p> <p>Street Address _____</p> <p>City, State Zip Code _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>
<p>Name of Special Education Administrator _____</p> <p>Title of Administrator _____</p> <p>Name of School District _____</p> <p>Mailing Address of Special Education District Office or Email Address of Administrator _____</p>
<p>Dear Name of Special Education Administrator:</p> <p>I am writing to request an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE), at public expense, in the form of a Behavioral Evaluation, (i.e. a neuropsychological evaluation), for my child, _____ (DOB: _____).</p> <p>I have several concerns regarding his/her educational progress and believe additional information is necessary to understand my child's needs as they relate to his/her education, to ensure he/she is provided the appropriate level and type of support, intervention, and services so he/she can receive the education to which he/she is entitled.</p> <p>It is my understanding that in requesting an IEE, the Committee on Special Education must agree the evaluation or file for an impartial hearing. If you could please contact me at your earliest convenience to inform me of your decision and how to proceed, I would appreciate it.</p> <p>Sincerely, Your Name/Signature _____</p>

Key Takeaways

- Put your request in writing
- Know what evaluations you need to have completed and why you're asking for them
- Understand the data and what it tells you about functioning
- If you disagree, you have options



Recordings of Previous Webinars in this Series

[IEP, 504, IEPs: What's it All About?](#)

[IDEA: An Overview](#)

Previous Webinars in this Series

Therapeutic Considerations in the Treatment of Single Parent Clients

Wed, June 30th | 12-1 PM

Responding to the Crisis of Black Youth Suicide

Part 1: Thurs, July 8th | 11 AM-12 PM

Part 2: Wed, July 14th | 11 AM-12 PM

For webinar descriptions & to register, visit registration.nytac.org

Upcoming CTAC Events

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Thank you!
