

EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

When a child struggles with learning, there may be a variety of reasons, but they often fall into one or more of these categories:

Physical/neurological (visual/hearing impairment, speech impairment, motor coordination difficulty, ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), autism, developmental issues, processing disorder)

Educational (learning disability such as dyslexia, dysgraphia or dyscalculia, giftedness)

Psychological (anxiety, emotional dysregulation, depression, attachment issues, obsessive compulsive disorder)

Sometimes the area of assessment can be narrowed by process of elimination; sometimes a wholistic approach is necessary. Parents should understand that all of these fields contain experts who will view problems through the lens of their particular training and experience.

TO HAVE A CHILD ASSESSED

1. If there is a physical or psychological component, begin with your doctor/hospital/insurance program. Your insurance may cover costs of physical tests, but might not include or financially cover educational measures. There is often a 3-6 month wait for this type of assessment, but the reports are usually quite complete and helpful.

Children's Hospitals – Psychological Services

612-813-8455 (Mpls), www.childrensmn.org

Park Nicollet Clinic

952-993-2498, www.parknicollet.com

Fairview-University Medical Center

612-273-8710, www.fairview-university.org

A Chance To Grow (will make contact with pediatrician; neurological, developmental, OT)

612-789-1236, www.actg.org

2. If there is a complicated academic learning issue:

LDA (Learning Disabilities Assn of MN)

952-582-6000, www.ldaminnesota.org

Groves Academy Learning Center

952-920-6377, www.grovesacademy.org

Fraser Community Services

612-767-7222, www.fraser.org

Brainsight (Dr. Chris Bedford)

651-335-4463, www.brainsight.clinic

These agencies do an excellent job of educational assessment. They write helpful reports with suggested next steps and can look for ADHD, anxiety and depression, but are not equipped to treat serious psychological conditions.

There are many good private psychologists qualified to give an ability test such as the WISC (Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children). This is the best option for giftedness assessment.

3. For significant psychological, emotional or behavior issues, the hospitals listed above all have a team which can bring a wholistic approach to a complicated situation or you can ask for a referral to the appropriate area within your insurance system.

4. The public school option:

As taxpayers, you have a right to request educational testing from the Mpls public school district, but you need to be aware that a) the primary purpose is to determine whether or not your child qualifies for public school special education services and b) a request generates a meeting to determine if the assessment is necessary. To begin a public school assessment contact the Director of Special Academic Services who can give you contact information for our current Minneapolis non-public representative.

If your child does qualify for assessment, and then for service, direct service is not provided at Minnehaha Academy, but at a location of district choice.

If you have additional questions, please call Director of Special Academic Services, Elaine Ekstedt, at 612-721-3359 ext 2146 or send an email to ekstedt@minnehahaacademy.net. The best time to reach her in person is between 8 and 10 am.