WHAT IS PEDIATRIC NEUROPSYCHOLOGY?

Pediatric neuropsychology is a specialty that tests how well a child’s brain is working in terms of cognitive development, learning, and behavior. A pediatric neuropsychologist is a psychologist with specialized training in how learning and behavior are related to development of brain structures and systems. A pediatric neuropsychologist generally uses paper-and-pencil or game-like tasks to test a child’s pattern of cognitive strengths and weaknesses. These test results are interpreted and based on this interpretation, recommendations can be made on how best to help your child progress and learn to the fullest potential.

WHO SHOULD HAVE A NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION?

Any child between the ages of 6 months and 18 years who is demonstrating difficulties in learning or development could benefit from an evaluation to determine what services he or she needs. However, in our clinic, we typically see children with a medical or neurological illness or injury that is known to change the brain in some way.

A few examples include:
- Seizures/Epilepsy
- Brain Tumors/Cysts
- Hydrocephalus
- Prematurity/Birth Complications
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Sickle Cell Disease
- Genetic Disorders
- Treatment for cancer
- Neurosurgical intervention

WHAT IS ASSESSED IN A NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION?

Evaluations vary depending on the age of the child and the reason for referral. A typical evaluation may assess these areas:
- General intellectual abilities
- Attention
- Executive Skills, such as organization, planning, inhibition or flexibility
- Learning and memory
- Language
- Visual-spatial skills
- Motor coordination
- Behavioral and Emotional Functioning
- Social skills
- Academic skills

WHY ARE CHILDREN REFERRED FOR A NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION?

Children are referred for many reasons. Some examples include:
- Determination of level of cognitive functioning
- Identification of change of medical/neurological illness or injury on functioning
- Assist in school and medical treatment planning
- Determine a level of functioning prior to treatment/intervention (baseline testing)
- Determine response to or recovery from treatment/intervention (follow-up testing)
- To monitor brain development and guide treatment decisions

HOW WILL AN EVALUATION HELP MY CHILD?

Just like an MRI scan is a picture of your child’s brain, testing is a picture of how your child’s brain works. An evaluation will help to identify your child’s pattern of cognitive strengths and weaknesses. Identification of this pattern can help to determine what skills your child needs help on and which strategies may be most useful to help your child.
WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT?

Most neuropsychological evaluations take 4 – 8 hours to complete. This may be completed in one day if your child is older than 5 or over several days if your child is 5 years old or younger. You will be asked to participate in an interview about your child’s developmental history. Please bring any records of previous testing or individualized education plans (IEPs) with you on the day of the appointment. You also will be asked to complete several questionnaires about your child’s emotional and behavioral functioning.

Your child will be asked to complete a variety of paper-and-pencil and game-like tasks like things he or she may do at school. Most of the testing will be conducted by trained technicians and will be done in a one-on-one setting with your child over a period of several hours. You can bring along snacks for your child to have during breaks in testing. Your child can be assured that there are no “shots” or other medical procedures involved.

In most cases, initial results and recommendations based on the results of testing will be shared with you at the end of the day. Because this can be a long day, it is best to make it a special day for you and your child, leave brothers and sisters in school, at home or in day care.

NEUROPSYCHOLOGY CLINIC

YOUR CHILD HAS AN APPOINTMENT WITH:

Dr. ________________________________

DAY: ______________________________

DATE: _______________________________

TIME: ______________________________

REASON FOR APPOINTMENT:

_____________________________________

_____________________________________

Please give 48 hour notice for appointment change

Located in Froedtert West Clinics
9200 W. Wisconsin Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53226

For more information or to schedule an appointment call:
414-805-5660

Some text paraphrased from the American Psychological Association Division 40 Brochure entitled, Pediatric Neuropsychology: A Guide for Parents