

Helpful Reminders

- Psychological testing should only be considered after first seeking consultation/ clinical supervision and if multiple interventions have been tried.
- Psychological testing will not always result in a change of diagnosis or new information. It sometimes confirms what was already known.
- Testing cannot make specific recommendations for placement, child custody evaluations, or other psycho-legal referral questions (e.g., civil procedures, competency, dangerousness, malingering, etc.).
- If the question is solely regarding COGNITIVE functioning the more appropriate referral source is the school system.
- If the question is solely regarding ADAPTIVE or DEVELOPMENTAL functioning the more appropriate referral source is the Regional Center system.
- If the question is solely regarding the first onset of PSYCHOTIC SYMPTOMS in adolescence to early adulthood (12-30 years) the more appropriate referral source is SacEDAPT.
- If the client could benefit from a multidisciplinary team-based approach, the psychologist may recommend an evaluation with the CAPS Clinic Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Assessment Team (CMAT).
- Testing requires a commitment from both treatment providers and families. Please consider referring only when the child has relative stability, is not at-risk for hospitalization or out-of-home placement, and when the family is able to participate fully in the process.

Contact Numbers

Sacramento County Access Team

Phone: (916) 875-1055

Fax: (916) 875-9970

TTY/TDD: (916) 876-8892

(916) 875-9970 Fax

Access toll free/24 hours
(888) 881-4881

California Relay Service: 711

Bilingual staff and/or interpreters are available at no cost.

Ryan Quist, Ph.D.

Behavioral Health Director

Peter Beilenson, MD, MPH, Director

Department of Health Services

Navdeep S. Gill, County Executive

Board of Supervisors

Phil Serna	Patrick Kennedy	Susan Peters	Sue Frost	Don Nottoli
1st District	2nd District	3rd District	4th District	5th District



Department of Health Services

Division of Behavioral Health Services

Psychological Consultation, Screening & Testing



A Child and Family Specialty Mental Health Service

What is Psychological Testing?

- Psychologists use tests and other culturally competent and linguistically proficient assessment tools (when available) to measure and observe a client's behavior.
- These tests show a child's performance at a *particular time* in his/her life and helps determine a diagnosis and guide treatment.
- The psychologist or supervised psychology intern/fellow will evaluate information from different sources (the child, caregivers, teachers, therapists) to better understand his/her strengths and difficulties and socio-cultural factors.
- Results of testing can help therapists adjust treatment to better meet the child's and family's needs.

What May Be Assessed?

- Personality functioning
- Social-emotional functioning
- Behavioral functioning
- Interpersonal functioning
- Adaptive behavior
- Cognitive, visual, motor, auditory, language, memory, and achievement
- Medical, developmental, academic, familial, and socio-cultural history
- Strengths and challenges
- The nature, presence and degree of any disabling conditions

Psychological Testing Process

- The referring therapist must first gather and review all available records and collateral information necessary to complete the referral form in its entirety.
- After reviewing history, speaking to caregivers, and determining that psychological testing is indicated, the evaluator may observe the child at his/her school and speak with his/her teachers.
- The evaluator will then meet with the child several times in the office, sometimes for several hours at a time.
- At the end of testing, the evaluator will score and interpret results, which will be integrated with relevant background information into a written report of the findings.
- Testing feedback will be provided to the client, client's family, and treatment team to review the results and discuss the recommendations.

Good Referral Questions

- Differentiating between diagnoses that share similar symptoms (e.g., Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder vs. Posttraumatic Stress Disorder).
- A child's symptoms seem to be getting worse without an explanation.
- Nothing is working in therapy despite multiple interventions.

Different Types of Psychological Testing

Once assigned, the evaluator may determine the type of testing:

1. Targeted Screening Assessment

- A targeted version of the Psychological Testing Process to clarify diagnosis and symptomatology, and/or make appropriate referrals for a psychiatrist or other services.
- May include: consultation, 1-2 administration sessions, feedback, and/or a brief 3-5 page report.

2. Standard Psychological Testing

- See description for Psychological Testing Process.
- May include: 4-6 administration sessions, feedback, and a 10-15 page report.

3. CAPS Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Assessment Team (CMAT)

- Psychological testing that includes a team of psychologists, psychiatrist, therapists, and trainees observing behind a one-way mirror. Complex situations typically involve several systems of care. Team sessions are currently held Wednesday mornings.
- May include: 4-6 administration sessions, feedback, and a 15-20 page report.

