

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Assessment

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is one of the most common neurodevelopmental disorders affecting approximately 5 % of children. ADHD begins in childhood and symptoms are most often present before the age of 12. Individuals with ADHD are likely to display behavioural patterns characterized by difficulty maintaining attention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity. These behaviour issues can have a significant impact on a student's ability to meet teacher or parental expectations in school and can cause strain on the parent-child relationship at home. It can also have a negative impact on developing or maintaining peer relationships.

Some Symptoms Associated with ADHD include:

- Difficulty paying attention to details or organizing tasks
- Limitations in sustaining attention and/or does not seem to listen when spoken to
- Is forgetful in daily activities or has trouble following through with homework and chores
- Often fidgets or squirms
- Leaves seat without permission or runs about at inappropriate times
- Talks excessively and interrupts and/or intrudes on other's space

Components of the ADHD Assessment

Consultation Appointment: Consists of a one-hour session providing the psychologist an opportunity to meet the student and parents in order to discuss the family's current concerns and to identify the goals and objectives for the evaluation.

Indirect Assessment: Consists of record review (e.g., report cards, attendance records), interviews conducted with teachers and parents, as well as questionnaires and rating scales developed to identify attention-related problems. Information gathered through the indirect assessment process helps to identify the primary concerns that affect the student's ability to meet his/her potential in both the home and school settings.

Direct Assessment: Consists of standardized procedures designed to determine if the student exhibits symptoms similar to those with ADHD and what impact this has on his/her ability to function in the classroom with his/her peers. Social skills and issues with bullying are also assessed.

- **Behavioural Observations:** Environmental and motivational factors can have an impact on the way students behave as well as their academic achievement. Direct observations are conducted as part of the assessment process to gather detailed information about the contexts in which behavioural difficulties occur.

Clinical Report and Feedback Session: A feedback session is scheduled following the completion of the indirect and direct assessment components. This session provides an opportunity for the parents to review the report with the psychologist in detail and to discuss the findings and recommendations. Follow-up appointments to collaborate with school personnel and to teach evidence-based strategies can also take place in the school setting to ensure success in treatment.

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