



Standards for
P s y c h o -
educational
Assessment



Standards for Psycho-educational Assessment

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The primary intended audience for this document is:

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Counsellors	✓
General Audience	
Parents	
Students	
Teachers	✓

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The National Association of School Psychologists
The Canadian Association of School Psychologists
The Psychologists Association of Alberta
The Canadian Guidance and Counselling Association
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INTRODUCTION

Psycho-educational assessment is widely used in Alberta schools to explore academic concerns and assist with program planning and placement decisions. As assessment results often have significant impact on students' educational futures, it is essential that ethical principles guide school assessment practices and that high expectations and standards be maintained and followed.

This monograph describes:

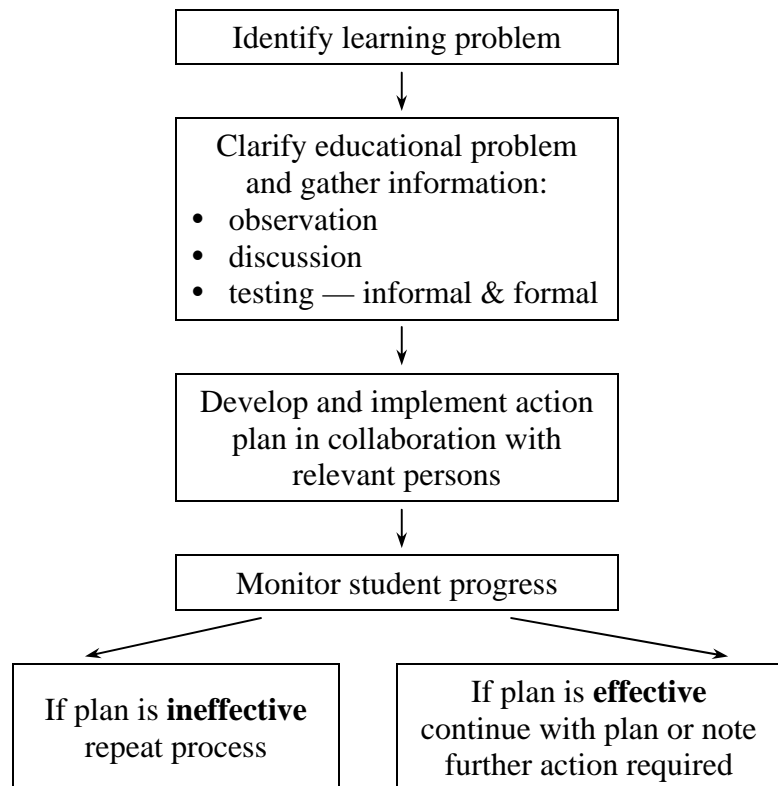
- ☞ an assessment process to follow once a concern is identified
- ☞ the ethical principles that guide psycho-educational assessment
- ☞ the expectations and standards established by Alberta Education for psycho-educational assessment.

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Assessment as a Cycle

Assessment in school is a process of gathering information about a student in order to better understand learning strengths and needs, and develop an appropriate educational program. Formal assessment requires the integration of information from several sources, such as, testing, observation, interviews, analysis of history and home environment and academic records.

Assessment may be viewed as a process which continues if warranted until problems are overcome and solutions are effectively implemented.



At early stages in the assessment process, attempts to clarify the problem primarily involve observation, consultation, and informal assessment by teachers and school-based teams. Alberta Education has developed a handbook entitled *Understanding Students' Needs* to assist school personnel in this process. The handbook identifies various types of assessments that can be used by teachers and school-based teams. School personnel completing informal assessments are encouraged to consult *Principles for Fair Student Assessment Practices for Education in Canada*, which presents guidelines for informal assessments.

With each repetition of the cycle, assessment becomes more formal, people outside the classroom are increasingly involved and plans to assist students involve more significant program modifications.

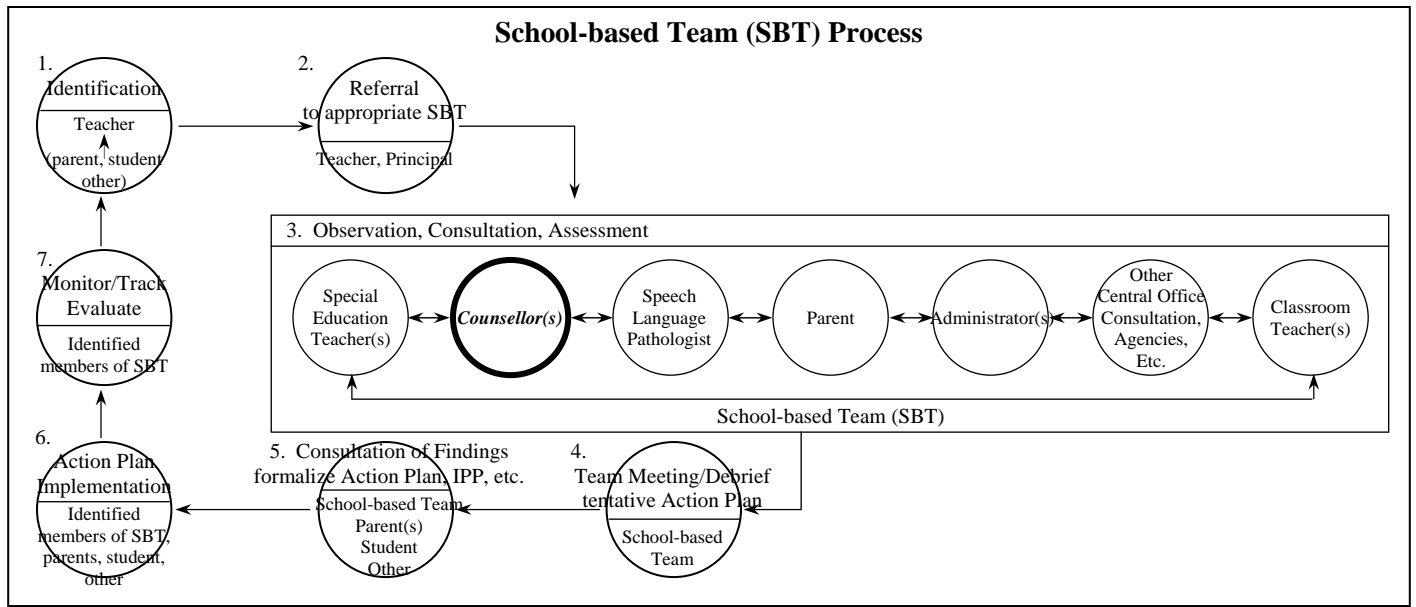
The Team Approach

Using a two-tiered team approach to assessment, attempts should be made to assist students before formal assessment is conducted. This reduces the number of formal assessments necessary, while ensuring that students requiring such services obtain them in a reasonable time frame. The time involved before moving toward formal assessment depends on the nature and severity of the concern.

School-based Teams

School staff are strongly encouraged to utilize their diverse strengths by forming school-based teams. Teams might include special education teachers, counsellors, administrators and regular classroom teachers knowledgeable about learning difficulties and learning strategies. Teachers who have identified concerns about students may consult with the team to develop strategies to resolve the concern. In this manner, initial cycles of the assessment process are carried out at the school level until either an effective plan is developed or further assistance is necessary.

School-based teams are encouraged to develop models describing the process they follow. The figure on the following page presents a possible model.



This model was developed by Hazel Love-McLaughlin and the school staff at Ardrossan Elementary School, Strathcona County Schools. It is used with their permission.

Consulting Team

If the school-based team requires additional support, resources external to the school may be consulted. The school-based team is expanded to include consultants and professionals appropriate to the needs of the student and school jurisdiction resources. The decision to progress to psycho-educational assessment is made only after consultation. Students should be referred for individual psycho-educational assessment only after reasonable attempts to assist them have not been successful.

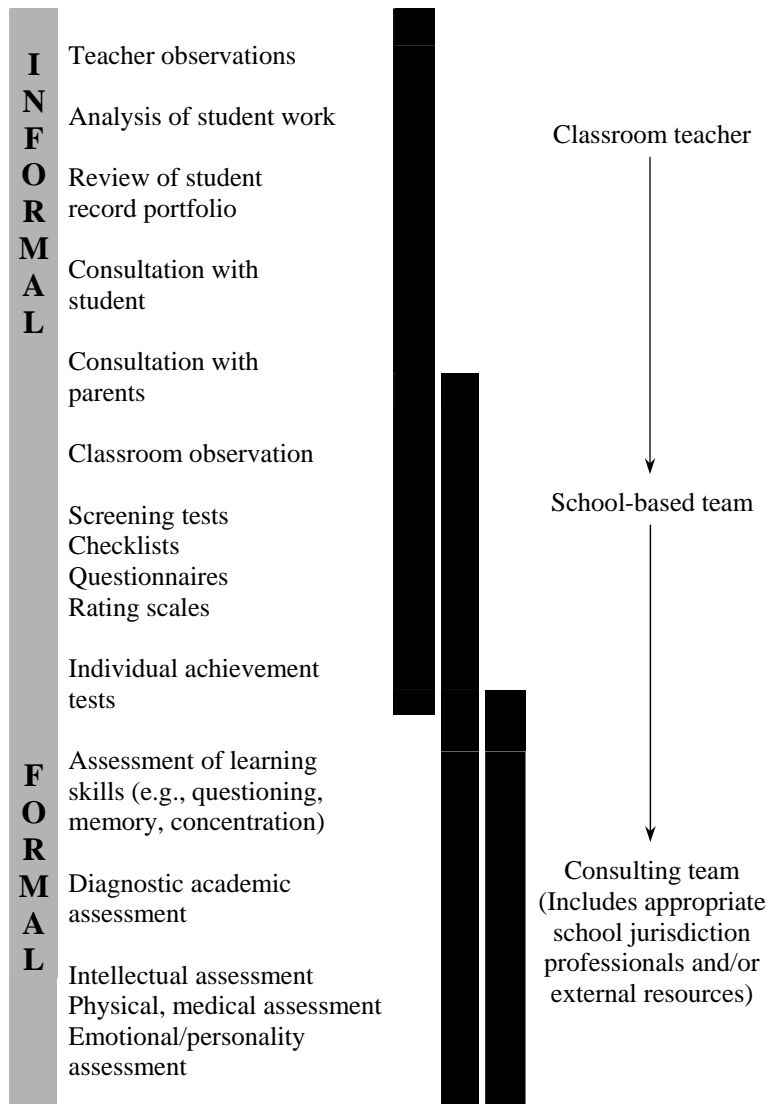
The assessment process should progress to psycho-educational assessment in situations such as the following:

- attempts to assist the student within the classroom have not been successful
- the initial reason for concern is becoming more pronounced
- a severe learning problem is suspected
- significantly modified educational programming will likely be required
- a special placement may be warranted

- special assistance to the student is deviating markedly from the regular program
- information that could be obtained through formal assessment would help determine the nature of the problem.

Types of Assessment

This diagram presents various activities that can be part of the assessment process and indicates which school personnel would generally be responsible as the process moves from informal to formal assessment. There is an overlap of possible assessment responsibilities, depending on the nature of the problem and the expertise of those involved.



The following chart outlines types, purposes and examples of formal assessment.

Type of Assessment	Purpose	General Examples
Academic achievement	<p>To identify achieved level of performance</p> <p>To identify specific academic needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement tests • Diagnostic tests
Learning/thinking skills	To explore and assess various skills used in learning and thinking	<p>Tests assessing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concentration • questioning skills • memory • learning style • perception, etc.
Intellectual	<p>To explore strengths and weaknesses in learning</p> <p>To identify current level of intellectual functioning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intelligence scales
Personality/emotional	To explore personal factors which may affect learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personality tests • Self-esteem inventories
Behaviour	To explore behavioural factors that affect learning and attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour checklists • Rating scales
Physical/medical (Only performed by the practicing medical specialist.)	To identify any physical problems that may interfere with learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neurological examination • Birth defects • Chronic heart problems • Vision/hearing

Assessment Scenario — The Case of Trevor



The following scenario is fictional. The counsellor in this scenario is intended to represent a psychologist who is chartered by the Psychologists Association of Alberta.

Presenting Behaviour:

Trevor, age 9, Grade 4

- ☞ ongoing difficulty in school
- ☞ reading skills delayed
- ☞ written work disorganized and rarely completed
- ☞ somewhat disruptive in class
- ☞ difficulty concentrating
- ☞ creative
- ☞ good ideas.

What the Teacher Does:

- extra help in reading
- requires less written work from Trevor
- calls Trevor back to task when distracted
- discusses situation with Trevor's parents and all decide problem is getting worse
- initiates referral to school-based team (principal, special education teacher, counsellor and teacher) together with Trevor's parents.

School-based Team Actions:

- team meeting results in development of an action plan:
 - special education teacher will complete individual language arts assessment to identify Trevor's strengths and needs
 - teacher will implement a simple behaviour program, focusing on positive behaviour
 - teacher and Trevor's parents will complete screening tests for possible Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)
- develop Individual Program Plan for language arts
- make referral to consulting team, since behaviour program was unsuccessful and scores on ADD screening tests were high
- Trevor's parents sign consent form allowing this referral.

Consulting Team Actions:

- counsellor speaks with Trevor's parents to determine home factors (stress, anxiety), observes him in class, reviews his student record portfolio, and examines previous assessment results
- initiates referral with parents to Trevor's physician for a full medical examination. Trevor's physician places him on medication to enhance his concentration.
- again implements a behaviour program (with success)
- behaviour consultant observes Trevor in the classroom and on the playground
- counsellor conducts assessment, as Trevor's academic difficulties continue and are even more pronounced now that he is applying himself in school (intellectual skills, fine-motor coordination, creativity explored)
- case conference to interpret assessment results and discuss recommendations results in some changes to Trevor's Individual Program Plan
- decide on follow-up plan and target dates.

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS FOR PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Ethics is the discipline wherein the right and wrong of values and behaviours are evaluated in order to determine moral duties and responsibilities. Ethical codes are developed or adopted by professional organizations, and involve moral principles and practices related to that profession. The principles represent a set of values that provide the foundation for standards of behaviour to which members of the organization are bound.

As assessment becomes more formal in nature, results are used to make important decisions which can significantly affect the educational futures of students involved. Those involved in the assessment process bear the responsibility to ensure competent and professional services. **It is essential that standards based on ethical principles be developed pertaining to psycho-educational assessment practices in schools to guide those responsible for policy development and those involved in assessment practices.** Psycho-educational methods generally refer to the processes of psychological assessment and the subsequent designing of remedial programs. The goal of this process is to facilitate learning.

The standards described here are based on ethical principles pertaining to psycho-educational assessment that have been developed by various professional associations, and are considered vital to assessment practices by Alberta Education. Ethical principles represent the underlying concepts guiding psycho-educational assessment and serve as a basis for the standards. Standards serve to operationalize the ethical principles, and are statements of expectations for psycho-educational assessments.

The ethical principles and standards are derived from a number of publications outlining ethical principles pertaining to assessment. Nine themes for the development of standards emerged from this analysis. These themes can be categorized into two main ethical

principles. These two principles are adapted from the *Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists* (1991). **Responsible Caring** requires competence and should be carried out only in ways that respect the dignity of persons. **Respect for the Dignity of Persons** emphasises an individual's moral rights. The table below illustrates the two main ethical principles and corresponding themes related to psycho-educational assessment.

Organizing Framework: General Ethical Principles and Themes for Standards for the Conduct of Psycho-educational Assessment in Schools

I. RESPONSIBLE CARING	II. RESPECT FOR THE DIGNITY OF PERSONS
1. Competence 2. Choosing assessment instruments 3. Conducting assessments 4. Interpreting results 5. Reporting results 6. Using results	7. Obtaining informed consent 8. Confidentiality 9. Storing records

I. RESPONSIBLE CARING (Competence Principle)



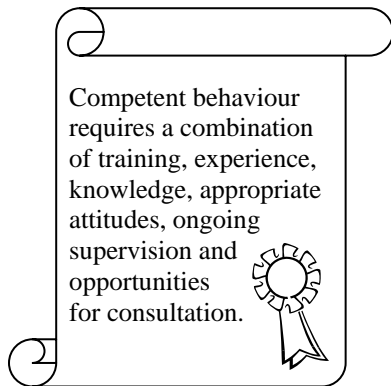
Theme 1: COMPETENCE

Ethical Principle

Psychological assessments are conducted by persons who are competent.

Standard

Psycho-educational assessments are conducted by persons with the appropriate qualifications.



Competence for psycho-educational assessment involves having the training, experience and knowledge necessary to:

- select and evaluate psycho-educational tests
- administer psycho-educational tests
- correctly interpret assessment results
- effectively integrate assessment results with other relevant information
- understand developmental milestones and characteristics of students.

Competence requires that:

- qualifications and standards established in professional fields have been met
- minimum qualifications for test administration have been met as specified in published manuals



THE CASE OF TREVOR

Those involved in Trevor's assessment were qualified to carry out those activities for which each was responsible. The special education teacher, Mr. Jones, completed a master's level course in assessment and testing, and administered achievement and screening tests. Although the course Mr. Jones took involved using intellectual scales, he did not administer the WISC-III as he was not qualified to administer Level C tests. The counsellor who worked with Trevor had significant experience in psycho-educational assessment and was knowledgeable about learning disabilities and Attention Deficit Disorder. The expertise of a physician was requested to determine whether medication would be helpful in improving Trevor's concentration and to rule out other possible medical explanations for his behaviour.

- minimum qualifications for test interpretation have been met as specified by professional organizations and by independent test evaluators (e.g., *Mental Measurements Yearbook*)
- psychological tests (e.g., WISC-III) be interpreted only by individuals meeting those qualifications outlined in the table on page 13
- individuals work only within their areas of training and experience
- individuals consult with or refer to other professionals when requiring services outside their areas of training and experience
- individuals assume responsibility for acting competently and recognize consequences of incompetent actions
- qualifications are accurately represented to others, and misrepresentation of qualifications by others is corrected
- professional growth is ongoing through further training, education, workshops and consultation
- those who obtain or have restricted psychological tests are responsible for ensuring proper use by qualified professionals, and assume liability should any misuse of restricted materials occur
- individuals are sensitive to cultural, psychological and familial diversity in students and parents.

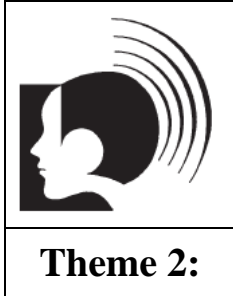
The table on the following page presents three levels of tests and qualifications which can be used to determine competence. Individuals must have all of the minimum qualifications in order to be considered competent to administer and interpret tests at that level.

Standards of Competence: Levels of Tests and Qualifications

LEVELS	MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS	SELECTED EXAMPLES
<p>Level A Tests (No formal training in testing required.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Four years teacher education inclusive of a Bachelor's degree ☞ Experience working within school systems (as a teacher and/or consultant) ☞ Familiarity with topic ☞ Able to follow administration procedures set out in manual ☞ Informal training (e.g., inservice) in the use of a particular instrument 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alberta Achievement Tests • Gates-McGinitie Reading Tests • Metropolitan Readiness Tests • Alberta Diagnostic Reading/Math Tests • Teacher Alert System • Stanford Diagnostic Math/Reading Tests • Canadian Tests of Basic Skills • Informal reading/math/spelling inventories
<p>Level B Tests (Require formal training in testing.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Four years teacher education inclusive of a Bachelor's degree ☞ Experience working within school systems (as a teacher and/or consultant) ☞ Senior undergraduate or graduate coursework in test principles (reliability, validity, test construction, norm groups, types of scores), administration and interpretation ☞ Training in specific area related to test ☞ Experience administering and interpreting test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test — Revised • Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests • Test of Language Development—II • Detroit Test of Learning Aptitude • Wechsler Individual Achievement Test • Key Math Diagnostic Arithmetic Test • Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-educational Battery (revised) — Achievement (Part II)
<p>Level C Tests (Restricted tests requiring professional qualifications.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Four years teacher education inclusive of a Bachelor's degree ☞ Experience working within school systems (as a teacher and/or consultant) ☞ Recognized Master's degree with a major in special education or educational psychology, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – graduate coursework in test principles (reliability, validity, test construction, norm groups, types of scores), and – graduate coursework in administering and interpreting individual tests ☞ Fulfill any additional requirements as stipulated by the test publisher as being necessary or desirable for administration of each particular test instrument <p><i>It is expected that individuals administering and interpreting Level C tests will be eligible for registration as a Chartered Psychologist with the Psychologists Association of Alberta.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intelligence Scales (WISC-III, WAIS-R, WPPSI-R, Stanford Binet IV, K-ABC) • Personality Tests (High School Personality Questionnaire, Personality Inventory for Children, projective instruments) • Self-esteem inventories • Bender Visual Motor Gestalt Test • Depression inventories • ADD inventories • Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking • Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-educational Battery (revised) — Cognitive Ability (Part I)

See the appendix for eligibility requirements for types of certification provided through the Psychologists Association of Alberta.

The standards of competence for levels A, B and C tests apply to all the standards which follow unless otherwise indicated.




CHOOSING ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

Ethical Principle

Assessment information should be obtained through a variety of sources and instruments.

Standard

A variety of valid and reliable instruments are used in the assessment process, including those assessing cognitive ability, achievement, personality and other pertinent areas.



THE CASE OF TREVOR

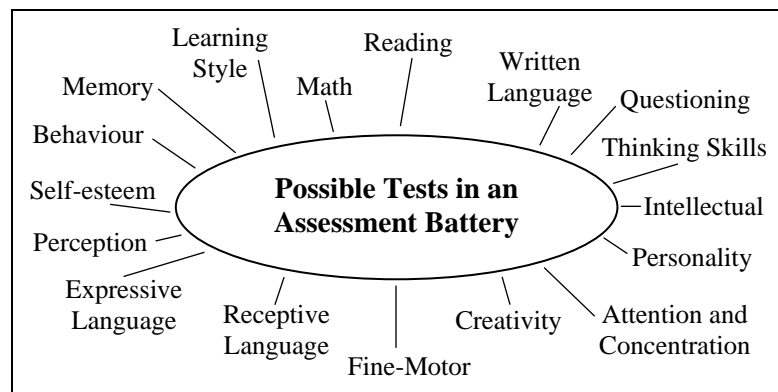
Trevor's assessment was comprehensive and utilized a variety of instruments and sources of information. Tests explored Trevor's concentration, intellectual abilities, academic skills and creativity. Information was obtained from his parents, teachers and past school records.

Individuals selecting assessment instruments should:

- clearly define the purpose of the assessment
- understand how differences among people (culture, language, gender, disabilities, socio-economic group) can affect the assessment process
- evaluate the statistical properties of tests (e.g., validity, reliability)
- identify potential problems in test design and use (e.g., errors of measurement norm groups)
- identify limitations of tests.

Tests chosen should be:

- valid
- reliable
- consistent with the purpose of assessment
- appropriate for the individual student
- supported by research
- recognized as good tests by independent evaluators (e.g., *Mental Measurements Yearbook*)
- relevant to the decision-making process
- limited to areas for which consent for assessment was obtained
- informative as to both student strengths and needs.






Theme 3: CONDUCTING ASSESSMENTS

Ethical Principle

The assessment setting should encourage a student's best performance without compromising standardized procedures.

Standard

Psycho-educational assessments are conducted in comfortable, quiet settings by individuals who follow standardized procedures at a time when the student is physically and mentally prepared for testing.



THE CASE OF TREVOR

Those testing Trevor were familiar with the use of their respective instruments and tests were administered as specified in their manuals. Experience and expertise assisted evaluators in responding to Trevor's questions during assessment and in probing unclear responses appropriately. Observations regarding interest and concentration were recorded discreetly on test protocols.

The following factors must be considered in assessing a child's readiness for assessment:

- motivation
- time of day
- health
- hunger
- comfort level
- special medical conditions.

The following points should be considered.

- Test instruments should be administered as specified in accompanying manuals.
- Testing should be conducted in comfortable settings with adequate light, heat and space, and with minimal distractions.
- No other children should be present during testing (Test levels B and C only).

- Evaluators should interact with students in a way that alleviates anxiety, builds rapport and encourages optimal performance.
- Evaluators should be familiar with how to introduce tests, directions, help that may be given, and how to respond to student questions. This may require practising administration of certain tests.
- Evaluators should be alert to differences in language and culture, as well as to disabilities.
- Evaluators should be alert to student's performance during assessment. Such things as organization, work habits, attention, listening skills, motor skills, interpersonal skills, speed and anxiety should be observed and discreetly recorded.
- Evaluators should be alert to signs of boredom, fatigue, and physical or emotional discomfort, and respond appropriately.
- Behaviour or unexpected events during the assessment, which may affect the results and interpretation, should be observed and recorded.
- Testing should be discontinued if situational factors are interfering with the assessment such that results would be of questionable validity.




INTERPRETING RESULTS

Ethical Principle

Assessment results should be interpreted by competent individuals.

Standard

Assessment results are individually interpreted in the context of the student's background by the same individual who conducted the assessment.

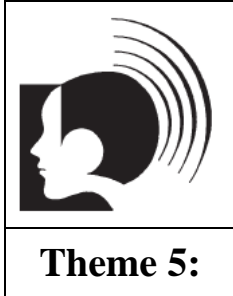


THE CASE OF TREVOR

The school psychologist consulted with Trevor's parents and teacher, and reviewed information in his student record portfolio. This helped provide the school-based team with comprehensive and applicable recommendations.

Individuals interpreting assessment results should:

- consider the effects of language, culture, ethnicity, gender, disabilities, socio-economic status and geographic location on test scores
- consider situational, medical and personal factors and their effects on performance
- consider the effects of school history on test scores
- consider the statistical significance of score differences
- evaluate the validity and reliability of assessment results
- recognize when caution should be used interpreting assessment results (e.g., lack of representation in norm group, variation from standardized administration)
- place appropriate emphasis on the relative importance of various instruments.



Ethical Principle

Assessment results should be reported to those involved in a way that ensures proper understanding.

Standard

School personnel, parents and students (when appropriate) are provided with an interpretation of assessment results that is understandable and useful.



THE CASE OF TREVOR

A report outlining the school-based team's involvement, including academic assessment results, was placed in Trevor's student record portfolio. Results of the academic assessment were reviewed in the meeting with Trevor's parents. Areas of strength and weakness were identified, relative to his peers and to his own skills and abilities. The school psychologist prepared two reports. The first was prepared after the consultation and presented information about Trevor's attention difficulties. The second presented an interpretation of the assessment results and recommendations. Information contained in these reports was discussed with Trevor's parents and teacher, and the reports

Schools should be provided with written interpretive reports after psycho-educational assessment. Written reports should:

- be provided in a reasonable time frame
- be accurate
- indicate reservations about the validity of test results due to unique administration conditions
- be in language that is understandable
- provide a clear, understandable interpretation of assessment results
- provide information regarding strengths as well as weaknesses
- include a frame of reference when describing skills (e.g., relative to age peers, grade peers, personal abilities)
- provide recommendations consistent with assessment results and context
- be relevant to the educational needs of students

(continued)

(The Case of Trevor continued)

were placed in his student record portfolio. Trevor's parents requested a copy of the report and were provided with one by the school psychologist as required by local board/school policy. Results of the assessments were discussed individually with Trevor in terms of his strengths and weaknesses.

- provide direction to school personnel and parents
- relate assessment results and recommendations to the purpose of assessment
- be placed in student record portfolios in keeping with the Student Record Regulation (*School Act*).

Parents should receive an interpretation of results from the person who conducted the assessment within a reasonable time frame. School personnel, preferably the teacher and an administrator, may be present during this conference. Under the *School Act* (Section 18), parents, and students 16 years of age or older, may review the test at a time when there is a competent person available to provide an explanation. They may be provided with copies of psycho-educational assessment reports or written summaries by the person who conducted the assessment if board/school policy provides for such copies.




Ethical Principle

Assessment results should be used in a manner that benefits the student.

Standard

Recommendations, program modifications and plans for future programming are consistent with student needs as identified through assessment results and other information.



THE CASE OF TREVOR

The modifications made to Trevor's program in Grade 4 were consistent with results of the assessment. Trevor received small group assistance in reading, worked extensively on a computer as an alternative to writing, and worked on oral and other projects allowing him to demonstrate his creativity and strong verbal skills. Trevor's reading skills would be reassessed before the end of the school year to evaluate his progress and determine whether extra assistance was still necessary.

(continued)

Proper use of assessment implies that:

- tests are used only for the purpose for which they were designed
- tests developed for screening purposes are used only to identify those requiring further assessment
- results of screening tests are not used to make programming decisions
- decisions are made on the basis of a variety of test scores and anecdotal information
- confidence intervals and errors of measurement are accounted for if cut-off scores are used
- psycho-educational test scores are considered to be estimated, and not absolute or permanent
- obsolete assessment data is recognized as such, and is not used to make decisions
- recommended program modifications are discussed with parents and teachers

(The Case of Trevor continued)

In Grade 7, Trevor was considered for an alternate program. Prior to placement in this program, an individual intellectual assessment was requested. Although the WISC-III and standardized achievement tests were administered when Trevor was in Grade 4, these results were now outdated and could not be used to identify Trevor's needs or to determine program appropriateness. Trevor was reassessed using a variety of tests to help determine whether an alternate program was appropriate.

- interventions are appropriate to student needs and consistent with assessment results
- student and parent wishes are considered.

Those conducting psycho-educational assessments have a responsibility to ensure that test results and interpretations are not misused and misunderstood by others.

II. RESPECT FOR THE DIGNITY OF PERSONS (Moral Rights Principle)



Theme 7: OBTAINING INFORMED CONSENT

Ethical Principle

Informed consent must be obtained from parents (or legal guardians) prior to formal assessment.

Standard

Written informed consent is obtained from parents (or legal guardians) before a psycho-educational assessment is conducted.



THE CASE OF TREVOR

Consent was obtained from Trevor's parents for psycho-educational assessment. They were aware that the results would likely be used to adapt Trevor's program and that the school would receive a written report from the school psychologist. The purpose of the assessment was described to Trevor by the principal prior to testing and again by the school psychologist at the time of testing.

Parents must be contacted directly before psycho-educational assessments (Test levels B and C only) are conducted in order to obtain their informed consent in writing. They should be provided with information which allows them to make an informed decision, including:

- purpose of assessment
- nature of assessment
- intended use of results
- access to results by parents
- access to results by others.

Parents should sign a form to indicate consent, and this should be placed in student record portfolios. Parents have the right to withhold consent and refuse psycho-educational assessment.

Students should be informed about the purpose of assessment, in advance by school personnel and at the time of assessment by the evaluator.

A SAMPLE PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

NAME OF STUDENT: _____

DATE OF BIRTH: _____

I understand that my child is being referred to _____

for _____ assessment

due to the following concerns: _____

Results of this assessment will be used to: _____

I understand that the results and recommendations will be discussed with me and with staff of the school after the assessment is completed. A copy of the report will be maintained in the school.

Parent's Signature _____

Date _____




CONFIDENTIALITY

Ethical Principle

Confidentiality of information must be respected and maintained.

Standard

Assessment results are confidential and shared for professional purposes only.



THE CASE OF TREVOR

Trevor's physician contacted the school and requested copies of the psychologist's reports. These were not released directly to him. He was asked to speak with Trevor's parents and have them contact the school psychologist. Trevor's parents did so, and the school psychologist sent copies of both reports to the physician after having one of Trevor's parents sign a consent form. The school psychologist also phoned Trevor's physician to briefly discuss the case.

Confidentiality (Test levels B and C only) requires that:

- written parental consent be obtained before sharing (orally or in writing) assessment information with anyone who should not have regular access to the student record portfolio
- written and oral reports respect the privacy of the student and family
- assessment results be discussed within the school setting for professional purposes only and only with those involved with the student.

To ensure that test security is maintained:

- answer sheets and test protocols should not be released
- specific test items should never be disclosed.




Theme 9: STORING RECORDS

Ethical Principle

Confidential information should be stored securely.

Standard

Assessment reports are stored in student record portfolios in a locked area with restricted access.



THE CASE OF TREVOR

School-based team summaries, academic test scores, and the psycho-educational reports were placed in Trevor's student record portfolio. Student record portfolios in Trevor's school were stored in a locking file cabinet in the school office.

The Student Record Regulation [Alberta Regulation 213/89, as amended A.R. 175/93] requires that the following information should be entered into the student record portfolio when psycho-educational assessment is completed [s.2(1)(k)]:

- a notation of any formal intellectual, cognitive, social or emotional test or evaluation of the student provided by the board
- the date of the test or evaluation
- the name of the person who conducted the test or evaluation
- a summary of the results of the test or evaluation or any interpretive report
- any action taken as a result of the test or evaluation.

The following points are to be considered when storing assessment reports.

- Psycho-educational assessment reports should be placed directly in student record portfolios
- Test reports, and thus student record portfolios, should be kept in a locked area with restricted access

- Copies of reports should be kept to a minimum to ensure proper security of test results
- Parents have the right to review their child's student record portfolio with qualified individuals present to help them interpret assessment reports
- Test results and reports should be protected from improper access
- Those using computers and discs to store assessment reports should take appropriate security measures to guard against improper access
- Assessment reports should be stored for at least seven years after the student ceases to attend a school operated by the board, or until original records have been forwarded to another school, or for at least seven years after the student is expected to graduate in the case of a transfer outside Alberta.

SUMMARY

Psycho-educational assessment can be a valuable tool to assist with program planning and placement decisions. As results of these tests potentially have significant impact and could be harmful to students if misused, it is essential that ethical principles and standards be respected and followed at the school and jurisdiction level.

STANDARDS FOR PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

I. Responsible Caring

STANDARD 1: Psycho-educational assessments are conducted by persons with the appropriate qualifications.

STANDARD 2: A variety of valid and reliable instruments are used in the assessment process, including those assessing cognitive ability, achievement, personality and other pertinent areas.

STANDARD 3: Psycho-educational assessments are conducted in comfortable, quiet settings by individuals who follow standardized procedures at a time when the student is physically and mentally prepared for testing.

STANDARD 4: Assessment results are individually interpreted in the context of the student's background by the same individual who conducted the assessment.

STANDARD 5: School personnel, parents and students (when appropriate) are provided with an interpretation of assessment results that is understandable and useful.

STANDARD 6: Recommendations, program modifications and plans for future programming are consistent with student needs as identified through assessment results and other information.

II. Respect for the Dignity of Persons

STANDARD 7: Written informed consent is obtained from parents (or legal guardians) before a psycho-educational assessment is conducted.

STANDARD 8: Assessment results are confidential and shared for professional purposes only.

STANDARD 9: Assessment reports are stored in student record portfolios in a locked area with restricted access.

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APPENDIX — Eligibility Requirements for P.A.A. Certification

Requirements for Eligibility as a Chartered Psychologist in Alberta

In order to be eligible to become a chartered psychologist in Alberta, the following requirements must be met:

- graduate degree approved by the Universities Co-ordinating Council
- 900 hour approved supervised practice
- security clearance
- three written appraisals by chartered psychologists
- written examination (EPPP)
- oral examination.

Granting of chartered status is by the Psychologists Association of Alberta.

Requirements for Eligibility as a Provincial Chartered Psychologist in Alberta

In order to be eligible to become a provisional psychologist in Alberta, individuals must have a graduate degree approved by the Universities Co-ordinating Council. Granting of provisional status is by the Psychologists Association of Alberta.

For more information, contact the Universities Co-ordinating Council (492-6850) or the Psychologists Association of Alberta (424-5070).

