



Psychological and Learning Assessment for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Children



How do I know if my child needs an assessment?

There are many reasons to refer a child or teen for a psychological or learning assessment. An assessment can help you find solutions to all of these concerns:

- Is your child struggling in school?
- Do you feel that your child could be doing better, but something is getting in the way?
- Do you suspect that your child is either gifted or delayed? (Both require special instruction.)
- Have you noticed that your child learns in a different way from other children?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, your child or teen may benefit from an assessment with a trained specialist.

How can an assessment benefit my child?

An assessment can provide your deaf or hard-of-hearing child or teen with greater opportunities to succeed in school, at home and in other settings.

Identifying a child's strengths and weaknesses allows parents, teachers and other care providers to develop the best ways to support the child's achievement.

We use an assessment to diagnose learning disabilities, identify instructional needs, document student progress, identify individual learning styles and help create short- and long-term academic plans.

What assessment services are provided?

We provide cognitive, academic, learning and psychological evaluations for children or teens with hearing loss and/or who use sign language as a primary mode of communication. We also offer independent classroom observations, consultations and partial evaluations. Complete and partial evaluations include assessment of:

- Verbal intelligence
- Nonverbal intelligence
- Academic achievement
- Specific learning disabilities
- Memory, learning or attention difficulties

Assessment services may include:

- Classroom observation
- Review of academic and medical records
- Interviewing and completion of questionnaires with parents, teachers and other involved school staff
- Written report with assessment results, including recommendations and referrals
- Feedback session about results with parents
- Feedback session about results with teachers and other school staff

Why are assessment specialists important?

Assessing children or teens with hearing loss presents many challenges. Each deaf and hard-of-hearing child has unique needs. We look at the degree of a child's hearing loss, their communication style and environment. All of these factors help us to interpret and understand a child's overall functioning. To assess the learning needs of children with hearing loss, professionals need to be skilled in assessment and sign language, and knowledgeable about the impact of hearing loss.

Who are the assessment specialists at Children's?

Our staff are licensed professionals with backgrounds in educational psychology and child clinical psychology. They are skilled in sign language and have in-depth knowledge about cognitive functioning and the impact of hearing loss on child development.

To Learn More

- Psychiatry Intake Office
206-987-3560
- Ask your child's nurse or doctor
- www.seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services

- In the hospital, ask your child's nurse.
- From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.
- For Deaf and hard of hearing callers
206-987-2280 (TTY)

We provide consultation on classroom behavior management and ways to manage children's learning difficulties. We have extensive experience assessing the intellectual strengths and weaknesses of deaf and hard-of-hearing children, as well as children who are nonverbal or who have other communication difficulties unrelated to hearing loss.

How are costs for assessment services covered?

The cost for an assessment may be covered partially through private insurance, self-pay agreements and/or through school or agency contracts. The cost of an evaluation will vary, based on the services provided. If you are covered by private insurance, please contact your insurance company about your coverage. If you have questions about the cost of an evaluation, please call the clinic manager at 206-987-1665.

Seattle Children's offers interpreter services for Deaf, hard of hearing or non-English speaking patients, family members and legal representatives free of charge. Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call the Family Resource Center at 206-987-2201.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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