

Frequently Asked Questions about Evaluations with Dr. Karen Barnes

What is a Psychological/Psycho-Educational Evaluation and what does it assess?

A comprehensive evaluation assists in better understanding your child's functioning in areas such as memory, attention, language, social-emotional functioning, and/or behavior. This information will help you and your child's teacher, therapists, and other providers provide supports and interventions for your child that will meet their unique needs.

The following areas may be assessed through the evaluation:

- Cognitive skills (e.g., language, visual spatial, short-term memory, processing speed)
- Academic achievement skills (e.g., reading, writing, and math)
- Executive skills (e.g., organization, planning, inhibition, and flexibility)
- Language
- Attention
- Learning and memory
- Behavioral and emotional functioning
- Social skills
- Adaptive skills (e.g., daily living skills)

Some abilities may be measured in more detail than others, depending on your child's needs. A detailed developmental history from parents as well as an interview with your child's teacher can aid in determining what specific areas may be most helpful to be assessed.

What will the results tell me about my child?

By comparing your child's test scores to scores of children of similar ages, the evaluation can create a profile of your child's strengths and challenges. The results from the evaluation can help determine if your child has problems with learning or behavior that may be interfering with their performance at school, their emotional functioning, and/or their ability to socialize with their peers. The findings can also be used by your child's school team to qualify them for academic accommodations in the classroom (e.g., a 504 Plan) or for more formal, individualized support (i.e., an Individualized Education Plan or IEP) and to help guide clinical treatments and interventions.

My goal is for families to have a clear path forward to helping their child by:

- Helping to answer your questions about your child to the best of my ability
- Collaborate to discover the best way your child learns and the way their brain works through a strengths-based and neurodiversity affirming approach
- Identify challenges and determine any appropriate diagnoses (to better understand specific brain styles and communicate with others)
- Provide a practical roadmap of next steps with individualized recommendations

What should I expect for the process?

While every assessment is individualized, the following outlines the general process of what to expect when you work with me:

- 1) Parent Intake Meeting:** A 2-hour telehealth appointment with the parent(s) to help determine the course of the assessment. Information is gathered regarding general history, main concerns, discussion of goals of assessment.
- 2) Child/Teen Testing Sessions:** Direct testing includes two to three sessions (~2-2.5 hours each). Testing involves paper and pencil and hands-on activities, answering questions, and sometimes using a computer. Parents are usually not in the room during testing. The time required depends on the child's age and what the specific areas of concern are.
- 3) Online Questionnaires:** Parents and teachers are asked to fill out standardized questionnaires about their child's development and behavior.
- 4) Conversations with teacher, tutors, and therapists:** With your written consent, I may also talk with teachers, tutors, therapists, or other providers who know your child.
- 5) School Observation (optional):** It is sometimes recommended to observe your child at school during academic and social times to see how your child interacts with the learning environment.
- 6) Parent Feedback:** 90-minute telehealth appointment with parents typically scheduled ~2 weeks after testing to discuss findings and recommendations
- 7) Child/Teen Feedback (if appropriate):** 30-60 minutes telehealth or in person. Throughout our sessions, your child and I will talk about the brain and how it learns and grows. In the feedback, we discuss specifically what we learned about their brain through a strengths-based approach.
- 8) Written Evaluation Report:** You will receive a detailed evaluation report approximately 3-4 weeks after the feedback which contains any specific diagnoses, testing results, background information, and most importantly an individualized plan with concrete recommendations for home and school.

The evaluation process typically spans 6 to 8 weeks, from the initial parent interview to the completion of the written report. In the case of divorced or separated parents, I do require both parents to consent (i.e., sign my policies and procedures form) to the evaluation. Please let me know if you have any questions about this.

What is the cost of the evaluation?

The fee for an evaluation varies depending on the scope and complexity of the assessment. The goal is to address your questions, which means the assessment measures I use may vary depending on the specific reason that led you to seek an assessment (I may use fewer or more measures). Therefore, there is a range (approximately \$3500-\$5000) in the fees associated with the assessment. A better estimate of cost can be discussed further at your intake appointment.

Fee Schedule: Fees are billed hourly. You will be billed at the following times:

- 1) At the parent intake (\$500 for the 2-hour appointment)
- 2) At each of the testing session for administration and scoring/interpretation, questionnaires/scoring, record review (\$260/hour)
- 3) At your feedback meeting for the meeting, collaboration with providers, data scoring/interpretation, record review, and report writing (\$260/hour). You can estimate about half the cost of the evaluation will be charged at the final feedback appointment.

Do you take insurance?

No, I am an out-of-network provider and do not contract with any insurance companies. Payment is due at the time of service and is billed electronically via credit card or health savings account card. I do provide insurance receipts (i.e., “superbills”) at the end of the evaluation process to families who wish to submit claims for insurance reimbursement. It is each client’s responsibility to inquire with their insurance about their out-of-network benefits so that they know what to expect upon submission of insurance claim forms.

My insurance is asking for procedure codes (e.g., “CPT” codes), what codes do you use?

Below is an example of my assessment process with CPT codes and the general range of hours: (purple = may be added if necessary)

Type of Appointment/Reason for Visit	Who	Method	CPT Code
Intake (general history, main concerns, discussion of assessment goals)	Parent	Telehealth (2 hours)	90791
Cognitive testing, academic testing, executive functioning, and social emotional	Child/Teen	In-person (5-8 hours)	96136 96137
Social skills, executive function, adaptive functioning, psychiatric symptoms	Parents, Teens, Teachers	Online questionnaires (2-3 hours)	96136 96137
Collaboration with other providers	Other Providers	Phone (30-90 minutes)	90887
Observation of child’s socialization in additional contexts	School/Child	School observation (1-2 hours)	
Feedback to discuss findings and recommendations	Parents	Telehealth (1.5 hours)	96131
Feedback to review findings and recommendations	Child/Teen	Telehealth (30-60 minutes)	96131
Scoring	NA	Office (1-2 hours)	96136 96137
Interpretation	NA	Office (1-2 hours)	96130 96131
Report writing	NA	Office (2.5-4 hours)	96131