– Dr. Judy Ho –

Clinical and Forensic Neuropsychologist

# Neuropsychological Evaluations for Children and Teens

*A guide for parents and caregivers*

## What Is a Neuropsychological Evaluation?

A neuropsychological evaluation looks closely at how your child's brain is developing and working, and how that shows up at school, at home, and with friends. The goal is to understand why a child or teen is struggling, whether cognitively, emotionally, or behaviorally, and to identify the strengths we can build on.

Evaluations are conducted by Dr. Judy Ho, a triple board-certified neuropsychologist with board certification in pediatric neuropsychology, together with her psychometrician and staff. Findings guide an evidence-based plan that Dr. Judy can coordinate with your child's school, pediatrician, and other providers.

## Common Reasons for an Evaluation

- Learning differences, including difficulties with reading (such as dyslexia), writing, or math
- Inattention, hyperactivity, or impulsivity (ADHD)
- Executive functioning challenges, such as planning, organizing, getting started on tasks, or managing time
- Slow processing speed
- Speech and language delays or difficulties
- Visual-spatial, visual-motor, or fine motor difficulties, including handwriting
- Intellectual or developmental disability
- Questions about autism
- Anxiety, depression, or significant mood swings
- Behavior difficulties at home or school
- Academic struggles or underperformance
- Learning and functioning after a medical or neurological condition, such as epilepsy, concussion or traumatic brain injury, brain tumor, hydrocephalus, or premature birth
- Giftedness alongside learning or other challenges (sometimes called twice-exceptional)

Not every evaluation ends in a diagnosis. Even when it does not, the results show which teaching approaches, supports, and accommodations will help your child make progress in school, with friends, and at home.

## What Happens During the Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation combines testing with a careful look at your child's history and daily life. Testing is done one-on-one in Dr. Judy's office and is kid-friendly: children answer questions

aloud, draw, solve puzzles, and use paper and pencil or a tablet. Testing can total 9 to 10 hours, so it is usually spread across two or more sessions with plenty of breaks.

**Getting to know your child**

- Interviews with you and your child, and input from teachers when possible
- Review of medical, developmental, and school history, including report cards, prior testing, and IEP or 504 plans
- Behavior rating scales completed by parents, teachers, and sometimes your child
- Questions about family background and home life, including family medical and mental health history, so that diagnoses are accurate and recommendations fit your family

**Areas we assess**

- Intellectual ability and academic skills in reading, writing, and math
- Attention, processing speed, and executive functioning
- Language, and verbal and visual memory
- Visual-spatial and visual-motor skills (for example, copying designs or picturing how a folded shape will look)
- Social understanding and the everyday adaptive skills your child uses at home and in the community
- Emotional and behavioral functioning, through structured diagnostic interviews based on the DSM-5-TR, questionnaires, and personality measures. Some evaluations also include tasks such as describing pictures or finishing sentences, which can reveal thoughts and feelings a child may not put into words.

No single test fits every child. Dr. Judy selects the measures that best answer the questions you have about your child. Identifying needs early also means support can start sooner, so there is no reason to wait until problems become severe.

## Preparing for the Evaluation

- Make sure your child gets a good night's sleep and eats breakfast.
- If your child takes medication, let us know in advance and give it as usual on testing days unless we advise otherwise.
- Bring glasses, hearing aids, or any other devices your child uses.
- Send prior evaluations (even from early childhood), report cards, and IEP or 504 documents before the first appointment.
- Keep the explanation simple and positive. Your child will be doing puzzles, games, and activities with someone whose job is to learn how they think best, and there is nothing to study for.

## Feedback Session

Dr. Judy reviews the results and recommendations with parents or guardians in a feedback session. Older children and teens may join part of the session when it is appropriate for their age and

maturity. With your consent, results can be shared with your child's school, pediatrician, therapist, or referring provider, and we will help connect your family with specialists as needed.

## The Written Report

You will receive a detailed report covering your child's history, the tests given and what the results mean, the reasoning behind any diagnoses, and specific recommendations. These may include therapy or other interventions, strategies for home and studying, and school accommodations and modifications. The report is written to be useful to you as well as to your child's school and providers.

## Fees

Fees depend on the type of evaluation and your child's needs. We are happy to talk through scope and cost with you before you schedule.