

ADHD ASSESSMENT

What is An ADHD Assessment?

An ADHD assessment is a comprehensive evaluation that helps to answer whether your child experiences differences in their brain's ability to regulate attention/activity levels. It can provide insights into your child's:

- Cognitive Profile
- Academic performance and screen for co-occurring learning problems

What's Included in the Assessment?

APPOINTMENT 1 *Parent interview (1hr)*

- Parent Interview (1 hour) Young DIVA
A collaborative discussion exploring:
- Learning and emotional/social history
 - Organisational skills, executive functioning skills
 - Sleep and energy levels
 - Current concerns at home and school
 - Educational, medical, and family background

APPOINTMENT 3 *Cognitive Assessment (2hrs)*

- Assessment Tools: WISC-V (ages 6–16) or
WPPSI-IV (ages 2.5–7) or WAIS (16+)
Evaluates:
- Verbal comprehension, visual-spatial skills, fluid reasoning, working memory, processing speed

A cognitive assessment helps the psychologist to better understand your child's cognitive profile. This can help us to identify individual strengths and weaknesses. Commonly, ADHDers will have spiky profiles, with lower working memory and processing speed.

APPOINTMENT 2 *Teacher/Tutor consultation (30 mins)*

- Teacher/Tutor Interview (30 mins to 1 hour) Young DIVA
A collaborative discussion exploring:
- Learning and emotional/social history
 - Organisational skills, executive functioning skills
 - Current concerns at school
 - Classroom accommodations/behaviour

APPOINTMENT 4 *Academic Assessment (2hrs)*

- Assessment Tool: WIAT-III
Evaluates:
- Reading and comprehension, writing and spelling, maths skills, oral language abilities

An educational assessment helps the psychologist to assess for difficulties with reading, writing and maths but also helps to observe behaviour in a session with classroom demands.

It provides an opportunity to observe cognitive effort from the young person in real-time whilst also providing an opportunity to assess their own insights.

APPOINTMENT 5 *Feedback Session (1hr)*

- Clear explanation of assessment findings
- Diagnosis (if applicable)
- Tailored strategies for home and school
- Comprehensive written report with results and recommendations

Fees

With a General Psychologist: \$2200 Deposit of \$300 then 2 instalments x \$600 and a final instalment of \$700, paid across the assessment appointments. If we do not require all assessment sessions to answer your referral cost, then the overall cost is reduced.

Frequently Asked Questions

I've heard I might be able to go straight to a paediatrician or psychiatrist for a diagnosis. Is this true?

Yes, there are multiple pathways to an ADHD diagnosis which does make it tricky for families to know which pathway to take. If you are already linked in with a paediatrician, then it may be most efficient (and cost effective) to book a consultation with them to consider whether they can confirm a diagnosis for your child or teen. Sometimes, paediatricians will recommend further assessment with a psychologist to consider a child's cognitive and academic profile before they confirm a diagnosis. For example, if a child is struggling with their learning, a psychological assessment may be necessary to consider alternate diagnoses or co-morbid presentations.

Paediatricians and psychiatrists support ADHDers by considering whether medication may reduce symptomatology and improve quality of life. Not all families are seeking medication and querying ADHD diagnosis may be more about supporting the young person (and their parents) to understand more about their brain and put in strategies/accommodations to support them at home and at school. Some families choose diagnosis through a psychologist for a more comprehensive assessment. If medication is something you are seeking, then often going straight to a paediatrician or psychiatrist will be the most cost-effective process.

If you are not sure which pathway to take, booking a parent session with a Mind & Seek psychologist as a starting point can be helpful. We understand that it is a costly process for families and aim to suggest the most efficient, comprehensive and cost-effective pathway for your family.

My child already has a psychologist at Mind & Seek, do I need to go through the whole assessment process?

At Mind & Seek, we understand that our assessments are a big cost for families. We aim to keep the assessment process as efficient and cost-effective as possible. If a client is familiar to us, we can tailor the assessment package above to include the essential parts of the assessment required to ensure confidence in our clinical decision making. In these instances, the psychologist may already have insight into observable or reported behaviours in session and will reduce assessment sessions where possible. It is also important that our psychologist schedule targeted sessions to help their decision making, which might mean going over behaviours previously mentioned. Our report writing time is often the same whether the client is existing or new to us.

What are the benefits of diagnosis?

Many parents are unsure how diagnosis will benefit their child, especially if they appear to be functioning well at school and at home.

One of the big benefits of diagnosis is helping the young person to better understand themselves. In our line of work, we have a front row seat to the cognitions children have about themselves. Many ADHDers feel different from others and if undiagnosed, they do not understand why. Some ADHDers blur our answers, finish other people's sentences, have difficulty waiting their turn or interrupt people because their brain is working a million miles an hour. Other ADHDers can appear daydreamy and preoccupied, disorganised and forgetful. They can struggle to start and finish tasks and can appear easily distracted and unfocused. Others find ways of accommodating for their cognitive effort by masking or hiding their behaviours, which can lead to cognitive fatigue. Negative feedback from others can prompt cognitions such as, "what's wrong with me?" "why did I just say that?" "why can't I listen like everybody else?" "why can't I relax?" "I must be stupid."

As cognitive demands increase with schooling, sometimes the differences become easier to see, and this can cause anxiety, depression and social withdrawal. Understanding brain differences and coming up with a family plan to accommodate for them at home and at school can help a child feel seen and heard and help them to develop a positive self-concept.

Post-diagnosis, parents and teachers often better understand the ADHDer and can seek resources themselves to help manage challenging behaviours (such as intense emotions) and promote the young person's independence.