

# **Pediatric Neuropsychology Associates**

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## **Addendum Informed Consent for Neuropsychological Evaluation via Telehealth During the Covid-19 Pandemic**

This document contains important information about your decision to conduct a neuropsychological assessment online (via tele-assessment) in light of the public health crisis.

### **What is Teleneuropsychological Assessment?**

Teleneuropsychological assessment is a form of evaluation provided through internet technology that can include interviews, surveys, and other tasks using interactive audio, visual, or data communications. Teleneuropsychological assessment has the same purpose as in-person neuropsychological assessment sessions; however, due to the nature of the technology used, tele-assessment may be experienced somewhat differently than face-to-face assessment sessions.

### **Benefits and Limitations of Online Assessment**

Remote assessment allows us to conduct an evaluation at a time when it is not possible to complete face-to-face testing. While remote evaluations allow us to make determinations about your child's difficulties and needs, there are also differences between in-person and remote assessments. In addition, there are some aspects of remote assessment that you should be aware of. For example:

- Risks to confidentiality: Other people (e.g., people in another room of your home) could overhear your child or the doctor if your child is not in a private place. It is also important for you to protect the privacy of your child's testing session on your computer or other devices. For example, avoid using a public Wi-Fi system and only use secure, password-protected networks for remote sessions.
- Problems with the technology: While technology will allow us to complete an evaluation when it might not otherwise be possible, there are several factors to consider as well. For example, video chat may stop working during an assessment session. If it stops more than once or twice, we may have to end and reschedule the session. Disruptions to video service may interfere with test administration, and additional tests may need to be added to get valid information. The video chat system we use is privacy-protected, but no system is perfect. Although a breach of confidentiality is not likely because we use end-to-end encryption and a password protected system, it is possible. Updated encryption methods, firewalls, and back-up systems will be used by our office to help keep your information safe.

- Emergencies during testing: As your child will be performing tests without another adult in the room, we will develop a response plan in case your child needs assistance or an emergency happens (e.g., your child injures himself/herself). A guardian must remain in the home for the duration of each evaluation session.
  
- Accuracy of Remote Testing: There has been limited research on neuropsychological testing done in the home by internet without a trained clinician or technician present. Studies so far suggest that tests may give similar results, but results may differ somewhat from those obtained from in-person testing. The way tests are administered has to be modified to do them online. These changes may affect the results. Because of that, individual test scores may not be as precise and will need to be interpreted with greater caution; however, it is believed that your child's overall performance will still give us meaningful information about his/her difficulties. Because evaluations will not happen face-to-face, there are some aspects of your child's behavior that may not be seen. Therefore, information about your child's behavior gained through parent interview, school records, and teacher reports may be weighted more heavily. All information available will be used to understand your child's difficulties. Although the NYS Department of Education allows for remote assessments when determining a child's special education needs, some organizations (e.g., school, court) might require other information (beyond that obtained as part of this evaluation) to make eligibility determinations.
  
- There are also other factors that may affect remote testing:
  - If you or your child has little or no experience with using technology;
  - If there is another person in the room, like a parent, or a caregiver;
  - If English is not your child's first language;

### **Appropriateness of Telepsychology**

Teleneuropsychological evaluations will only be offered to children who appear (based on initial interview) to be good candidates for this type of evaluation. If, once the evaluation begins, it is determined that remote assessment is not a good fit for your child, we will discuss whether changes to the evaluation are possible or if we need to wait until face-to-face assessment is available.

### **Confidentiality**

The extent of confidentiality and the exceptions to confidentiality that are outlined in the **Confidentiality Disclosure** still apply to remote testing. Please let me know if you have any questions about exceptions to confidentiality.

### **Recordings**

You agree that you and your child will not record any remote sessions in any way, unless we have both consented in writing. You also agree that you and your child will not make copies of the tests or materials sent to you. In addition, you and your child will not send, give, or show the tests, questionnaires, or other assessment materials to anyone other than a licensed psychologist.

**Informed Consent**

This consent adds to the general assessment informed consent signed by you at the beginning of our work together. It does not change any part of that agreement. Your signature below shows that you understand and agree with this consent agreement's terms and conditions.

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Signature of Patient (if 18 years of age or older)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent (if child is less than 18 years of age)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date