



Dr. Stephanie Cristina, C.Psych.
Clinical & Educational Psychologist

Informed Consent:

Psychological/Psycho-educational Assessment

- 1) Psychological assessment involves individual testing conducted alone with the client, in addition to observation of the client, administration of rating scales, and interviews with the client*, parents**, teachers and other relevant professionals, as deemed appropriate. Tests administered are chosen by Dr. Cristina, based on the assessment questions brought forward by the client and/or parents. Tests administered have research evidence to support their reliability and validity, and they are administered in a standardized manner. Dr. Cristina has been fully trained in the administration and interpretation of all tests used.
- 2) A comprehensive written report of test results, diagnoses (if appropriate) and recommendations will be provided to the client and/or parents at the completion of the assessment; the client will be informed that the things he or she says and does during the process may be shared in the report, and/or during the feedback meeting. Legal limits of confidentiality will also be discussed (see policy form), and the client will be informed that sharing of information in the case of assessment is different from that of therapy. The results and report will be discussed in person, at a feedback meeting, unless the client/parents decline this opportunity. The report belongs to the client/parents and can be shared at their discretion; Dr. Cristina's consent is not required. A copy of the report will be kept in the client's file in a secure storage area (see policy form). It will be destroyed with the rest of the file 10 years following the client's 18th birthday.
- 3) Testing provides information about the client's cognitive abilities, academic skills and learning profile. It is conducted in an objective and unbiased manner. Rating scales may be completed by the client and parents, as well as teachers, or other involved adults (with the client/parent's permission) to obtain information about the client's achievement, behaviour, and/or social/emotional functioning. Information gained from rating scale responses will be summarized in the assessment report and shared with the client/parent.
- 4) Tests are designed to be engaging for clients, and most clients find the process a positive experience. Some may find it tiring, or they may feel anxious about their performance; however, all attempts are made to ensure the client feels comfortable and secure. Dr. Cristina administers the tests at the client's pace, and in a manner which is aimed to ensure the client can best demonstrate his or her abilities and skills. Breaks are taken when it is deemed the client needs a rest. The amount of time taken to complete testing varies with each individual client, as well as the goals of

the assessment. More or less time may be required, depending on the client's mental energy, attention span, and speed of processing. The client and parents have the right to withdraw from the assessment at any time. Dr. Cristina will not commence an assessment with a client who is obviously not consenting to the process, or who is attending under duress.

- 5) An assessment provides detailed information about the client's learning strengths and weaknesses, as well as his/her cognitive, academic, and emotional-behavioural functioning. Only a registered psychologist or psychological associate is legally qualified to administer most psychological tests (e.g., WISC-V), and to make a diagnosis based on assessment findings. Diagnoses are made according to criteria outlined by the American Psychiatric Association (DSM-V). It should be noted that some educational designations (e.g. "Gifted", "Mild Intellectual Delay") are not diagnoses; rather, the criteria are determined by school boards, and thus identification can vary, depending on the school a student attends. Based on the test results, Dr. Cristina will make recommendations regarding appropriate intervention and/or treatment. These recommendations are only suggestions, and it is the right of the client/parents to determine whether recommendations are followed. If the report is shared with the client's school, or other professionals, plans for intervention and treatment can only be implemented with the consent of the client/parents.
- 6) Should the client/parents have concerns about the assessment results/diagnoses/recommendations, they should discuss these concerns with Dr. Cristina, who will do her best to collaborate in a way that ensures full understanding of the findings, and satisfaction with the report. Some tests (eg. cognitive testing) cannot be re-administered for a specified period of time (usually two years), as results can be invalid due to practice effects. Clients are free to share the report, and/or consult with other professionals regarding the tests administered, results, and recommendations; however, only a registered psychologist is fully qualified to interpret test data. Test responses and raw data can be shared with a registered psychologist with the written consent of the client/parents.
- 7) Should a diagnosis (e.g., Specific Learning Disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder) be indicated by the assessment findings, Dr. Cristina will communicate this diagnosis in the assessment report, and in person to the client/parents. In most cases, having a diagnosis is perceived to be a positive outcome of the assessment process, as it helps all involved to understand the client's needs, as well as appropriate intervention strategies. In a small minority of cases, clients have found that having a diagnosis can cause them to feel "labelled" and sometimes misunderstood by others; Dr. Cristina will take all steps necessary to ensure that the diagnosis is fully understood by the client, and her report will fully explain how this diagnosis was made, in order to reduce the chance of misunderstanding, or ill-treatment.

I, Dr. Stephanie Cristina, C.Psych., have reviewed the above information with my client(s), and I have answered any questions which were forthcoming regarding the nature, purpose, process and potential outcomes of assessment. By signing below, I acknowledge that I have fully informed my client to the best of my ability, and I have deemed that their consent is based on a full understanding of the process.

Stephanie Cristina, Ph.D., C.Psych.

Member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario #3814

I have read the above, and Dr. Cristina has reviewed the information with me, answering any questions I had. By signing below, I acknowledge that I have been fully informed regarding the nature, purpose, and process of assessment, and I am giving consent with full understanding.

Parent/guardian of _____

**client refers to the person undergoing assessment, regardless of age. If the client is under the age of 16, parental consent is required to engage in assessment, and the report is provided to the parents. Persons 16 years of age or older must consent to the assessment themselves, and the report is provided directly to them; if parents are to receive the information, the client must consent.*

***parent refers to the legal guardian(s) of a child under the age of 16 years.*