

"We're Going to Have Learn All About You"

How to Talk to Your Child About Their Neuropsychological Evaluation

First, What Is a Neuropsychological Evaluation?

(So you feel calm and clear *before* you talk to them.)

A neuropsych evaluation is a series of tests that help understand:

- **How your child thinks, learns, remembers, and solves problems**
- How their **attention, emotions, behavior, and social skills** work together
- Their **strengths and needs** — so parents, teachers, and doctors can support them better

It usually includes:

- **Fun tasks** (games, puzzles, memory challenges, drawing, etc.)
 - **Questionnaires** for you and sometimes their teachers
 - Talking with a specialist (a psychologist) who's really good at understanding how brains work — not to judge, but to help
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What to Say to Your Child (Scripts by Age & Personality)

If they're young (5–8) and anxious:

"You're going to meet a grown-up who wants to get to know your brain — like a brain helper. You'll do games, puzzles, and answer questions. It's not about getting everything right — it's just so we can understand how to help you learn and feel your best."

"It's not a test like school. No grades. No wrong answers. Just your brain being your brain."

If they're school-age (8–12) and curious:

“This is a way for us to learn more about how your brain works — what helps you focus, learn, and manage tricky feelings. We want to make sure school and home are working for you.”

“It's not about fixing you — because you're not broken. It's about understanding you better, like detective work for your brain.”

If they're a teen and skeptical or sensitive:

“This isn't a test you pass or fail. It's a deep dive into how your mind works — and how we can make things easier, smarter, or less overwhelming for you.”

“A lot of teens find this helpful — even if it feels weird at first. The psychologist isn't there to judge, just to understand.”

Reassure Without Overpromising

- **You can say:**
 - “It might feel a little boring or tiring, but it's not a trick or a trap.”
 - “You can ask for breaks and snacks.”
 - “You can say ‘I don't know’ or ‘Can you repeat that?’ any time.”
 - **Avoid saying:**
 - “It'll be easy.” (Some parts might feel hard.)
 - “You'll get a diagnosis.” (We don't know that yet, and it can create anxiety.)
 - “It's just like school.” (That may increase dread.)
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What If They Ask, “Is Something Wrong With Me?”

You can say:

“Nope. You're just you. And we want to understand *how* your brain works so we can make sure the world fits you better — not the other way around.”

Or:

“Sometimes the world assumes everyone learns and thinks the same way. But we know that’s not true. This is just a way to make sure we’re doing the best we can to support you.”



Pro Tips for the Day Of:

- Let them **bring a fidget, favorite snack, or comfort item**
 - Pack water, and dress comfortably
 - Plan a **fun, low-pressure activity afterward** — ice cream, movie night, or a favorite meal
 - Don’t quiz them about how they did afterward — just say:
“I’m proud of you. That was a big thing, and you did it.”
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Final Reminder

Your child may not understand everything about the evaluation — and that’s okay. What matters most is that they:

- Feel safe
- Know it’s not a punishment
- Understand this is about **support**, not **shame**

Your calm and curiosity will set the tone. If you frame it with warmth, your child will follow your lead.