

Are School Psychology services the same as those provided in health care settings and private offices?

School Psychology services are different from those provided in other settings such as hospitals and private clinics. **The focus of School Psychology services is to help students succeed in their school program.** School Psychologists are one of the student services professionals who provide support to students in our schools. School Psychologists work with teachers, teacher assistants, resource teachers, speech-language pathologists, guidance counsellors and other school personnel to address the academic, behavior and social-emotional needs of students. They may also work with professionals from outside agencies and always involve parents/guardians in their work, to the extent possible.

It is important to note that School Psychology services, including psych-educational assessments, are provided to assist students with school programming. They are not completed for other agencies or in response to personal family requests. School Psychologists do not respond to direct referrals from parents/guardians or outside agencies. Rather, referrals must follow the School Planning Team process outlined in this brochure.

Where can I get more information?

School Psychologists are important members of the student services teams in our schools. As valued members of our regional support staff, they add to the program supports that are available to students. More information on School Psychology services may be obtained by referring to the following chart:

Topic	Contact
Referrals for School Psychology Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinator of Student Services: 902-625-7133
Parental consent for School Psychology Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinator of Student Services: 902-625-7133
Copies of psychological assessment reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Principal
Student Records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Centre and Provincial Student Records Policies: www.ednet.ns.ca www.srce.ca
General inquiries and to access additional copies of this brochure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 902-625-2191/ 1-800-650-4448 www.srce.ca srce@srce.ca

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Strait Regional Centre for Education
Programs and Student Services

School Psychology Services

A Guide for Parents/Guardians



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Who are School Psychologists?

School Psychologists are professionals who have completed university training in a range of areas, including child development, behavior, learning differences, counseling, assessment and mental health. They possess a graduate degree in psychology and other essential credentials, including supervised work experience in psychology. In Nova Scotia, all psychologists must be registered with the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners. They complete continuing education to maintain their professional certification.

What services do School Psychologists provide?

School Psychologists are assigned to a circuit of schools. They provide a variety of indirect and direct services to students with learning, behavioral and/or social-emotional challenges.

Indirect services may include:

- consultation with teachers and parents/guardians on school programs;
- participation in school planning teams and program planning teams; and
- facilitation of training sessions for school personnel and parents.

Direct services may include:

- counseling services;
- school crisis response;
- psych-educational assessments; and
- behavioral assessments.

School Psychologists work with students, parents, teachers, and other professionals to deliver these services using a team approach.

How can my child access School Psychology services?

In order to access School Psychology services, a referral must be made to the School Planning Team. The School Planning Team is made up of administrators, teachers and regional student services personnel who meet on a regular basis to discuss the programming needs of students. If the team determines that a student should access School Psychology services, a referral to the School Psychologist is then completed. **Written, informed parental consent is required for any formal, individual psychological assessment. Parents have the right to receive a copy of the assessment report. We suggest that you keep a copy of the assessment report for future reference.**

If you have concerns about your child's academic or behavioral performance at school, you may wish to speak with a teacher, the chair of the School Planning Team or a School Psychologist to discuss the matter. Such consultation is often helpful in determining if a student should be referred for School Psychology services.

The School Planning Team handles referrals and sets the wait list for School Psychology services. While professionals from outside agencies may recommend that a student receive School Psychology services, the School Planning Team determines how School Psychology services are allocated in the building. Although school personnel appreciate information from outside professionals, Regional Centre personnel determine how School Psychology services are delivered in our schools.

What is a psych-educational assessment?

A psych-educational assessment is a formal, individual assessment of a student's:

- ability (how they learn);
- academic achievement (what they have learned so far in different school subjects);
- attention (how long and how well they can focus on school work); and
- perception and memory (eye-hand coordination, sequencing skills, speed of processing information in the classroom, short- and long- term retention of information learned at school).

The assessment is made up of observations, interviews and tests. It involves the collection of information from many sources and may include discussion with the student, parent interviews, consultation with teachers, classroom observations and a review of student records. The assessment provides a general description of where your child's learning strengths and challenges lie. It also describes how the student is performing in key subjects at school, especially reading, writing, and mathematics. All of the assessment information is used to develop an appropriate school program for the student. It is not used for labeling.

Where are the assessment reports on my child kept?

Psych-educational assessment reports prepared by Regional Centre staff are the property of the Strait Regional Centre for Education. The reports are kept in Confidential Student Records at the school. Please check the back of this brochure for more information.