

FSL FAQs

POPARD Family - School Liaison Newsletter



FAQ: WHAT IS A PSYCH-ED?

A “psych-ed” is a short form for “psychoeducational assessment.” It is defined by its function.

What is the Function of a Psych-Ed?

According to the Ministry of Education and Childcare, psychoeducational assessments serve diagnostic and planning functions for students with special needs by assisting teachers and parents in understanding the nature of a special need, developmental factors, and educational, social, emotional, and career implications. Assessment information is used to plan, set goals, and select teaching and behaviour intervention strategies and evaluation [[Special Education Policy Manual \(gov.bc.ca\)](#), p. 30].

What is a Psych-Ed?

The content of psychoeducational assessments varies, depending on the purpose of an assessment and issues that might emerge during an assessment. Nevertheless, all Psych-eds will include evaluation of:

- cognitive ability (general intellectual ability and areas of specific intellectual function)
- Achievement in one or more basic academic skills (reading, writing, and arithmetic)

Often they will include:

- developmental history (especially language and motor skills from birth to the present)
- medical history, including hearing and vision (from birth)
- school history (from preschool or kindergarten to the present)
- social-emotional functioning (social relationships with family, friends, and others)

Sometimes they will include evaluation of:

- adaptive functioning (how an individual functions in their daily life)

What does a Pysch-Ed look like?

Psychoeducational assessments are known by their form - a written report shared with the parent/guardian, the school-based team, and, when appropriate, the student. The Ministry expects school staff to inform parents as to how the report is shared with all who work with the student (op. cit.).

Report findings may include diagnoses of one of two common *neurodevelopmental* conditions:

- Intellectual Developmental Disorder
- Specific Learning Disorder

As needed, recommendations for treatment of any conditions found are also in the report.

Treatment might include:

- additional assessment by a specialist
- classroom accommodations to allow a student to participate in the regular curriculum
- modifications to a student's educational plan if they are not able to participate in the regular curriculum, and/or
- remedial intervention to develop one or more skills to assist a student in participating in the regular curriculum as much as possible

Who provides Psych-Eds?

Providers of psychoeducational assessments include Registered Psychologists, with expertise in school psychology, and Licensed School Psychologists.

- Licensed School Psychologists may diagnose intellectual developmental disorders and learning disorders, if appropriate;
- Registered Psychologists may diagnose the above, and, according to their training and experience, may also diagnose:
 - Communication (language) Disorders
 - Autism Spectrum Disorder
 - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
 - Other mental health disorders

You can verify Licensed School Psychologists and Registered Psychologists at: [Verify a Registrant - College of Psychologists of British Columbia](#). More information is available in POPARD FAQs: *What "professional" supports are available in schools?* and *How do I find professionals (professional services) outside of school in my community?*

Where are Psych-Eds performed?

In-School Assessments

Registered Psychologists or Licensed School Psychologists employed by schools provide psychoeducational assessments at school for students referred by a school-based team.

Public Health Authority Assessments

Public health authorities employ Registered Psychologists who provide assessments, including psychoeducational assessments, to children and adults at a public facility, such as a hospital or mental health centre.

Private Assessments

Registered Psychologists in private practice provide psychoeducational assessments at a private office or clinic for students referred by their parents. Parents seeking a psychoeducational assessment by a private practitioner should ensure that their provider is registered with the College of Psychologists of British Columbia.

What do Psych-Eds cost?

There is no charge for public school district or Health Authority assessments. Practitioners in private practice charge for their services.

**IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR
WOULD LIKE FURTHER INFORMATION
CONTACT POPARD'S
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