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The Center for School Success (CSS), a non-profit organization established in 2003, is located in West Lebanon, New Hampshire on the border of New Hampshire and Vermont. CSS offers both a nationally recognized assessment model and professional development programs that incorporate brain-based research as a means to detect, understand and describe specific breakdowns in learning. CSS provides services specifically focused on ways to better understand and manage students' unique learning profiles (in school and at home), by providing strategies to promote self-advocacy and school success.

CSS Learning Assessment Fact Sheet for Clinicians

What Is the CSS Approach To Differences In Learning?

CSS recognizes and appreciates that everyone has a mixed profile of learning strengths and weaknesses. The CSS approach to differences in learning is based, in part, on the work of Dr. Mel Levine, co-founder of the All Kinds of Minds Institute in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Dr. Levine is a developmental pediatrician and author with more than 30 years of research and clinical practice. CSS has adapted the learning assessment model developed by Dr. Levine. The assessment model emphasizes that individual students have different ways of learning and succeeding in life and that observations from the student, his/her parents and teachers can provide valuable insight to the student's unique learning profile.

CSS learning assessments focus on neurodevelopmental functions and how they affect the way a student learns and performs. CSS individualized assessments are specifically designed to identify neurodevelopmental strengths and weaknesses, and link them to academic skills. For example, CSS clinicians assess why a student may struggle with spelling by examining memory, attention, language and sequencing. The assessment is *dynamic* in that the CSS clinicians interact with the student during the process, talking about how the student approaches problems, and experimenting with possible accommodations.

Because of the dynamic nature of the CSS assessment, neither IQ nor standardized achievement test scores are provided. Labels are not used (e.g., "learning disabled", "ADD") in reports or explanations to parents. Consequently, CSS assessments are not designed to determine eligibility for special education services. However, the report can be used to better understand a student's neurodevelopmental strengths and weaknesses, the effect they have on learning, as well as, specific strategies to support school success.

How Is the CSS Approach Reflected in Its Assessments?

At the heart of the CSS philosophy is a commitment first and foremost to the student, his/her family and to the important support networks working to ensure a student's school success (e.g., teacher, school personnel, pediatrician, other health care professionals). The assessment day is designed to provide an educational experience not only for the student, but for the parent(s) as well. A CSS Family Liaison joins parents while they observe the assessment through a one-way mirror, explaining the various assessment measures and answering parents' questions. CSS assessment reports are written with the student and his/her family as the intended audience. However, sections of the report are designed to share with teachers, health care providers or other clinicians. The learning plan section contains recommendations for both home and school.

Which Students Are Best Suited for a CSS Assessment?

CSS works with school-aged children and young adults (2nd grade-college) who experience learning challenges. It focuses primarily on *learning* and *production* issues within the *general education classroom*; therefore, CSS services are **not** suitable for students with more severe learning needs, delayed cognitive functioning, or emotional/behavioral difficulties.

What is Included in a CSS Report?

Reports include several sections: an assessment summary, a learning profile summary; a customized learning plan; and a one page management plan that contains specific ways parents can help their child address his/her learning difficulties and maximize his/her strengths. Typically, parents want to share the learning profile summary and management plan with the child's teacher(s). However, CSS advises parents that a **school is not obligated** to use any information or suggestions listed in the report.

What is the Cost of a CSS Assessment?

The cost for a full CSS assessment is \$3,000; however there is a tiered fee scale available to residents who live in the Northeast region (VT, NH ME, RI, CT, MA). The tiered fee is determined by a family's adjusted gross income and ranges from \$1500-\$3000. The fee includes: 1) a comprehensive clinical review; 2) a full day of assessment with an inter-disciplinary team comprised of a developmental pediatrician, a clinical psychologist and a learning specialist; 3) a detailed written report within 6 weeks after the assessment; 4) a follow-up visit to discuss the report; and 5) another follow-up visit 4-6 months after the initial assessment. Coaching sessions with the student/parent are encouraged between the two follow-up visits. These sessions (available for an additional fee) support linking the student's profile to school experience.

Does CSS Bill Insurance?

CSS does not bill schools or insurance companies directly; however, CSS can provide an invoice with procedure codes to assist clients in obtaining reimbursement for portions of the assessment.

How Can I Make a Referral to CSS?

Please call Nancee Tracy, CSS Clinic Coordinator, at (603) 298-6700 and she will be able to assist you with the referral process. All families are asked to complete a CSS contact form prior to scheduling an appointment. This form is reviewed by the clinic team to ensure that CSS can meet the needs of individual students. In addition, the student, his/her parent(s) and teacher(s) are asked to fill out questionnaires, provide work samples and any other relevant reports once an appointment is scheduled.

What Role Can a Referral Source Play in Monitoring a Student's Progress After an Assessment?

The referral source plays an important role once CSS has identified the critical factors which affect a student's approach to learning. The information provided by a CSS assessment report can be used to monitor the student's progress in order to provide appropriate preventative strategies and support to enhance school success.

How Can I Receive More Information About The Center for School Success?

You can call CSS at (603) 298-6700 and ask to speak with Nancee Tracy, CSS Clinic Coordinator, or e-mail her at: ntracy@centerforschoolsuccess.org. You may also go to the CSS website at: www.centerforschoolsuccess.org.