What is a pediatric neuropsychological evaluation?
This evaluation uses tests and observations of behavior to look at patterns in the way a child’s thinking develops. How well a child learns, remembers, and adapts may show what treatment can help address challenges the child has.

This kind of evaluation might be ordered if a child:
- has a disability, like a learning disability
- has behavioral challenges
- has a medical condition, like a brain injury
- is on a medication that affects the brain
- has a neurological disorder such as Autism, Cerebral palsy, Tourette’s Syndrome, or Epilepsy

The evaluation usually includes:
- an interview with parents about the child’s history
- observation of and interview with the child
- testing
  - using paper and pencil
  - with hands-on activities using toys, games and cards
  - answering questions
  - sometimes using a computer

Parents may be asked to fill out questionnaires about their child’s development and behavior.

How can someone get this exam for their child?
The child’s doctor or school will need to request the evaluation. If ordered by a school, it is important to find out if the school is going to pay for the evaluation. If a doctor requests the evaluation, prior authorization may be needed from the child’s health insurance provider.

How to prepare
- Make sure the child gets plenty of rest the night before the test.
- Tell the child that no shots or medicine will be given.
- Try to leave brothers and sisters at home.
- Make sure the child does not need to go to the bathroom and is not hungry before the evaluation begins.

How can a neuropsychological evaluation help a child?
- A neuropsychological evaluation and report looks at the child’s strengths and weaknesses.
- The report will also have recommendations on how to help the child, such as learning how to use the child’s stronger skills, and suggestions for improving behavior.
- It may also help parents to know what is fair to expect from the child at this point and what the child’s future needs may be.