



Psychological Services Staff provide:

- consultative services to teachers, administrators, resource staff, and parents/guardians regarding students with learning, personal adjustment, or developmental concerns
- assessment of high-risk students for whom school staff indicate a need for further information about the student's learning profile, learning style, affective, social and/or personality development in order to establish program alternatives
- short-term supportive intervention during transition to community therapeutic services for students experiencing personal or family crisis
- supportive peer groups for high-risk students to enhance self-esteem
- assistance to families in accessing community agencies for individual and family support services
- liaison with community agencies including the exchange of confidential information with appropriate consent
- communication to school/area resource staff of educationally relevant information obtained with consent from other agencies/school boards for the purpose of improving the quality of instruction
- resource to case conferences and Special Education Identification, Placement, and Review Committees
- inservice to Board staff and parents/guardians on child and adolescent development, learning, psychosocial and emotional development, mental health, and procedures for accessing services

Referral to Psychological Services should be made for students who have complex learning, social, or emotional needs. It is expected that all students requiring placement in Intensive Support and Assessment Programs, Program for Academic and Creative Extension (Gifted), Language Support Centre, Educational Support Program, Social Communication Program and Functional Life Skills Program shall have a recent psychological assessment (i.e., within two to three years for consideration for admission to the Program). Assessment may not be required where two previous congruent assessments are on record and when the student's current performance is consistent with the earlier

psychological assessments. Psychological Services staff in conjunction with the other professionals directly involved with the student will make this determination.

Psychological assessments are needed primarily to support staff in establishing programs and determining placement alternatives for the student, and therefore referrals should come from the professionals working directly with the student in the school setting. Requests, by parents, for assessments will require agreement at the case conference that assessment is necessary.

Psychological Services staff will not ordinarily be involved in assessments for students who will be repeating, transferring, or accelerating a grade.

Referrals for psychological assessments should follow after a period of time (at least three months) during which the classroom and core resource teachers have implemented programming alternatives.

Prior to January 2004, a referral to the Psychology Department was always preceded by a School level Case Conference. As of January 2004, a new procedure was implemented. This procedure allows schools to refer to psychology at any time of the year by completing a pre-referral form (RPR1, See Appendix 7). If deemed appropriate, parental consent will then be obtained. In complex situations, referrals can also be made to psychology at School and Central Case Conferences.

Four Stages of Ongoing Assessment of Students with Learning Needs

The York Catholic District School Board uses a four-step procedure for operationalizing the evaluation of the presence of exceptional learning needs and decision making of eligibility for and provision of special education programs and related services. Psychological services becomes most active in the second stage and maintains a consultative role during most of the other stages.

These stages are:

- Stage 1:** address the learning problems prior to referral for formal psychological assessment
- Stage 2:** formalized assessment of individual learning needs
- Stage 3:** determine eligibility for special education and related services
- Stage 4:** bridge assessment to specialized instruction and accommodations, monitor and review results