Todd C. Ognibene, Ph.D., P.C.
7525 S Webster St.
Littleton, CO 80128
303 550 7832
tco.phd@gmail.com

Guide for Parents: How to Talk to Your Child About Admissions Testing

The most helpful way to describe the evaluation is as a series of **brain games, puzzles, and listening activities** designed to discover how they think, learn, and solve problems.

Sample Scripts by Age:

For Ages 6–8:
"We're going to visit someone who has fun puzzles, pictures, and memory games for kids your age. Some parts will feel easy, and some parts will be tricky, but no one is expected to get every answer right. The main job is just to try your best and see how your brain likes to solve problems!"

For Ages 9–12:
"You'll be spending time doing an evaluation for [School Name / school applications]. It's not like a regular school test - there are no grades, spelling words, or studying needed. You'll be doing a mix of visual puzzles, word challenges, and quick-thinking activities. The evaluator just wants to see how you think and work through different kinds of challenges."

What NOT to Say

To ensure your child feels comfortable and to protect the accuracy of the results:

- **Avoid calling it a "test":** Words like "test" or "exam" can trigger academic anxiety. Frame it as "activities," "games," or "a session with a learning specialist."
- **Don't practice or "prep":** Do not try to practice block designs, vocabulary lists, or memory games at home. WPPSI-IV and WISC-V scores are only valid if the tasks are unfamiliar. Over-preparing or coaching can distort the results.
- **Avoid high-stakes language:** Refrain from saying, *"If you do well, you'll get into the new school!"* High pressure creates anxiety, which can hinder memory and processing speed.
- **Don't promise perfection:** Remind them that the tasks are intentionally designed to get harder until they reach their limit - struggling on a question is a normal part of the process, not a failure.

Tips for the Day of the Assessment

- **Prioritize Rest & Meals:** Ensure your child gets a solid night's sleep and a nutritious breakfast or snack beforehand.
- **Keep the Routine Calm:** Avoid rushing on the morning of the appointment.
- **Be Honest About Time:** Let them know they'll be working one-on-one with the evaluator for about 60 to 90 minutes, with breaks if needed.
- **Offer Low-Key Motivation:** Reassure them that as long as they try their best, they've done a great job. Plan a fun, relaxed activity afterward (like a trip to the park or an ice cream shop) to celebrate their effort, regardless of how they feel they performed.