

**PSYCHOLOGICAL REPORT**  
***CONFIDENTIAL***

**Student Data:**

Name: Student Thomas

Age at Testing: 14 years, 3 months

Date of Birth: 1/25/2000

School: Middle School

Grade: 8<sup>th</sup>

Evaluation Completed: 4/30/14

Examiners: Katie Zofcin, M.A. 2nd Year Practicum Student

**Reason for Referral and Relevant Background Information:**

Student was referred for psychological testing as part of the normal three-year re-evaluation cycle for students receiving special education services. He is currently on an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for Autism. His current IEP addresses goals in the areas of communication skills, adaptive PE, comprehension, mathematics, written expression and social-emotional. Student attends all general education classes with special education support and he receives academic support in a special education daily. Student receives counseling services, speech and language support, behavior support (direct service from a 1:1 behavior therapist with monthly consultation with a BCBA), and adaptive physical education.

According to school records, a transition assessment conducted in 2002, recommended that Student be considered eligible for special education services (F, LS, and P, 2002). The first reference to a diagnosis of Autism was noted in Student's IEP in 2005 from the Public Schools in Maryland. Testing conducted in 2011 indicated significant differences between his index scores. Although testing conducted in 2011 indicated global cognitive functioning within the Borderline range, there were significant discrepancies among his index scores. For example, Student's verbal reasoning abilities (3<sup>rd</sup> percentile) and his work rate (Processing Speed – 1<sup>st</sup> percentile) fell well below the range of age expectations. His nonverbal reasoning abilities (30<sup>th</sup> percentile) were within the range of same aged peers. Student's ability to hold information in mind and manipulate it to get a result (Working Memory - 21<sup>st</sup> percentile) fell below the range of age expectations. Social emotional tasks suggested that, at times, Student might be oppositional and have difficulties with peer relations. Testing also noted that it was challenging for him to perceive abstract information that is presented in a variety of ways.

According to school records at Student's annual review and high school transition meeting, held on April 8, 2014, Student's parents expressed that they would like to see him become more independent with daily tasks throughout his day. They would like to see Student continue to make progress in being flexible when his typical routine is challenged or changed. His parents would also like to see him continue to develop his social skills in order to develop meaningful relationships with peers at school.

According to Student's academic support teacher, he has difficulty interacting with peers in the classroom setting. Most of the time he does not interact with his peers, however when he does, he tells them the date, asks when the student's birthday is, or brings up insignificant events that occurred on a specific date in the past. While in class Student can engage in group or partner work with support. He does not independently establish a group himself without the teacher assigning him to a group. Mrs. C indicated that on rare occasions Student will interact with his peers by asking, "how are you?" or stating "I like what you're wearing." Mrs. C mentioned that he rarely makes eye contact; she notices his head go down immediately when asking a question, especially if it is something important. According to Mrs. C, Student's facial expressions rarely match his emotions; he always appears to be smiling. She observes

Student to engage in repetitive behaviors, speech, and movements. Mrs. C noted that Student has a tendency to talk about the same thing over and over, especially when he is stressed. She mentioned that she observes Student to walk in circles frequently and that he can be seen flapping when he is joyful. Mrs. C noted that Student has instances of rigid patterns of thinking and likes things to be “a certain way, or it is no way.” She uses expected versus unexpected language with him when he engages in inflexible thinking. According to Mrs. C, Student is highly interested in calendar dates as well as traffic patterns and can become highly fixated on these topics.

School records indicate that prior to attending Middle School, Student attended Kindergarten through grade five at C Elementary School. Student’s term three report card indicates that he received an A in Academic Support and Physical Education; a B+ in History and Science; a B in English; and a B- in Math. It was noted on his third term report card, that his grades in Math and Science were based on modifications. On the most recent state-wide testing (MCAS), which was conducted in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Student scored within the Warning range in Math (score of 214). In the area of English Language Arts, Student takes an alternate assessment to the statewide MCAS testing, meaning that his teacher submits a portfolio of his work samples to demonstrate his mastery of the curriculum frameworks.

Student reported living at home with his mom, dad, his brother who is 12 years old and his sister who is 17 years old. Student described generally being in a happy mood. He mentioned that he takes medication for behavior and mood regulation and that he regularly sees a counselor outside of school. He stated that, outside of school, he enjoys hanging out and watching Wheel of Fortune. When asked what he wanted to be when he grew up, Student stated that he did not want to say and that it was inappropriate because it is something he was “obsessed with three years ago.” Student conveyed that his favorite subject in school is Math because he can remember everything and it is easy. He did not express having a least favorite or most challenging class. One thing Student reported wanting to change about school was to put up traffic lights in the hallways because there are too many people.

### **Tests Administered:**

Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, Fourth Edition (WISC-IV) – Standard Battery  
Delis-Kaplan Executive Function System (D-KEFS) - Selected Subtests  
A Developmental Neuropsychological Assessment, Second Edition (NEPSY-II) – Selected Subtests  
Rey-Osterrieth Complex Figure Test (ROCF)  
Behavior Assessment System for Adolescents (BASC-2) – Self-Report of Personality  
Behavior Assessment System for Adolescents (BASC-2) – Parent Rating Scales  
Behavior Assessment System for Adolescents (BASC-2) - Teacher Rating Scales  
Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function (BRIEF) – Self-Report  
Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function (BRIEF) – Parent Form  
Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function (BRIEF) – Teacher Form  
Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS-2) – Parent  
Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS-2) – Teacher  
Student interview  
Teacher interview – Mrs. C, Inclusion Facilitator (5/7/14)  
Record review

### **Behavioral Observations:**

Overall Presentation: Student completed the administered battery during four testing sessions. Each session was approximately fifty minutes. Student was friendly and cooperative throughout the sessions, engaging in spontaneous conversation between tasks as well as answering conversational questions posed.

Attention: Student exhibited good focus and attention for most of testing. Student had difficulty sustaining his attention when asked to look at the faces in pictures for a set amount of time. He tended to fidget slightly throughout the testing sessions and was observed to rock back and forth in his chair at times as well as to stand up for a short period of time before sitting back down. He was able to identify and ask for breaks when needed and utilized deep breathing during some of these breaks to regain his focus.

Attitude towards testing: Student was very enthusiastic about testing. When this examiner picked him up to begin testing, he began flapping while walking to the room, mentioning that he spoke with his mother over the break about the testing and that he was very excited. He exhibited appropriate effort, focus and attention throughout testing. He was engaged in each task, made an attempt to answer every question, and appeared motivated to put forth his best effort and do well. When his verbal responses required elaboration in order to be awarded credit, however, he did not attempt to provide additional information, he simply restated what he had already said or remarked “I don’t know” or “nothing more.” Student’s inflexible approach also impacted his performance on other tasks during testing, for example, needing to re-trace the lines he drew on trail-making as well as needing to return to the beginning of a task to correct an error on Color-Word.

### **Cognitive Functioning**

Ability levels were assessed using the WISC-IV as a basis for intellectual evaluation along with the administration of additional assessments to evaluate specific areas in greater depth. The WISC-IV is one of the most widely used scales of individual intellectual development for children and adolescents. It not only measures general intelligence but, through subtest interpretation and the development of area composite scores, generates a diagnostic profile of a student's learning style.

Psychological testing resulted in the following WISC-IV cognitive ability scores (Table 1). Interpretations from this testing suggest that Student’s nonverbal reasoning abilities, his ability to hold information in mind and manipulate it to produce a result (Working Memory) and his rate of work production (Processing Speed) are within the range of age expectations. His verbal reasoning abilities fall well below the range of age expectations. Student’s Verbal Comprehension index score is revealed to be a significant weakness when compared to his other index scores, suggesting significantly less developed ability in the area of verbal concept formation and to verbally express his fund of knowledge. His score on the VCI was significantly impacted by cognitive inflexibility; for example, he had difficulty naming another reason or another advantage when a question challenged him to give multiple responses to a question or multiple ways of seeing a situation. Because of the significant discrepancies among some of Student’s index scores, his Full Scale IQ score is not considered to be a valid measure of his global cognitive functioning, and is therefore not reported. His performance on the individual WISC-IV indices will be of greater diagnostic significance. It is also important to note that there is significant inter-subtest scatter on certain indices indicating unevenly developed abilities.

Table 1.

<b>WISC-IV Composite Scale</b>	<b>Index Score</b>	<b>Confidence Interval (95%)</b>	<b>Percentile</b>	<b>Range Descriptor</b>
Verbal Comprehension (VCI)	67	62-76	1 <sup>st</sup>	Extremely Low
Perceptual Reasoning (PRI)	94	87-102	34 <sup>th</sup>	Average
Working Memory (WMI)	97	90-105	42 <sup>nd</sup>	Average
Processing Speed (PSI)	91	83-101	27 <sup>th</sup>	Average

**Verbal Comprehension:**

Verbal comprehension is the ability to understand and manipulate verbal concepts on both a concrete and abstract level. On those WISC-IV subtests measuring this ability (Table 2)—Similarities, Vocabulary, and Comprehension—Student's composite score of 67, (1<sup>st</sup> percentile), is well below the range of age expectations. He demonstrated some strength in his ability to describe relationships between two words. However Student performed poorly on tasks requiring him to define vocabulary words and answer social judgment questions. When asked to provide elaborations in order to be awarded credit, Student demonstrated difficulty providing additional information by either restating what he already said or stating “I don’t know” or “nothing more,” which may be reflective of difficulty with flexible thinking.

Table 2.

<b>WISC-IV Verbal Comprehension Subtest Scores</b>	<b>Well Below</b>	<b>Below Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Well Above</b>
<b>Similarities</b> – Verbal concept formation: Abstract and logical reasoning with objects and ideas placed in meaningful categories.	.....	7	.....	.....	.....
<b>Vocabulary</b> – Tests ability to describe the meaning of words. Related to educational environment and language development.	3	.....	.....	.....	.....
<b>Comprehension</b> – Requires understanding of what is involved in social situations and the ability to provide answers to social problems. “Common-sense.”	3	.....	.....	.....	.....

**Perceptual Reasoning and Organization:**

Perceptual reasoning involves visual integration/organizational skills, including the ability to recognize or conceptualize shapes and to construct abstract designs. Assessments administered in this area are also designed to measure abstract, categorical reasoning ability. On the WISC-IV subtests pertinent to this area (Table 3)—Picture Concepts, Block Design, and Matrix Reasoning—Student's composite score is 94, (34<sup>th</sup> percentile), which is within the range of age expectations. The significant variability among Student’s scores on this index suggests that the overall composite score is not a valid measure of his abilities. Student’s ability to detect sequential and geometric patterns was revealed to be significantly stronger than his ability to perceive categorical relationships. Though it did not influence his score on the Picture Concept subtest, when asked to choose between numbered options, on an item for which his response was, “3, 5, 12,” Student gave the answer, “March 5, 2012,” which is reflective of his highly restricted, fixated interests as noted by his academic support teacher. On the Block Design subtest, Student was observed to engage in repetitive vocalizations stating “Red and white blocks. Blocks, blocks, blocks, blocks.”

Table 3.

<b>WISC-IV Perceptual Reasoning Subtest Scores</b>	<b>Well Below</b>	<b>Below Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Well Above</b>
<b>Block Design</b> – Tests visual perceptual organization and visual-spatial skills ability by reproducing a design with blocks. Timed test.	.....	.....	9	.....	.....
<b>Picture Concepts</b> – Categorical reasoning, student chooses a picture from each row of pictures to form a group with a common characteristic.	.....	7	.....	.....	.....
<b>Matrix Reasoning</b> – A measure of visual information processing and abstract reasoning skills.	.....	.....	11	.....	.....

**Working Memory:**

Working memory skills were assessed through the administration of several tasks designed to measure recall of orally presented material. Working memory is the ability to hold information in mind for the purpose of completing a task and it is essential to carry out multi-step activities and follow complex instructions. On the WISC-IV subtests assessing auditory memory (Table 4)—Letter-Number Sequencing and Digit Span—Student’s composite score of 97 (42<sup>nd</sup> percentile) is within the range of age expectations.

Table 4.

<b>WISC-IV Working Memory Subtest Scores</b>	Well Below	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Well Above
<b>Digit Span</b> – Short-term auditory memory, Sequencing ability and concentration. <b>Digit Span Forward:</b>			8		
<b>Digits Backward:</b>				11	
<b>Digits Total:</b>			9		
<b>Letter-Number Sequencing</b> – Involves sequencing letters & numbers demonstrating short-term auditory memory, mental manipulation and attention skills			10		

**Executive Functioning:**

Executive functioning, along with working memory, is involved in motor planning, organization, sustaining of attention/concentration, and regulation of tasks. Processing speed ability, the ability to stay on task, inhibition of distraction, and the ability to shift mental-set are specific skills assessed in this area. In addition to standardized testing, members of Student’s educational team completed behavior rating scales assessing his performance in this area.

*Processing speed/Mental flexibility:*

The two WISC-IV subtests that fall within this category--Coding and Symbol Search (Table 5)--measure the ability to quickly complete tasks involving visual scanning and short-term visual memory. Student’s composite score of 91 (27<sup>th</sup> percentile) falls within the range of age expectations, suggesting that Student’s rate of work production is similar to that of other students his age. There is a 5-point range however among Student’s performances on subtests contributing to his Processing Speed Index score, which is a significant discrepancy. This composite then should be interpreted with caution as it is not representative of the overall speed and accuracy of his mental and graphomotor processing. Analysis of the individual subtests reveals that Student’s ability to quickly and accurately complete tasks is significantly stronger when the task is more demanding of visual scanning than when the task is more demanding of fine motor output.

Table 5.

<b>WISC-IV Processing Speed Subtest Scores</b>	Well Below	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Well Above
<b>Coding</b> – Visual-motor co-ordination speed. Requires short-term visual memory. Related to skills necessary for reading and writing.		6			
<b>Symbol Search</b> – Measures visual scanning speed and symbol discrimination.			11		

The D-KEFS Trail Making Test consists of five conditions (Table 6). The primary executive function task is the Number-Letter Switching condition, a visual-motor sequencing procedure, which is a measure of flexibility of thinking. It required Student to multi-task by shifting mental set quickly in drawing a line

from a number to a letter to a number, in sequential order. On this task, Student achieved a scaled score of 9, which is within the range of age expectations and suggests that his ability to transition between activities and manage complex tasks that require simultaneous thinking and divided attention is comparable to that of his same-aged peers.

The other four conditions of this test allow the examiner to quantify and derive normative data for several key component processes needed to perform the switching task. These fundamental components include visual scanning, number sequencing, letter sequencing, and motor speed. In this way, the examiner can assess whether a deficient score on the switching condition is related to a higher-level deficit in cognitive flexibility, or to one or more impairments in the underlying component skills of the task, or to both. When compared to his same-aged peers, on most conditions Student performed within the range of age expectations with the exception of condition 2, the lead on Student’s pencil began to run low and he continued to draw over his lines until they were dark, which negatively impacted his score. Here, Student’ rigid approach to the task (needing the lines to be dark) negatively impacted his performance as it slowed his work rate considerably. On all five conditions in order to complete the task, Student moved the paper on the desk as he drew the lines, suggesting difficulty with the fine motor aspect of the tasks.

Table 6:

<b>D-KEFS: Trail Making Test Scores</b>	<b>Well Below</b>	<b>Below Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Well Above</b>
<b>Condition 1: Visual Scanning</b>	.....	. 9 .....	.....	.....	.....
<b>Condition 2: Number Sequencing</b>	.. 5 .....	.....	.....	.....	.....
<b>Condition 3: Letter Sequencing</b>	.....	. 9 .....	.....	.....	.....
<b>Condition 4: Number-Letter Switching</b>	.....	.....	11 .	.....	.....
<b>Condition 5: Motor Speed</b>	.....	.....	10 .	.....	.....

*Inhibition/Attention:*

Student’s verbal inhibition of an overlearned response and mental flexibility were assessed utilizing the D-KEFS Color-Word Interference subtest (Table 7). When asked to identify colors (Color Naming) Student performed well below the range of age expectations. During this task he made an error on the third word on the second line and went back to the beginning to start over again, which negatively impacted his score. At the end of this task Student commented, “I don’t like this, it’s really hard.” When asked to read words (Word Reading) Student performed above the range of age expectations. At the end of this task, Student mentioned that this task was much easier because he was able to read the words. When asked to identify the color ink words are printed in although it differs from the word printed, i.e. the word ‘blue’ printed in yellow ink (Inhibition) Student performed below the range of age expectations. At the end of this task Student stated “that was tricky.” When asked to identify the color ink words are printed in although it differs from the word printed, i.e. the word ‘blue’ printed in yellow ink but to change this rule for responding when a word is printed inside a little box, i.e. then read the word instead of naming the ink color (Inhibition/Switching) the pace at which Student worked was comparable to that of his same-aged peers, suggesting that Student was able to work at the same rate as same aged peers without sacrificing accuracy. When all four tasks were completed Student commented that he did not like this task because it was very hard. The below average score on the Inhibition task speaks to his difficulty thinking flexibly and inhibiting automatic responding. Perhaps his Average performance on the switching task was due to the prior exposure and Student’s practice or incase comfort level with task expectations.

Table 7

<b>D-KEFS: Color-Word Interference Test Scores</b>	Well Below	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Well Above
<b>Condition 1: Color Naming</b>	1 . . . . .	. . . . .	. . . . .	. . . . .	. . . . .
<b>Condition 2: Word Reading</b>	. . . . .	. . . . .	. . . . .	13 . . . . .	. . . . .
<b>Condition 3: Inhibition</b>	. . . . .	6 . . . . .	. . . . .	. . . . .	. . . . .
<b>Condition 4: Inhibition/Switching</b>	. . . . .	. . . . .	8 . . . . .	. . . . .	. . . . .

*Organization & Planning*

Visual organization and integration skills were assessed using the Rey-Osterrieth Complex Figure Test (Table 8). This test provides a window into Student’s ability to structure or prioritize information, to plan, and to problem solve. On the ROCF, Student was asked to replicate a complex geometric design over three trials: using the design as a model (Copy Trial), immediately recalling the design in the absence of a model (Immediate Recall Trial) and recalling the design after an approximately 15-20 minute delay (Delayed Recall Trial). His performance is evaluated on the accuracy of the drawings as well as the manner in which the drawings were organized.

Student’s approach to the figure was configurational, indicating that he encoded the “gestalt” of the figure and integrated most visual details into a cohesive whole. Although Student’s reproduction of the figure was fairly well organized, he failed to attend to some of the small visual details of the figure, such as line intersections and alignments, which negatively impacted the organization score he achieved. His performance remained consistent across recall trials, meaning that Student’s reproductions of the figure remained configurational indicating that he encoded the main centralizing feature, but he failed to attend to many of the small visual details, which negatively impacted his performance on these trials, as well.

Table 8.

<b>ROCF Scores</b>	<b>Copy</b>	<b>Immediate Recall</b>	<b>Delayed Recall</b>
Organization Basal Level:	III	III	II
Organization Percentile:	10 <sup>th</sup> -25 <sup>th</sup>	25 <sup>th</sup> -50 <sup>th</sup>	25 <sup>th</sup>
Style:	Configurational	Configurational	Configurational
Structural Accuracy Percentile:	25 <sup>th</sup> -100 <sup>th</sup>	25 <sup>th</sup>	50 <sup>th</sup> -100 <sup>th</sup>
Incidental Element Percentile:	10 <sup>th</sup>	<10 <sup>th</sup>	<10 <sup>th</sup>
Errors:	Within Normal Limits	Within Normal Limits	Within Normal Limits

*Behavior Rating Scale:*

In addition to the standardized tests of executive functioning reported above, members of Student’s educational team completed the Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function (BRIEF) (Table 9), a rating scale that examines specific behaviors in this area. Such behaviors include planning and organization skills, working memory, the ability to monitor, shift, and/or inhibit behaviors, and emotional control. BRIEF T-Scores exceeding 65 are considered clinically significant, and for the purpose of this evaluation, scores between 60 and 65 are considered sufficiently elevated to warrant ongoing attention or observation.

Both parent and teacher reports indicated that at home and in school Student is observed to have significant difficulties resisting impulses and difficulty considering consequences before acting (Inhibit); to have marked difficulty with behavioral shifting, attentional shifting, and cognitive shifting and that he has a tendency to be rigid or inflexible (Shift); having noticeable concerns regarding Student's ability to regulate or modulate his emotions and that he has a tendency to overreact to events and is likely to demonstrate sudden emotional outbursts (Emotional Control); and to have substantial difficulty with self-monitoring and he appears less aware of his own behaviors and the impact that his behaviors have on his social interactions with others (Monitor). His teacher also observes Student to have marked difficulties beginning on tasks, activities, and problem solving approaches (Initiate) and difficulties in his ability to hold an appropriate amount of information in mind or "active memory" for further processing, encoding, and manipulation (Working Memory). Student's teacher noted mild concerns in his ability to plan and organize his approach to problem solving appropriately as well as grasp the overall structure of novel information that facilitates learning and later recall (Plan/Organize).

On the BRIEF Self-Report, Student indicated mild difficulties in resisting impulses and considering consequences before acting (Inhibit), with the regulation or modulation of his emotions and may overreact to events and demonstrate sudden outbursts or mood changes (Emotional Control), and holding an appropriate amount of information in mind or "active memory" for further processing, encoding, or mental manipulation (Working Memory). He reported experiencing great difficulty with both behavioral and cognitive flexibility suggesting that he likes routine and may be unable to drop certain topics/interests and/or unable to move beyond disappointment or unmet need (Shift).



Table 9.

<i>Index/Scale</i>	<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Parent</i>	<i>Student</i>
Inhibit	<b>72</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>64</b>
Shift	<b>126</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>68</b>
Emotional Control	<b>79</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>62</b>
Initiate	<b>80</b>	53	
Working Memory	<b>67</b>	58	<b>60</b>
Plan/Organize	<b>63</b>	50	53
Organization of Materials	57	52	40
Monitor	<b>79</b>	<b>68</b>	44
Task Completion			46

\* Average: 41-59

**All Elevated scores are in bold-faced type**

### **Social/Emotional Functioning**

The Behavior Assessment System for Children, Second Edition (BASC-2) is a behavior assessment system designed to facilitate the diagnosis of a variety of emotional and behavioral disorders of children and to aid in the design of treatment plans. The BASC-2 reviews a range of clinical behaviors related to school adjustment and conduct, attention, hyperactivity, and emotional factors. Adaptive behaviors are also rated, including social, leadership, and study skills. Responses are standardized, allowing comparison of responses with a normed sample of students based on Student’s age and gender. Any score in the Clinically Significant range suggests a high level of maladjustment. Scores in the At-Risk range identify either a significant problem that may not be severe enough to require formal treatment or the potential of a developing problem that needs careful monitoring.

Student rated himself on the BASC-2 – Self Report of Personality, Adolescent Form (SRP-A) (Table 10). He reported scores in the “At Risk” range on the Attention Problems, Hyperactivity, and Atypicality scales. Student’s ratings suggest that he reports having difficulty maintaining attention; engages in a number of restless and impulsive behaviors, such as often having trouble sitting still, standing in lines, and having the need to get up and move around; and occasionally behaving in ways that are considered out of place for a student his age, such as often doing things over and over and cannot stop and often sees weird things.

Student was also rated by his mother, Mrs. A, on the BASC-2 – Parent Rating Scale (Table 11). She reported Clinically Significant ratings on the Anxiety and Atypicality scales, suggesting that at home Mrs. A observes Student exhibiting behaviors stemming from worry or nervousness and to engage in behaviors that appear out of place for a student his age and appears disconnected from his surroundings. For example, she indicated that Student often seems unaware of others, repeats an activity over and over, says things that make no sense, and hears sounds that are not there. Mrs. A’s report also yielded “At Risk” ratings in the areas of Hyperactivity, Depression, Somatization, Withdrawal, Adaptability, and Leadership. Ratings on these scales suggest that at home Student displays a moderately high number of disruptive, impulsive, and uncontrolled behaviors; exhibits depressive symptoms, such as crying easily, is negative about things, and changes his mood quickly; has a tendency to be overly sensitive and to over report minor physical problems; has a tendency to avoid social contact and lack interest in making contact in social situations; has difficulty with changes in routine and shifting from one task to another; and to exhibit less developed abilities to effectively lead others as well as have confidence in his decisions, such as never working well under pressure.

Student’s academic support teacher also rated him on the on the BASC-2 - Teacher Rating Scale (Table 12). She reported Clinically Significant ratings on the Atypicality, Withdrawal, and Adaptability scales.

Clinically Significant ratings on these scales suggest that at school his teacher observes Student to engage in behaviors that appear out of place for a student his age and often appears unaware of others; has a tendency to avoid social contact and lacks interest in making contact in social situations; and has extreme difficulty adapting to changing situations and takes much longer to recover from difficult situations than most others his age. She reported “At Risk” ratings on the Anxiety and Depression scales. Ratings on these scales suggest that at school his teacher observes Student to sometimes exhibit behaviors stemming from worrying, nervousness or fear and to at times appear withdrawn, lonely, sad or negative about things. His teacher’s report also indicated “At Risk” ratings on the Social Skills, Leadership, and Functional Communication scales. Ratings on these scales suggest that at school Student sometimes has difficulty complimenting others and never offers to help others; tends to exhibit less developed abilities to effectively lead others as well as have confidence in his decisions, such as never working well under pressure and never makes decisions easily; and to sometimes have difficulty in his ability to express ideas and communicate in a way that others can easily understand.

Table 10.

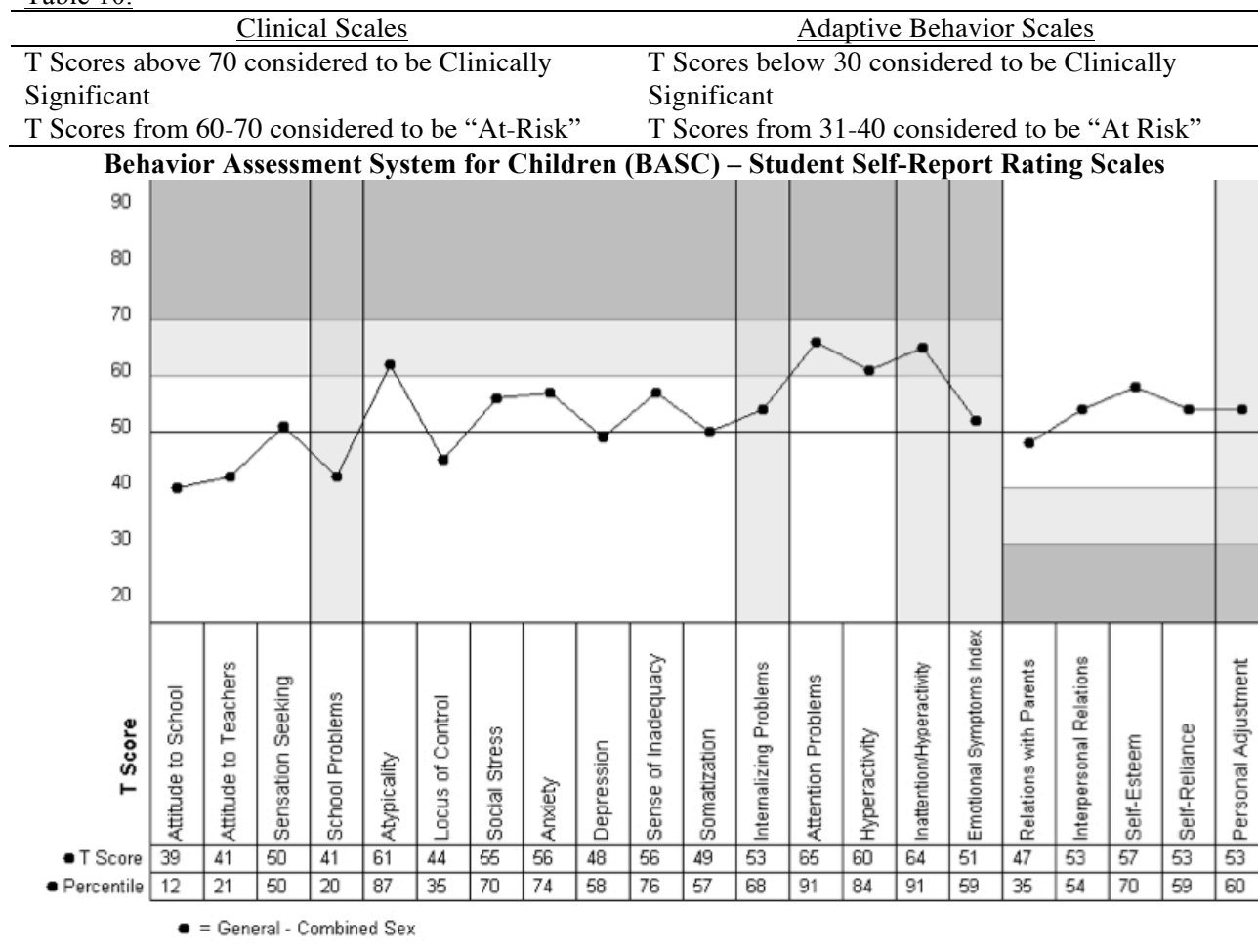


Table 11

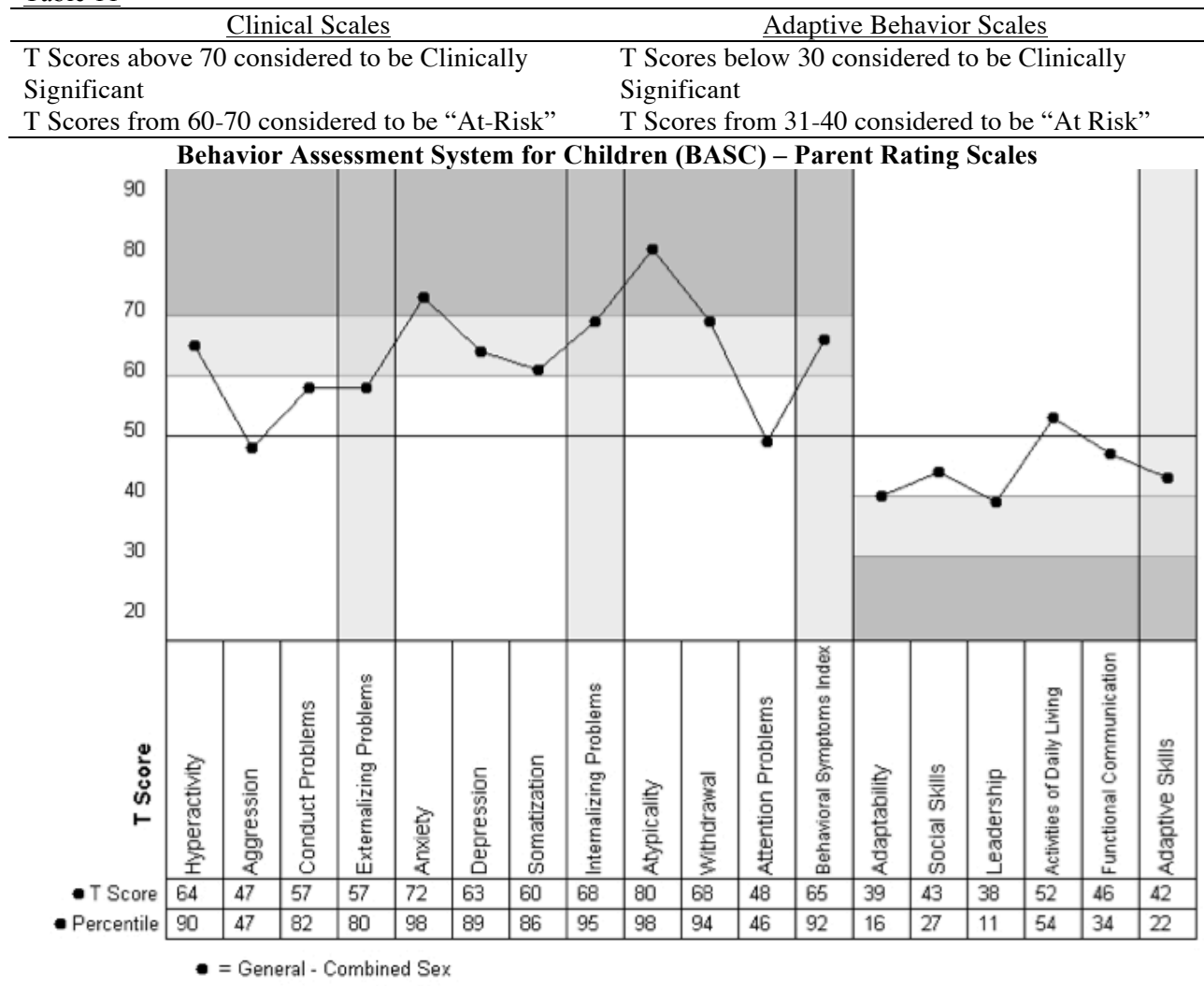
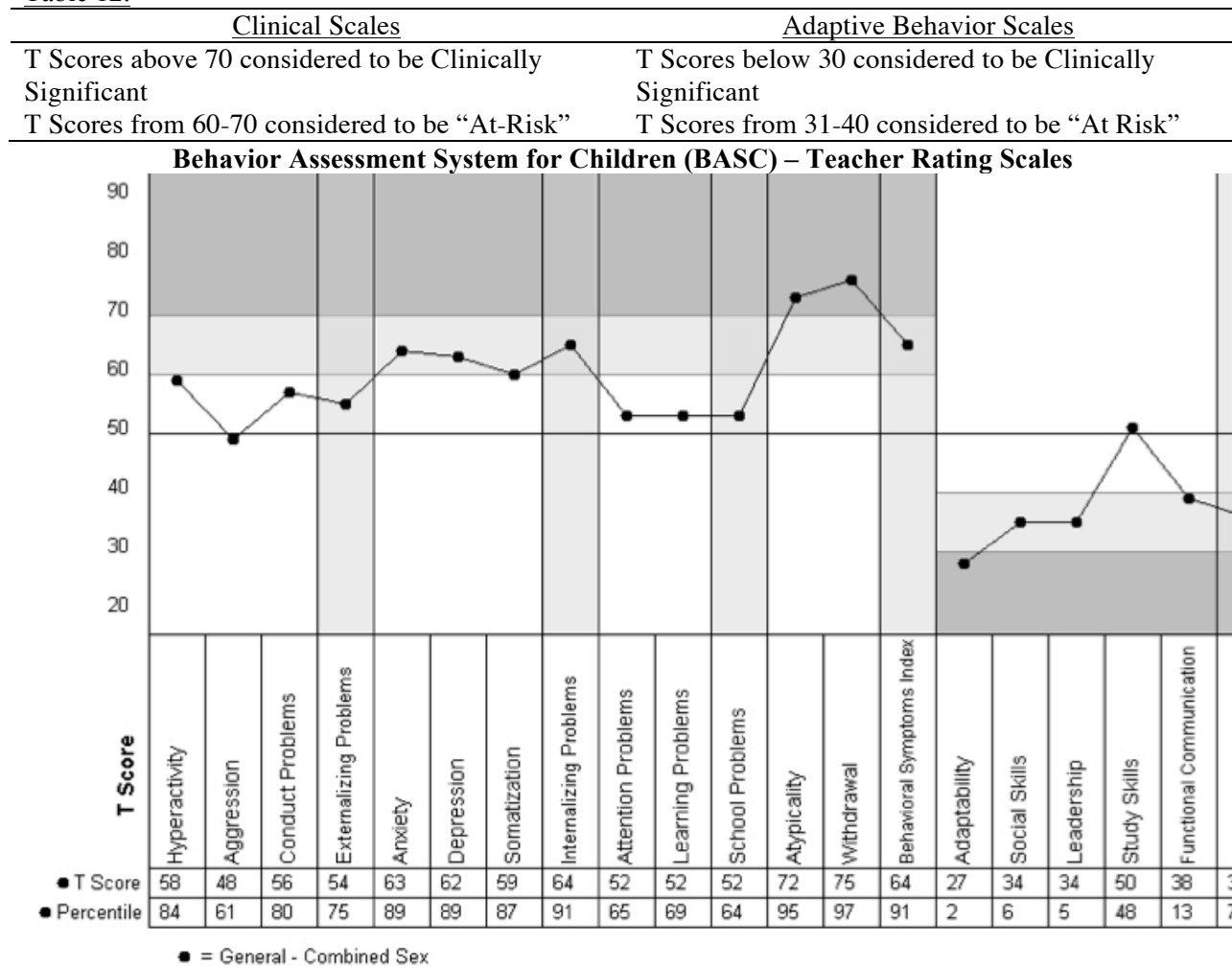


Table 12.



**Social Perception:**

Student was administered subtests from the NEPSY-2 to assess aspects of his social perception, including recognition of facial affect, affect in relation to contextual cues and theory of mind. On the Affect Recognition subtest, which assesses the ability to determine if two different children demonstrate the same affect and to match different children with the same affect, Student performed below the range of age expectations (scaled score =5), suggesting that his ability to recognize facial affect is less-developed than that of others his age. On this task, Student had difficulty sustaining his attention when asked to look at the faces in the pictures for a set amount of time, even when redirected he continued to look around the room and when cued for the answer, he attempted to flip back and look at the face on the previous page. On the Theory of Mind subtest, which assessed Student’s ability to comprehend others’ perceptions and experiences and apply that knowledge to questions, he performed well below the range of age expectations (less than 2<sup>nd</sup> percentile). He had difficulty determining how and why others might act in response to given scenarios and some difficulty understanding idioms, such as “two peas in a pod” and “wrapped around your finger.”

**Social-Interaction and Communication:**

Student’s special education teacher, Mrs. C, and his mother, Mrs. A, also completed the Social Responsiveness Scale, Second Edition (SRS-2) to assess Student’s social interaction and communicative

social skills. The SRS-2 is a 65-item questionnaire, which covers various dimensions of interpersonal behavior, social cognition and communication.

Both Mrs. A's report and Mrs. C's report indicate skills within the severe range in the area of Restricted Interests and Repetitive Behavior (indicating that Student exhibits preoccupations and mannerisms characteristic of Autism). Mrs. C's report yields scores in the Severe range in the areas of Social Awareness (meaning that at school, Student presents with significant difficulties picking up on social cues), Social Cognition (meaning that at school, Student is observed to have significant difficulty interpreting social cues) and Social Communication (meaning that at school, Student is observed to exhibit expressive social communication skills that are significantly less-developed than those of his same-aged peers). Her report indicates that deficiencies in these areas may lead to moderate to severe interference with everyday social interactions, although Mrs. A reported skills in each of these areas to be within the Moderate range, indicating a substantial interference with everyday interactions. Mrs. C's reports also yields a score in the Moderate range in the area of Social Motivation (indicating that Student exhibits difficulty with motivation to engage in social-interpersonal behavior) although Mrs. A reported this skill to be within the Normal range.

### **Formulations and Recommendations:**

Student is an eighth grade student who was referred for psychological testing as part of the normal three-year re-evaluation cycle for students receiving special education services. He is currently on an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for Autism. His current IEP addresses goals in the areas of communication skills, adaptive PE, comprehension, mathematics, written expression and social-emotional. Student attends all general education classes with special education support and he receives academic support in a special education daily. Student receives counseling services, speech and language support, behavior support (direct service from a 1:1 behavior therapist with monthly consultation with a BCBA), and adaptive physical education.

Student's learning profile on the WISC-IV suggests that his nonverbal reasoning abilities, his ability to hold information in mind and manipulate it to produce a result (Working Memory) and his rate of work production (Processing Speed) are within the range of age expectations. His verbal reasoning abilities fall well below the range of age expectations. Student's Verbal Comprehension index score (1<sup>st</sup> percentile) is revealed to be a significant weakness when compared to his other index scores, suggesting significantly less developed ability in the area of verbal concept formation and fund of knowledge. Because of the significant discrepancies among some of Student's index scores, his Full Scale IQ score is not considered to be a valid measure of his global cognitive functioning. Also, Student's inflexibility and difficulty seeing a situation from more than one perspective negatively impacted his performance on certain verbal tasks.

Results of both standardized assessments and behavior rating scales indicate some concerns regarding aspects of Student's executive functioning. Parent and teacher reports as well as Student's own self-report on the BRIEF indicated significant concerns regarding Student's ability to resist impulses and consider the consequences before acting (Inhibit), marked difficulties with behavioral, attentional, and cognitive flexibility (Shift), and concerns about his regulation or modulation of emotions (Emotional Control). Both parent and teacher reports indicated concerns with Student's ability to self monitor and keep track of the effect his behavior has on others and be less aware of his own behavior and the impact his behavior has on social interactions with others (Monitor). Student's teacher noted mild concerns in his ability to hold an appropriate amount of information in mind or "active memory" for further processing, encoding, and manipulation (Working Memory), while Student reported mild concerns in this area. His teacher's report also indicated concern in Student's ability to plan and organize his approach to problem solving appropriately as well as grasp the overall structure of novel information that facilitates learning

and later recall (Plan/Organize). When asked to draw a complex figure, Student was able to encode the main centralizing feature, but he failed to attend to many of the small visual details across the three trials.

Social emotional rating scales completed by Student, his mother, and his teacher indicated concerns regarding Atypicality suggesting that Student engages in behaviors that appear out of place for a student his age, often appears unaware of others, and repeats activities over and over again. Both parent and teacher reports indicated concerns regarding Student having a tendency to avoid social contact and lack interest in making contact in social situations; that he has difficulty adapting to changing situations and takes much longer to recover from difficult situations than most others his age; and exhibits behaviors stemming from worrying, nervousness or fear. Parent reports also indicated concerns about Student presenting with a dysphoric mood, frequent somatic complaints and symptoms of hyperactivity.

On the SRS-2 both parent and teacher reports indicate skills within the severe range in the area of Restricted Interests and Repetitive Behavior (indicating that Student exhibits preoccupations and mannerisms characteristic of Autism). Teacher reports also yield scores in the Severe range suggesting significant difficulties picking up on social cues, interpreting social cues, and exhibit expressive social communication skills that are significantly less-developed than those of his same-aged peers, while parent reports indicate these areas to be Moderate concerns have moderate interference with everyday social interactions. Results of standardized testing indicate that Student has significant difficulty recognizing facial affect and significant difficulty comprehending others' perceptions and experiences.

Results from testing suggest that Student continues to exhibit characteristics of an Autism Spectrum Disorder. He continues to have deficits in social communication and social interactions. For example, his teacher described him to have severe difficulty picking up on and interpreting social cues. Furthermore, on the Theory of Mind subtest, Student had significant difficulty determining how and why others might feel in response to given scenarios. His teacher also mentioned that he has difficulty making eye contact especially if he is asking a question about something important. Both parent and teacher reports on the BASC indicate that Student often has difficulty making friends as well. Student continues to exhibit restricted, repetitive motor movements and speech. Based on the teacher interview as well as observations from testing sessions, Student is observed flapping his arms when he is joyful or continuously walking in circles and he has a tendency to make repetitive statements, especially when stressed. Student demonstrates insistence on sameness, as indicated by elevated scores on the Shift scale of the BRIEF. Based on Student's teacher report and observations in testing sessions, Student exhibits highly restricted, fixated interests that are abnormal in intensity, particularly regarding calendar dates and traffic patterns.

In order to facilitate a successful school experience for Student the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Other testing will further clarify Student's academic profile and should be coordinated with the results of testing reported here to determine his complete educational profile and the most appropriate educational services to facilitate his academic progress.
2. Student's performance on the Coding subtest of the WISC-IV, the Trail Making Subtest of the DKEFS, and on the ROCF suggests a slower rate of fine motor output. It may be beneficial for him to have an assistive technology consult to further explore accommodations that will help with his reduced graphomotor skills.
3. Due to concerns about inattention reported by Student, it will be important to make sure that his attention is focused before presenting information. He may also benefit from preferential seating, i.e.

sitting close to or in the front row, so as to minimize surrounding distractions and maximize interaction with the teacher. It may also be beneficial for Student's teachers to continue to employ instructional strategies that will facilitate his ability to focus in class, such as frequent check-ins and individualized cueing back to task.

4. Due to concerns of hyperactivity reported by both Student and his mother, he would benefit from frequent opportunities for movement breaks and the use of fidgets, such as silly putty, in class to help him focus.
5. Student would benefit from previewing, repetition, and rehearsal to help build confidence in his academic abilities.
6. To assist with Student's difficulty with planning and organizing, as suggested by elevated scores on the BRIEF Parent and Teacher Forms and Student's segmented approach to details of the ROCF, he may benefit from organizational strategies for his materials (such as color coded folders) as well as his assignments (such as graphic organizers or writing templates). Additionally, time lines should be developed for completing projects, and long-term assignments should be broken down into manageable steps with intermediate deadlines for each one
7. Due to Student's performance on the verbal comprehension index of the WISC-IV, he would benefit from check-ins after directions are given to ensure comprehension of task demands; this might be done by asking Student to paraphrase directions in his own words.
8. Due to difficulties with initiation reported by Student's teacher, he would benefit from the use of visual cues and/or peer models for enhancing comprehension and initiation skills.
9. Due to tendencies of rigid and inflexible thinking and adherence to routine, as reported by both Student's mother and teacher, he would benefit from consistent and clearly defined routines, expectations, limits, and predictable rewards and consequences.
10. Student would benefit from structured and supported social interactions to increase interpersonal peer relationships, for example, participation in extra curricular activities in an area of interest to connect with peers who have similar interests as well as a group that focuses on social skills building, such as perspective taking and interpreting non-verbal communication.
11. Due to difficulties with shifting as mentioned by Student's mother, teacher, and in his own experience, Student would benefit from previewing any schedule changes that are likely to cause distress and the use of two minute warnings regarding transitions.
12. Due to concerns of elevated feelings of anxiety reported by both Student's mother and teacher, Student would benefit from social-emotional support to help him develop strategies for coping with anxious feelings when they occur.
13. As is often the case for students on the Autism Spectrum, Student may need to be explicitly taught the meaning of figurative language, such as idioms, as they are encountered.

Please feel free to call me at (xxx) xxx-xxxx if you have any comments or questions about this report.

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