

# Anxiety!

## How Much is Too Much?

Evaluating anxious kids in the admission process with greater predictive accuracy?

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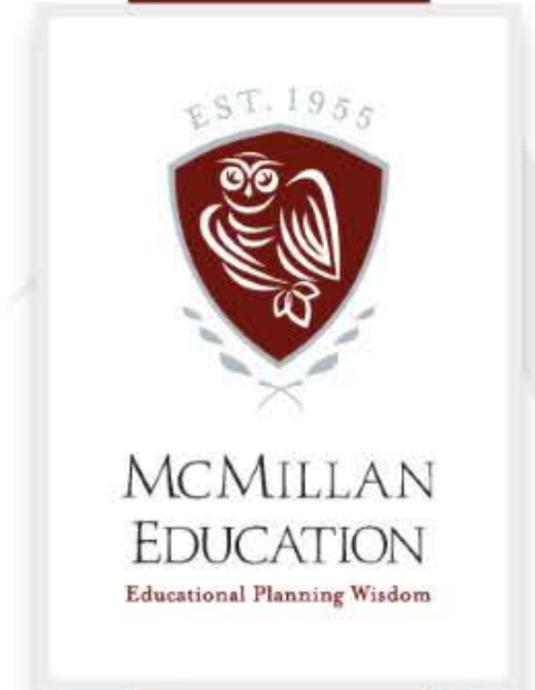
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## Session goals

- Are you happy with your admission process for vetting complex kids?
- How do you differentiate between anxiety that will respond to change in environment vs. need for more therapeutic intervention?
- How do you set the kid up for success that you've determined is a good risk & admitted?



# What a New Environment Can Do ... and Not Do

- **Sawyer – elite feeder school, traditional boarding applicant**
- **Aiden – public school on an IEP looking for answers**
- **Mike – isolated socially, academically challenged, skipping from day school to day school in LA**

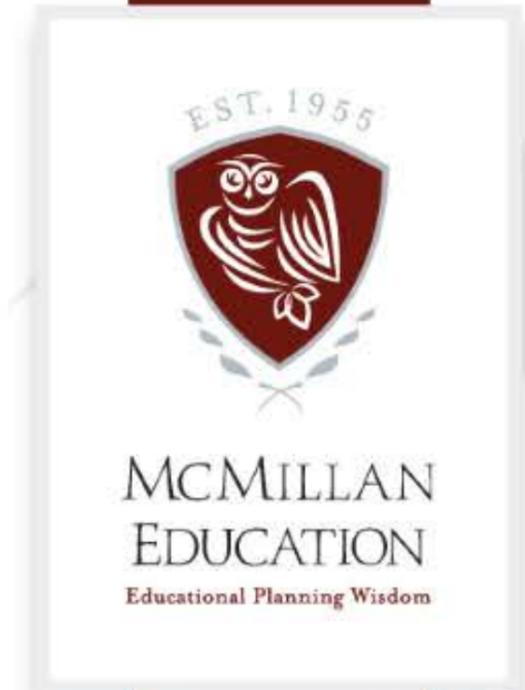
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# McGruff the admission detective!

- What pops out that requires further investigation?
- Who does this investigation and how does the admission team process this information as part of the final admission decision?
- What level & type of risk are you equipped / willing to incur?



## Categories for further investigation

- Neuro-cognitive profile
  - Academic-related deficits & vulnerabilities
  - Broader developmental challenges
- Emotional & behavioral history
  - Academic habits
  - Personal habits, coping skills
  - Family setting
  - Social / peers
  - Counseling
  - Psychopharmacology

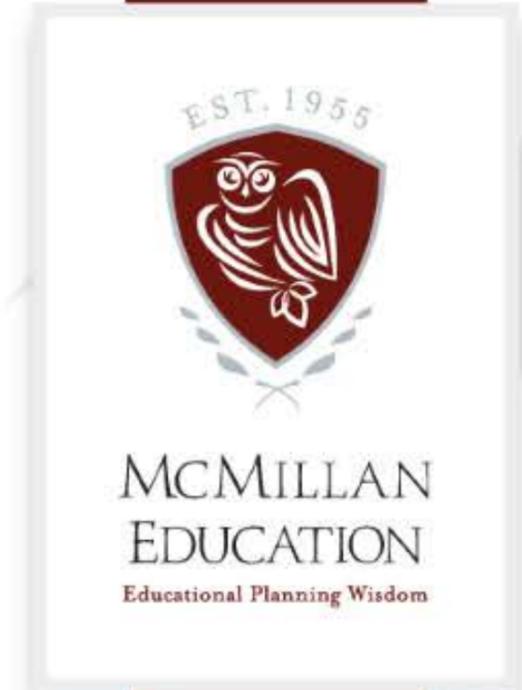


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# What can foretell problems?

Neurocognitive features that impact emotional health & functioning

- Executive functions
- Processing speed
- Working memory
- Splits between reasoning ability and performance indices
- Impulsivity
- Spectrum-related features

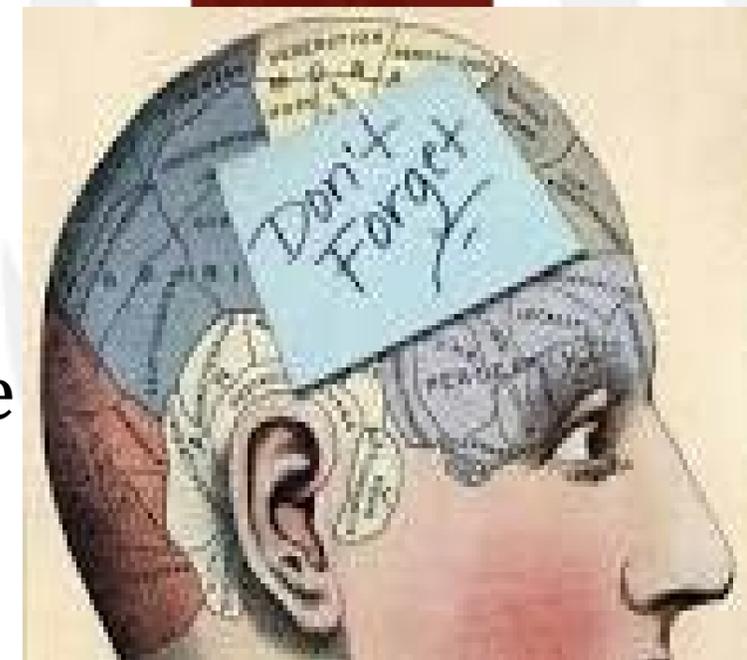
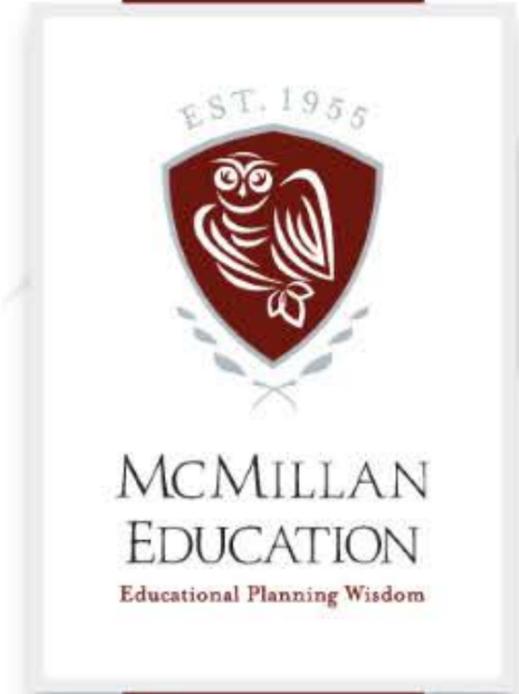




# Executive Functions



- Executive functions involve the ability to process information in an organized and efficient manner. They are essential to everyday tasks such as organizing, planning, problem solving, following rules, and adjusting to new situations.
- The **executive functions** are a set of processes that all have to do with managing oneself and one's resources in order to achieve a goal. It is an umbrella term for the neurologically-based skills involving mental control and self-regulation.
- Executive function and **self-regulation skills** depend on three types of brain function: **working memory**, mental **flexibility**, and **self-control**. These functions are highly interrelated, and the successful **application** of executive function skills requires them to operate in **coordination** with each other.



# What can foretell problems?

Emotional & behavioral features that impact functioning & typically require treatment to resolve

- Avoidance
- School refusal
- Rigidity, non-adaptive style
- Somatization
- Social anxiety
- OCD (“Perfectionism”)
- Mood dysregulation
- Sleep disruption
- Self-medicating



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## Mo' data ... mo' better!

- Reading testing from both the academic & emotional perspectives — integrative vs. “silo approach”
- Focus on measures that evaluate *life skills functioning*
- Focus on developmental history
- Beware of “Ed Evals” that don’t include emotional and behavioral measures
- BASC
- ADOS
- Psych projectives



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# Anxiety ... Managed or Manageable ...

- Skills – can they articulate productive coping skills to replace maladaptive skills?
- Self-advocacy — do they know when they need help & can they ask for it?
- Medication — where are they in trialing?
- Therapy — how long? What's been achieved? What are remaining therapeutic goals?
- Parent transparency & partnership
- Situational anxiety or pervasive anxiety with notable developmental history?
- Discrete or primary learning issues?
- Discrete social or familial issues?

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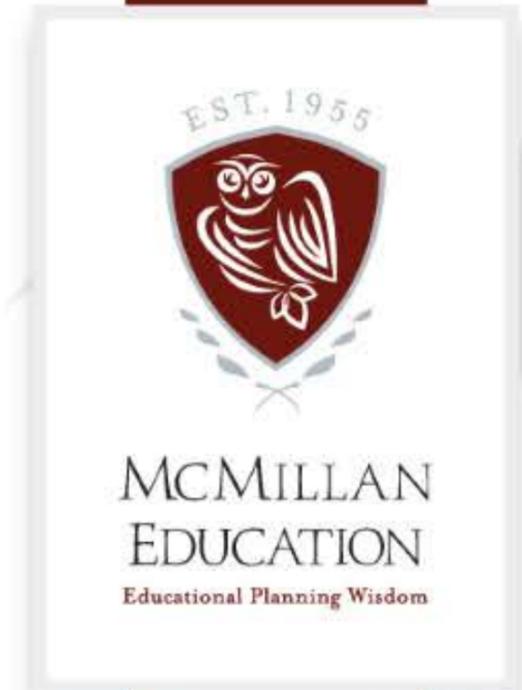


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## Setting up success

- Use conditional acceptances to their fullest potential good!
- What *is* success, anyway, for *your* school, *this* kid?
  - Learning Profile
  - Emotional, Behavioral & Social Profile
- Do you have a reasonable level of confidence this student can meet the basic requirements of your program?
  - Honest appraisal of available resources
  - What will this do to your faculty? Remember the 80-20 rule!
  - How hated do you want to be??!!



**Questions?**

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