Achievement Test: Test designed to assess the present level of skill in or knowledge of a particular content domain. Is usually considered a measure of previous learning but may also assess innate characteristics. See also aptitude test.
Aptitude Test: Test that assesses the potential for learning a specific skill or performing a specific task. Usually considered a measure of innate ability but often also reflects previous learning.
Behavioral Assessment: A method of behavioral evaluation in which current, specific, and observable behaviors are quantitatively and qualitatively assessed. Reflects an idiographic (individual approach) and considers observed behaviors to be ‘samples’ rather than signs of underlying phenomena.
Culture-Fair Tests: Tests of mental ability designed to eliminate cultural biases (e.g., by using a nonverbal format and nonacademic items). Evaluations of existing culture-fair tests have suggested that no completely culturally fair test has yet been developed.
Client-Focused Measures: Techniques developed specifically for a particular client and used to assess the extent of her problem, follow her progress over the course of intervention, and determine when intervention can be terminated. Include individualized rating scales, goal attainment scales, and client logs.
Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales (Vineland-II):
Appropriate for individuals from birth to age 90 and designed to evaluate personal and social skills of individuals with intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorders, ADHD, brain injury, or major neurocognitive disorders (i.e., dementia), and for assisting in the development of educational and treatment plans.
Conners 3: Scales used to evaluate behaviors and other concerns in youth ages 8 to 18. In contrast to its predecessor (Conners’ Rating Scales-Revised), offers a more thorough assessment of ADHD and addresses comorbid disorders, such as oppositional defiant disorder and conduct disorder. The Conners 3 includes parent rating scales (Conners 3-P), teacher rating scales (Conners 3-T), and self-report rating scales (Conners 3-SR).
Accountability: The duty of a profession to notify the public about its functions and methods and to provide assurances to its consumers that members of the profession meet certain standards of competence.
Case Record: Worker documentation of a client’s situation and the services offered during intervention. Used to enhance the quality and accountability of social work services.
Clarification: A helping skill used in response to vague or unclear client messages. Using this skill is appropriate whenever the social worker doesn’t understand a client’s message, would like the client to become more explicit, or wishes to check his understanding of a client’s message.
Closed-Ended Questions: Interview questions that elicit responses that contain either factual information or a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no.’ Used primarily in the latter portion of an interview to obtain missing factual data.
Confrontation: Respectful and gentle efforts to help a client recognize that he or she is using distortions, deceptions, denials, avoidance, or manipulations that are getting in the way of desired change. The social worker challenges and invites the client to examine a thought or behavior that is self-defeating or harmful to others and to take action to change it. Efforts to confront a client generally emphasize factors that the social worker believes are contributing to the client’s problems and preventing him or her from making progress.
Consultation

Consultation: A process in which a human services professional assists a consultee with a work-related problem within a client system. The goal is to help both the consultee and the client system in some specified way. Several principles guide consultation: (1) First, consultation always has a problem-solving (educational) function. (2) Second, a consultant has no administrative authority over staff members, and a consultee may turn down the consultant’s suggestions. The determining factor is the value of the consultant’s idea not his or her status as a consultant. (3) Third, consultation relies on the quality of the relationship between the consultant and consultee. Thus, a consultant must be skilled at developing and maintaining relationships with consultees. Consultation is used by most social workers on an as-needed basis.
Open-Ended Questions: Interview questions that define a topic area but allow a client to respond in whatever way he or she chooses. Effective for encouraging a client to self-disclose or expand on personal information and, thus, tend to elicit valuable data.
Case Management: A procedure used to plan, seek, and monitor services from different social agencies and staff on behalf of a client; usually, one agency has primary responsibility for the client and assigns a case manager to his case. The case manager’s overall focus is on the client’s relationship to his or her environment; and the case manager’s functions include assessment, service planning, linkage and service coordination, follow up and monitoring of service delivery, and client support. Clients needing case management services usually have multiple problems that require assistance from more than one provider and that need to be addressed at the same time or about the same time and special difficulties in seeking and using help effectively.
P.L. 94-142 (Education For All Handicapped Children Act): This law has been renamed the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). P.L. 94-142 requires the following: All disabled people from infancy to age 21 years must be evaluated by a team of specialists to determine their specific needs; an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) must be developed for each disabled child enrolled in the public education system; and the IEP must provide education for the student in the ‘least restrictive environment’ and be approved by the child’s parents. Additionally, while reliable, valid, and nondiscriminatory psychological tests can be used, assignment to special education classes cannot be made on the basis of IQ tests only.
Expert Witness: An individual who testifies before a lawmaking body or in a court of law because of his/her exceptional knowledge in a specific area. Information given by the witness is used to enlighten the court in assessing evidence.
Freedom of Information Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-487): Federal legislation establishing the right of citizens to know what information the government and other organizations have about them. This right is not absolute and specific exceptions are noted. Based on this act, clients of federally administered health and welfare agencies under some circumstances have the right to access their case records.
Guardian (Legal Guardian): An individual who is legally responsible for the management and care of another individual. California law currently appoints ‘guardians’ only for minors; adult guardianships are considered ‘conservatorships,’ which have more limited consequences than guardianships.
Health Maintenance Organization (HMO): A type of insurance plan in which contracted health-care providers (e.g., physicians, hospitals) are paid in advance for their services. HMOs are the most restrictive form of managed care benefit plans because they limit the procedures, providers, and benefits available to enrollees. The members of an HMO (i.e., the individuals enrolled in and covered by the HMO and their dependents) are required to use participating or approved providers for all health services and, generally, all services will need to meet further approval by the HMO through its utilization program. An HMO member must choose a primary care physician, who then directs the member’s medical care and determines whether he/she should be referred for specialty care.

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