

Dr. Amanda Nicolson, Ph.D., BCBA-D

Private ASD Assessments

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Thank you for being in touch regarding an assessment for your child. This letter introduces several aspects of the assessment process. Navigating the landscape of assessment, diagnosis and obtaining services, whether they are private or school based, is not easy. My goal is to help provide information so that you and your child gets the support he or she needs as quickly as possible.

Background: My concierge consulting practice focuses on assessment and recommendations for children, youth and young adults who may benefit from behavior invention and special education services. I have worked with children and youth with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) for over 20 years and also have received extensive training on diagnostic assessments from a highly specialized developmental pediatrician affiliated UCSF Medical School's residency program.

As you already know, this is not as easy an area to navigate, and my goal is to help facilitate access to information and services in a number of ways:

- Assessment that provides the information your pediatrician needs for a Diagnosis
- Evaluations for school programs and assistance with the IEP process
- Consultation on services most appropriate for ASD and other special needs through private insurance, regional centers and school districts

The Assessment: The assessment that I use for ASD diagnostic process is called the Childhood Autism Rating Scale (CARS). It has good validity and provides a more complete picture than many checklists do. My assessment is a piece of the formal diagnosis process. When we've completed it, I will write a brief report that goes back to you. You will then take this to your pediatrician who will confer and sign off on the decision to make it a formal medical diagnosis.

For the Appointment: The appointment takes 60 to 90 minutes. I prefer having the child present if they are comfortable and willing. I do "passive" observations, meaning that I observe the child's natural interaction with parents and the environment, but do not require responses as this can be difficult for many children in a new situation.

I work from my home office for my consulting practice and will provide the address when we book the appointment. I am also able to do house calls and assess in your home (local area Fresno/Clovis only)

Cost:

- ASD assessment: \$450 includes appointment, report, and follow up questions as needed.
- Consultation appointments: \$150

- Payment due at time of service. Payment via check, cash, credit card, Apple Pay, Zelle and Venmo.

**If you have experienced financial hardship, please let me know. I will work with you.*

Resources:

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/> Click on the Help & Resources tab for some very good guides.

Local resource guide:

<https://www.fresno.ucsf.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/SJVAutismhandbook.pdf>