

## Forensic Neuropsychology

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### ABOUT THE STUDY

The Forensic Neuropsychology Section is within the Neuropsychology Division and provides specialty neuropsychological services for parties needing cognitive and psychological assessment within a legal context. The Forensic Neuropsychology Section works closely with the Forensic Psychiatry Division in the USF Department of Psychiatry and Neurosciences.

Forensic neuropsychology is the application of neuropsychological science and methods to the legal system. A forensic neuropsychological examination is performed by a neuropsychologist who is hired as an independent contractor by a third party, such as an attorney, insurance company, or the court to make a determination regarding neuropsychological functioning. Forensic neuropsychological evaluations in civil litigation often involve determination of the presence or absence of neurological and/or psychiatric disorders, causality related to a specific event or injury, documentation of the extent of functional deficits, discussion of limitations to competence or daily functioning, prognosis, medical necessity of treatment and/or disability status. The neuropsychological examination may be used to assist in determining competency to stand trial, issues of responsibility for the crime, or in sentencing/mitigation in criminal litigation. The USF Neuropsychology Division has board certified clinical neuropsychologists with expertise in forensic neuropsychology. The USF Neuropsychology Division offers neuropsychological expertise for civil and criminal legal action. Forensic neuropsychological assessments may include record review, neuropsychological/neurocognitive testing, litigant and collateral interviews, behavioral observation, and integration of these data to a report provided to attorneys and frequently the court. USF Neuropsychologists can also offer 2nd opinions and review of available neuropsychological and medical records to assist with preparing cross examinations and legal formulations.

### Symptoms

Antisocial mental disorder signs and symptoms may include:

- Disregard for right and wrong.

- Persistent lying or deceit to take advantage of others.
- Being callous, cynical and disrespectful of others.
- Using charm or wit to control others for private gain or personal pleasure.

Adults with antisocial mental disorder typically show symptoms of conduct disorder before the age of 15. Signs and symptoms of conduct disorder include serious, persistent behavior problems, such as:

- Aggression toward people and animals
- Destruction of property
- Deceitfulness
- Theft
- Serious violation of rules

### SENSATIONAL ASPECTS OF FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY

An excerpt that appeared in the online encyclopaedia states, "Forensic psychologists are perhaps most commonly recognized for their involvement in the processing of a crime scene." This excerpt is an excellent example of the misguided beliefs that frequently appear regarding forensic psychology and the critical evaluation that should take place when using an online "encyclopaedia" that anyone with Internet access can contribute to in the modern age. The real problem with the above statement is that it is true. The public's notion of forensic psychology does come from television shows and movies in which a psychologist is somehow involved in the "processing of a crime scene." Movies like *Silence of the Lambs* and *Kiss the Girls* frequently depict forensic psychologists as super sleuths who get into the minds of serial killers with their psychological techniques and foil their murderous plans. There was even a television show on for several years, *Profiler*, in which a Dr. Samantha Waters played a "forensic psychologist" who was a psychic detective. The only problem with such a show is there is no empirical support in psychology for the existence of psychic powers, nor have forensic psychologists ever solved crimes by reading tea leaves or interpreting psychic visions.

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## RISK FACTORS

Certain factors seem to extend the danger of developing antisocial mental disorder, such as:

- Diagnosis of childhood conducts disorder.
- Family history of antisocial mental disorder or other personality disorders or psychological state disorders.
- Being subjected to abuse or neglect during childhood.
- Men are at greater risk of getting antisocial mental disorder women are Causes Personality is that the combination thoughts, emotions and behaviors that creates everyone unique.

it is the way people view, understand and relate to the surface world, also as how they see themselves. Personality forms during childhood, shaped through an interaction of inherited tendencies and environmental factors.

## PREVENTION

There's no sure thanks to prevent antisocial mental disorder from developing in those in danger. Because antisocial behavior is assumed to possess its roots in childhood, parents, teachers and pediatricians could also be ready to spot early warning signs. it's going to help to undertake to spot those most in danger, like children who show signs of conduct disorder, then offer early intervention.