

# A Comprehensive Model for Specific Learning Disability Evaluations



**Using the *Building Blocks Brain Model of  
Development* to Understand and Assess Learning  
Disabilities**

Peter Thompson, Ed.S., Ph.D.

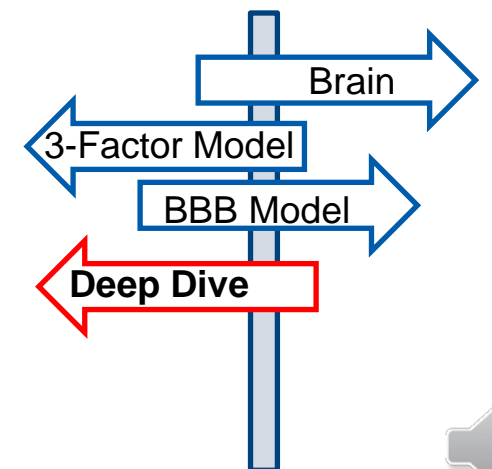




# Module 2.5 Guidepost 4

The Building Blocks Brain Model

## **A DEEPER DIVE: Inhibition**



# Important Note

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The information, concepts, and models provided in this presentation are intended to give practitioners a framework when conducting special education evaluations. It is emphasized that nothing in this presentation is meant to be directive or prescriptive. Professionals are free to use some, or all of the information presented, but they are not required to do so in their practice. **Always consult with your special education director for clarity around district policies and expectations for special education evaluations.**



**IMPORTANT** 

# Learning Outcomes

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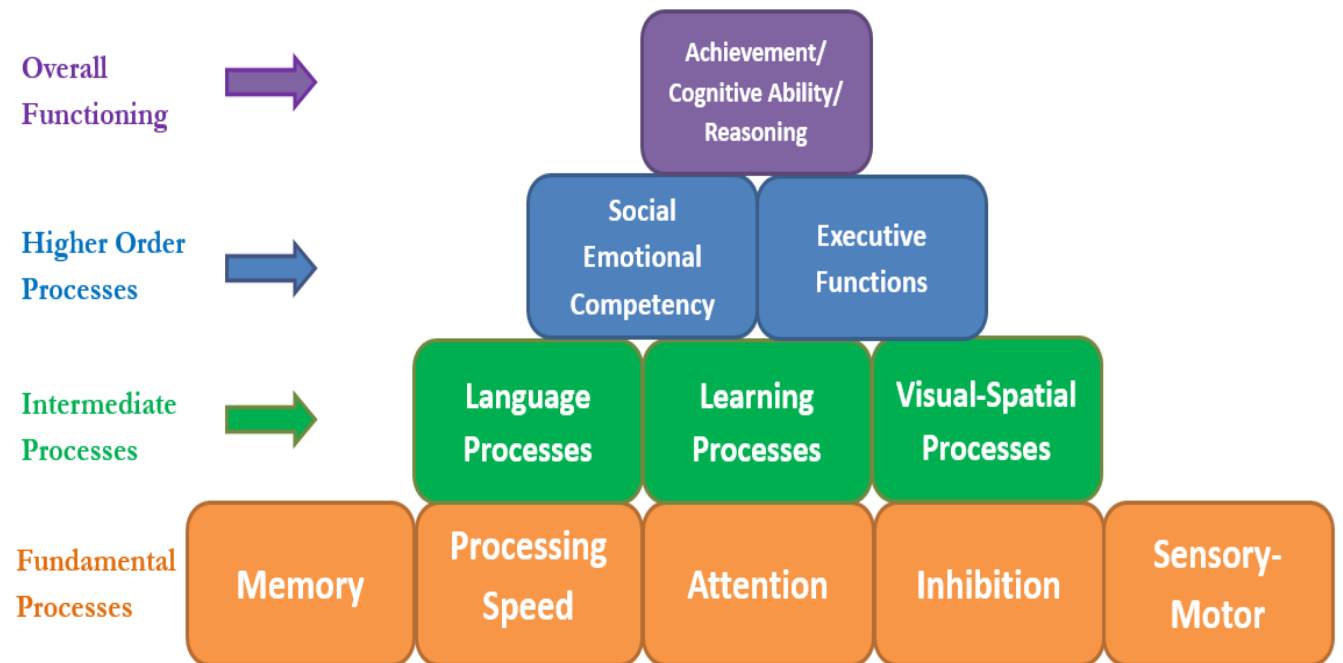
- Why is inhibition critical for learning?
- Behavioral and academic “Look-Fors”
- How to properly assess inhibition



## Key Points: Inhibition's Impact in Learning Disabilities

- **Core trait is behavioral *and* emotional control**
- **Central to *Executive Function***
- **Linked to attention**
- **Correlated with learning and success in various domains of life**

## Building Blocks of Brain Development ©

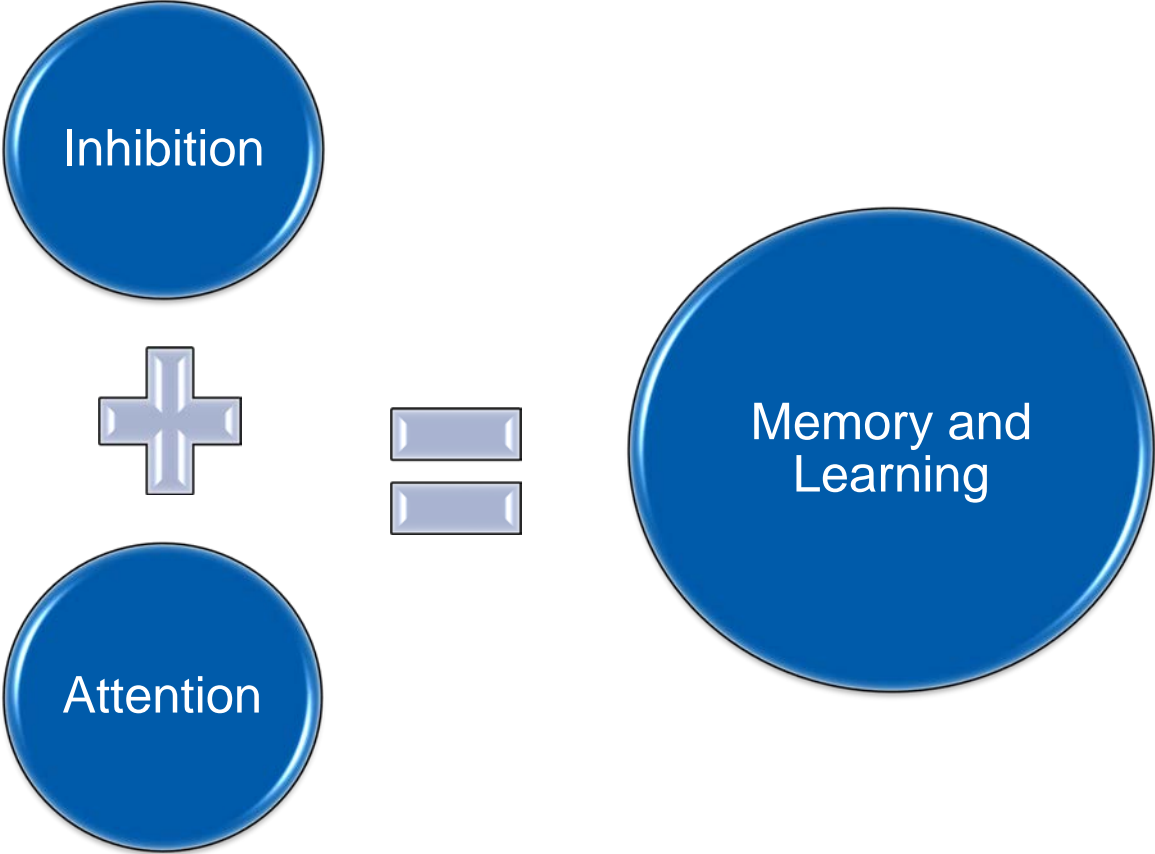


The Hierarchy of Neurocognitive Functioning © - created by Peter Thompson, Ph.D. 2013, adapted from the works of Miller 2007; and Wolfson 2004; Hale and Fiorello 2004.

The Building Blocks of Brain Development © - further adapted from the Brain Injury Steering Committee, 2016.



# Interdependent Nature of the BBBM

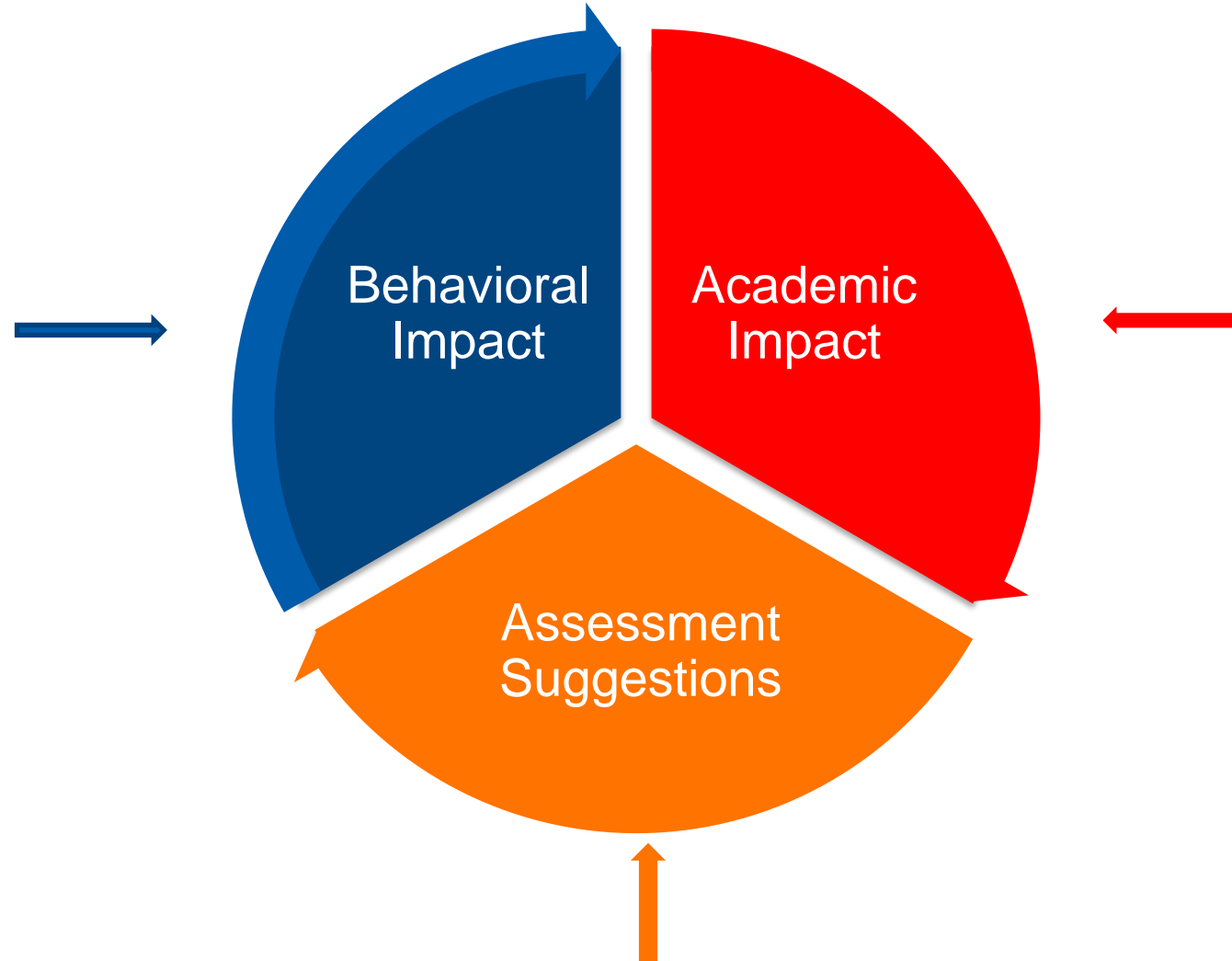


Emotional and behavioral control helps to facilitate sustained attention, which then allows for information to be placed into memory. Memory then becomes the storage room for one's knowledge and learned skills.



# Inhibition: 3 key Aspects to Consider in SLD Evaluations

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# *Behavioral* Impacts (Look-Fors)

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- Impulsive; “acts without thinking”
- Blurts thoughts out and can talk excessively
- Fidgety/squirmy/ need for movement
- Difficulty staying in line, seat, assigned area
- Sensation seeking
- Low self-monitoring / self-awareness





# *Behavioral* Impacts (Look-Fors) Con't

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- Interrupts; socially intrusive
- Jumps into an activity rather than waiting
- Physical with others
- Disregard for boundaries
- Social difficulties in general
- Participation in unsafe behaviors



# *Academic* Impacts (Look-Fors)

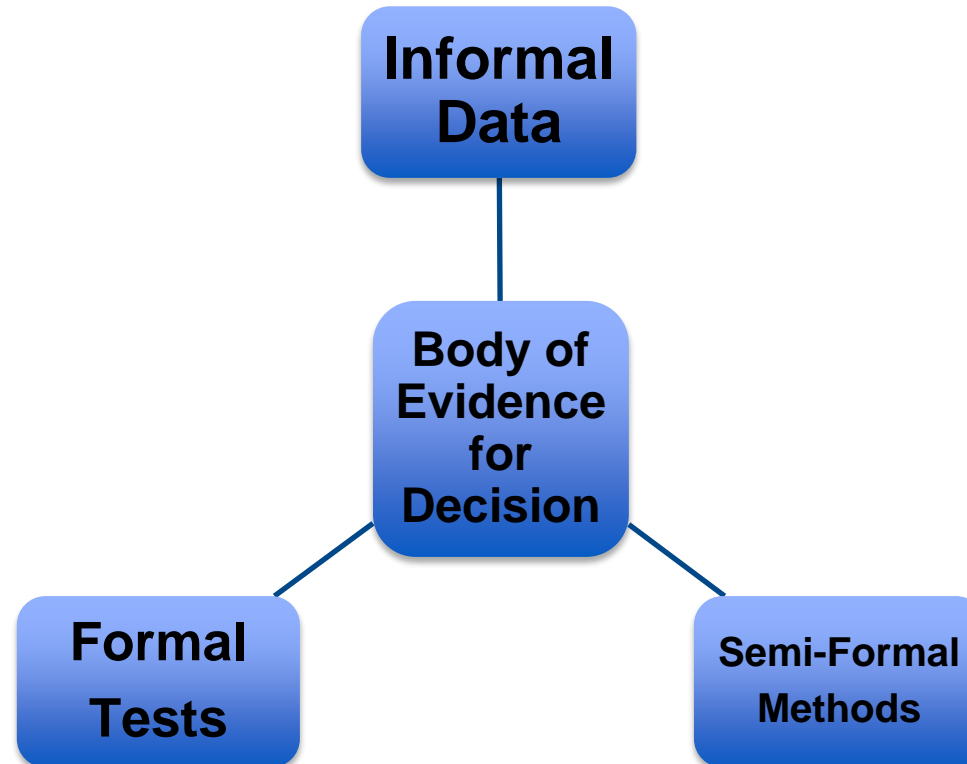
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- Can be disruptive in the classroom
- Difficulty following multistep directions
- Not slowing down to process directions
- May complete assignments incorrectly/sloppy
- May require a lot of redirection from teacher
- Leads to poor academic outcomes / undermines classroom



# Assessment Suggestions: Inhibition

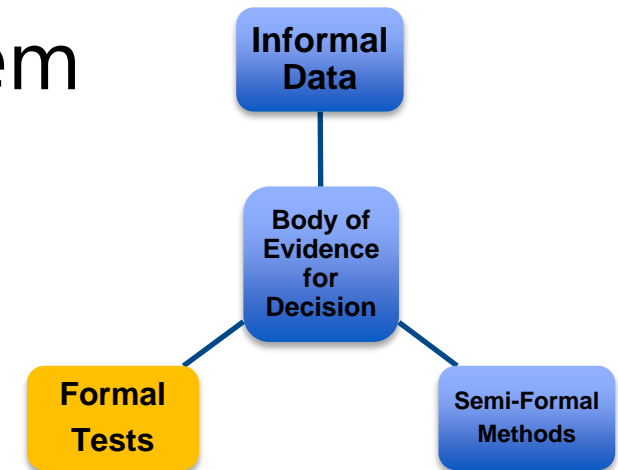
- Use 3-Factor Model for Assessment
  1. Formal
  2. Informal
  3. Semi-Formal



# Formal Methods: **Inhibition**

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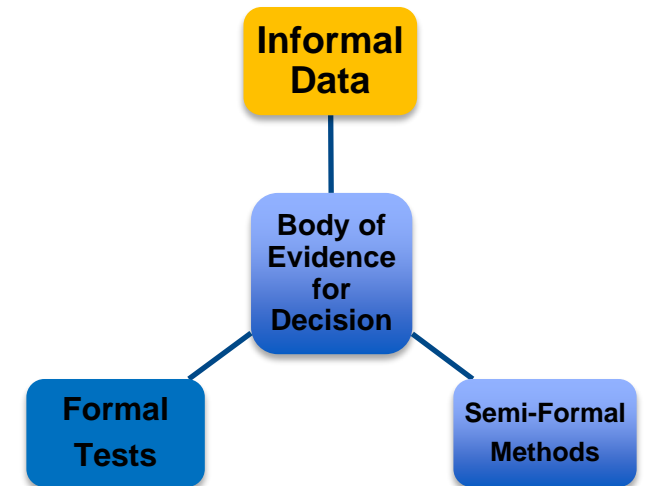
- CAS-2 Attention and Planning subtests
- NEPSY-II: Inhibition, Statue subtests
- PS and WM on cognitive tests
- Delis-Kaplan Executive Function System
- Trail Making Test
- BRIEF-2 / CEFI-2



# Informal Methods: **Inhibition**

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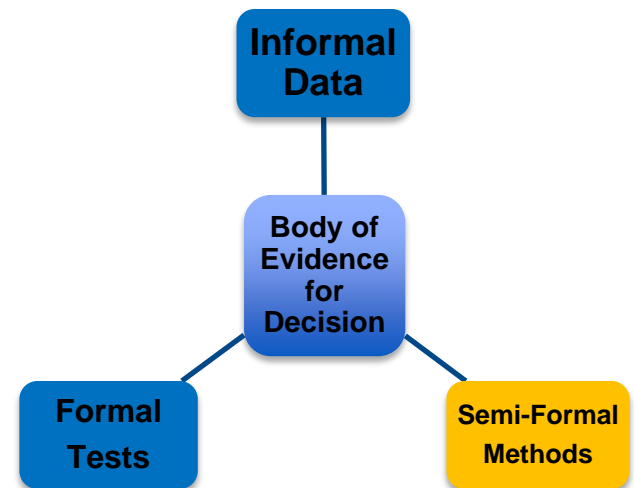
- Parent, student, staff interviews
- Records review- Family history- (Discipline Records)
- Medical history -TBI/multiple cx
- Observations-multiple settings
- Work samples



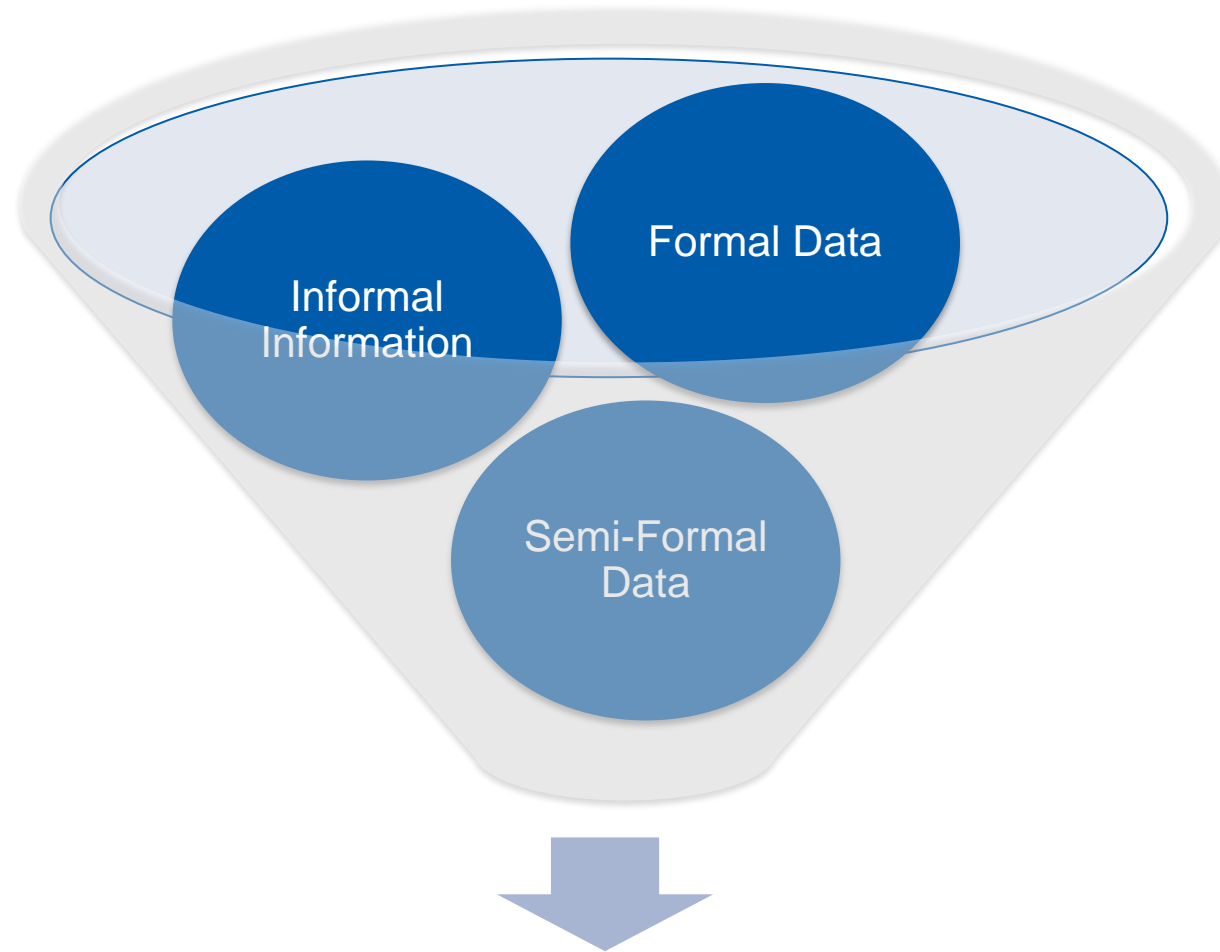
# Semi-Formal: Inhibition

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- Self-Created Executive Function Rating Scales
- NEF (CDE)
- Vanderbilt Scales ( Free download)



# Examining Inhibition



Integrated Body of Evidence






## Summary: Inhibition

1. Must have "self-control" to set the stage for learning and lifelong success. Allows for "persistence" and participation in the learning environment.
2. Inhibition deficits have obvious behavioral and academic impacts. Low self-control causes problems that can be serious.
3. Use executive function measures for assessment and the 3-Factor Model.







# End of Module 2.5

## Thanks for Listening



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