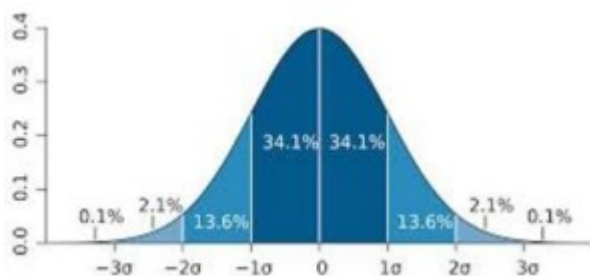


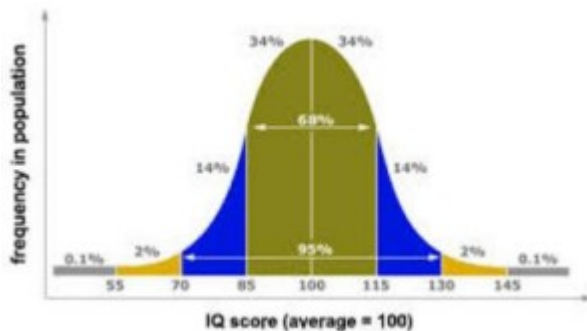
# What does an “Average” Test Score Mean?

## *What is Average?*

Most psychological tests provide **scores and/or percentiles** to describe your child’s performance compared to a representative sample of same-aged peers, or the “norm group.” For example, an 8-year-old’s performance on a standardized test is compared to same-aged children, not a 12-year-old or 4-year-old. These scores are guidelines for what is average, above average, and below average compared to children of the same age. The norm group, and their within-average scores, represent the performance of the *majority* of children.

When we talk about “**average scores**” in a psychological report, this does not include only the mean, (the average of all scores) or the median (the score located at the 50th percentile of all scores). **Average scores** on a neuropsychological evaluation refers to a range of scores that is commonly achieved by the majority of people. This does not mean the 50th percentile, but may refer to the middle 68% of people taking the test (1 standard deviation). Average scores encompass most people. A useful and scientific visual representation of this is the Bell Curve:





In the image on the left, we can see that the average scores are in the dark blue and take up 68% of the population. In the image on the right, we see IQ scores where a score of “100” is the midpoint of average, and scores from 85-115 constitute 68% of the population. Most IQ tests such as the WISC-V, WPPSI-IV, and the WAIS-IV classify scores of 90-109 as “Average,” 110-119 as “High Average,” 120-129 as “Superior” and scores above 130 as “Very Superior.” Scores of 80-89 are classified as “Low Average,” from 70-79 as “Borderline” and scores below 70 as “Extremely Low”.

The term *Standard Deviation* is used to describe what variation from the average score is typical, or “standard” based on the norm group; this term will be discussed more below.

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