

\$30 Million Project Announced To Give Struggling Students a New Beginning In School and in Life

Cognitive First™ (Cog1st), the leading nonprofit providing access to learning skill [testing](#) and [training](#), announces a national project to deliver up to \$30 million in learning skills assessments to qualified students. This breakthrough offer will give up to one million children and their parents and teachers the [life-changing awareness](#) they need to help each child be smarter for the rest of their lives. Knowing when a student has one or more weak learning skills can be the turning point from academic struggle to success. The solutions are now available to make sure children have a strong foundation for learning.

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Any parent can go to [cog1st.org](#) and quickly discover their child's [learning skills profile](#). The principal of a leading strategic Pilot School for educational innovation in Colorado has experienced the value both as a parent and as an educator. When she learned that targeted learning skill testing was readily available she immediately tested her fifth-grade son. Based upon the results, she recognized the value of knowing this information and contacted Cog1st to test her high school students. A number of those students did an introduction to a brain training program during the summer and this fall the lab is already packed with students who are getting smarter by maximizing their learning skills in a twelve week session.

“ Weak cognitive (mental) skills make learning and reading a struggle; strong skills empower academic success. Every parent or educator can now know if a child has weak skills and can take appropriate action to help each child achieve their full potential. ”

Now she is encouraging parents and other schools to take advantage of the package offered by Cognitive First. “In a glance at the report we were given we could target, identify, and confirm the learning strengths and limitations of each of our students. There is no downside to what we’ve learned. This is positive information that helps us to be better prepared to help every student achieve their full potential. Cog1st has made it easy. I encourage parents and educators to learn how they can take advantage of their offer.” Cognitive First announces a breakthrough opportunity for all parents to test their children at low or no cost. Cognitive First has teamed with the leading online cognitive skill assessment, the Gibson Test, and is working with sponsors to cover the cost of testing for qualified students nationwide. Traditionally, cognitive skill testing is expensive, usually costing \$250 or more in a clinic. The Gibson Test is \$29.95 online.

Despite our nation’s best efforts, far too many students are either under-performing in our educational system or working harder than necessary to succeed in school. Children from under-resourced families are especially vulnerable and on average, are significantly behind students from families with resources. Some children fail while others succeed in the same school with the same teachers using the same curriculum. There is a missing link that explains the reason under performing students are not learning in a system that clearly works for some. Roughly [80% of learning or reading difficulties](#) among U.S. students and adults — are the direct consequence of a cognitive skill weakness. It is urgent that we provide solutions. The futures of millions of children are at risk.

The Chairman of the Leadership Council for Cognitive First, Dr. Vernard Gant, is a 30 year urban educator who grew up in Birmingham and has dedicated his life to serving minority children. His youngest daughter was a good student but she struggled with long hours of homework to keep her grades up. Dr. Gant learned more about his daughter’s learning capacity limitations and needs in an hour of testing than he had learned from her schools and teachers in twelve years of her education. His two-minute video story has one simple message, [“Don’t have the regret I had of not knowing. Test your child.”](#)

How well a child processes information and learns may be the single most critical element that defines whether they will struggle or succeed in school. Weak learning skills may be keeping a child from achieving their full potential. Now, every parent can find out quickly and easily whether their child has any weak learning skills that make learning hard.

Cognitive First recommends every student take a cognitive skill assessment to measure their foundational learning skills. This is the first step to equipping and empowering them with greater learning abilities. Similar to the notion that every child should have a vision and hearing screening, it is just as important for every parent to make sure their child’s basic mental skills are working properly to enable learning.

Once parents and educators know if any weak skills may be causing children to under-perform in school, there are additional steps that can be taken to strengthen weak skills and unlock learning potential. A critical turning point can be reached in the learning capacity of a child. There are several free [resources that parents can access](#) at [cog1st.org](#). Parents and teachers can also learn what makes a program comprehensive and how they can choose an effective option for their child.

Any family can go to [http://cog1st.org](#) now and have their children take the Gibson Test. Cognitive First is also seeking to partner with [community groups, schools and employers](#) to help reach those families most in need.

Organizations who serve under-resourced children may qualify not only for testing but also for ‘Turning Point’ demonstration packages that provide brain training programs to children who are eligible for the national free and reduced school lunch program. Employers can also apply and qualify to provide the Gibson Test to children in their employees’ families. Contact Cog1st to learn more.

[Parents no longer have to wonder](#) if weak cognitive skills may be impeding their children from achieving their best. Now they have access to the tools to help them succeed.

Cognitive First is a qualified project of Congressional District Programs, a 501(c)(3) umbrella organization. The mission of Cognitive First is to “to empower under-resourced, under-served and disadvantaged children to maximize their learning capacity and improve their academic performance.” Cog1st operates from a strong conviction that all kids deserve an equal opportunity to learn and to achieve a quality education. Having Cognitive First initiatives and programs in place expands the effectiveness of schools, improves academic achievement and teacher quality, and promotes greater parental involvement. More information is available at [http://cog1st.org](#).

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