

# Making Sense of Gifted Students

**The most valuable lesson that parents can teach gifted children is that they have value and worth apart from how well they perform.**






# **MYTHS** and **TRUTHS** about **Gifted Students**

Information borrowed from  
[NAGC.Org](http://NAGC.Org)



## Myth:

Gifted students don't need help; they'll do fine on their own.



**Truth:** Would you send a star athlete to train for the Olympics without a coach? Gifted students need guidance from well trained, challenging teachers to help develop their talents.



**Myth:**

Teachers challenge all the students, so gifted kids will be fine in the regular classroom

Truth: Although teachers try to challenge all students they are frequently unfamiliar with the needs of gifted children and do not know how to best serve them in the classroom. The National Research Center on Gifted and Talented (NRC/GT) found that 61% of classroom teachers had no training in teaching highly able students, limiting the challenging educational opportunities offered to advanced learners.[1] A more recent national study conducted by the Fordham Institute found that 58% of teachers have received no professional development focused on teaching academically advanced students in the past few years. Taken together, these reports confirm what many families have known: not all teachers are able to recognize and support gifted learners.

**Myth:** Gifted students make everyone else in the class smarter by providing a role model or a challenge.

**Truth:** Actually, average or below-average students do not look to the gifted students in the class as role models. They are more likely to model their behavior on those who have similar capabilities and are coping well in school. Seeing a student at a similar performance level succeed motivates students because it adds to their own sense of ability; watching or relying on someone who is expected to succeed does little to increase a struggling student's sense of self-confidence. Similarly, gifted students benefit from interactions with peers at similar performance levels.





**Myth:** All children are gifted.

**Truth:** While all children are special and deserving, not all children have exceptional academic gifts that require additional support in school. Interestingly, most people readily accept that there are children in performing arts or athletics whose talents are so far above those of others their age that they require additional or different training or coaching. It is important to understand that these same characteristics apply to academically gifted students who need support and guidance to reach their full potential.



**Myth:** Gifted education programs  
are elitist.

**Truth:** Gifted education is not about status, it is about meeting student needs. Advanced learners are found in all cultures, ethnic backgrounds, and socioeconomic groups. However, not every school district offers services for gifted students, even though there are gifted students in every district.



**Myth:** That student can't be gifted;  
he's receiving poor grades.


**Truth:** Underachievement describes a discrepancy between a student's performance and his actual ability. The roots of this problem differ, based on each child's experiences. Gifted students may become bored or frustrated in an unchallenging situation, causing them to lose interest, learn bad study habits, or distrust the school environment. Other students may mask their abilities to try to fit in socially with their same-age peers. No matter the cause, it is imperative that a caring and perceptive adult help gifted learners break the cycle of underachievement in order for them to achieve their full potential.



**Myth:** Gifted students are happy,  
popular, and well adjusted in school.

**Truth:** Many gifted students flourish in their community and school environment. However, some gifted children differ in terms of their emotional and moral intensity, sensitivity to expectations and feelings, perfectionism, and deep concerns about societal problems. Others do not share interests with their classmates, resulting in isolation or being labeled unfavorably as a “nerd.” Because of these difficulties, the school experience is one to be endured rather than celebrated. It is estimated that 20 to 25% of gifted children have social and emotional difficulties, about twice as many as in the general population of students.





**Myth:** This child can't be gifted, he is in special education.

**Truth:** Some gifted students also have learning or other disabilities. These “twice-exceptional” students often go undetected in regular classrooms because their disability and gifts mask each other, making them appear “average.” Other twice- exceptional students are identified as having a learning disability and as a result, are not considered for gifted services. In both cases, it is important to focus on the students’ abilities and allow them to have challenging curricula in addition to receiving help for their learning disability.

# Strengths Of Gifted Children

# Possible Problems

Acquires and retains information quickly

Inquisitive attitude; intellectual curiosity; intrinsic motivation; searches for significance

Ability to conceptualize, abstract, synthesize; enjoys problem solving and intellectual activity

Impatient with slowness of others; dislikes routine and drill; may resist mastering foundation skills; may make concepts unduly complex

Asks embarrassing questions; strong-willed; resists direction; seems excessive in interests; expects same of others

Rejects or omits details; resists practice or drill; questions teaching procedures

# Strengths Of Gifted Children

# Possible Problems

Can see cause-effect relations

Love of truth, equity and fair play

Enjoys organizing things and people into structure and order; seeks to systematize

Difficulty accepting the illogical, such as feelings, traditions, or matters to be taken on faith

Difficulty in being practical; worry about humanitarian concerns

Constructs complicated rules or systems; may be seen as bossy, rude, or domineering

## Strengths Of Gifted Children

Large vocabulary and facile verbal proficiency; broad information in advanced areas

Thinks critically; has high expectancies; is self-critical and evaluates others

Keen observer; willing to consider the unusual; open to new experiences

## Possible Problems

May use words to escape or avoid situations; becomes bored with school and age-peers; seen by others as a "know it all"

Critical or intolerant towards others; may become discouraged or depressed; perfectionist

Overly intense focus; occasional gullibility

# Strengths Of Gifted Children

Creative and inventive; likes new ways of doing things

Intense concentration; long attention span in areas of interest; goal directed behavior; persistence

Sensitivity; empathy for others; desire to be accepted by others

# Possible Problems

May disrupt plans or reject what is already known; seen by others as different or out of step

Resists interruption; neglects duties or people during periods of focused interests, stubbornness

Sensitivity to criticism or peer rejection; expects others to have similar values; need for success and recognition; may feel different and alienated

# Strengths Of Gifted Children

# Possible Problems

High energy, alertness, eagerness; periods of intense effort

**Independent; prefers individualized work; self-reliant**

Frustration with inactivity; eagerness may disrupt others' schedules; need continual stimulation; may be seen as hyperactive

May reject parent or peer input; non-conformity; may be unconventional



## Strengths Of Gifted Children

## Possible Problems

Diverse interests and abilities; versatility

May appear scattered and disorganized; frustrations over lack of time; others may expect continual competence

Strong sense of humor

Sees absurdities of situations; humor may not be understood by peers; may become 'class clown' to gain attention



# Most Prevalent Characteristics of Giftedness

- ◆ 99.4% learn rapidly
- ◆ 99.4% have extensive vocabulary
- ◆ 99.3% have excellent memory
- ◆ 99.3% reason well
- ◆ 97.9% are curious
- ◆ 96.1% are mature for their age at times
- ◆ 95.9% have an excellent sense of humor
- ◆ 93.8% have a keen sense of observation
- ◆ 93.5% have compassion for others
- ◆ 93.4% have a vivid imagination
- ◆ 93.4% have a long attention span
- ◆ 92.9% have ability with numbers
- ◆ 90.3% are concerned with justice and fairness
- ◆ 89.4% have facility with puzzles and legos
- ◆ 88.4% have a high energy level
- ◆ 88.3% are perfectionistic
- ◆ 85.9% are perseverant in their areas of interest
- ◆ 84.1% question authority
- ◆ 80.3% are avid readers

# Specific Struggles of the Gifted

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Confusion about the meaning of giftedness</li><li>•Feeling different</li><li>•Heightened sensitivity</li><li>•Idealism</li><li>•Feelings of inadequacy</li><li>•Relentless self- criticism</li><li>•Increased levels of inner conflict</li><li>•Deep concerns with morality and justice</li><li>•Lack of understanding from others</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Unrealistic expectations of others</li><li>•Hostility of others toward their abilities</li><li>•Difficulty with social relationships</li><li>•Difficulty in selecting amount a diversity of talents</li><li>•Lack of sufficient challenge in schoolwork</li><li>•Depression (often manifested as boredom)</li><li>•High levels of anxiety</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Hiding talents to fit in with peers</li><li>•Nonconformity and resistance to authority</li><li>•Refusal to do routine, repetitive tasks</li><li>•Inappropriate criticizing of others</li><li>•Excessive competitiveness</li><li>•Isolation from peers</li><li>•Low frustration tolerance</li><li>•Intolerance of others</li><li>•Lack of study habits</li></ul> |
|---|--|--|

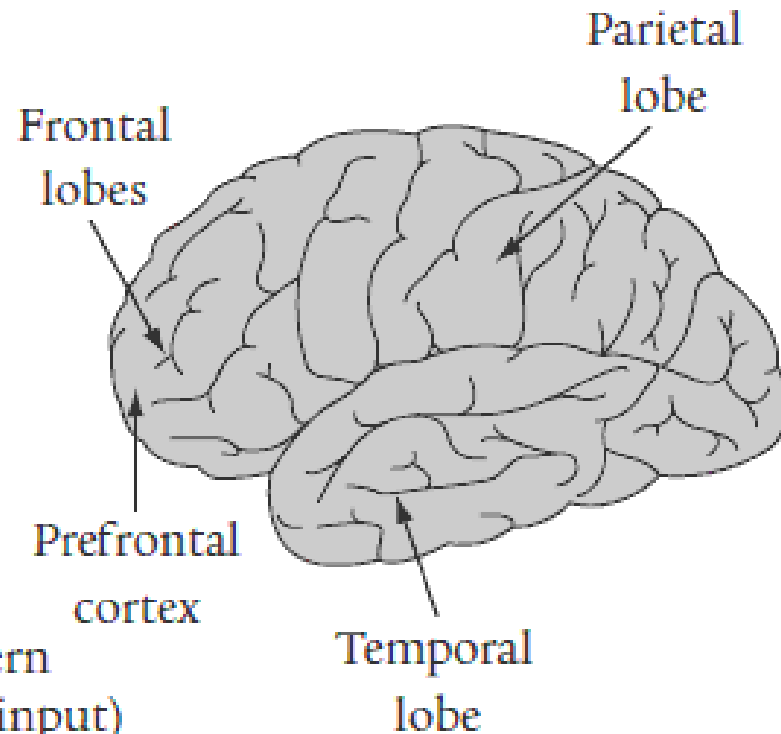
# 8 Gripes of Gifted Kids

- 1. No one explains what being gifted is all about – it's kept a big secret.*
- 2. School is too easy and too boring.*
- 3. Parents, teachers and/or friends expect us to be perfect all the time.*
- 4. Friends who really understand us are few and far between.*
- 5. Kids often tease us about being smart.*
- 6. We feel overwhelmed by the number of things we can do in life.*
- 7. We feel different and alienated.*
- 8. We worry about world problems and feel helpless to do anything about them.*

# The Gifted Brain

The brains of gifted people often show these differences:

- Greater focus skills  
(frontal lobe function)
- Greater global connectivity  
(more overall brain usage)
- Greater alpha brainwave pattern  
(supports concentration and input)
- Better brain chemistry balance  
(supports attention, mood, and memory)



*Figure 6.2. Exceptional or “Gifted” Brains.*

# COMMON TRAITS OF GIFTED STUDENTS

1. Asynchrony
2. Intuition
3. Uncommon Personality Traits
4. Over-Excitability

# 1. Asynchrony

- The physical domain may develop at a pace similar to an average student or even sometimes a little slower.
- The cognitive domain develops at a much faster pace than the average student.
- The social domain might develop at a similar or slower pace than an average student
- The emotional domain develops faster than for an average student.

**It's the 5<sup>th</sup> grader who's  
physically a 4th grader,  
emotionally a 6<sup>th</sup> grader,  
cognitively a 7<sup>th</sup> grader, and  
socially a 4<sup>th</sup> grader.**

# Asynchrony

Gifted children's physical development may lead to an inability to complete a task they are capable of intellectually envisioning. (Perfectionism may play a role in this frustration as well.)

A gifted child may be able to participate in adult conversations about issues such as global warming or world hunger one minute and the next minute cry and whine because a sibling took a favorite toy.



## 2. INTUITION

75% of Gifted Kids are Intuitive Thinkers

- Struggle to explain themselves and their thought processes
- Make connections that others miss

# PROBLEMS INTUITIVE THINKERS FACE

- 85-90% of CCRS is Left Brain/Analytical Thinkers
- Teachers tend to prefer logical, systematic explanations

# What Can You Do To Help An Intuitive Thinker?

- Give Time to Explore
- Let Them Go Faster
- Encourage Their Connections
- Demand Explanations



# I AM THE LEFT BRAIN

Decisive!  
011001011 LOGIC

Accurate  
ANALYTIC

REASON  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7  
8 9

PRACTICAL  
Strategic

CONTROL

SCIENCE

Realistic  
Bliss

WWW.CARTOONADAY.COM



# I AM the Right Brain!

Intuition  
Love LOVE love

you art  
Poetry

FREEDOM

Passion  
Vivid

creative

YEARNING

PEACE

## 4. OVEREXCITABLE

- Intellectual
- Imagination
- Emotional Sensitivity
- Sensory
- Psychomotor



# Intellectual Over -Excitability



Loves nothing more than to think, solve problems, and ask questions?

# Over-Excitable Imagination

Creates such a rich fantasy life that it is difficult for him or her to distinguish reality from fantasy?



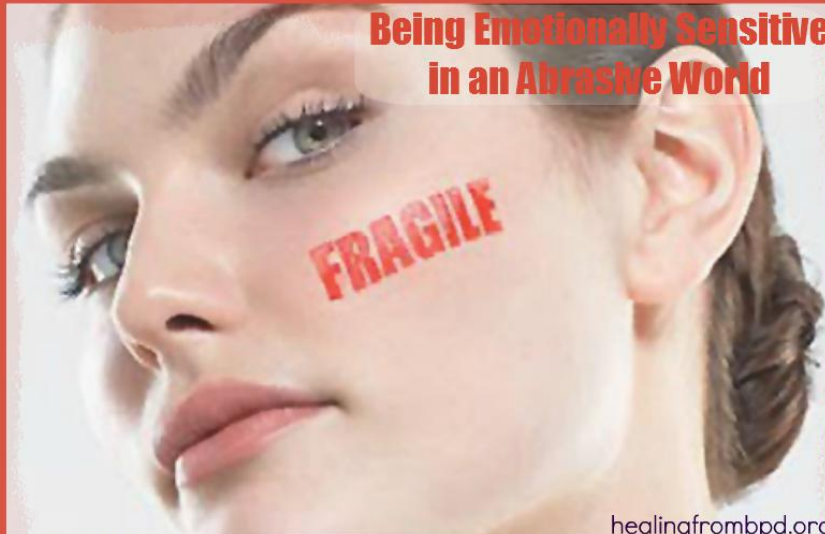
# Emotional Over- Excitability



Intense  
emotional  
reactions, such  
that it seems like  
he or she is  
"overreacting"?



**Being Emotionally Sensitive  
in an Abrasive World**



healingfrombpd.org

**sen·si·tive** /ˈsensitiv/ ◀▶

Adjective: Quick to detect or respond to slight changes, signals, or influences:  
"spiders are **sensitive** to vibrations on their web".

{Heightened sensitivity}  
generates emotions  
that are experienced,  
but not necessarily  
expressed.



Gifted children feel deeply about ideas about fairness and what is right. They go through the stages of moral development earlier than their peers.

Gifted children can intellectually understand abstract concepts but may be unable to deal with those concepts emotionally, leading to intense concerns about death, the future, sex, and other such issues.

Emotional intensity is positively correlated with intelligence and so the higher the intellectual level, the more emotionally intense a gifted child will be. Emotional intensity is expressed by the gifted through a wide range of feelings, attachments, compassion, heightened sense of responsibility and scrupulous self-examination. While these are normal for the gifted and appear very early in gifted children, they are often mistaken for emotional immaturity rather than as evidence of a rich inner life. (Piechowski & Colangelo 1984)

- ◆ Forms And Expression Of Emotional Intensity

Intensity of feeling: positive feelings, negative feelings, extremes of emotion, complex emotions, identification with others' feelings, laughing and crying together

Somatic (bodily) expression: tense stomach, sinking heart, blushing, flushing

Inhibition: timidity, shyness

Strong affective memory

Fears and anxieties, feelings of guilt

Concerns with death, depressive and suicidal moods

Relationship feelings: emotional ties and attachments, concern for others (empathy), sensitivity in relationships, attachment to animals, difficulty in adjusting to new environments, loneliness, conflicts with others over depth of relationship

Feelings toward self: self-evaluation and self-judgment, feelings of inadequacy and inferiority

# - Last journal entry of a gifted adolescent who completed suicide

*I am having trouble deciding were [where] to kill myself.*

*I can either do it here (home) when no one is home call the police before so they can clean up so my family won't have to discover me. There is a chance the police would get there too soon and save me My family would probably have very bad memories if they knew I did it in one of our trees .*

*I can do it somewhere else someone would find me, call the police, my family would never see me. This would receive more publicity which would be shitty for my parents and friends*

*Even though both are flawed I believe doing it somewhere else is the best option.*



# Sensory Over-Excitability



Has strong, unusual reactions to sounds or smells?

Has strong reactions to the way things feel (tags, buttons, paper-towels, etc.)

# Psychomotor Over- Excitability



Fidgets a lot, or seems to have more energy than other children his or her age?

Excessive talking

# Stress: Causes in Gifted Kids

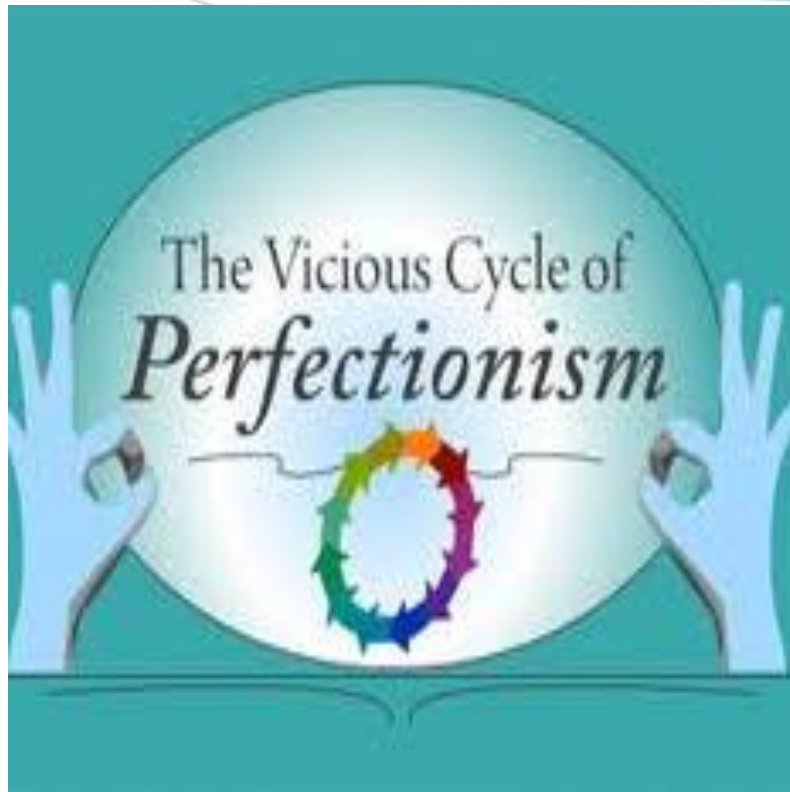
- ◆ Gifted children are particularly susceptible to stress, which if not checked may result in any number of chronic maladies or “burnout” (Fimian). This is characterized by a state of mental and physical exhaustion from prolonged, unrelieved stress that can lead to withdrawal, hopelessness, and inactivity. Farrell (2002) reports that suicide has become the solution to an increasing number of gifted youth’s inability to cope.

# Why are Gifted Students at a High Risk for Burnout?

- ◆ Excessive environmental demands
- ◆ Negative self-perception habits
- ◆ Poor coping patterns
- ◆ Undeveloped stress management skills.
- ◆ Pulled in too many directions or into too many activities



# Perfectionism causes STRESS



## THE CYCLE OF PERFECTIONISM IN SCIENCE



## Trying to Do Well

## vs. Perfectionism

Trying to Do Well	Perfectionism
Doing the research you have to do for a project, working hard on it, turning it in on time, and feeling good about what you learned.	Writing your report over three times, staying up two nights in a row, and handing it in late because you had to get it right (and still feeling bad about your report).
Studying for a test, taking it with confidence, and feeling good about your score of 9 out of 10, or getting a B+ instead of an A.	Cramming at the last minute, taking the test with sweaty palms, and feeling bad about your B+ because a friend got an A.
Choosing to work on group projects because you enjoy learning from different people's experiences and ways of doing things.	Always working alone because no one can do as good a job as you—and you're not about to let anyone else slide by on <i>your</i> A.
Accepting an award with pride, even though your name is misspelled on it. (You know it can be fixed later.)	Being grumpy about the award because the officials didn't get your name right.
Getting together with people who are interesting, likable, and fun to be with.	Refusing to be with people who aren't star athletes, smart, and popular.
Being willing to try new things, even when they're a little scary, and learning from your experiences and mistakes.	Avoiding experiences because you are terrified of making mistakes—especially in public.
Keeping your room cleaner and neater, making your bed more often, and putting your clothes away.	Not being able to leave the room until the bed and room are just so.
Joining a soccer team and playing two or three times a week to have fun and compete with other teams.	Taking lessons as often as you can, practicing every day, and not feeling satisfied until you can beat every other team in your league.

“When perfectionism is driving, shame is always riding shotgun.”

Dr. Brene Brown



The Perfectionist's Guide to Results

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Children who suffer from perfectionism are in a constant state of frustration because of the ever present gap between how they feel they are actually performing and their sometimes unrealistic, sometimes self-imposed achievement goals.

Kaplan and Geoffroy (1993) report that self-inflicted stress can lead to burnout or underachievement. This can lead to perfectionistic “freeze-up,” which is a type of internal stage fright or fear of failure associated with any new, perhaps threatening challenge.



# Excessive Achievement Demands Cause Stress

- ◆ Pressure caused by the ambitious demands of others
- ◆ A general “achievement anxiety” can be generated in children by well-meaning adults who want their kids to do their best all the time.
- ◆ Rather than “achieving to live” a satisfying, productive life, gifted children overburdened in this manner may learn to “live to achieve.”

Achievement-anxious children are often plagued by such fears and implicit questions as

- “Can I maintain this level of achievement?” and
- “Will only more be expected of me once I achieve these goals?”

They sometimes camouflage themselves behind a facade of underachievement.



**IMPOSTER**

**SYNDROME**

CAUSES STRESS

High achievers believe that somehow, they have “tricked” everyone into thinking they are great. They think no one else is aware of their limitations. Success is attributed to luck, not ability:

- I only won the science fair because Jimmy didn't enter this year.
- I did well in middle school, but only because the teachers liked me.
- You think I'm good at the piano, but that's only because I chose easy songs.

In an attempt to maintain the illusion of perfection, they avoid situations in which they might not be the best. This is Impostor's Syndrome.





What if someone finds out that I don't know the answer?

I can't explain my thought process, but I get it right.—I must be lucky.

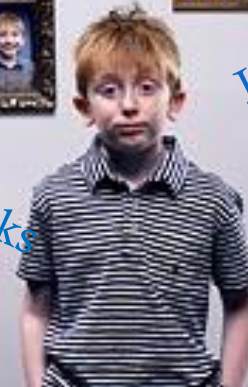
**FRAUD**

Too much pressure

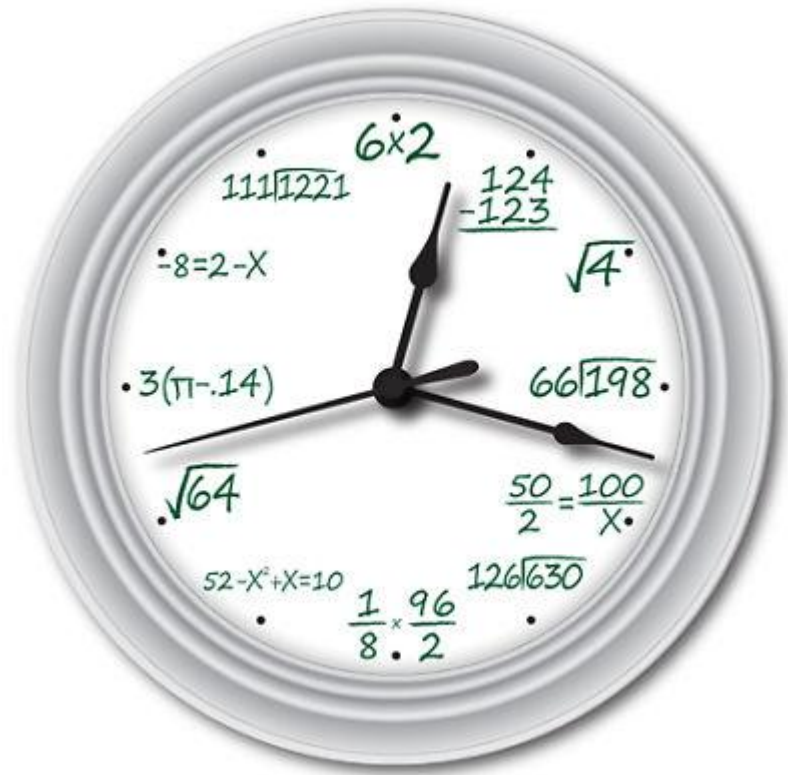
I'm scared to take risks

I feel like I can't fail or my parents will be disappointed.

If it's hard, I must be stupid.



[Impostor syndrome is] a shared learned behavior common to high achievers – people are left on their own, competition is intense, and there's not much of a mentor system.



It's only a  
matter of  
**TIME...**

# Increased Distance, Decreased Confidence



- Distance between students and teachers increase as students move up.
- In elementary school, teachers know interests, strengths, and weaknesses. By college, they don't even recognize my face.
- Students feel more and more like they are sneaking past the overloaded plates of teachers and professors.



**EASY = SMART**

**HARD = NOT SMART**



**TOUGH, BUT  
DOABLE**



**GUARANTEED  
100%**

Children praised for intelligence  
value PERFORMANCE.

Children praised for hard work  
value OPPORTUNITIES.

# How to Help Students with Imposter Syndrome

1. Make your high achieving students aware of Impostor Syndrome, especially as they move up in their educational careers.
2. Encourage teachers to give caring, honest feedback of how their best students can improve
3. Encourage teachers and parents to never give the impression that they think a gifted child has perfectly mastered a topic/skill (because the gifted child *knows he* hasn't, and the teacher/parent will then appear to be un-objective).



# More Causes of Stress: Intellectual/Social Development Gap

- ◆ Many GT students lack the physical/social development of an older child.
- ◆ The efforts of a bright student to socialize with older children will quite often be blocked by the older children's rejection of the "little kid." Thus the gifted student feels "out of it" with his or her own age peers as well as with older kids who pay no attention.
- ◆ Social isolation can cause stress.

# Feelings of Isolation

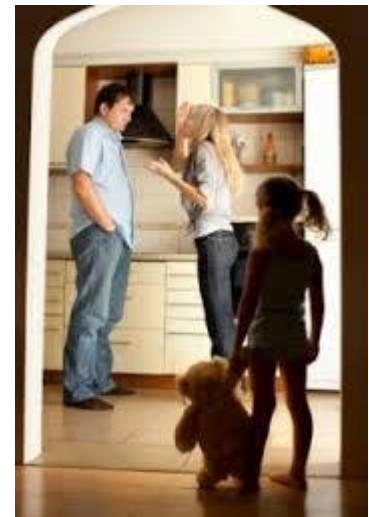
Highly gifted children often feel especially isolated among chronological age peers.

Most profoundly affected:

- Highly gifted verbal
- Girls
- African Americans (especially African American girls)


# Heightened Sensitivity to Adult Problems Causes Stress

- ◆ Gifted kids tend to be “info-maniacs” about what is going on in their environment, everything from family problems to global issues, and this, too can create stress.
- ◆ They have the knowledge but lack the maturity or experience to deal with the knowledge.
- ◆ They often worry about problems that may not affect them directly(except that the worry does affect them), or over which they have no control.



# Other Causes of Stress

- extra pressure from parents and teachers to be continually successful
- increased fear of failure and a sense of failure when not 'perfect'
- expectations that they will spend unusual amounts of time practicing their special skills such that they do not have normal play and recreation time
- developing high demands and expectations of others
- confusion in choosing a career for the child who is gifted in many areas.
- frustration caused by having skills at different stages of development (eg. having advanced cognitive skills but only 'normal' for age handwriting skills)
- difficulties in gaining access to a challenging level of education appropriate to their needs
- inappropriate preschool or school curriculum and/or placement
- difficulties relating to other children of the same age and finding same age friends

A young child with short blonde hair, wearing an orange t-shirt and khaki shorts, is walking away from the camera on a sandy beach. The child's arms are slightly out to the sides. In the background, the ocean waves are breaking on the shore. The entire scene is set against a dark, semi-transparent background that allows the text to be clearly visible.

*Each time we  
steal a student's  
struggle, we  
steal the  
opportunity for  
them to build  
self-confidence.  
They must learn  
to do hard  
things to feel  
good about  
themselves.*

Dr. Sylvia Rimm

[venspired.com](http://venspired.com)




# PERSISTENCE

Helping to increase persistence and resilience is critical for both teaching and parenting a gifted child.

What good is it to have exceptional science abilities with a promising career in physics if you meltdown when you don't agree with your professor or "refuse" to do what you are asked by your boss at a leading technology firm?

While we must differentiate and accommodate for a gifted child's strengths and weaknesses, we also must help him or her to manage challenges and adversity.



A decorative blue header with a curved, wavy bottom edge, transitioning from a darker blue on the left to a lighter blue on the right.

While understanding how difficult it is for them to feel stupid and inferior, we must help them build the coping skills to take risks, to fall down and get back up, and to keep coming back for more.

**As we all know, it is not the smartest who are most successful in our world, it is those who persevere, adapt, problem solve, and don't give up.**

Successful people understand what they are good at, what they aren't, and how to solve problems as they arise—in short, they show resilience. While many gifted kids pose challenges in parenting and teaching, we must continue to try to help them grow—and not give up either.

# Encourage Persistence

Persistence “Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept trying when there seemed no hope at all” Dale Carnegie

- Remind students of previous successful strategies.
- Provide choices of both required and optional activities
- Avoid too early rescue, let the learner struggle. Provide support and encouragement, “I know you can figure it out”. Call attention to those who have persisted.
- It is more helpful to learn three ways to solve one problem, than one way to solve three problems.

## Teach Students to Failing Gracefully

“Losing can be positive and ennobling if it compels us to examine why we lost. After all, it is the way we learn and the way we live.” William Ecenbarger, Pulitzer-prize winner

- Offer choices. A resilient person needs to have confidence in his/her decision-making ability.
- Foster “islands of competence”—the ability to offer a positive outcome. Friends are important.
- Encourage risk-taking and accept mistakes. Model positive acceptance of failure.
- Set clear criteria for success. Assist the child in identifying “What went wrong?”

# Unsettling Statistics

- ◆ 14%-20% of high school dropouts are in the superior range of abilities (Rimm 1995)
- ◆ 48.8 % of the Gifted dropouts are in the lowest quartile SES level and only 3.56 were from the highest quartile SES level (Renzulli 2000)
- ◆ Of the top 5 percent of our high school graduates, 40 percent do not graduate from college (Rimm 2008)
- ◆ 88% of high school dropouts had passing grades, but dropped out due to boredom (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation: “The Silent Epidemic” March 2006)

# Unsettling Statistics

- ◆ Despite decades of interest and commitment to this topic, it is estimated that 15% to 40% of identified gifted students are at risk of performing far below their academic potential (Seeley, 1993), with Rimm (2003) referring to under achievement as a “syndrome [that] continues in epidemic proportions”
- ◆ Signs of underachievement may begin as early as 2<sup>nd</sup> grade (Ford 2004)

# Why do Gifted Students Underachieve?

- Lack of Positive Role Models
- Fear of Failure
- Non-conformity or Rebellion
- Depression
- Poverty
- Rejection of the dominant culture
- Unstable Family Life
- Parental Devaluation of Education



# Why do Gifted Students Underachieve?

- Mismatch of teaching & learning styles
- Absence of challenge
- Feelings of isolation
- Peer pressure
- Perfectionism
- Lack of organizational and study skills

# Gifted Girls

- ◆ Highly gifted girls do not receive recognition for their achievements
- ◆ Gifted Girls take less rigorous courses than gifted boys in high school
- ◆ Gifted girls' IQ scores drop during adolescence, perhaps as girls begin to perceive that giftedness in females is undesirable.



# Gifted Girls

- ◆ **Highly gifted girls are less likely to attend prestigious colleges than gifted boys , a choice that leads to lowered career status**
- ◆ **Gifted girls fear having to choose between career and marriage, yet this dilemma is not in fact a reality**
- ◆ **Gifted girls maintain a high involvement in extracurricular and social activities during adolescence**

# Impact of Bullying

- See their academic gifts as flaws.

negative view of their intelligence

doubt their abilities

falsely believe something is wrong with them

embarrassed by their academic gifts

- Mask their giftedness.

try to blend in

intentionally provide the wrong answers in class



"Mr. Wickers called me 'gifted' in front of the whole class. I'm ruined."

# Become perfectionistic.

Although most gifted children are inclined to be perfectionists at times, bullying can increase this tendency. Because they have an intrinsic desire to avoid “mistakes” and to “be better,” they often approach bullying this way, trying to find ways to change themselves so that bullies no longer target them.

# Experience Strong Reactions.




- ◆ **Gifted students tend to have heightened sensitivities and are profoundly affected by verbal bullying and relational aggression. As a result, just one incident can be traumatic for them. They also may feel unexpressed rage over bullying or become depressed as a result of the bullying. Additionally, gifted students tend to have high expectations of themselves so when they are bullied, they may feel like they have failed and have trouble overcoming bullying.**



# Struggle to Understand the Bullying

**Gifted students often struggle to understand why the bullying is happening and may get deeply engrossed in analyzing the situation. They may try to figure out everything from the bully's motivation for bullying to how they could be different. Their goal is to learn about the situation in order to change it or make it stop, which is usually not possible without outside help. What's more, gifted students are often passionate about social justice issues and may struggle to make sense of cruelty and aggression.**

A decorative header at the top of the slide, consisting of a dark blue curved shape on the left and a lighter blue curved shape on the right, meeting at a central point.

“Don’t worry that children never listen to you, worry that they are always watching.”

Robert Fulghum

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