

UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTING THE COMPLEXITIES OF YOUR CHILD:

IT ISN'T ALWAYS EASY BEING GIFTED

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What is Giftedness?

Giftedness is asynchronous development in which advanced cognitive abilities and heightened intensity combine to create inner experiences and awareness that are qualitatively different from the norm.

This uniqueness of the gifted renders them particularly vulnerable and requires modifications in parenting, teaching, and counseling in order for them to develop optimally.

❖ Columbus Group, 1991

Five Domains of Development

- ❖ *Intellectual*
- ❖ *Emotional*
- ❖ *Physical*
- ❖ *Spiritual/Moral*
- ❖ *Social*

Asynchronony

- ❖ *Out of sync; uneven development in each or most domains. In a gifted child, each of the five domains develops at different rates according to the advanced abilities within the domain.*

❖ *Gatto-Walden, P. (2000)*

Overexcitabilities

- ❖ *Psychomotor*
- ❖ *Sensual*
- ❖ *Intellectual*
- ❖ *Imaginational*
- ❖ *Emotional*

Silverman, 1993

Psychomotor

- ❖ *Surplus of energy (i.e., rapid speech, intense enthusiasm, acting out)*
- ❖ *Psychomotor expression of emotional tension (continual talking, impulsive behavior, nervous habits)*

Sensual

- ❖ *Sensory pleasure (i.e., seeing, smelling, hearing)*
- ❖ *Sensual expression of emotional tension (i.e., overeating, wanting to be center of attention)*
- ❖ *Aesthetic Pleasures (i.e., appreciation of beauty, writing styles)*

Intellectual

- ❖ *Probing questions; problem-solving; learning (i.e., curiosity, concentration, avid reading)*
- ❖ *Theoretical thinking (meta-cognition, introspection, moral thinking)*

Imaginational

- ❖ *Free play of the imagination (i.e., frequent use of image and metaphor, facility for invention and fantasy)*
- ❖ *Spontaneous imagery as an expression of emotional tension (i.e., tendency to dramatize, fear of the unknown)*

Emotional

- ❖ *Intensity of feeling (i.e., positive or negative feelings, extremes of emotion)*
- ❖ *Somatic expressions (i.e., tense stomach, sinking heart)*
- ❖ *Inhibition (timidity, shyness)*
- ❖ *Strong affective memory*
- ❖ *Fears and anxieties, feelings of guilt*

Emotional (cont'd)

- ❖ *Concern with death, depressive and suicidal moods*
- ❖ *Relationship feelings (i.e., emotional ties and attachment, empathy, sensitivity in relationships)*
- ❖ *Feelings toward self (i.e., self evaluation and self-judgment, feelings of inadequacy and inferiority)*

The Whole Child

- ❖ *One of the basic characteristics of the gifted is their intensity and an expanded field of their subjective experience. The intensity, in particular, must be understood as a qualitatively distinct characteristic. It is not a matter of degree but of a different quality of experiencing; vivid, absorbing, penetrating, encompassing, complex, commanding---a way of being quiveringly alive.*

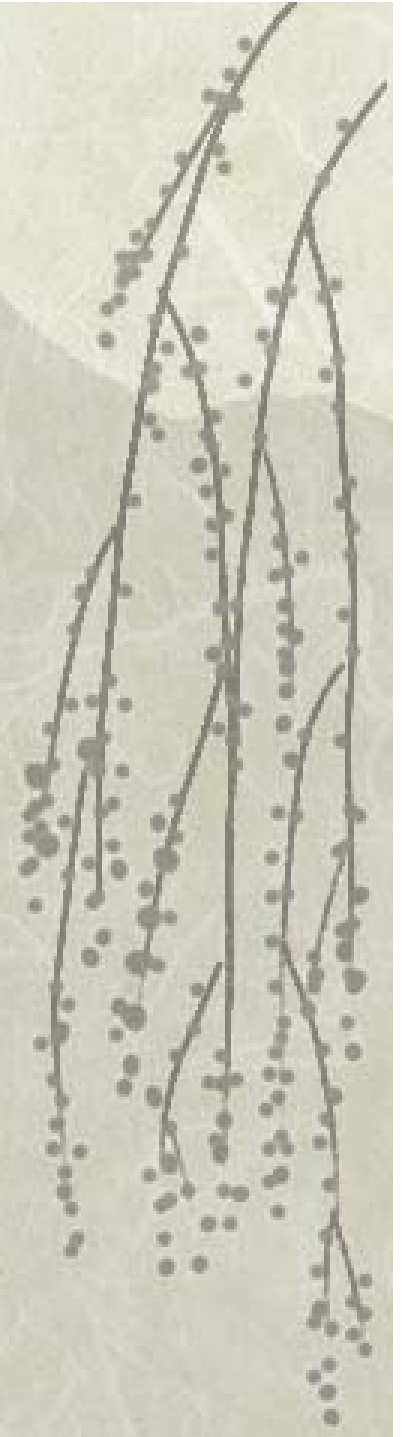
❖ Piechowski, 1991

Introverts

- ❖ *Get energy from inside themselves*
- ❖ *Feel drained by people*
- ❖ *Have two personas (private and public)*
- ❖ *Reveal self to only a few*
- ❖ *Mentally rehearse before speaking*
- ❖ *Dislike being the center of attention*
- ❖ *Are uncomfortable with changes*
- ❖ *Are reflective*
- ❖ *Fear humiliation*

Extroverts

- ❖ *Get energy from interaction*
- ❖ *Are open and trusting*
- ❖ *Think aloud*
- ❖ *Enjoy being center of attention*
- ❖ *Are comfortable in new situations*
- ❖ *Are distractible and impulsive*
- ❖ *Are risk-takers in groups*
- ❖ *Learn by doing*





*Supporting Gifted Children from
Culturally, Linguistically, and
Economically Diverse Environments*

- ❖ *Screening and assessment practices*
- ❖ *English Language Learners*
- ❖ *Children from low SES backgrounds*
- ❖ *Race, ethnicity and cultural heritage*
- ❖ *Multicultural learning experiences*

Peer Relationships

- ❖ *Building and maintaining same-age peer relationships*
- ❖ *Accessing intellectual peers who are often not same-age peers*
- ❖ *Dealing with bullying and harassment (at home and school)*
- ❖ *Managing intensities in social interactions*
- ❖ *Developing social skills and problem-solving skills*
- ❖ *Accessing support when needed*

Basic Steps to Problem- Solving

- ❖ *Stop and think!*
- ❖ *What is the problem? (Problem identification)*
- ❖ *How can I handle it... what choices do I have? (Problem Analysis)*
- ❖ *Make a decision and follow through (action)*
- ❖ *Did I solve the problem? Did it work out the way I wanted? (reflection and problem evaluation)*

Social Skills Training

- ❖ *“Tool box” analogy*
- ❖ *Performance versus skill deficit*
- ❖ *Teaching replacement behaviors*
- ❖ *Generalization and transfer of training*
- ❖ *Barriers and obstacles*

Dealing with Harassment and Bullying

- ❖ *Definition of Bullying*
- ❖ *Direct vs. Indirect harassment (gender)*
- ❖ *Passive vs. provocative targets*
- ❖ *Inequity in power between target and bully*
- ❖ *Intent of bullying is to cause distress*
- ❖ *Bullying does not typically stop without intervention (it is very reinforcing for the bully)*
- ❖ *Bullying affects bystanders as well*
- ❖ *Systems approach is most effective*

Steps to Anger Management

- ❖ *ABCs of anger and aggressive behavior*
- ❖ *Identify **Cues** and **Reducers***
- ❖ *Determine individual **Triggers**. (Internal/ External)*
- ❖ *Introduce and model use of **Reminders***
- ❖ *Teach **Self-evaluation** and self-monitoring skills*
- ❖ *Practice the sequence of skills through role play*

Triggers-Cues-Reminders-Reducers-Self Evaluation

Safe homes and safe schools

- ❖ *Are free of verbal and physical aggression*
- ❖ *Are nurturing a, caring and respectful of everyone*
- ❖ *Are physically and psychologically healthy*
- ❖ *Promote sensible risk taking*
- ❖ *Enhance the self-esteem of all*

What is your parenting style?

Facilitator

Director

Guide; interacts-----Imposes, demands

Self-determined goals-----Sets requirements

*Challenges; supports risks-----Expectations as
pressure*

Process oriented-----Product oriented

Safe environment-----Critical environment

Inner directedness-----Outer directedness

Mutual Respect-----Demands respect

Strategies we use that never work!

- ❖ *Yell (what have we modeled?)*
- ❖ *Engage in Power struggles*
- ❖ *Use Idle threats (lack of follow through)*
- ❖ *Use Time-out as punishment*
- ❖ *Have a “problem” rather than solution focus*
- ❖ *Take behavior personally*
- ❖ *Assume “fair” means “the same as”*
- ❖ *Use harsh, punitive discipline*

Some Strategies to Increase Compliance

- ❖ *Avoid using a question format*
- ❖ *Make proximity work to your advantage*
- ❖ *Make initial eye contact*
- ❖ *Avoid multiple requests*
- ❖ *Note your volume; avoid raising your voice*
- ❖ *Allow time for compliance*
- ❖ *Use Start vs.. Stop requests*
- ❖ *Be descriptive with your directions*
- ❖ *Reinforce compliance!*

Reavis, K., 1996

Helpful Resources

Davidson Institute for Talent Development:

www.gt-cybersource.org

ERIC: www.ericec.org

Hoagies Gifted Education Page:

www.hoagiesgifted.org

National Association for Gifted Children:

www.nagc.org

*National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, University of
Connecticut:*

www.sp.uconn.edu~nrcgt

Resources

SENG Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted: www.sengifted.org

The Association for the Gifted (TAG)/ Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)

Florida Association for Gifted (FLAG)

www.flagifted.org

World Council for Gifted and Talented Children www.worldgifted.org