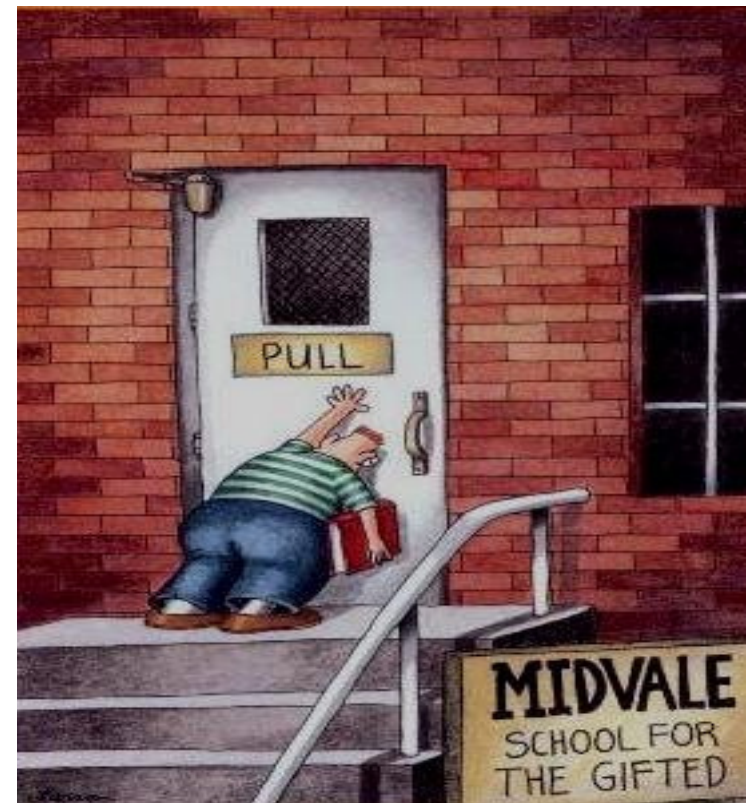


# Social-Emotional Health of Children Who are Gifted

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# Questions

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- Is the social-emotional health of Gifted children really any different than for other children?
- What are some social needs of Gifted children?
- What are some emotional needs of Gifted children?

# Social Needs of the Gifted

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## Myth or Not

- Gifted students should be with students their own age.
- Gifted students are better off if they spend their entire school day amidst same-age, heterogeneous classmates.
- (Cross)

# Social Needs of the Gifted





# Social Needs of the Gifted

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Social difficulties may arise through...

School Culture and Norms

- Require different education experiences
- Differentiated instruction



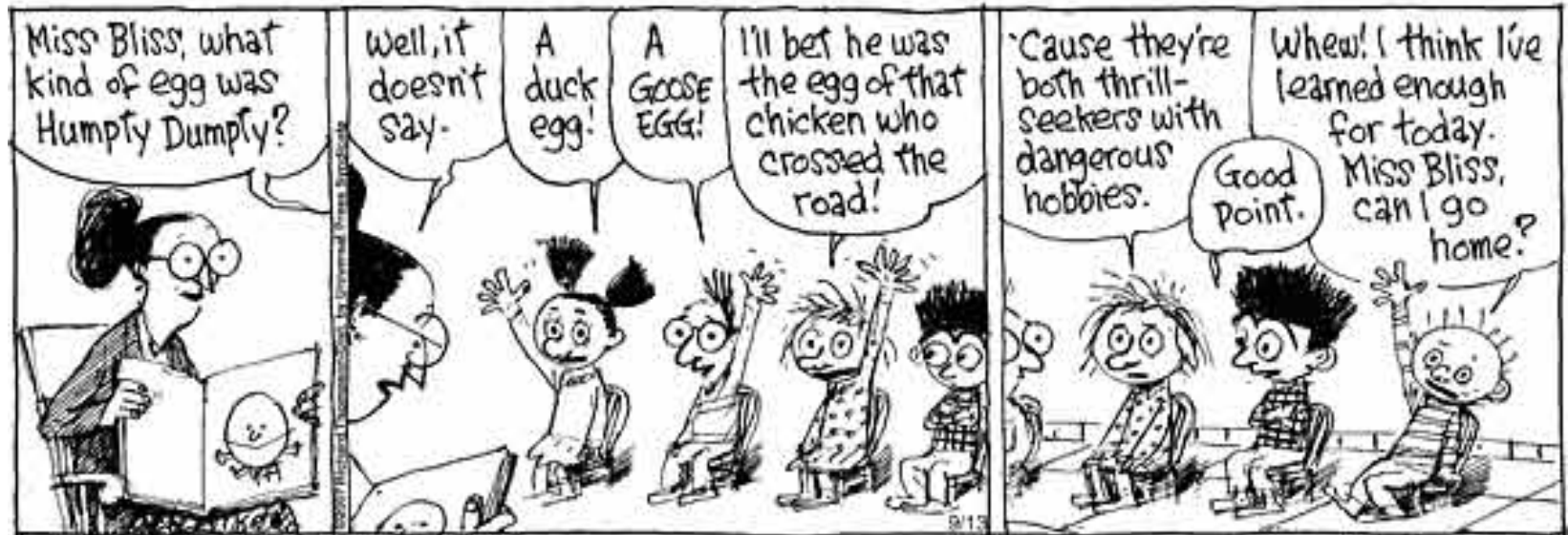
# Social Needs of the Gifted

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Social difficulties may arise through...

- Sensitivity to expectations of others
  - Become more self-critical
  - Underachievement
  - Hide own abilities

# Social Needs of the Gifted





# Social Needs of the Gifted

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Social difficulties may arise through...

- Peer Relations

- May experience social isolation
- May choose older playmates



# Social Needs of the Gifted

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In studies, L.S. Hollingworth found that with exceptionally gifted students, the higher their IQ, the more likely they are to feel isolated from their peers...

However:

# Social Needs of the Gifted

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- This "isolation did not arise from emotional disturbance, but was caused by the absence of a suitable peer group with whom to relate. When extremely gifted students who had been rejected by age-peers were removed from the inappropriate grade-placement and were permitted to work and play with intellectual peers, the loneliness and social isolation disappeared and the child became accepted as a valued classmate and friend." (Gross)



# Emotional Needs

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## Myth or Not

- Gifted Children are Better Adjusted than Average Children
- Gifted Children are At-Risk for Negative Outcomes



# Emotional Needs

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- Gifted Children are Better Adjusted than Average Children
  - Because they have high intelligence, are creative and can problem solve well, they are able to cope with stressors and are better adjusted.
  - High intelligence is a protective factor found in children who are resilient.



# Emotional Needs

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Gifted Children are At-Risk for Negative Outcomes

- Higher rates of depression, delinquency, underachievement
- Vulnerable to certain kinds of problems as a result of personality characteristics and high levels of intensity

# Emotional Needs



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# Emotional Needs

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## Uneven Development

- Cognitive skills may be more advanced than fine-motor skills in young children
- Cause for frustration as child can visualize what they want to do but not be able to actually do it
- May be cause for emotional outbursts



# Emotional Needs

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Gifted students may find their elementary work too easy and not develop good study habits. When they receive challenging work in later grades or even in college, they may lack the study habits to succeed, thus leading to more stress.



# Emotional Needs

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- Gifted students can have a high level of sensitivity to events, ideas, surroundings, relationships, and expectations.
- Advanced Moral Judgment or Moral Reasoning
  - Unusually developed sense of justice and interest in fair play
  - May worry about humanitarian concerns
  - May seem different from peers
  - May appear stubborn and unyielding



# Emotional Needs

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- They can be especially apt to put too much pressure on themselves to excel.
- Perfectionism
  - Pursuit of high standards
  - May lead to intolerance
  - Disappointment in self
  - Possibly lead to higher incidence of eating disorders and depression



# Emotional Needs

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- Multipotentiality
  - Being advanced in many areas, may mean being involved in diverse activities at a frantic pace
  - Child may not have problem but can create problems for family when child/adult must commit to one course of action or career path



# Emotional Needs

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Gifted students may resort to unhealthy strategies to cope with stress:

- Substance abuse
- Eating disorders
- Frequent illness
- Apathy (If you don't try, you can't fail)
- Procrastination
- Overachieving
- Underachieving...

# Emotional Needs





# Emotional Needs

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Gifted students need healthy ways of dealing with stress:

- Change activities
- Talk to someone
- Shift perspective
- Take a break
- Ignore stress
- Get regular exercise



## Summary of Important Information:

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- Socially, gifted students need to have peer relationships based on common interests and pursuits, not on similar ages.
- Emotionally, gifted students need ways to cope with the stresses in their lives.



## Summary of Important Information:

- What Can We Do to Promote the Social-Emotional Health of Children Who are Gifted?



# Know the Warning Signs

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Be aware of...

- Sudden or drastic change in behavior
- Talks of harm to self or others



# Become Informed

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- Understand the characteristics that may make your child different
  - Gifted characteristics that
    - Provide strength or
    - Can lead to negative outcomes
  - Other characteristics. Gifted children are just as likely as other children to have other conditions or disorders



# Recommendations for Parents

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- Make sure educational needs are met
  - Good educational and environmental fit
    - Have true peers
    - Challenging curriculum
    - Receive validation and affirmation for abilities
  - Proper fit is most difficult to provide for the most gifted



# Recommendations for Parents

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Assist your child by helping them...

- Understand their similarities and differences to others
- Accept their abilities and limitations
- Develop social skills
- Feel understood and accepted



# Recommendations for Parents

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Assist your child by helping them...

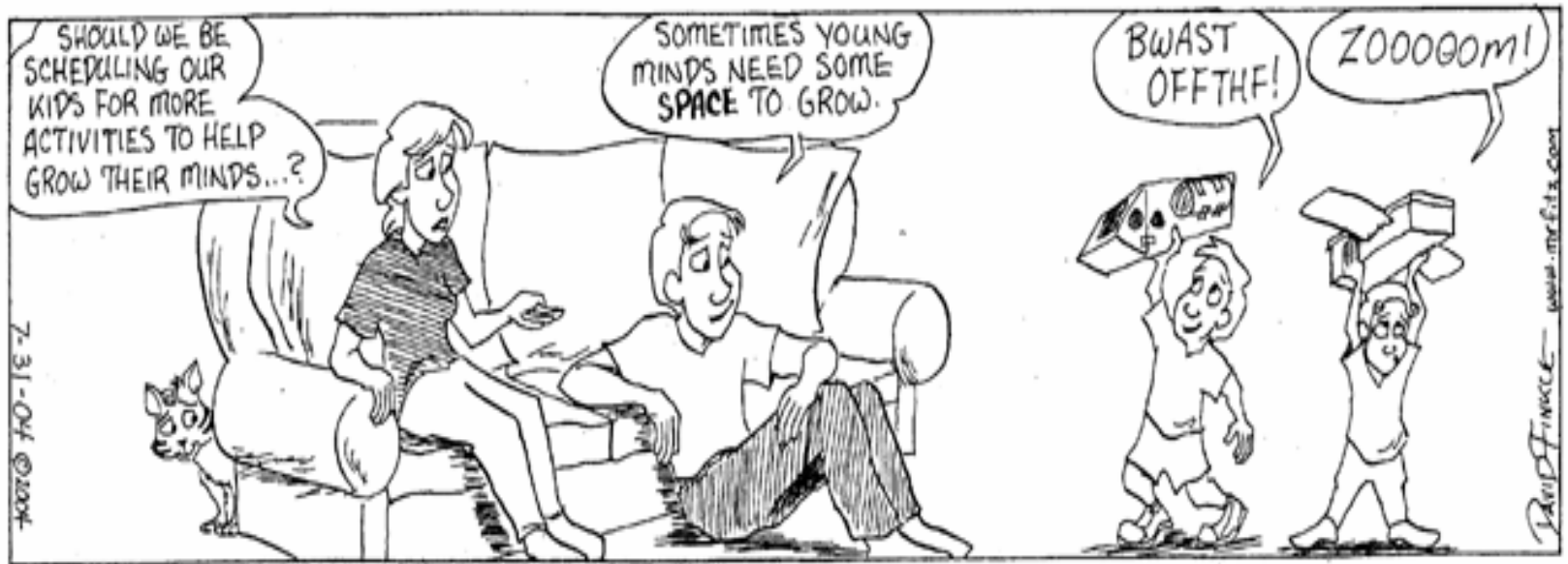
- Understand the difference between excellence and perfection
- Develop realistic self concepts
- Be a whole person
- Use their emotions, not lose their heads!

# Recommendations for Parents

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- Support Healthy Risk-Taking
  - Model healthy risk-taking
    - Get outside comfort zone
    - Engage in experiences where you are not guaranteed success
    - Talk about experiences and how to handle feelings when your performance does not meet your standards and may not for some time
  - Certain Ages and Developmental periods may be more difficult to engage in taking risks
  - Don't take risks, may lose out on opportunities

# Recommendations for Parents





# Recommendations for Parents

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- Make sure your child has time with other gifted children
  - Access to gifted program and/or
  - Access to community resources



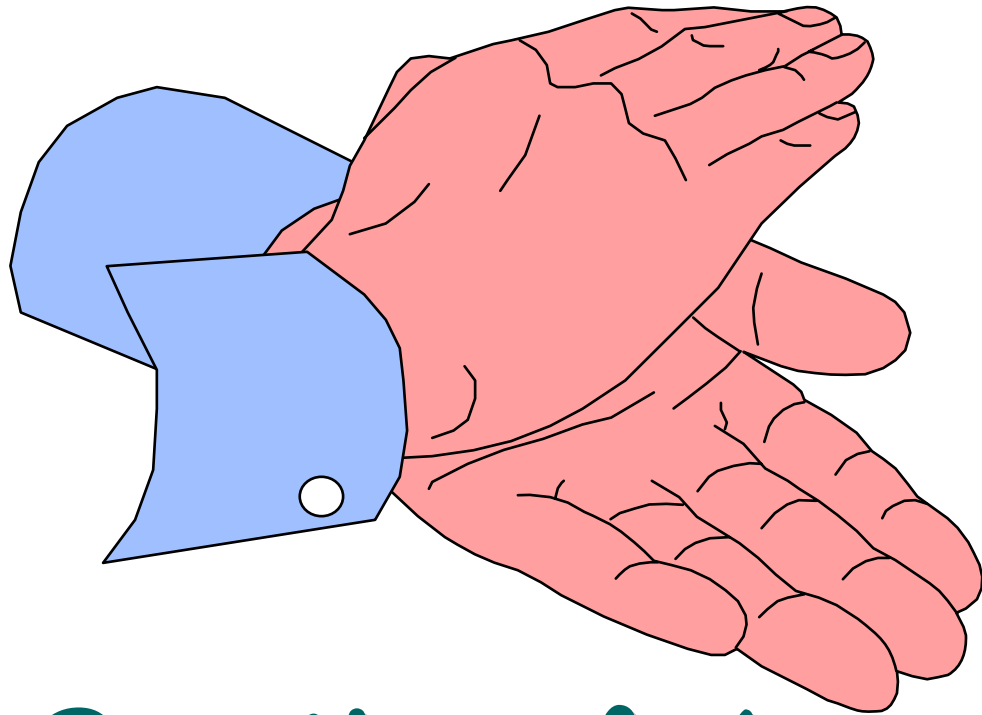
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# Applause

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Questions & Answers