Gifted Parenting 101:
Guiding Gifted and Twice Exceptional Children

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LWSD Gifted Education Advisory Council
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www.lwsdgeac.org
Dilemmas and Delights

• What do you want from this talk?
• What do you want to share?
What’s different about gifted kids?

Let’s start with the IQ bell curve
Mean = 100
Standard deviation = 15

Highly gifted children (three standard deviations above the mean IQ) are as far from the norm as children with a severe intellectual disability.

30 and below - Profound intellectual disability
Severe intellectual disability
55

2%

Mild intellectual disability
Moderate intellectual disability
70

14%

Neurotypical
Range 85-115
85

68%

4%

Bright/mildly gifted
Moderately gifted
115

14%

130
98th %ile

160 and above - exceptionally/profoundly gifted
Highly gifted
145

2%

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And the Extended Bell Curve...
Far from the norm

➢ Gifted kids feel different from neurotypical kids because they really are different!
➢ Children two or more standard deviations above the mean IQ are as different from the average child as a moderate or severely retarded child is from an average child.
➢ “Severely” gifted?
What does “gifted” mean?

➢ Gifted is a long-standing research and education label. No other label has emerged that works really well.

➢ Giftedness is a holistic concept - more than cognitive ability or achievement. Academic success is often unrelated to giftedness.

➢ What may seem unique and peculiar in a gifted child is probably part of the typical development seen in highly intelligent children.
Understanding and Compassion

➢ Many of the seemingly quirky behaviors and reactions gifted children have are actually typical of giftedness.

➢ They are “hard wired” into the nervous system and in fact promote high intelligence.

➢ Understanding this builds compassion and better guidance for managing these behaviors and reactions.
"Giftedness is **not** what you do or how hard you work. It is who you are. You think differently. You experience life intensely. You care about injustice. You seek meaning. You appreciate and strive for the exquisite. You are painfully sensitive. You are extremely complex. You cherish integrity. Your truth-telling has gotten you in trouble. Should 98% of the population find you odd, seek the company of those who love you just the way you are. You are not broken. You do not need to be fixed. You are utterly fascinating. Trust yourself!"

- Linda Silverman
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

**Intense**

- Also described as just MORE
- Do and feel things to extremes
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

Perfectionists

➢ Both healthy and unhealthy expression
➢ May be driven to excel

OR

➢ May underachieve, which may show as avoidance/fear
➢ Unwilling to try if aren’t sure they can demonstrate perfection
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

Sensitive

➢ Experience outer *and* inner world differently from neurotypical children
➢ React *more* strongly to a *smaller* input and have a *longer* reaction than normal
➢ Examples: things are too loud, too bright, too sticky, too sad
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

Introverted

➢ Get recharged with alone time
➢ Groups can be tiring
➢ The higher the intelligence, the more likely to be introverted.
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

**Asynchronous in development**

- Maturity and ability may vary significantly across areas
- For example, may be capable of reading at a 12th grade level, but emotionally be at a 4th grade level
- Math, verbal, and short term memory skills may be at widely different levels which is confusing for a gifted child (and parents and teachers!)
- Motor skills may lag cognitive abilities leading to frustration with drawing, writing, or physical activity
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

**Concerned with fairness, social justice, and existential issues**

- Way above their age-peers
- Prone to emotional distress because of this
- Helps to find meaningful activities related to their concerns (e.g., volunteer at food bank)
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

Empathetic and compassionate

➢ May be unusually aware of the feelings and suffering of others
➢ Often strong desire to help those in need
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

**Part of a gifted family**

- Parents, grandparents, and siblings of the gifted child are probably also gifted
- Second and later children are less often identified because they don’t demonstrate “gifted” behaviors as overtly
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

**Unsure of where they fit in**
- Feel “different” because they really are different from their age peers
- Can feel lonely and isolated without an appropriate gifted peer group
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

**Frustrated with relationships**

- Even in a full-time gifted program it might be hard to find a friend who really “gets” them
- May not be until college or later to find their “tribe”
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

Late bloomers in executive skills functioning

- Organizing, planning, initiating tasks, judgement, evaluating quality of work, etc.
- Executive skills tend to mature later in highly gifted children than their age peers
- Often need more support for longer than expected
- Sherlock Holmes needed Watson 😊
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

**Twice Exceptional (2e)**

- Gifted children can have learning or other disabilities
- They may be masked by their intellectual abilities
- Or disabilities may mask giftedness
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

**Hard to fit in a perfect educational setting**

- Especially if they are
  - profoundly gifted
  - Twice Exceptional
  - Very asynchronous

- GIFTED CHILDREN DO NOT NECESSARILY EXCEL AT SCHOOL!
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

At risk academically

- If they are not given truly challenging work they may fail when their natural abilities aren’t enough in later grades
- True challenge allows them to develop study skills and perseverance
- Need to develop appropriate attitude
  - fixed mindset (I’m smart so this should be easy)
  - versus growth mindset (effort produces success)
  - see Carol Dweck’s book *Mindset*
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

Differently motivated

➢ Enjoy learning for its own sake
➢ Good grades may not be a primary goal
➢ Prefer to focus on specific interests; find general classes boring
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

**Independent**
- Prefer to be original
- Generally non-conformist
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

**Problematic about food**
- Gifted brains use lots of glucose when engaged
  - hypoglycemia can trigger meltdowns
- Forget or decline to eat when deeply involved
- Tend to be more sensitive to foods; picky eaters
- *Healthy protein snacks are important to their (and your) physical and emotional well-being!*
Gifted children (and adults!) tend to be:

Overexcitable or easily stimulated

➢ Gifted naturally have “overexcitabilities” (OEs) which impact their lives in both positive and negative ways

➢ Polish psychologist Kazimierz Dabrowski identified five areas in which children show intense behaviors

➢ More on this next
Dabrowski’s Overexcitabilities (OEs)

➢ “OEs are primarily positive sources of energy...The term literally means “superstimulatability” of the nervous system.”
➢ “OEs can be thought of as an abundance of physical, sensual, creative, intellectual and emotional energy...OEs are innate, suggesting that gifted children are wired differently.”
➢ “Negative aspects of OE require further evaluation to rule out overlapping symptoms...OEs can co-exist with any disability. It is essential to rule out any other possible causes of problematic behavior, rather than just attributing it to OEs.”

– Linda Silverman
“Gifted individuals --- especially those at the highest levels of ability --- seem to have the ability to function as specialized and highly sensitive receptacles for incoming stimuli. Human Geiger counters, so to speak.”

“They see, hear, sense, feel, think, imagine all to a degree that is often completely invisible to others. With these intensely tuned perceptions, they can then create, innovate, perform, and astound. They can also deeply suffer.”

“…Having these super senses can unfortunately make these individuals feel vastly different from others, and thus always in search of a way to fit in. Some never truly find their tribe.”

- Marianne Kuzujanakis (https://kuzujanakis.com/2015/09/12/oes-ohno-oes-ohyes/)
Overexcitabilities

**Intellectual** OE – most common OE

- intense curiosity
- endless questions
- hyper focus on a topic or area of interest
- love of problem-solving, knowledge, and learning
- avid reading/researching
- appear to be thinking all the time
- look for answers to deep questions
Overexcitabilities

**Emotional OE** – strong emotional sensitivity

- Intense feelings
- Emotional mood swings
- Empathic and sensitive to moods of others
- Anxiety, guilt, fears, depression, self-critical
- Physical reactions to emotions (e.g., stomachaches, headaches)
- Strong memory of feelings
Overexcitabilities

Sensual (sensory) OE – heightened awareness to input from the senses.

➢ keen appreciation for beauty – music, color, art, words, etc.
➢ intense sensitivity to smells, tastes, light, sounds (irritated by buzzing noise, picky eater; hears things others don’t)
➢ tactile sensitivity to textures or clothing (aversion to tags in shirts and/or cravings for fuzzy fabrics)
Overexcitabilities

Imaginational OE – very creative and divergent thinkers

➢ strong sense of humor
➢ inventive
➢ love of drama, imagination, fantasy
➢ daydreaming
➢ good ability to visualize
➢ magical thinking and overdeveloped fears
Overexcitabilities

Psychomotor OE – energetic and active
- lots of movement, constant fidgeting
- impulsive behavior
- craves physical activity
- difficulty sleeping
- constant talking or humming, rapid speech
- can be exhausting to be around
Overexcitabilities

“You may be saying to yourself, ‘Holy cow! That is EXACTLY what my child is like, but I never knew that those weird little idiosyncrasies had any connection to his being smart!’”

“It makes sense when you think about it – why do some kids ‘get’ new concepts so quickly and so deeply? A predisposition to ‘feeling’ rather than ‘observing’ the world could be the key.”

http://www.raisingwizards.com/what-are-hypersensitivities
Raising Wizards: The Secrets of Parenting Gifted Children
Overexcitabilities

“...the OEs cannot be turned off like a light: they affect children throughout the day and across the lifespan, in nearly every area of their lives.”

- Emily VR- https://thefissureblog.com/tag/gifted-intensities/
Some good books on gifted kids for parents to start with

➢ Giftedness 101 by Linda Silverman
➢ Living with Intensity: Understanding the Sensitivity, Excitability, and the Emotional Development of Gifted Children, Adolescents, and Adults Edited by Susan Daniels and Michael M. Piechowski
➢ The Highly Sensitive Child by Elaine N. Aron
➢ Misdiagnosis and Dual Diagnoses of Gifted Children and Adults: ADHD, Bipolar, OCD, Asperger's, Depression, and Other Disorders by James T. Webb et al.
Some good websites to start with:


➢ Hoagies Gifted - [www.hoagiesgifted.org/](http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/)

• Gifted Development Center - [www.gifteddevelopment.com](http://www.gifteddevelopment.com)
And now on to Twice Exceptional
- the quick tour -
Twice Exceptional - Definition

Gifted and...
➢ learning disabilities
➢ learning disorders
➢ attention difficulties
➢ or just plain learning differences

- Twice-Exceptional Newsletter

➢ Also known as 2e, GT/LD, Dual Identified
➢ Estimated 20% of gifted population is 2e
➢ Often misdiagnosed or missed as a diagnosis because giftedness can mask disabilities or disabilities can mask giftedness
What to understand if you have a Twice Exceptional child

• You are not alone.
• Your kid is not broken.
• There are things that help.
• These kids can do remarkable things.
The Potential Costs

“...students who are GT/LD [2e] have repeatedly reported school as being a difficult and frustrating experience. It is sometimes the behaviors associated with these school reactions that begins the process that leads to specific diagnosis and learning plans.”

- Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) 2004
Misdiagnosis or Missed Diagnosis?

Students whose giftedness masks their learning and attention issues.

➢ These kids score high on tests for giftedness but may not do well in gifted programs.
➢ These students use their exceptional abilities to try to compensate for their weaknesses.
➢ But as they get older, they may be labeled as “underachievers” or “lazy” as they fall behind their gifted peers.

Parent experience and 2e

- Frustration
- Guilt
- Panic
- Empathy
- Pride
- Confusion
- Creativity
- Loneliness/Isolation
- Relief
- Overwhelmed
- Grief
- Worry
- Exhaustion
- Patience
- Vigilance
- Doubt
Child’s experience of 2e
(when not supported)

- Frustration
- Helplessness
- Confusion
- Persistence
- Imposter syndrome
- Fear of failure

- Shame
- Creativity
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Burnout
“To have an incredible mind with extraordinary power that is limited in some way can generate anxiety and depression.

It’s like owning a Ferrari and only being able to drive it 40 mph.

You know you own a Ferrari, and you cannot experience the full potential of the car. Your neighbor may be driving a Prius and passing you on the highway.”

- Kimberlee King http://www.inspiredattention.com/articles/whats-it-like-to-be-twice-exceptional
Common 2E subtypes

Specific learning disabilities

➢ Dyslexia – reading (can be stealth dyslexia)
➢ Dysgraphia – writing
➢ Dyscalculia – e.g. difficulty with math computation, trouble memorizing math facts
  ➢ Einstein!
➢ Auditory processing disorder
Common 2e subtypes

ADHD - Difficulties with:

- Attention, concentration
- Hyperactivity
- Impulsivity
- Judgment, ability to evaluate quality of work

Children with ADHD “Need more support in the way of more frequent and more obvious reminders, cues, and reinforcement”

- Chris McCurry
Common 2e subtypes

Asperger’s (aka high functioning autism)

- Difficulty with social interactions
- Difficulty with transitions
- Overly rigid, rule-focused
- May have difficulty with abstracting concepts
Common 2e subtypes

Sensory processing disorder

➢ Can overlap with typical OEs of the gifted
➢ Sensitivity to noise, light, movement, texture, emotional atmosphere, etc.
➢ Difficulty concentrating due to sensitivities
➢ Handwriting (e.g., grip strength, fine motor control)
➢ Proprioceptive input (wiggle seat, elastic band, heavy work can help orient them)
Common 2e subtypes

Learning “differences” or cognitive styles such as Visual Spatial Learning style

➢ “phenomenal abilities to solve items presented to them visually or items requiring excellent abilities to visualize” (Silverman, 2013)

➢ Traditional classrooms are often taught in an auditory-sequential style, but many gifted kids prefer visual-spatial

“Most of these children thought in pictures, rather than in words. They had three-dimensional (or four? Or five?) perception, like sculptors. They were unusually sensitive and intense. They were highly imaginative and creative. They often knew things intuitively, but could not tell you how they knew them. They were Big Picture thinkers.” - Silverman
Visual Spatial Learners
http://www.gifteddevelopment.com/Visual_Spatial_Learner/vsl.htm
Illustrated by Buck Jones, 2002. All rights reserved
### High Achiever vs Gifted Learner vs Creative Thinker

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A High Achiever...</th>
<th>A Gifted Learner...</th>
<th>A Creative Thinker...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remember the answers.</td>
<td>Poses unforeseen questions.</td>
<td>Sees exceptions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is attentive.</td>
<td>Is selectively mentally engaged.</td>
<td>Daydreams; may seem off task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generates advanced ideas.</td>
<td>Generates complex, abstract ideas.</td>
<td>Overflows with ideas, many of which will never be developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works hard to achieve.</td>
<td>Knows without working hard.</td>
<td>Plays with ideas and concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answer the questions in detail.</td>
<td>Ponders with depth and multiple perspectives.</td>
<td>Injects new possibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performs at the top of the group.</td>
<td>Is beyond the group.</td>
<td>Is in own group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responds with interest and opinions.</td>
<td>Exhibits feelings and opinions from multiple perspectives.</td>
<td>Shares bizarre, sometimes conflicting opinions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learns with ease.</td>
<td>Already knows.</td>
<td>Questions: What if...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs 5 to 8 repetitions to master.</td>
<td>Needs 1 to 3 repetitions to master.</td>
<td>Questions the need for mastery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehends at a high level.</td>
<td>Comprehends in-depth, complex ideas.</td>
<td>Overflows with ideas—many of which will never be developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoys the company of age peers.</td>
<td>Prefers the company of intellectual peers.</td>
<td>Prefers the company of creative peers but often works alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grasses the meaning.</td>
<td>Infrs and connects concepts.</td>
<td>Makes mental leaps: Aha!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completes assignments on time.</td>
<td>Initiates projects and extensions of assignments.</td>
<td>Initiates more projects that will ever be completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is accurate and complete.</td>
<td>Is original and continually developing.</td>
<td>Is original and continually developing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absorbs information.</td>
<td>Manipulates information.</td>
<td>Improvises.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is a technician with expertise in a field.</td>
<td>Is an expert who abstracts beyond the field.</td>
<td>Is an inventor and idea generator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorizes well.</td>
<td>Guesses and infers well.</td>
<td>Creates and brainstorms well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is highly alert and observant.</td>
<td>Anticipates and relates observations.</td>
<td>Is intuitive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gets A’s.</td>
<td>May not be motivated by grades.</td>
<td>May not be motivated by grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is able.</td>
<td>Is intellectual.</td>
<td>Is idiosyncratic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And yes, a child can have more than one other exceptionality

➢ “Uniquely exceptional”
➢ ADHD often co-exists
Key areas of impairment/difficulty

Executive dysfunction

- Planning
- Organizing
- Initiation of tasks – getting started
- Completion of tasks
- Judgment/evaluation of quality
- Time management
- Maintaining attention and concentration
Key areas of impairment/difficulty

➢ Short term and working memory deficits
➢ Forgetful/distractible
➢ Materials management/keeping track of belongings
➢ Processing speed
➢ Output dysfunction
• Written expression
Key areas of impairment/difficulty

➢ Fatigue and limited mental energy
➢ Frustration
➢ Discouragement
➢ Sleep deprivation
➢ “Fun deprivation”
➢ Fear of poor quality work
➢ Fear of increased expectations if do good work
Concentration/Limited mental energy

➢ Frequently has difficulty sustaining attention
➢ But may be able to concentrate for long periods *in areas of interest*

“...working harder is what happens when passion kicks in” - David Flink
Good Assessment is Essential

“A good diagnosis is essentially a prescription that says, ‘This is what you need’” - David Flink, Thinking Differently

➢ What are child’s weaknesses and strengths
➢ Tester must understand gifted testing
➢ Rule out other issues
  • Vision – tracking/teaming/convergence
    – Is not obvious in regular vision screening!
    – Can make reading exhausting, cause errors in math
  • Hearing/Auditory processing
  • Health concerns (e.g., hypoglycemia, vitamin deficiency, stealth infections like Lyme, PANDAS)

Without a diagnosis, you may not have access to legal protections
“These children are a puzzle to themselves and often are greatly relieved when diagnosed. They no longer carry the burden of “fault” for their lack of success in school.”
- Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) 2004
Working with schools

➢ LWPTSA Council Special Needs webpage – lots of resources
  ➢ http://www.lwptsa.net/special-needs/
➢ Meet with guidance team/student support team
➢ IEP and 504 plans
IEPs and 504 Plans

IEP – Individual Education Plan

➢ Special Education law (IDEA)
➢ Specially designed instruction for that student
➢ Special Education funds
IEPs and 504 Plans

504 Plan

➢ Antidiscrimination law
➢ Must not discriminate against people with disabilities in access to education
➢ Accommodations or modifications provided to “level the playing field”
   ➢ E.g., Glasses to bring vision to 20/20
   ➢ E.g., Sidewalk ramps for wheelchairs
IEPs and 504 Plans

Goal: Allow children to achieve and demonstrate their gifted full potential
What should schools do?

➢ Provide challenging instruction in areas of strength
➢ Provide explicit instruction to improve areas of weakness
➢ Provide individualized accommodations
➢ Empower 2e students to self-advocate
➢ Teach compensation strategies
➢ Provide social/emotional support and monitor progress
Accommodations

➢ Good teachers try to accommodate all students’ needs so they can achieve maximal learning and achievement

➢ Not every twice-exceptional child will need a formal 504 plan or IEP
Accommodations

• Idaho Department of Education PDF on Twice-Exceptional – 9 pages of possible accommodations:
Some Useful Accommodations

➢ Allow keyboarding (might be difficult at first)
➢ Allow movement breaks
➢ Allow preferential seating
➢ Assess writing content separately from other writing skills (grammar, spelling)
➢ Allow breaks or extended time on tests and assignments
➢ Allow use of sensory items (fidget, water bottle)
➢ Audiobook version of texts

Involve your child in accommodations and help them think about how they learn best.
Some Useful Accommodations

➢ Check back for understanding
➢ Check planner for accuracy
➢ Provide written instructions
➢ Allow extra time for packing up
➢ Assist child with desk/binder organization
➢ Allow quiet space for test taking or working on projects
➢ Allow use of headphones

“Appropriate accommodations, such as a calculator, allow these students to utilize their often superior math reasoning abilities while not being held back by their computation skills.” - MCPS
Writing

➢ Hardest academic area – involves multiple skills simultaneously
➢ Maturation of handwriting ability is often delayed (especially in gifted boys) and may never fully mature
➢ “Awesome computer, lousy printer” discrepancy
Sample Writing Accommodations

➢ Allow keyboarding
➢ Allow scribe/dictation
➢ Allow use of graph paper for handwriting/math
➢ Provide sufficient space for math calculations!!!
➢ Limit copying from whiteboard, textbooks
➢ Provide shorter writing assignments and/or oral, visual options to demonstrate learning
➢ Allow drafts to focus on content, not spelling, grammar, punctuation
➢ Provide scoring rubric, models, and anchor papers for students to evaluate their own work
➢ Connect to interests/real-world
Journeys

- Private neuropsychological evaluations
- Tutoring (e.g., writing tutors, math enrichment)
- Occupational therapy
- Vision therapy
- Auditory processing therapy
- Neurofeedback
- Handwriting Without Tears
- UW Robinson or other enrichment classes
- Medication – can help significantly for some kids
- Classroom accommodations
- Choice/alternative schools in LWSD
- Private School, Home Schooling, online enrichment
On the bright side...

➢ Creative!
➢ Specialized brains
➢ Empathy
➢ Larger than normal population locally of gifted AND 2e
➢ Develop persistence and strong study habits (if supported)
Power Ups

• Humor
• Friends and community
• Family fun events
• Good sleep
• Exercise
• Good diet
• Activity kid excels at
  ➢ Don’t limit these interests to work on weaknesses!

Strengths can be key to developing strategies, stamina, skills, and confidence to overcome weaknesses.

• Parent support
• Down time
• Growth Mindset (see Carol Dweck book)
“Many of the world’s most successful and creative people, both now and in the past, have been twice exceptional as children...Children who’ve been forced to find creative approaches for doing things most people do without effort often develop a “habit of creativity”--- but only if they don’t lose sight of their gifts and fall into a cycle of underachievement and despair. That’s why...it’s absolutely crucial to help children who are struggling in school maintain a positive vision of themselves and their future. This is especially true for 2e children, who are often troubled by the tremendous disparity they perceive between their abilities and their performance.” p. 447, The Mislabeled Child (Eide and Eide)
Really?

These people were considered learning disabled:

- Albert Einstein
- Nikola Tesla
- Thomas Edison
- Isaac Newton
Strategies

➢ Help them develop good habits and routines
➢ Regular study time (even if they don’t have homework)
➢ Regular backpack “tidy” NO ZOMBIE PAPERS!
➢ Communication folder (from/to school)
➢ Preparation habits
  • Backpack packed the night before
  • Clothes, other items laid out
  • Get enough sleep
  • Get a good breakfast
  • Get up and out the door with time to spare
Strategies

➢ Dedicated study space with necessary supplies
  • This may not be a desk, ask child to help design area

➢ Have a kid-friendly timer
  • Time Timers are good visual
Strategies

➢ Budget extra time for homework (and everything else!)
➢ Don’t overschedule activities
➢ Get little tasks done ASAP
➢ Just 15 minutes
➢ Homework’s not done until...
   • It’s packed up
   • It’s turned in
Strategies

➢ Intersperse breaks (rest and recharging)
➢ Provide healthy snacks
➢ Provide reminders
  • “natural consequences” may backfire and lead to discouragement
➢ Be a good role model for working
➢ Provide supervision if necessary
  • “Lend them your frontal lobe”

Children with ADHD “Need more support in the way of more frequent and more obvious reminders, cues, and reinforcement”
- Chris McCurry
Organization

- What we call organization is a set of behaviors or skills
- As such, they must be taught, coached, practiced, and encouraged until these behaviors become habit
- Not just a matter of getting them organized, but teaching organization skills and keeping the student organized
- That’s where you come in: teaching, modeling, supervising, and encouraging

- Chris McCurry
Strategies

➢ Empathize – these kids are working very hard!
➢ They can be more emotionally fragile than they look
➢ Help them approach complex assignments
  • Acknowledge anxiety
  • Just 15 minutes approach
  • Strategize steps to completion
Strategies

➢ Define problems in specific terms:
  • She leaves her notebook at school is more useful than “she’s forgetful”

➢ Let them offload unnecessary aspects of work
  • Help them get started
  • Be their scribe
  • Ask guiding questions
  • Help review rubric when editing
  • Help with organizing

Children with ADHD “Need more support in the way of more frequent and more obvious reminders, cues, and reinforcement”
- Chris McCurry
Strategies

➢ Focus on effort and progress, not achievement
➢ Help them find ways to reward themselves for their extra effort
➢ Discouragement is deadly!
➢ Build on successes
➢ Work in areas of strength
  • More complex work can actually increase their interest and performance
➢ Work in areas of interest
  • Especially for remediation of deficits
  • Find mentor if possible (chess, dinosaurs, etc.)
Strategies

➢ Educate child about his/her strengths
➢ Educate child about his/her weaknesses
➢ Share your own struggles and triumphs with similar issues
➢ Teach compensatory skills
  • Sticky note on “desktop,” note on hand
➢ Teach child to advocate for him/herself
  • Ask for breaks at school, etc.
  • Ask for help before they get too far behind
  • It’s ok to get stuck, but not ok to stay stuck
How much parent support?
Chris McCurry says

▪ It is the teacher’s job to grade the homework

▪ The student is responsible for the quality of the work

▪ It is the parent’s job to make sure there is something the teacher can grade
Balance the need for support with the need for competence

Hold back the urge to help unless it’s clear that they can’t move forward without it. Even then, support effort rather than negate or eliminate need for it. - David Flink
Mottos

➢ Just get it done.
   • finish assignments early
   • “anti-procrastination” approach
   • Turn in forms ASAP, electronically if possible

➢ Pack up.

➢ Just 15 minutes.

➢ Don’t rely on remembering.

➢ Be a Watson to your kid’s Sherlock.
Final thoughts

- Time will help
- Swimming through Jello makes you strong
- Honor the goal: lifetime success and happiness
Some Resources

• 2e: Twice-Exceptional Newsletter http://www.2enewsletter.com/ now https://2eresource.com/
• Uniquely Gifted http://www.uniquelygifted.org/
• Gifted Development Center: Visual-Spatial Learners http://visualspatial.org/welcome.php
• Hoagies Gifted Education Page http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/twice_exceptional.htm
  *Also excellent FAQ page with “GT/LD Checklist for Parents.”
• Wrightslaw Twice Exceptional Children (2e) http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/2e.index.htm/
• For a dose of 2E humor, http://www.laughingatchaos.com/
• Roadblocks to Achievement: Organization and Executive Skills  Presentation by Christopher McCurry, Ph.D., ABCD, Inc., Seattle, WA
Some Useful Books

• *Thinking Differently: An Inspiring Guide for Parents of Children with Learning Disabilities (Flink)
  ➢ Very readable and comforting!
• The Myth of Laziness (Levine)
  ➢ Excellent section on writing
• The Motivation Breakthrough: 6 Secrets to Turning On the Tuned-Out Child (Lavoie)
• The Spark (Barnett)
• Parent's Guide to Gifted Children (Webb et al.)
• Sensational Kids (Miller) – Sensory Processing
• The Mislabeled Child (Eide and Eide)
• Misdiagnosis and Dual Diagnoses of Gifted Children and Adults: ADHD, Bipolar, OCD, Asperger's, Depression, and Other Disorders (Olenchak, Webb, etc.)
• Smart But Scattered (Dawson and Guare)
• Organizing Solutions for People with ADHD (Pinsky)
• Twice-Exceptional Gifted Children (Trail) – used by Quest for Professional Development, good for seeing educational view
• If This is a Gift, Can I Send it Back?: Surviving in the Land of the Gifted and Twice Exceptional (Merrill)
Useful Books
Executive Function/ADHD

Not just for boys!
Useful books - diagnosis
Useful books – Sensory Issues

1. Sensational Kids: Hope and Help for Children with Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD)
   - Author: Lucy Jane Miller, PhD, OTR

2. Raising a Sensory Smart Child: The Definitive Handbook for Helping Your Child with Sensory Processing Issues
   - Author: Lindsay B. Bell, M.A., OT, and Nancy Peske

3. The Out-of-Sync Child: Revised and Updated Edition
   - Author: Carol Stock Kranowitz, M.A.

4. The Out-of-Sync Child Has Fun: Activities for Kids with Sensory Processing Disorder
   - Author: Carol Stock Kranowitz, M.A.

5. The Out-of-Sync Child Grows Up: Coping with Sensory Processing Disorder in the Adolescent and Young Adult Years
   - Author: Carol Stock Kranowitz, M.A.
Myths about 2e - You don’t know what you’re talking about, you’re not an educator/psychologist/therapist/doctor.

Nope, I’m a parent, I’m all those things stuffed into one hyper-caffeinated package, and I specialize in THIS child. I know what he needs. No one ever learns as quickly, deeply, and completely as a concerned freaked-out mother, so yeah, I do know what I’m talking about. I have a PhD in THIS kid: Parenting higher Difficulties.
One last thing

- Inspiring 5 min video
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSVV7SuMvWY  “Outside of the Box Gifted Learners” 2010 IAGC