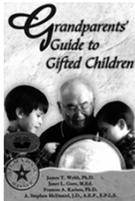
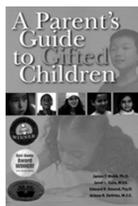
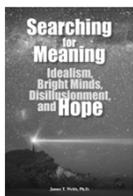


Eleven Key Issues for Parents of Gifted Children

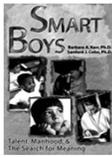
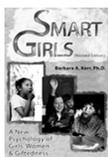
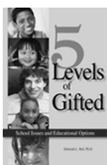


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WEB SITES FOR GIFTED RESOURCES

- www.greatpotentialpress.com
- www.hoagiesgifted.com
- www.TAGFAM.com
- www.sengifted.org
- www.nagc.org
- www.ditd.org

3

Parenting a gifted child is like living in a theme park full of thrill rides.



Sometimes you smile. Sometimes you gasp. Sometimes you scream. Sometimes you laugh. Sometimes you gaze in wonder and astonishment. Sometimes you're frozen in your seat. Sometimes you're proud. And sometimes the ride is so nerve-racking you can't do anything but cry.

Helping Gifted Children Soar (2011), p. 3.

4

Success Is More than just Financial Success

College Prep, or Life Prep?

Defining Giftedness

Marland Report (1972)

- **General intellectual ability**
- **Specific academic aptitude**
- **Creative or productive thinkers**
- **Leadership ability**
- **Visual or performing arts**
- **Psychomotor ability (since deleted)**

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Four Types of Gifted Children

(Drews, 1963. *The Four Faces of Able Adolescents*)

➤ High Achievers



➤ Social Leaders



➤ Creative Intellectuals

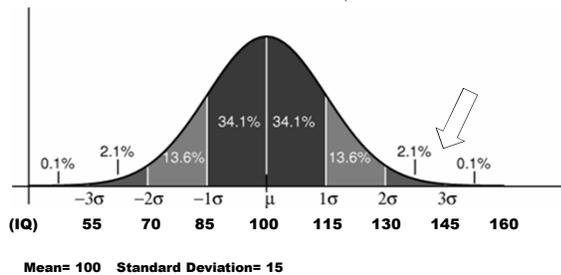


➤ Nonconformist Rebels



Most schools focus on Intellectual and Academic Giftedness and try to estimate potential in these areas using tests.

(Tests are simply shorthand attempts to measure what we could observe, if we had enough time and the proper settings. We need to focus on behaviors as much as on test scores.)



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High Ability Is a Benefit Overall. However, Some Problems Are More Frequent

- Boredom
- Underachievement
- Peer Issues
- Feelings of Belongingness
- Anger
- Power Struggles
- Stress and Perfectionism
- Misdiagnosis
- Health and Behavioral Problems
 - Asthma
 - Allergies
 - Reactive Hypoglycemia
- Existential Depression
- Expectations of Others
- Judgment Lags behind Intellectual Abilities

9

Issue # 1
The School Climate



- Today's education system contains a widespread bias against programs for talented children
- The last comprehensive nationwide survey of gifted education programs in U.S. public schools was in 1985
- Over one-half of the superintendents believed that they had no gifted children in their districts
- Schools select services that are visible to parents rather than programs that are more educationally substantive, but less apparent
- Only about half the states currently have a legislative mandate to serve the special needs of gifted and talented children
- Less than half the states require special training of teachers of gifted and talented students
- Of each Federal dollar spent for education, less than two cents goes to fund programs for gifted children

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Issue # 2:
The Social and Educational Environment

- Parents of gifted children have very few resources for information
- Much ignorance and misinformation still exists about talented, able learners
- The curriculum generally is lock-step where every child is expected to learn the same material at approximately the same age
- Educational systems increasingly focus on basic minimal levels of competence and achievement
- Our society is perilously drifting into an anti-intellectual mode with emphasis of mediocrity and conformity
- Socialization is viewed as more important than academic achievement
- The most eminent and successful adults received educational programs very different than those currently offered in most schools

11

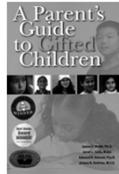
Issue # 3
Myths about Gifted Children

- If they have high ability in one area, they are likely to have equally high abilities in other areas
- The "regular" educational system typically meets their needs
- They can succeed without special help because they already have so much talent
- They are not aware of being different unless someone points it out to them
- They always will show their abilities in school and will want to emphasize them
- They enjoy serving as "models" and "examples" for other children
- They only live up to their potential if adults constantly push them
- Their emotional maturity is at the same level as their intellectual ability
- They are easy to parent, and families always value their special abilities
- They are no different from other children because all children are gifted

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Issue # 4
Ignorance, Misinformation, and Bias
about Parents of Talented, Able Learners

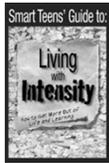
- Parents of gifted children are often criticized as exaggerating or being pushy.
- Parents of gifted children have very few resources for information.
- The research indicates that parents are extremely important, but seldom are included by schools.



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Issue # 5
Lack of Knowledge about
Characteristics of Gifted Children

- Unusually large vocabularies
- Complex sentence structures
- Greater comprehension of language nuances
- Longer attention span, persistence
- Intensity of feelings and actions
- Wide range of interests
- Strong curiosity; limitless questions
- Like to experiment; puts ideas or things together in unusual ways



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Issue # 5
Lack of Knowledge about
Characteristics of Gifted Children - continued

- Learn basic skills quickly and with less practice than peers
- Largely self-taught reading and writing skills as preschoolers
- Unusually good memory; retain information
- Unusual sense of humor; may use puns
- Like to organize people and things, and typically devise complex games
- Imaginary playmates (as preschoolers)

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Four Factors Particularly Influence the Expression of Giftedness, as Well As Educational, Social, and Emotional Functioning

1. Level of Giftedness
 2. Asynchronous Development
 3. Dabrowski's Overexcitabilities
 4. Thinking and Learning Styles
- The higher the child's overall ability level, the more these variables influence the behaviors.

Level of Giftedness
Ruf (2003)

Levels of Giftedness	Approximate Score Range	Descriptive Designation
Level One	120 -129	Moderately Gifted 120-124/Gifted 125-129
Level Two	130-135	Highly Gifted
Level Three	136-140	Exceptionally Gifted
Level Four	141+	Exceptionally to Profoundly Gifted
Level Five	141+	Exceptionally to Profoundly Gifted

Asynchronous Development

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Learning/Thinking Styles

Auditory-Sequential

- Prefers verbal explanations; uses language to remember
- Processes information sequentially; deals with one task at a time
- Produces ideas logically; prefers analyzing activities
- Prefers concrete thinking tasks; likes structured experiences
- Prefers proper working materials and proper settings for working
- Prefers to learn facts and details
- Approaches problems seriously

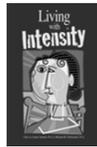
Visual-Spatial

- Prefers visual explanations; uses images to remember
- Processes information holistically; deals with several tasks at a time
- Produces ideas intuitively; prefers synthesizing activities
- Prefers abstract thinking tasks; likes open, fluid experiences
- Improvises with materials available; creates own structure
- Prefers to gain general overview
- Approaches problems playfully

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Dabrowski Overexcitabilities

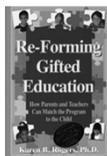
- **Intellectual** (Avid Reading, Curiosity, Asking Probing Questions, Concentration, Problem Solving, Theoretical Thinking)
- **Imaginational** (Fantasy Play, Animistic and Imaginative Thinking, Daydreaming, Dramatic Perception, Use of Metaphor)
- **Emotional** (Concern for Others, Timidity and Shyness, Fear and Anxiety, Difficulty Adjusting to New Environments, Intensity of Feeling)
- **Psychomotor** (Marked Enthusiasm, Rapid Speech, Surplus of Energy, Nervous Habits, Impulsive Actions)
- **Sensual** (Sensory Pleasures, Appreciation of Sensory Aspects of Experiences, Avoidance of Overstimulation)



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Issue # 7 Educational Placement Approaches

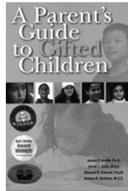
- Teachers need information about characteristics and differentiation
- Appropriate educational placements are diverse
- Flexibility and counseling are needed
- Acceleration vs. enrichment



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Issue # 8
Specific Concerns of Parents and Teachers of Gifted Children

- Intensity, perfectionism, and stress
- Idealism, unhappiness, and depression
- Motivation and underachievement
- Sibling issues
- Peer relation issues
- Communication issues
- Discipline and self-discipline
- Values and traditions
- Complexities of modern parenting



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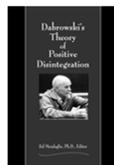
Issue # 9
Parenting is Just More Difficult Now because of:

- Fractured families
- Lack of extended family and neighborhood support
- Increased mobility and lack of community
- Faster pace that is seemingly more urgent
- Information explosion handicaps relationships
- Disturbing role models
- "Unthinkable" acts are no longer unthinkable
- Peers and society are stronger influences than parents
- Lack of consistent consequences for behaviors
- Depression is now ten times the rate of the 1950s

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Issue # 10
Finding Professional Help

- Few health care or counseling professionals have any training about gifted children
- There is a lot of misdiagnosis of gifted children
- Asynchronous development may require special assistance
- Consider Dabrowski's concept of "positive disintegration"
- Inquire about past training and experience in working with gifted children and their families



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Issue # 11
Twice Exceptional Gifted

- Gifted children have a higher incidence of:
 - learning disabilities (asynchronous development)
 - allergies and asthma
 - reactive hypoglycemia
- Gifted children who are twice-exceptional should not have their giftedness neglected
- Schools must be sufficiently flexible to accommodate both areas of need.



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Lessons From People Who Became Eminent

From *Cradles of Eminence: Childhoods of More Than 700 Famous Men and Women* (Goertzel, Goertzel, Goertzel, & Hansen, 2003)



- Homes usually were full of books and stimulating conversation.



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People Who Became Eminent

Findings from *Cradles of Eminence* (continued)



- Their families valued learning, and the children loved learning.
- As children, most of them disliked school and schoolteachers.

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People Who Became Eminent

Findings from *Cradles of Eminence* (continued)



- These children learned to think and express themselves clearly.
- All had learned to be persistent in pursuing their own visions and goals.
- Many had difficult childhoods (which may have been a spark)
 - Poverty
 - Broken homes
 - Physical handicaps
 - Parental dissatisfaction
 - Controlling or rejecting parents

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People Who Became Eminent

Findings from *Cradles of Eminence* (continued)



- Their parents held strong opinions about controversial subjects.
- Their parents, particularly mothers, were highly involved in the lives of their children, even dominating.
- The parents often were pressured by others to have their children conform to mediocrity.

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The Truth Is — Parenting Gifted Children Is Often Difficult



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Recommended Readings

- *5 Levels of Gifted: School Issues and Educational Options* (Ruf, 2009).
- *Academic Advocacy for Gifted Children: A Parent's Complete Guide* (Gilman, 2008).
- *Children: The Challenge* (Dreikurs and Soltz, 1991).
- *Dr. Sylvia Rimm's Smart Parenting: How to Raise a Happy, Achieving Child* (Rimm, 1996).
- *How to Behave So Your Children Will, Too* (Severe, 2003).
- *How to Parent So Children Will Learn.* (Rimm, 2008).
- *Living with Intensity* (Daniels & Piechowski, 2009).
- *Misdiagnosis and Dual Diagnoses of Gifted Children and Adults* (Webb, Amend, Webb, Goerss, Beljan, & Olenchak, 2005).

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Recommended Readings

- *The Optimistic Child* (Seligman, Reivich, Jaycox, & Gillham, 1995).
- *A Parent's Guide to Gifted Children* (Webb, Gore, Amend, DeVries, 2007).
- *A Parent's Guide to Gifted Teens: Living with Intense and Creative Adolescents.* (Rivero, 2010).
- *Raising Creative Kids* (Daniels & Peters, 2013).
- *Re-Forming Gifted Education: How Parents and Teachers Can Match the Program to the Child.* (Rogers, 2002).
- *The Resilience Factor* (Reivich & Shatté, 2002).
- *The Shelter of Each Other: Rebuilding Our Families* (Pipher, 1995).
- *Siblings without Rivalry* (Fabert and Mazlish, 1998).

32

Recommended Readings

- *Smart Boys: Talent, Manhood, and the Search for Meaning* (Kerr and Cohn, 2001).
- *Smart Girls: A New Psychology of Girls, Women, and Giftedness.* (Kerr, 1997).
- *The Smart Teens' Guide to Living with Intensity: How to Get More Out of Life and Learning.* (Rivero, 2010).
- *Why Bright Kids Get Poor Grades (and What You Can Do about It.* (Rimm, 2008).

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