

Meeting the Social/Emotional Needs of Gifted Kids



Julio O'Cana
Laurie Perea

“To teach the core,
you must first reach
the core.”

Lisa Lee



Smart vs. Gifted:

	Smart	Gifted
Questioning Style	Asks questions that have answers	Asks questions about abstract ideas, concepts and theories
Learning Speed and Application of Concepts	Learn step by step	Jumps from 2 to 10
Emotional Outlook	Get past an upsetting incident fairly easily	Experiences heightened, sometimes all-consuming emotions
Level of Interest	Asks questions and are curious about many things	Shows intense curiosity about nearly everything and immerse themselves in areas of interest
Language Ability	Learn new vocab easily and choose words typical for their age	Extensive and advanced vocab and understand nuances, wordplay and puns

Asynchronous Development:

Increases with intelligence level



Asynchronous Development:

Erick Erickson's Stages of Development:



Stages	Crisis
1 st Year	Trust vs. Mistrust
2 nd Year	Autonomy vs. Doubt
3 rd - 5 th Year	Initiative vs. Guilt
6 th Year- Puberty	Industry vs. Inferiority
Adolescence	Identity vs. Confusion
Adulthood	Intimacy vs. Isolation
Middle Age	Generativity vs. Self Absorption
Ageing Years	Integrity vs. Despair

Strategies for Parents:

- Chronological age
- Emotional support
- Tribe
- Coping skills
- Strengths and Weaknesses
- GT Support Groups (JAGC, SENG)
- Counseling support



Overexcitabilities

Gifted students tend to be extremely sensitive in a variety of areas; more so than typically developing students. This means that in five different areas, gifted students tend to react more strongly than normal for longer than normal to a stimulus that may be very small. It involves not just psychological factors but central nervous system sensitivity.

“Intense responses to stimuli.” Dr. Dabrowski’s

Overexcitabilities

- Psychomotor
- Sensual
- Imaginational
- Intellectual
- Emotional



Gifted students have all five overexcitabilities, but the intensity of the overexcitabilities will be different in each student.

Psychomotor Strategies

Fidgets, exercise balls, lots of brain breaks, allowed to stand/pace in the back of the room, bouncy bands, standing work space, one-legged stool, lots of patience



3rd Grade Gridiron



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Sensual Strategies:

Noise-canceling headphones/earbuds, lighting alternatives, multiple possible work spaces, texturized fidgets, salt rock lamp

Hit or Miss:

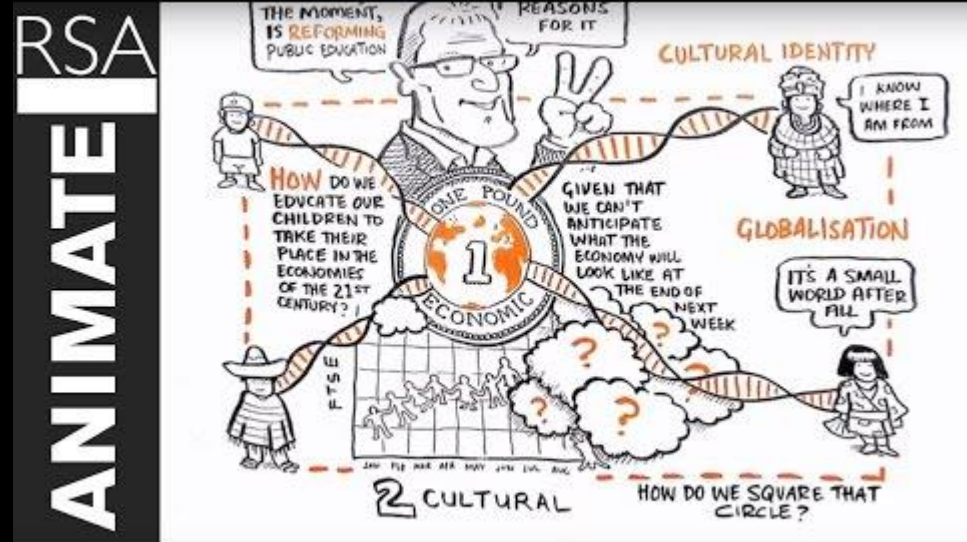
White noise machine

Scented air-fresheners



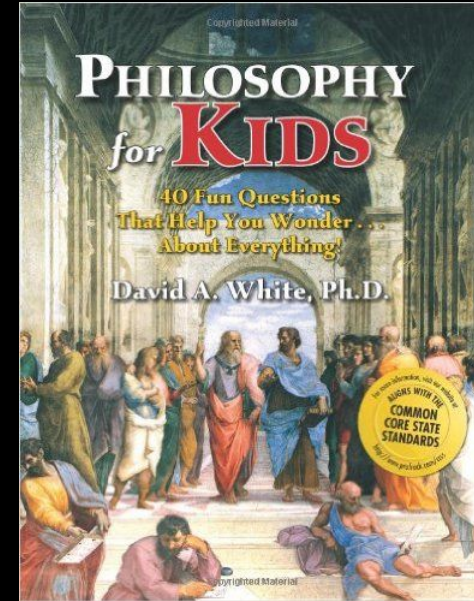
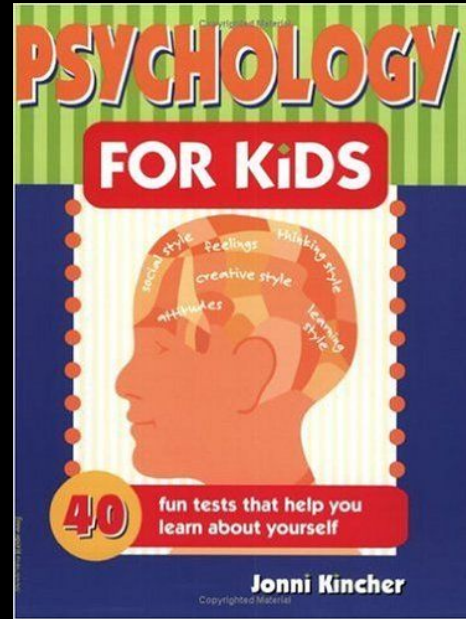
Imaginational Strategies:

Constructive doodling,
Project Based Learning,
creative ways to
demonstrate their
knowledge (marble run),
journaling, using their
imagination to their
advantage (the same kids who
have night-terrors can imagine a
device that wards off the “monster”)



Intellectual Strategies:

Show them how to find answers to questions, teach them to discuss new ideas, service learning projects (allows them to act on what they learn), socratic seminars, teach them to see shades of grey, teach them how to communicate their dissatisfaction



Emotional Strategies:

Acceptance (no matter how absurd it is to you, it is real to them), listen - they often just need to be heard, body triggers, belly breathing, grounding, visualization, naming their emotion, taking self-designated breaks, bibliotherapy

Break Card

I feel _____ and
I need a break.

Break Please

I am feeling..



really angry



really frustrated



really worried



really disappointed

How to Help:

You can get a better understanding of your gifted child if you recognize their intensities which can help you to become a more effective and supportive parent. For example, if your child is emotionally intense, you know that they will have a tough time “just ignoring” the teasing or bullying. They may need extra help in managing their reactions to hurtful behavior from others.



Perfectionism



What is perfectionism?

Setting impossibly high standards

Spending excessive time on assignments

Fear of embarrassment or humiliation

Hyper focusing on past mistakes

Feeling anxious, angry or upset about mistakes

Catastrophic reactions or meltdowns

Procrastination of big and small tasks

Refusing to take risks for fear of failure



Mindset:



Negative Thought Loop:



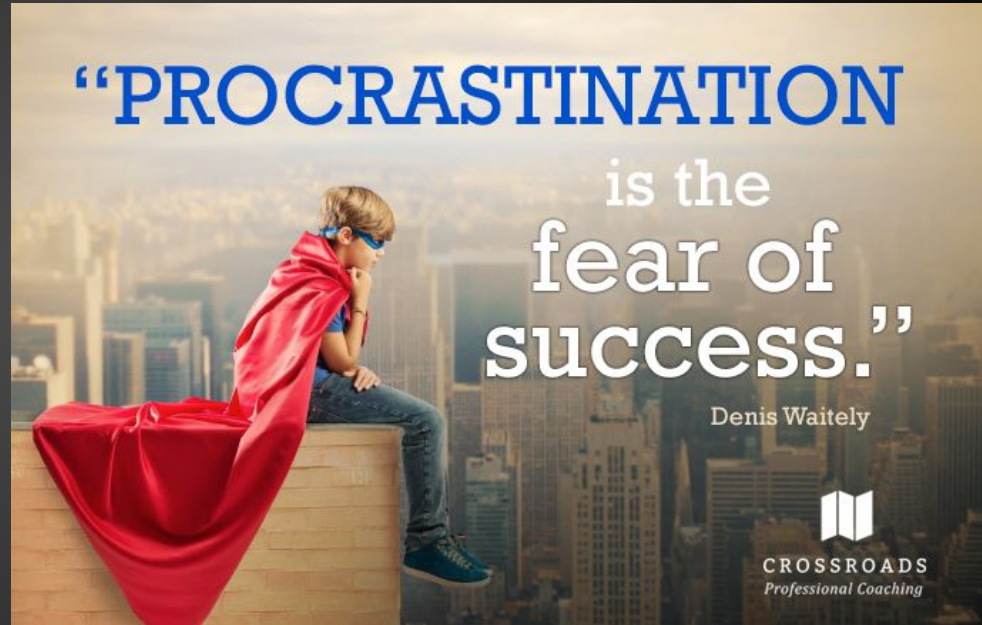
Strategies for Perfectionism:

1. Educate your child about what perfectionism is.
2. Teach positive self-talk.
3. Share other perspectives with your child.
4. Praise your child's efforts.



Strategies for Procrastination:

1. Chunk larger assignments.
2. Backward planning
3. Use a calendar and set time goals
4. Identify priorities
5. Have balance in their lives



Other ideas:

- ★ Encourage saying “I don’t know” and/or “yet”
- ★ Self advocacy
- ★ Share your own mistakes with humor
- ★ Help your child set reasonable goals
- ★ Encourage your child to help others, such as volunteering.

Helpful books on Perfectionism:

Perfectionism: What's Bad about Being Too Good? By Miriam Adderholdt-Elliott, Miriam Elliot, & Jan Goldberg

When Perfect Isn't Good Enough: Strategies for Coping with Perfectionism by Martin M. Antony & Richard P. Swinson

What to Do When Good Enough Isn't Good Enough: The Real Deal on Perfectionism by Thomas S., Ph.D.
Greenspoon

Remember:

You can't meet their
academic needs until you
have met their affective
needs.



Questions???