

BILOXI PUBLIC SC

Create

PROGR

**Series 2: Life as a Gifted Kid-  
Perfectionism and Other Pains in the  
Brain!**



# Any questions? Drop it in the chat!

Drop your email and student's name to  
**WIN A PRIZE!**

# Hear From The Professionals!



**Dr. Colley**  
**Biloxi Jr. High**



**Ms. St. Amant**  
**Popp's Ferry  
Elementary**

# Hello! Meet the TEAM



**Cagney Weaver**  
Biloxi Upper Elementary

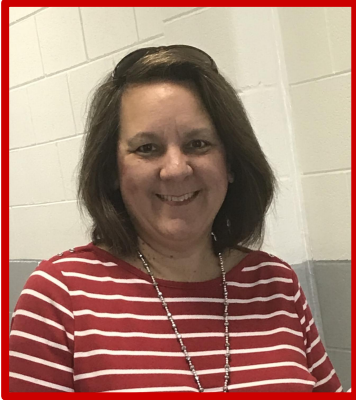


**John Collins**  
Biloxi Upper Elementary



**Christina Pullin**  
Biloxi Upper Elementary

# Hello! Meet the TEAM



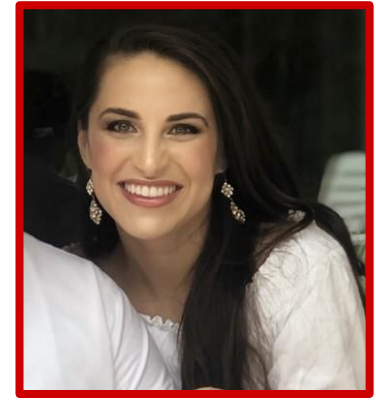
**Amy Dahl**  
Back Bay  
Elementary



**Nicole Hanks**  
Gifted Program Contact  
Popp's Ferry Elementary



**Mindy Townsend**  
North Bay Elementary  
Gorenflo Elementary



**Ann-Carter Tate**  
North Bay Elementary

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# Self Esteem & Perfectionism

# Self Esteem & Perfectionism

**\*Perfectionism defined is the refusal to accept any standard short of perfection.**

Perfectionism can look like regular high-achieving behavior until it starts to damage the child's wellbeing.

Perfectionism is often related to self-esteem when the gifted child, or those around the child, expect them to be gifted all the time, in every subject. While there is debate about whether perfectionism comes in both good and bad varieties, the issue for many gifted students is that this pressure to be perfect comes from their inability to see themselves beyond their role as the “smart student” in class.

Gifted children should be reminded frequently that their value is **not** based on their grades or performance alone.

## Problematic behavior associated with perfectionism

- Competitiveness with others
- Achievement at the expense of socializing/ self isolation
- Avoidance of activities they fear they will fail at



## Gifted Perfectionism

Perfectionism is a special kind of challenge for gifted children that parents will need to be aware of. Children who have perfectionist tendencies can't accept mistakes or failures in their work or regular activities. It might mean tearful episodes when a child comes home with an A- or came in third place in the science competition. Perfectionist children often seem like regular high achievers until the stress and anxiety of perfectionism begins to cause damage to the child's wellbeing.



## What parents may see if their child is a perfectionist:

- Children with perfectionism may experience **intense anxiety**, feelings of moral failure, or engage in “[catastrophic thinking](#)” if they perceive they are not living up to a certain standard.
- It can also look like **procrastination or underachievement**. Many perfectionists tend to not initiate any task unless they can do it perfectly the first time around or may not turn in work they find less than perfect.
- Perfectionism might be expressed outwardly by having high to unreasonable standards that they hold others to, including an **unhealthy amount of competitiveness, which makes it difficult for them to cooperate with authority figures and peers.**

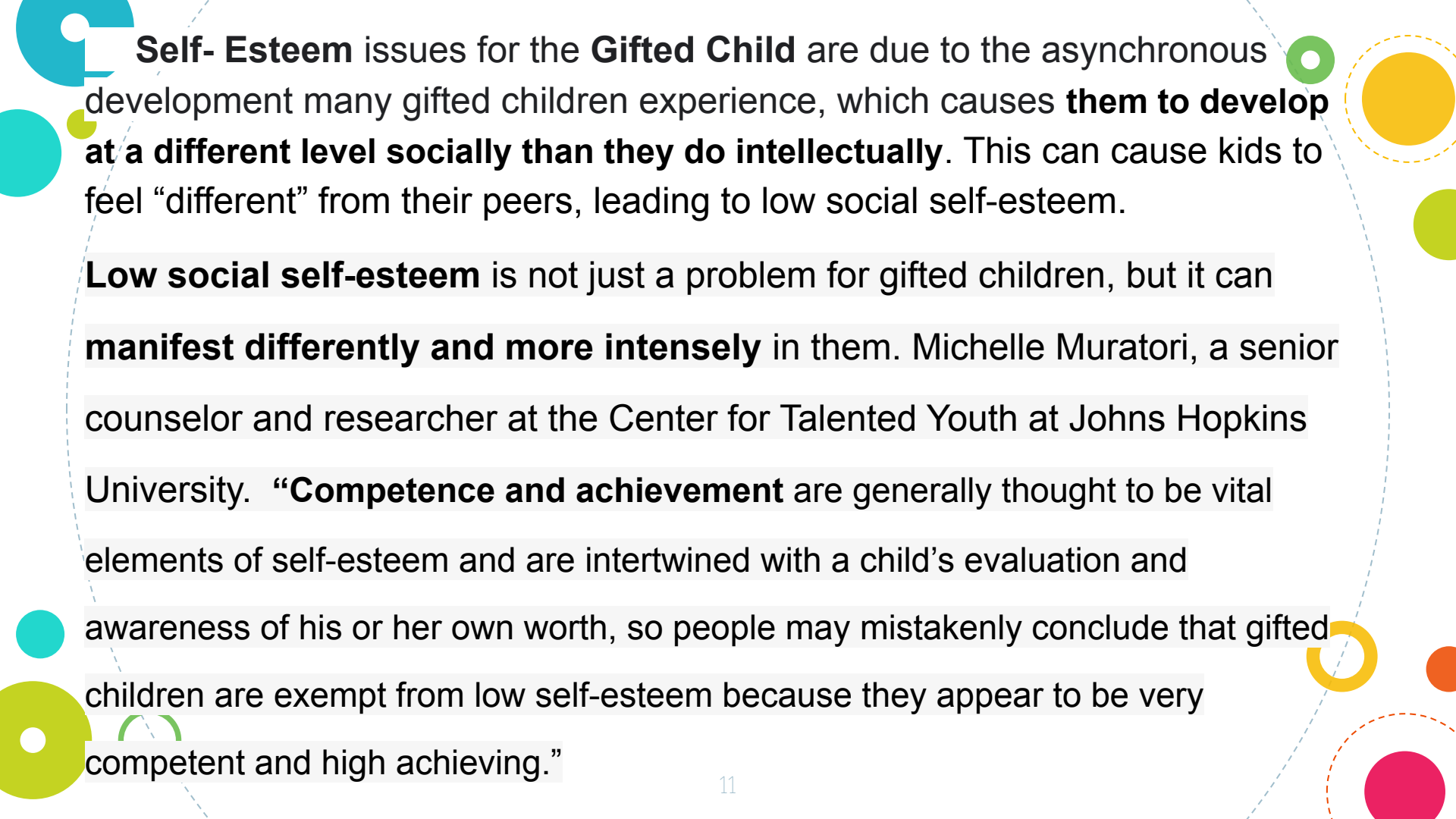
## What parents can do:

**Perfectionism is often a self-esteem** issue for gifted children. They may hear praises like “You are always the smartest in class,” which can later be a real blow to their confidence if they are struggling with an assignment or subject. Parents need to be cautious about how and what they praise their gifted child for. Healthier options might be “You put so much care into that project” or praising students for their effort and other **growth-mindset approaches**.

- The pressure to be gifted 24/7 in all walks of life can be very intense for these children, which is why parents should try to remember that these children are children first and gifted second. **Make time to connect and do activities that have nothing to do with their college trajectory like a cooking class.**
- Perfectionism tends to be accompanied by **anxiety and intensity**, which is why it is important to **practice self-soothing skills with your child when they get upset, such as mindfulness or even a short walk.**

**It is not uncommon for highly gifted students to be perfectionists.**

**Book suggestion:** **Being Perfect** by Anna Quindlen, author of the bestseller **A Short Guide to a Happy Life**, wrote this book to let readers know about “the perfection trap,” the price you pay when you become ensnared in it, and the key to setting yourself free. Quindlen believes that when your success looks good to the world but doesn’t feel good in your heart, it isn’t success at all.



**Self-Esteem** issues for the **Gifted Child** are due to the asynchronous development many gifted children experience, which causes **them to develop at a different level socially than they do intellectually**. This can cause kids to feel “different” from their peers, leading to low social self-esteem.

**Low social self-esteem** is not just a problem for gifted children, but it can **manifest differently and more intensely** in them. Michelle Muratori, a senior counselor and researcher at the Center for Talented Youth at Johns Hopkins University. “**Competence and achievement** are generally thought to be vital elements of self-esteem and are intertwined with a child’s evaluation and awareness of his or her own worth, so people may mistakenly conclude that gifted children are exempt from low self-esteem because they appear to be very competent and high achieving.”

One of the main causes of low social self-esteem in gifted children is **“divergent thinking”**. Many **gifted people have a strong need for honesty and transparency**, yet many of those considered socially successful are good at knowing what is expected from them to fit in with the norm. **They will often choose to protect themselves socially rather than doing what is “right”, which is at odds with the way many gifted children think.** This can make fitting in socially difficult, since belonging to most peer groups requires some conformity. It often leads gifted kids with low self-esteem to believe they have to choose between being accepted by their peers and being true to who they are. Additionally, due to the **Dabrowski overexcitabilities** often present, **gifted kids tend to be more intense in their feelings. Often, this causes them either to stand out or try to be unnoticed, making them easy targets for teasing and bullies.** These students may unfortunately internalize the message that it is not OK for them to be who they truly are, which may damage their global self-esteem.

Furthermore, **a study from the University of Washington**, notes that **gifted children are not always taught to use their many capabilities to solve the problem and need help obtaining a balanced view of their self-worth in both a social and intellectual context.**

## Parents there are some things you can do to help your gifted child improve their social self-esteem.

### 1. Find opportunities for them to interact with intellectual peers.

Friends are an essential component to boosting social self-esteem. Start by talking to your school's gifted coordinator, or connecting with a gifted advocacy group in your state. Ask them about social or interest groups that would fit your child. Also, consider inquiring about parent groups, where you can foster connections for both your child and yourself. If there are no groups in your area, some parents have recommended searching online resources and connecting your child with a pen pal. **Keep in mind that gifted children may not always find close friends in their age group.**



### 2. Help them recognize their contributions.

It is important to remember that your child is a complex person with both intellectual and emotional needs. Help them recognize their contributions in all facets of their life by making a list of accomplishments they are proud of beyond just academics.

**3. \*Don't let them think everything is easy.** "Gifted Guru", Lisa Van Gemert, M.Ed., points out that some **gifted children** develop the idea that, if they are smart, **everything will come easily to them.** This makes them more likely to quit when something, such as finding a friend group, becomes difficult.

**4. \*Remind** them that even the best performers practice a lot and help them develop a **manageable plan for overcoming obstacles.** \*Seek counseling if the need arises. Sometimes, even with the best parental and teacher support, a gifted child may need counseling to deal with issues related to low social self-esteem. **\*\*Hopefully, with a little help and lots of patience, your gifted child will develop a healthy social self-esteem and be able to reach their full potential in all areas of life.**



# Underachievement

A large pink circle with the number 2 inside, surrounded by various colored circles and a dashed line. The background is white with a large, faint dashed circle. There are several smaller circles in various colors (blue, green, yellow, orange, red) scattered around the main circle. Some are solid, some are hollow, and some are dashed. The number 2 is white and centered within the pink circle.

2



# Underachievement

What is underachievement?

- When a student can do the work, but his/her school performance does not show it.
- If a student has a higher IQ score but his/her behaviors make it seem like they are “below average”.

What causes underachievement?

- Family: sibling competition, “...parent overprotection, authoritarianism, excessive permissiveness, and inconsistencies between parents” (Davis, Rimm, Siegle, 2011, p. 302)
- School: not being challenged, lack of student respect, expectation of the teachers, peers’ attitudes and thoughts.





# Underachievement

## Characteristics of Underachieving Gifted Students

Low Self Esteem

Poor Self-Efficacy

Avoidance Behaviors

Rebellion

Perfectionism

Poor Functioning in Competition


Low Sense of Competence (Females)

Other Characteristics



# Underachievement

## Reversing Underachievement

1. Assessments
    - a. Observations of the child while they are taking the test.
  2. Communication between Parents and Teachers
    - a. Are both parties willing to support each other and the child?
    - b. Daily/Weekly Communication
  3. Changing Expectations
    - a. “Helping students set expectations that are realistic...is crucial” (Davis, Rimm, and Siegle, 2011,p316)
  4. Role Model Identification
    - a. Someone who is successful and able to achieve
    - b. Role model should be nurturing, the same gender, open, and willing to volunteer their time, and have a sense of accomplishment. (Davis, Rimm, and Siegle, 2011, pgs.318-319)
  5. Correction of Deficiencies
    - a. Tutoring with specific goal in mind
  6. Modifications at Home and School
    - a. Teacher and Parent should work together to make modifications that are appropriate for the student.
    - b. Small, meaningful rewards are useful to reinforce successful behavior.
- 

The background features a variety of colorful circles and dashed lines. In the top left, there is a large orange circle with a dashed white outline, overlapping a yellow circle. Below it is a small pink circle. In the top center, a large dashed white circle contains the number '3'. To the right, there is a green circle with a white dot, a yellow circle, and a dashed green circle with a yellow center. In the bottom left, there is a green dashed circle, a large yellow circle, and a small cyan circle. In the bottom right, there is a large cyan circle with a white center, a dashed cyan circle, and a cyan circle.

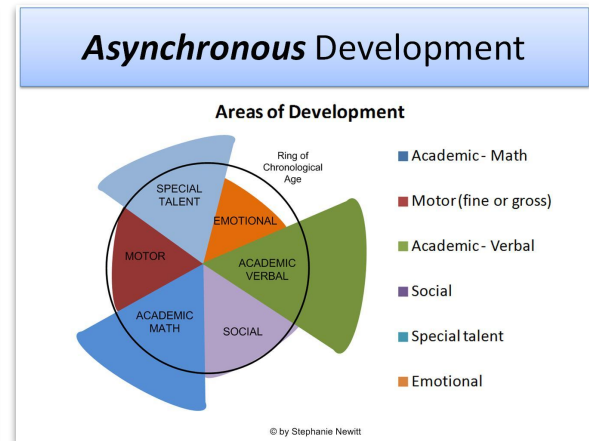
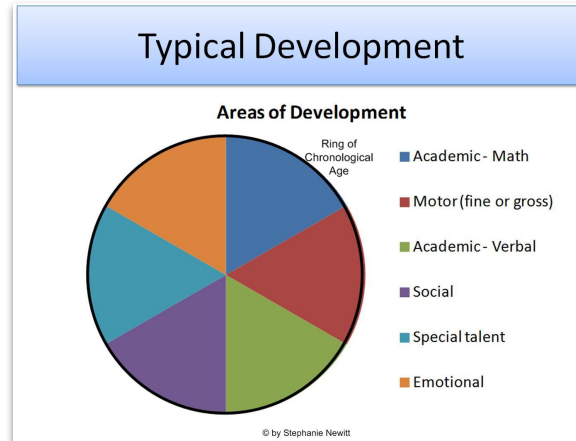
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# Asynchronous Development

# Asynchronous Development

Definition: Asynchronous Development is a term used to describe the mismatch between cognitive, emotional, and physical development of gifted individuals. In other words, these students are “out of sync” with other children their age.

The higher a child’s IQ, the more out of sync their development may be.



# Asynchronous Development

Issues that gifted learners face due to Asynchronous Development:

- ◎ Excel in academic performance, but seem to lag behind in physical or emotional development
- ◎ Struggle to make or keep friends in their own peer group
- ◎ Experience bullying for being perceived as “different”
- ◎ Higher expectations to succeed, but less support from teachers and parents than students that are not gifted
- ◎ Heightened awareness of issues in the world, such as injustice, poverty, death.
- ◎ Stronger feelings or emotional responses than children their age, leading to being labeled as “too sensitive”
- ◎ Easily overwhelmed

# Asynchronous Development

How to help as a parent:

- ◎ Recognize that your child's emotional and social development will not always match his/her intellectual development
  - ◎ If your child is having an emotional outburst, stop and remind yourself that your child may be acting in line with his/her chronological age
- ◎ Allow your child to socialize with other gifted children, older children or adults to give them an opportunity to share ideas with others on their level, while still giving them opportunities to socialize with their own age group, too
- ◎ Remember that not only do these kiddos need an extra challenge and mental stimulation, but they might need extra reassurance and hugs!

# Let's Be Proactive!

Things You Can Do to Help Your Child Stay on Track

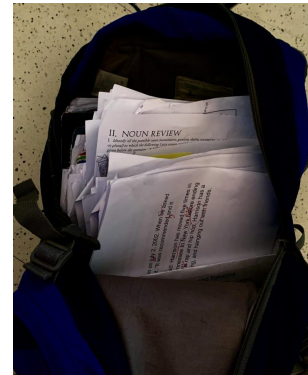
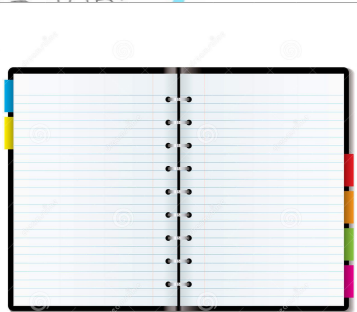
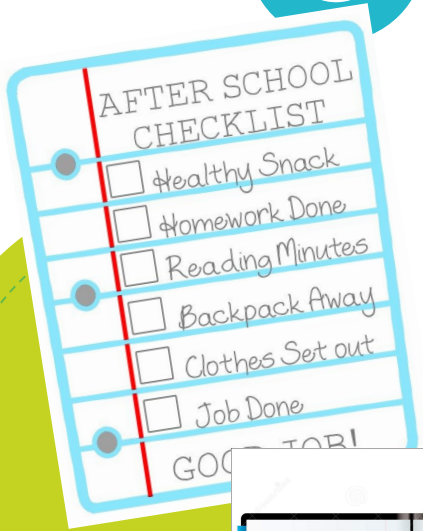
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# Organizing is Key!

Research has shown that better organization leads to better learning as well as lower anxiety levels.

Children need to be explicitly taught organization skills; just like any other skill we want them to master. Beyond being taught organization skills, modeling by both teachers and parents can help maintain this practice.





Day 19

Today's Date: 4 / 3 / 2020

My morning



Centering

- 3 Deep Breaths
- Smiling Heart
- Shine

Today's inspiration

Believe you can and you are halfway there.

Theodore Roosevelt

Today, I am grateful for...

- 1 My teachers for teaching me so many things
- 2 Myself for working hard
- 3 Freedom because I can do whatever I want

Review your goals

Today's top 5 actions towards your goals.

- I practiced 3x3.
- Learned new thing in math.
- I brainstormed some new ideas.
- Did research for cubing comps.
- I got 100 on my practice year test.

I AM Affirmation

I AM a good cuber

Daily Reflection/Lessons Learned/Notes

I learned that I am more powerful than I think.

My energy level



Tomorrow, I will...

- 1 Do more research for cubing.
- 2 Practice more 3x3.
- 3 See my cousins

BY WRITING DOWN  
YOUR  
GOALS  
YOU ARE  
42%  
MORE LIKELY TO  
ACHIEVE THEM.



Big Life Journal - biglifejournal.com

# WEEKLY GOAL SHEET

## WEEKLY DUTIES:

- 60 MINUTES IREADY READING
- 60 MINUTES IREADY MATH
- 1 AR TEST
- CHORES DONE
- CREATE SOMETHING
- DO A KIND ACT FOR SOMEONE

## TESTS THIS WEEK:

- |          |             |               |
|----------|-------------|---------------|
| 1: ----- | GOAL: ----- | ACTUAL: ----- |
| 2: ----- | GOAL: ----- | ACTUAL: ----- |
| 3: ----- | GOAL: ----- | ACTUAL: ----- |

## MY MANTRA:

- I AM A ----- I AM -----
- I CAN BE ----- I WILL -----

# PRAISE

VS.

# ENCOURAGEMENT

Stimulates rivalry and competition	Stimulates cooperation and contribution for the good of all
Focuses on quality of performance	Focuses on amount of effort and joy
Evaluative and judgmental; person feels "judged"	Little or no evaluation of person or act; person feels "accepted"
Emphasis on global evaluation of person - "You are better than others."	Emphasis on specific contributions - "You have helped in this way."
Creates quitters	Creates triers
Fosters dependence	Fosters self-sufficiency and independence



## 50+ WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT FOR KIDS

### WORDS TO SHOW YOUR LOVE

- You are my number one priority.
- You are an important part of our family.
- I could never stop loving you.
- I love you just the way you are.
- I love spending time with you.
- I appreciate you.

### WORDS TO MOTIVATE

- I am really proud of you for trying.
- I can see you're really trying.
- Be proud of yourself.
- Well done for giving it a go.
- Thank you for helping me.
- I can see how much you have improved.
- I have seen how hard you worked on this.
- Great job figuring it out.
- Your hard work is really paying off.
- I love how you created that.
- One more time and you'll have it.
- Keep going and you'll work it out. You're almost there!
- Give it a go first. I am here if you need help.
- You've come up with a good solution.
- Trust yourself.

### ENCOURAGE BEHAVIOR

- What you did was very kind.
- I really like how you showed empathy in that situation.
- I am proud of how you put yourself in someone else's shoes.
- What you did was very thoughtful.
- I like how you use words to describe your feelings.
- It's generous of you to share.
- You're being a great friend.
- I love your kind heart.
- That's a very generous thing to do.
- I am really proud of how you handled that situation.
- That was great listening.
- I like the way you handled that!

### PROMOTE CREATIVITY

- Your imagination is awesome!
- I really like how creative you were.
- The ideas you came up with were very creative.
- I like the way you are choosing to do this so creatively.
- You came up with a creative answer and really nailed that question!
- I like how you pursue new ideas!
- Your creativity is such an asset.
- You're so brave to try something new.

### BOOST SELF-ESTEEM

- You are enough.
- Trust in yourself.
- Believe in yourself, you can do it.
- You are capable.
- You are strong.
- No matter what happens, I love you.
- Can you show me?
- That is really interesting, can you tell me more?
- I really want to hear what you have to say.
- I believe in you.

FOR MORE POSITIVE MESSAGES FOR KIDS VISIT:  
[proudhappymama.com/words-of-encouragement-for-kids/](http://proudhappymama.com/words-of-encouragement-for-kids/)

The background features several decorative elements: a large orange ring with a dashed white inner circle in the top left; a large teal ring with a white inner circle in the bottom right; a large teal number '5' inside a dashed white circle in the top center; and various smaller solid and dashed circles in colors like yellow, pink, green, and lime green scattered throughout.

5

Anxiety

# Anxiety

Anxiety among gifted individuals can come from:

- Heightened sensitivity
  - Deeper understanding of the emotions of others
- Analytical attitude
  - Questioning others can lead to conflict
- Self-criticism
  - Internal focus on deficits & overly critical of self

# Anxiety

Helping children cope with anxiety:

- Demonstrate effective coping skills
- Healthy food, exercise and sleep
- Quality time and conversation
- Encourage positive thinking

**Other tips and tricks for dealing with anxiety/stress in the moment:**

Breathing exercises  
Repetitive motion  
Reading or drawing  
Laughing  
Mazes or puzzle solving  
TALKING  
Get organized

# Anxiety

Sources for helping students cope with anxiety:

Coping Skills for Kids Workbook  
by Janine Halloran.

The Relaxation & Stress Reduction Workbook for Kids  
by Lawrence E. Shapiro and Robin K. Sprague.

# Overexcitabilities & Emotional Sensitivities

6

A decorative graphic featuring a large pink circle in the center with a white number '6' inside. Surrounding this central element are several smaller circles in various colors (yellow, green, orange, red, blue) and dashed lines, creating a playful and abstract design.



# Overexcitabilities & Emotional Sensitivities

Gifted kids tend to be more intense in their feelings.

Children who feel things with great intensity experience the world in a different way. Gifted young people are often more aware, stimulated, and affected by their surroundings. Emotional or physical reactions to events can last longer than expected and are often replayed in the child's mind.



# Overexcitabilities & Emotional Sensitivities

Intensities can be characterized by:

- *Extreme feelings:* positive or negative feelings; complex emotions; connection with the feelings of others; grand laughter and tears
- *Physical reaction to emotion:* stomachaches and headaches; blushing; rise in body temperature
- *Strong affective memory:* re-living or re-feeling things long after the triggering event; nightmares; elaborate daydreams connected to actual events



# Overexcitabilities & Emotional Sensitivities

Often, this causes them either to stand out or try to be unnoticed, making them easy targets for teasing and bullies.

These students may unfortunately internalize the message that it is not OK for them to be who they truly are, which may damage their global self-esteem.

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# Social Smarts: Tips and Tricks to Friendships

# Social Smarts!

## Why making friends can be a challenge!

- ◎ It's not always easy for gifted children to make friends!
- ◎ They sometimes feel lonely because they feel set apart.
- ◎ Struggle with understanding social behavior so they don't like trying to make friends.
- ◎ Want it to be “their way or no way!” so they claim to not enjoy playing with others.
- ◎ Emotionally sensitive.

# Tips and Tricks: Classroom

We practice in the classroom through the Affective Skills to the Communication Skills!

Respond appropriately to non-verbal cues AS 2.6

Understand emotions in self AS 3.2

Demonstrate respect for others. AS 4.6c

Demonstrate effective listening skills. CM All Grades

As a leader, work effectively with a group. SS 3.6

Work effectively with a group. SS 2.6

Apply rules of etiquette for a variety of social situations. SS 3.4

# Tips and Tricks: Classroom



# Tips and Tricks

## Friendship tips from Gifted Students:

- ◉ Practice taking turns being the leader.
- ◉ Don't boss your friends around. Let them have their own things!
- ◉ Being a good listener!
- ◉ It's okay to disagree with your friends, but you have to learn to problem solve!
- ◉ Laugh at your friend's jokes but never at their feelings!
- ◉ Show your friends that you appreciate them for who they are!

# Thanks!



## Any questions?

Drop your email and student's name in the chat to receive our survey so you can give feedback on our next meeting!