



A Handbook for Families
of Ohio's Gifted Children

Navigating the World

of Gifted Education



- Gifted Identification
- Academic Acceleration
- Educational Strategies

- Social Emotional Needs
- Characteristics of Gifted Children
- Enrichment Programs

- Defining Giftedness
- Resources for Families
- Advocating for Your Child

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Updated: 5/15/20





LOOK INSIDE:



Parent-Teacher Conferences
Questions about how to best handle a parent-teacher conference especially when it's your first one after your child has been identified....
PAGE 18



Q&A: Acceleration
Information about whether acceleration is right for your child.
PAGE 11



Books for Parents
Check out these books for parents on raising gifted learners. Covering topics from academic to social-emotional needs.
PAGE 13

Unlocking Potential

THE OAGC Parent DIVISION

OAGC Parent Division Advocacy•Resources•Connection

Dear Parents and Guardians:

Welcome to the world of gifted education! Our children's academic and intellectual future will be shaped considerably by their schools' gifted services and participation in local, regional, state and national gifted educational options.

As parents and guardians of some of Ohio's brightest, we need to be major players in our children's education. You can take the first step toward becoming more involved in your child's future by joining OAGC. Contact OAGC at 614- 337-0386 or visit our website at www.oagc.com. We believe that every child, including the gifted, deserves an appropriate education.

The second step is to take an active role in supporting gifted education. Advocacy for improved gifted educational opportunities in Ohio works at all levels: local (classroom, building, and district), regional and state.

Gifted teachers often tell us that parent involvement is powerful. When families join to advocate for stronger and more comprehensive gifted education, legislators, school officials and other influencers listen.

Let your voice be heard!

Written by Ohio parents and gifted educators, *Navigating the World of Gifted Education* is designed to offer help as you enter the realm of gifted education with your child. We look forward to your involvement as a partner in our efforts to better serve Ohio's gifted children.

Very truly yours,

Ohio Association for Gifted Children
Parent Division
February 2020

Join us on Social Media

Connect with other families and gather more resources!

 **oagcgifted**

 **OhioAGC**

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www.oagc.com



Welcome



The Parent Division of the Ohio Association for Gifted Children (OAGC) is pleased to provide you with a copy of *Navigating the World of Gifted Education*.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide parents with information about:

- Gifted identification
- Characteristics of gifted children
- Educational strategies
- Advocacy methods
- Extracurricular learning options that may be appropriate for your child
- Resources for families

If you would like additional information or additional copies of *Navigating the World of Gifted Education*, go to our website www.oagc.com.



Table of Contents

<i>Defining Giftedness in Ohio</i>	4
<i>The ABC's of Gifted Education</i>	5
<i>Characteristics of Gifted Children</i>	6
<i>Myths and Facts about Gifted Children</i>	7
<i>Helping Your Child Succeed</i>	8
<i>Differentiation</i>	9
<i>Service Settings</i>	10
<i>Q&A on Academic Acceleration</i>	11
<i>Twice Exceptional Learners</i>	12
<i>Books for Parents</i>	13
<i>Website Resources</i>	14
<i>Advocating for Your Child</i>	16
<i>Other Learning Opportunities</i>	17
<i>Parent-Teacher Conferences</i>	18
<i>Join OAGC</i>	19

Defining Giftedness in Ohio

Ohio's school districts are not required to serve gifted children by law, but they are required to identify students as gifted in grades K - 12. In 1999, the Ohio General Assembly passed legislation that updated the process for identifying Ohio's gifted students. The Law or Ohio Revised Code specifies, in general terms, how gifted students are to be identified, and how they may be served. The law has been updated over the years, most recently in September 2014. The Rule or Ohio Administrative Code provides the specifics that must be followed in identification. The Rule also provides specifics on how districts may serve gifted children and how state funded gifted units (coordinators and gifted intervention specialists) may be utilized. Ohio districts must comply with both the Law and the Rule.

In July 2018, the Gifted Rule was revised. The gifted law and rule can be found at <http://www.oagc.com/rulelaw.asp>.

How does Ohio define giftedness?

In Ohio, a child can be identified in one or more of the following categories:

Superior Cognitive Ability

Child has general intellectual ability that is consistently superior to that of other children in the schoolto the extent that he/she needs and can profit from specially planned educational services beyond those normally provided by the standard school curriculum.

Specific Academic Ability

Child has an aptitude in a specific subject area that is consistently superior to the aptitudes of other children in the school...to the extent that he/she needs and can profit from specially planned educational services beyond those normally provided by the standard school curriculum. Ohio law specifies reading and/or writing, math, science and social studies, as specific academic areas.

Visual and/or Performing Arts Ability

Child demonstrates consistently outstanding aesthetic production in graphic arts, sculpture, music, theatre or dance.to the extent that he/she needs and can profit from specially planned educational services beyond those normally provided by the standard school curriculum. Some artistically gifted students learn best through the arts.

Creative Thinking Ability

Child consistently engages in divergent thinking that results in unconventional responses to conventional tasksto the extent that he/she needs and can profit from specially planned educational services beyond those normally provided by the standard school curriculum.

The Ohio Department of Education has established criteria to identify children in each of these four areas. For additional information regarding the identification of gifted children:

- Ask your local Gifted Specialist or Gifted Coordinator about your district's identification process, procedures and services plan.
- Contact Ohio's Consultants for Gifted Children in the Center for Exceptional Children of the Ohio Department of Education at (614) 466-2650.

When are children identified?

Students can be identified as gifted at any point in time. In a public school district, the district by law must have a plan in place which screens for gifted identification twice: once prior to the end of grade two and once after the completion of grade two but prior to the end of grade six. Parents can also request that students be assessed for gifted identification or pursue having private assessment or testing completed. Note: if parents have outside testing/assessment completed for identification purposes it must be through appropriately trained personnel using an approved testing instrument from ODE's battery. See <http://www.oagc.com/files/TipsforFindingaPsychologistorCounselorforYourGiftedChild2.2017.pdf>

If my child is identified does that mean they will receive gifted services?

Not necessarily. Your local school district may have additional identification criteria for entrance into your school's program for gifted students. All of this information regarding: service criteria should be available to you through the district's Gifted Plan.

The ABC's of Gifted Education

An understanding of the terms and phrases used by educators and other parents of gifted children will help you with a beginning gifted education vocabulary.

Acceleration is a method of serving gifted children that can include early entrance to kindergarten, high school and college; grade skipping; dual enrollment programs; and single subject acceleration. Important research about the effectiveness of acceleration is in the report "A Nation Empowered" at http://www.accelerationinstitute.org/nation_empowered/

Achievement Tests are a way to measure your child's intellectual achievement. These tests are measures of "school learning." Most report scores in typical classroom subjects like reading, math and science. Examples: The Iowa Assessments and NWEA MAP.

Advocacy is the act of pleading in favor of something, such as a cause, idea, or policy; active support. Literally, advocacy represents "a call to voice." Supporting gifted education is part of OAGC's mission, and advocacy comes in many forms. You can be an advocate for your own student, for all the students in your district, for your district's gifted program, for state policies, etc. Parents of gifted students usually find that being an advocate for their child is essential to that child's success.

Aptitude/Intelligence Tests are a way to measure a child's abilities in abstract thinking, reasoning and speed of response. These types of assessments indicate a child's potential. Example: WISC-V and CogAT. Go to www.ode.state.oh.us and search for "Chart of Approved Assessment Instruments for Gifted Screening and Identification" for a complete list.

Asynchrony occurs when gifted students develop at different rates intellectually, socially and emotionally. This is quite common in gifted students. Asynchrony means out-of-sync within oneself, or uneven development. Students can also be out-of-sync with age mates and the expectations of the classroom.

Differentiation is a process in which the curriculum or learning environment is modified to meet the needs of individual learners. See page 9 for more information.

Educational Options – independent study. Schools can develop educational options for any student and have them count towards graduation requirements. For many gifted students, providing individualized educational options may be a good way to complete required courses on an accelerated basis and/or pursue study of advanced and specialized topics not available as traditional courses in the district.

Gifted Coordinators can assist parents with district gifted policies and procedures. Ask your district who this person is. Some Coordinators are shared by more than one district, especially in rural areas, and are based in regional Educational Service Centers.

Gifted Specialists provide direct service to gifted students. They are often hired by districts or Educational Service Centers. A pre-dominance of their time should be spent in direct contact with students.

Online Learning will vary with each district. Students can take approved courses for online credit and work at their own pace.

Percentile Rank is an indicator of how your child's performance on a given assessment compares to other children taking the same assessment. For example, a percentile rank of 98 means that a child's performance equaled or excelled that of 98 out of each 100 children in his/her age or grade group (depending on which comparison was made).

Value-Added Analysis is a statistical method used to measure the academic progress of individual students and groups of students from year to year. This method of measuring school quality estimates the academic growth for individual students, using all test information in each student's test history. School quality is measured based on how much academic growth schools facilitate in their students no matter where their students start the year. This progress measure provides a fairer comparison of school effectiveness across geographic and demographic factors than traditional achievement measures. For more on Value-Added Assessment: www.oagc.com and search for "Value Added."

Written Educational Plans (WEPs) are required by Ohio law for any student who is provided services in the area in which he/she is identified as gifted. School districts can design their own WEP.



Characteristics of Gifted

characteristic	positive behavior	negative behavior
Learns rapidly/easily	Memorizes/masters basic facts quickly	Gets bored easily, resists drill, disturbs others
Reads intensively	Reads many books and uses library on own	Neglects other responsibilities
Advanced vocabulary	Communicates ideas well	Shows off, evokes peer resentment
Retains a quantity of information	Ready recall and responses	Monopolizes discussion
Long attention span	Sticks with tasks or projects	Resists class routine, dislikes interruptions
Curious, has a variety of interests	Asks questions, gets excited about ideas	Goes on tangents, no follow through
Works independently	Creates and invents beyond assigned tasks	Refuses to work with others
Alert and observant	Recognizes problems	Impolitely corrects adults
Has a good sense of humor	Able to laugh at self	Plays cruel jokes or tricks on others
Comprehends, recognizes relationships	Able to solve social problems alone	Interferes in the affairs of others
High academic achievement	Does school work well	Braggs, egotistical, impatient with others
Fluent, verbal facility	Forceful with words, numbers; leads peers in positive ways	Leads others into negative behaviors
Individualistic	Asserts self and ideas, has few friends; sense of own uniqueness	Stubborn in beliefs
Self-motivated, self-sufficient	Requires minimum teacher directions or help	Is overly aggressive, challenges authority

Myths and Facts About Gifted Children

There are many myths associated with giftedness, and parents are often unsure how to address incorrect information. The following list summarizes some of the fallacies and facts related to gifted children:

Myth: Gifted children will achieve without guidance.

Fact: Without guidance and support, gifted children may lose motivation and become underachievers.

Myth: Gifted children should be given larger quantities of work at average grade level.

Fact: Gifted children need a high degree of educational challenge not more of an average level.

Myth: Gifted children are “teacher pleasers” and easy to teach.

Fact: In order for gifted children to maintain high levels of achievement, teachers must make curricular adjustments. Without appropriate modifications, gifted children may develop behavior problems.

Myth: Gifted children will make straight A’s.

Fact: Gifted children will not always achieve, especially if unmotivated.

Myth: Gifted children are nearly always from upper middle-class professional families.

Fact: Gifted children are from radically diverse racial, ethnic and socio- economic backgrounds.

Myth: Most gifted children are failures in their adult life.

Fact: Research indicates that outstanding success is achieved by most gifted individuals if they have been identified early and had their giftedness nurtured.

Myth: Extra help for gifted children fosters snobbery and is likely to lead to an elitist class.

Fact: Gifted children have special needs and need instruction appropriate to their academic level. One size does not fit all! All children deserve an education that allows them to reach their potential.

Myth: Gifted children are more mature than their peers.

Fact: Gifted children often develop asynchronistically and may be very advanced in some areas while quite delayed in others.

Myth: Gifted children are always neat and organized.

Fact: All children are neat and messy, depending upon ability and their own personal comfort level. This is true of gifted children as well.

Helping your Child Succeed

Spend Time Together Doing Enriching or Creative Activities

Read books, visit libraries or museums. Watch enriching television programs or videos. Attend cultural events. Have conversations about world issues on the news. Talk about what is happening at school and build on the activities provided. Daydream. Make up imaginary stories. Draw. Encourage expression in a variety of mediums.

Avoid Over-Extending in Extracurricular Activities

Your child may have varying and vast interests and want to be involved in multiple activities. Help your child create realistic goals and schedules.

Explain What Giftedness Means

Make sure your child knows what it means to be gifted. Use state definitions or explain how your child was selected for a program. Discuss gifted characteristics you see in your child and ways to cope with them, in an age-appropriate way. Make sure your child doesn't use gifted characteristics as an excuse, manipulation tool or bragging right. Explain that what they DO with their talent or gift is important.

Realize Your Child Is Not an Adult

If your child gets along well with adults, understands and contributes to adult conversation and uses an advanced vocabulary, others may expect more out of your child than is realistic or appropriate. Help them understand your child is "just a kid."

Avoid Comparing Your Child to Other Children

Your child is a special individual with diverse gifts and talents. Focus on developing those gifts and talents to the fullest potential instead of comparing him/her to others.

Listen

Your child may have a lot of questions or concerns. Your child may want to discuss special plans, projects, interests, worries or dreams. Actively listen. Ask questions to enhance conversation. Take the time to find out about information in which your child is interested.

Remind Your Child that Mistakes Are Acceptable

Mistakes are part of learning, growing and finding workable solutions. Help make sure your child does not equate making a mistake with failure as an individual. Instead, focus on process rather than performance. Study famous people and discuss barriers and mistakes that led to their successes. Share your own mistakes and what you accomplished. Model making mistakes, learning from them, and moving on.

Help Your Child Become an Independent, Contributing Member of Society

Participate in special interest projects. Help others. Model community-building activities. Encourage your child's originality. Share real-life examples of times you did not go along with the crowd or times you helped others.



Differentiation

Differentiation means changing one or more aspects of the learning environment in order to better meet the needs of individual students. Gifted services in school are settings where sustained, significant differentiation is implemented by trained instructors. Differentiation is important because it offers students who are gifted an opportunity to learn new content, and because it ensures that gifted students are able to learn skills and habits that will help them succeed in the future. There are four ways that classwork is typically differentiated for gifted students.

PACING: Changes in pacing for gifted students usually means speeding up the rate at which content is taught. This can happen through subject or grade acceleration, course compacting, unit compacting, or even on a daily basis with teachers providing options for students to work at their own pace on projects.

DEPTH: Adding depth to a course or lesson means that students get a chance to learn more about the topic being taught. This is often done at the unit or lesson level with teachers providing opportunities for students to go behind the scenes or follow up on “why” questions about a topic of study.

BREADTH: Another way to meet the intellectual needs of gifted students is to widen the scope of the curriculum. Students can make connections across multiple classes or look at the way our understanding of a topic has changed over time. They can be asked to consider how a piece of information might impact multiple fields of study or people in different places.

COMPLEXITY: This can be a change in either the way information is given, or in the way the student must work with the content that is being taught—or both. Teachers often add complexity to allow a student the ability to manipulate information in more advanced ways or to practice more sophisticated modes of showing what they know.



Educational Service Settings

A variety of service options are appropriate for children who have been identified as gifted. Please ask your local gifted coordinator what type of educational programming is available and supported by your school district. Common educational settings include (in alphabetical order):

Acceleration progressing through an educational program at rates faster or at ages younger than conventionally accepted. Acceleration can include early entrance to kindergarten, high school and college; grade skipping; dual enrollment programs; compacting; and single subject acceleration. Ask your district for a copy of their acceleration policy.

Advanced Placement A type of acceleration in which students take approved advanced placement classes in high school, then take an advanced placement exam. Most colleges give credit to students earning qualifying scores on the exam. Go to www.collegeboard.com and search for Advanced Placement.

Cluster Grouping Placing a small group of identified gifted students in a classroom with other students of mixed abilities and differentiating curriculum to meet their needs.

Co-Teaching a classroom in which a trained classroom teacher and a gifted intervention specialist plan and teach a differentiated curriculum in cooperation.

Educational Options including credit flexibility, advanced online courses and programs and other options as defined in rules 3301-35-01 and 3301-35-06 of the Ohio Administrative Code.

Dual Enrollment including but not limited to College Credit Plus: Provides students with the opportunity to attend college courses while earning both high school and college credit. Tuition is paid with state education funds. For more on College Credit Plus visit, https://www.ohiohighered.org/content/college_credit_plus_info_students_families.

Honors Course a course that the district has determined to be challenging which is further differentiated for gifted students by a trained classroom teacher.

International Baccalaureate Program a set of challenging courses for high school students that is recognized by many institutions worldwide for entry into higher education.

Pull-Out Program in which students are pulled out of the regular classroom on a scheduled basis to go to a resource room staffed by a teacher trained in the education of gifted children.

Self-Contained Classroom A classroom in which all the students have been identified as gifted. This is the student's everyday classroom assignment. This can be full-time or single subject course.

Services through Art Instructor: courses in visual or performing arts that have differentiated instruction for students who are gifted in visual or performing arts.



Q&A

About Academic Acceleration

Source: Acceleration Institute

What is acceleration?

Acceleration is an academic intervention that moves students through an educational program at a rate faster or at an age that is younger than typical.

Acceleration helps match the level, complexity, and pace of the curriculum with the readiness and motivation of the student. It is about creating a better match between a student and the level and pace of instruction.

Acceleration does NOT mean pushing a child. It does not mean forcing a child to learn advanced material or socialize with older children before he or she is ready. Acceleration is a strategy that respects individual differences and acknowledges the fact that some of these differences merit educational flexibility.

Should I accelerate my child?

Research indicates that acceleration is a social and academic success story; in many cases, it is the right intervention for students whose academic needs are not met in age-grouped classrooms.

The more relevant question might be, "What form of acceleration is most appropriate for my child?" For many people, acceleration is synonymous with grade skipping. However, grade skipping is just one form of acceleration. Early entrance to kindergarten or 1st grade, dual enrollment in high school and college, and subject matter acceleration are other forms of acceleration that may also work for some students.

Choosing an accelerative intervention requires careful consideration of many factors, and the type of acceleration that works well with one child may not work well with another. The support of family and friends, the student's level of academic and social-emotional development, the student's age and physical development, and the beliefs of local school personnel are all factors to consider. For example, students who skip grades need emotional maturity as well as academic ability in order to succeed. With single-subject acceleration, however, the more important criterion is academic ability, and social-emotional maturity may be less of a concern.

What does acceleration look like?

Acceleration doesn't have to be an all-or-nothing event. Academically talented students might skip an entire grade or they might move ahead in only one subject. Some students might enter kindergarten early, then skip a grade later on in middle school. Exceptionally talented students might put together different types of acceleration to make a plan that works best for them. For example, a talented 7-year-old might be in 2nd grade for a few subjects, 3rd grade for others, and working with a mentor at the 5th grade level in yet another subject. The best way to think about this is to look for an appropriate match: the student can be placed at different levels for different subjects in order to match the curriculum to his or her abilities and achievements. When students are placed based on academic needs and not based on age, we are truly matching the curriculum to the student and meeting their academic needs.

For more Q&A go to: <http://www.accelerationinstitute.org/Resources/QA/>



Twice Exceptional Learners

Twice exceptional learners are those who are identified with more than one educational difference. Usually, it refers to a child who has been identified as gifted and who also has a disability. These disabilities can fall under any disability category recognized in Ohio. For most types of disabilities, a student who is gifted is equally as likely to have a disability as a student who is not gifted. However, twice exceptional students are at greater risk of going undiagnosed either because their giftedness covers up the signs of their disability, or because their disability covers up signs of their giftedness. These students need support for both of their differences to truly thrive.

Resource	Web Address
OAGC 2e Parents Facebook Group	https://www.facebook.com/groups/407087729644133/
2e Newsletter	http://2enewsletter.com/
Hoagie's Gifted Page	https://www.hoagiesgifted.org/twice_exceptional.htm
My Little Poppies Blog	http://my-little-poppies.com/top-gifted-2e-and-homeschool-resources/
Davidson Institute	http://www.davidsongifted.org/search-database/entry/a10536
ODE: Twice Exceptional Guide	http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Special-Education/Students-with-Disabilities/Educating-Students-with-Disabilities/Educating-Gifted-Students-with-Disabilities/Twice-Exceptional-Guide.pdf.aspx
Wrightslaw- 2E and the law	http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/2e.index.htm
Social Thinking -resources and conferences for children who need help with social skills	https://www.socialthinking.com/
SENG Gifted	https://www.sengifted.org/post/helping-your-twice-exceptional-2e-child-build-frustration-tolerance
Council for Exceptional Children	http://www.cec.sped.org/Policy-and-Advocacy/Current-Sped-Gifted-Issues/Gifted-and-Talented
Twice Exceptional National FB Page	https://www.facebook.com/groups/158474124337015/

Books to Stack on your Nightstand!

A Parent's Guide to Gifted Children, James T Webb et al. Great Potential Press, Scottsdale, AZ, 2007

The Survival Guide for Gifted Parents, Sally Yahnke Walker PhD, Free Spirit Publishing, Minneapolis, MN, 2002.

How to Parent so Kids Will Learn, Dr. Sylvia Rimm, Three Rivers Press, NY, 1996.

When Gifted Kids Don't Have All the Answers, Jim Delisle PhD, & Judy Galbraith MA, Free Spirit Publishing, Minneapolis, MN, 2015.

Being Smart about Gifted Children, Dona J. Mathews PhD, and Joanne F. Foster EdD, Great Potential Press, Scottsdale, AZ, 2005.

Reforming Gifted Education, Karen B. Rogers PhD, Great Potential Press, Scottsdale, AZ, 2002.

Misdiagnosis and Dual Diagnosis of Gifted Children and Adults, James T. Webb PhD, Edward R. Amend PsyD, Nadia E. Webb PsyD, Jean Goerss MD MPH, Paul Beljan PsyD, F. Richard Olenchak PhD, Great Potential Press, Scottsdale, AZ, 2005.

Perfectionism: What's Bad About Being Too Good? Miriam Adderholdt PhD and Jan Goldberg, Free Spirit Publishing, Minneapolis, MN, 1999.

Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century, Howard Gardner, Basic Books, New York, NY, 1999.

Losing Our Minds: Gifted Children Left Behind, Deborah L. Ruf PhD, Great Potential Press, Scottsdale, AZ, 2005.

Genius Denied: How to Stop Wasting Our Brightest Young Minds, Jan & Bob Davidson, Simon & Schuster, New York, NY, 2004.

The Gifted Kids Survival Guide for Ages 10 & Under, Judy Galbraith MA, Free Spirit Publishing, Minneapolis, MN, 1999.

Stand Up for Your Gifted Child, Joan Franklin Smutny, Free Spirit Publishing, Minneapolis, MN, 2000.

College Planning for Gifted Students, Berger, S., Prufrock Press, Waco, TX, 2014

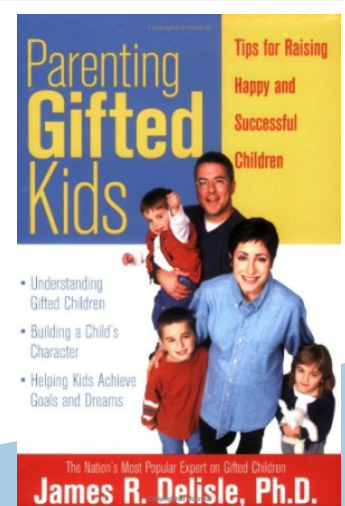
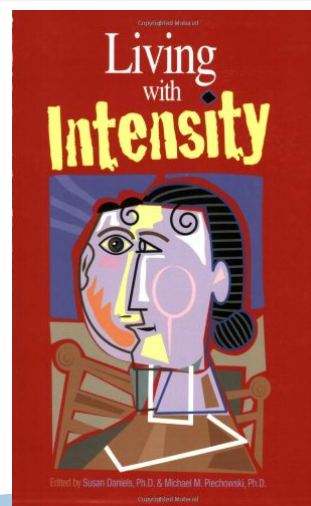
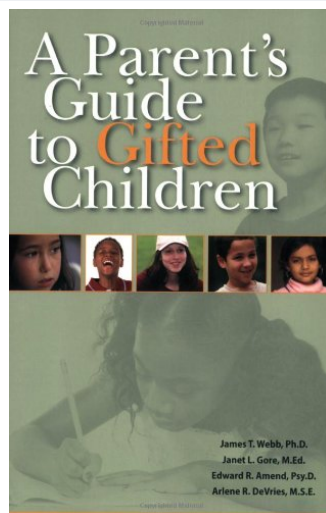
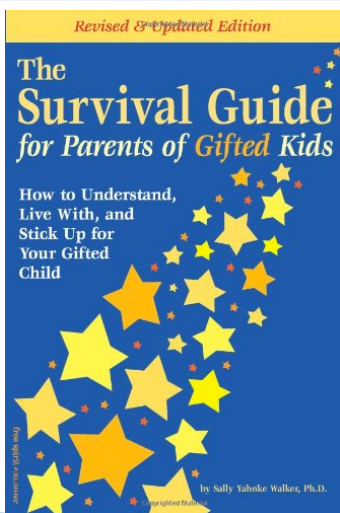
The Gifted Kids Survival Guide II, Delisle, J., & Galbraith, J., Free Spirit Publishing, Minneapolis, MN, 1987.

Living with Intensity, Susan Daniels and Michael M. Piechowski, Great Potential Press, Scottsdale, AZ, 2008.

Parenting Gifted Kids Tips for Raising Happy and Successful Children, James R. Delisle, Prufrock Press, Waco, TX, 2006.

Emotional Intensity in Gifted Students: Helping Kids with Explosive Feelings, Christine Fonseca, Prufrock Press, 2015.

Smart but Scattered, Peg Dawson and Richard Guare, The Guilford Press, New York, NY, 2011.



Websites with Testing Information

ACT College Entrance Exam

<http://www.act.org/>

Buros Institute of Mental Measurements

<http://buros.org/>

Contains information on specific tests and assessments.

Eric Clearinghouse on Testing and Evaluation

<http://www.ericae.net/>

Information on testing research and evaluation.

SAT College Entrance Exam

<https://www.collegeboard.org/>

ODE: Chart of Approved Assessment Instruments for Gifted Screening and Identification <http://education.ohio.gov/>

Search for “Chart of Approved Assessment Instruments for Gifted Screening and Identification”

Catalogs Catering to Gifted Education

Resources listed are not necessarily endorsed by the Ohio Association for Gifted Children. This list is not a complete listing of resources appropriate for parents or gifted children.

Prufrock Press <http://www.prufrock.com/>

Free Spirit Publishing <http://www.freespirit.com/>

Pieces of Learning <https://piecesoflearning.com/>

Gifted Education Press <http://www.giftededpress.com/>

Mindware <http://www.mindware.orientaltrading.com/>

www.oagc.com

Websites Containing Information Pertinent to Gifted Parents/Educators

Ohio Association for Gifted Children (OAGC) www.oagc.com

The official website of OAGC. Contains comprehensive information.

National Association for Gifted Children www.nagc.org

The official website of NAGC. You may order the parent magazine, Parenting for High Potential. Contains links to research and articles on gifted students.

Hoagies Gifted Education Home Page www.hoagiesgifted.org

Resources and information on many facets of gifted education.

Ohio Department of Education www.ode.state.oh.us.

Click on the "Families" link at the bottom of the home page, and then find the "Gifted Education" link.

SENG: Supporting Emotional Needs of Gifted Children www.sengifted.org

The only organization dedicated to the social and emotional needs of gifted individuals.

A Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students

www.nationdeceived.org

Comprehensive research-based information on the benefits of acceleration.

Eric Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education <http://www.icdri.org/Education/eric.htm>

Contains articles and research on gifted education. Click on "Gifted Education" at the top of the right-hand column.

Davidson Institute www.ditd.org

A gateway to resources selected for the nation's gifted & talented

www.oagc.com

Advocating for your Child's Needs

The best advocate for your child is YOU! As parents we need to make sure our children's educational needs are met. Advocacy comes in many forms with varying degrees of involvement. A few ways you can advocate for your child's educational needs are:

Schedule a Conference with Your Child's Teacher.

Volunteer in your child's classroom if possible. Show your support for the efforts made by your child's teacher to meet your child's needs and share your concerns in a non-confrontational manner. See the last pages of this booklet for ideas.

Join an Advocacy Bulletin Board. To find out what is happening in Ohio, send an e-mail message requesting to sign up for the advocacy bulletin board to anngift@aol.com. There are also list serves such as OHIOGIFT that encourage discussion about relevant gifted topics. You may access OHIOGIFT via the OAGC website.

Join or Form a Parent Group. There are other parents of gifted children with similar concerns and questions. Forming or joining a parent group can provide you with a resource to discuss issues and advocate for change. One voice is good, but 30 unified voices are better. Parent groups may also join OAGC as affiliate organizations. You can find a list of parent groups on the OAGC website or contact the OAGC Vice President for Affiliates at 614-337-0386.

Attend a Local School Board Meeting. If you have concerns about gifted services in your district, attend school board meetings. Review your district's policy and programs for gifted learners.

Write a Letter or Make a Phone Call to Your State Legislator. Parents who are constituents of a state legislator's district have a powerful voice. Ask your legislator if he/she supports funding educational options for gifted learners. Encourage your legislator to learn about the unique needs of gifted learners and share your personal stories of triumph and tragedy with your legislator. You can find out how to contact your legislator by visiting our website at www.oagc.com.

Become a Member of OAGC

The Ohio Association for Gifted Children (OAGC) has been working with families and educators to promote the best interests of gifted children since 1952. OAGC advances the understanding of the needs of gifted children, promotes programs and services, and encourages the exchange of information on the national, state and local level. OAGC is an affiliate organization of the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC).

Membership in OAGC is an affordable way to learn more about the needs of gifted children, gather parenting tips, connect with other parents of gifted children and be informed about advocacy efforts at the national, state and local levels.

www.oagc.com

Other Learning Opportunities

Your child may require more educational opportunities than are provided by your school district. Many learning opportunities that occur outside the regular school day are appropriate for gifted children. Consult your local gifted specialist for additional information about these and other learning opportunities in your area. If no programs are offered, volunteer to start one!

Ohio Kids for Creativity is a program that fosters creative thinking and problem-solving skills among participating students in grades K-12. Working in teams of five to seven, students develop solutions to problems and are given the opportunity to test their creative solutions.

Project Outreach is a program in which groups of students in grades 7-12 select a challenge and develop an original project for the betterment of their home community. Each challenge requires research, community interaction, creativity, and the design and implementation of a long-range community project for a solution.

Future Problem Solving is a national program based on Torrance's Creative Problem-Solving Model. Students in grades K-12 enhance critical thinking skills and creativity while solving futuristic problems with unique solutions.

Academic Quiz Bowls There are several versions, such as In the Know, Brain-storm, Academic Challenge, and High Q. These are generally high school teams that practice and compete after school. Some tournaments are televised.

Ohio Mock Trial is a comprehensive law-related educational activity for students in grades 9-12 that involves a mock court case argued and presented by students in a role-playing simulation.

Ohio Model United Nations is a three-day simulation experience that allows students in grades 6-12 to learn about the complete operations of the United Nations and its role as the world's largest international peacekeeping and humanitarian organization.

Martin Essex School for the Gifted is a one-week summer program for rising high school seniors provided by the Ohio Department of Education. Each high school may nominate one candidate for the program.

Ohio Summer Honors Institutes are one-to-three-week commuter and residential summer programs for students entering grades 10-11. They are held at colleges and universities throughout the state. Topics of study vary by college/university.

Science Olympiad is devoted to improving the quality of science education through academic interscholastic competitions for students in grades K-12. The competitions consist of 23 individual and team events, including the various science disciplines of biology, earth science, chemistry, physics, computers and technology.

Activities and organizations listed are not necessarily endorsed by the Ohio Association for Gifted Children. The above list is not an inclusive listing of programs appropriate for gifted children.

Suggestions for Parent-Teacher Conferences

Before the meeting:

- ✓ Set a goal for the meeting
- ✓ Plan what you'll say and what questions to ask
- ✓ Gather examples of student work from home (2-3 pieces for each subject area you wish to address)

At the Meeting

- ✓ Begin on a positive note
- ✓ Build a partnership
- ✓ Get to the point
- ✓ Listen carefully
- ✓ Seek consensus
- ✓ Get your questions answered
- ✓ Follow up within a month

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

✓ ***For you before the meeting:***

- Does my child's work at home surpass the classroom assignments?

For the teacher:

- Is it possible for my child to read a different book than the others? ...to write a report in a different way?
...to do an independent project in an area of interest?
- What do you do to help a child expand beyond what he knows already?

✓ ***For you before the meeting:***

- Is my child achieving his or her best in school?

For the teacher:

- How do you help students who aren't succeeding at the level of their ability?
- What other district resources are available in the school day? beyond the school day?
- My child learns best while using (art, her body, math, etc..) – could she do more hands-on work?

✓ ***For you before the meeting:***

- Does my child seem happy at school?

For the teacher:

- Does my child seem positive, productive, creative, and respectful at school?

✓ ***For you before the meeting:***

- Do I know what this teacher expects in the classroom?

For the teacher:

- What do you think my child needs help with?
- What can I do to help?

Adapted with permission from Joan Franklin
Smutny's **Stand Up for Your Gifted Child**,
Free Spirit Publishing, Minneapolis, MN,
2000.

*Ongoing communication with
schools and teachers is important for a child's success. Most parents find it helpful
to keep accurate records of conversations, meetings and decisions.*

Support Ohio's Gifted Children!

Join OAGC Today!



Benefits of an OAGC membership include:

- **Receipt of the OAGC Review**, which is published on a quarterly basis. The *Review* contains articles on parenting and educating gifted children, research in the field of gifted education, advocacy updates, and a kid's section with puzzles and information for gifted children. The *Review* also provides a forum to showcase the creative works of gifted students from across the state. Recent issues can be viewed at www.oagc.com.
- **Reduced registration fees** at the annual OAGC annual fall conference. Each year, OAGC hosts a two-day conference for educators and parents of gifted children featuring nationally recognized experts in the field of gifted education and over 60 sessions presented by knowledgeable educators and parents.
- **Right to hold an office** on the Governing Board and voting privileges. All members of the Governing Board are individuals committed to gifted education and volunteer their services to improve the education of gifted children in Ohio.
- OAGC works with a number of companies to offer **special discounts to members**. These discounts are detailed on www.oagc.com.
- OAGC sponsors annual teacher, student, parent, and affiliate **awards and quarterly scholarships** to gifted students desiring participation in camps or special programs. Members of OAGC are eligible and may nominate others.
- Members can also join Divisions specific to the needs of Teachers, Parents, Coordinators and Higher Education. Each Division offers at least one conference or academy each year.

Joining is easy:

Go to oagc.com.

Hover on the membership menu tab.

Click on Join Today!

Why Should I Join?

Gifted children need stimulation and challenge to continue to grow. Through Parent Division membership you will find a forum where your questions and concerns about your child can be addressed. Your support of this organization also helps to realize the dream of challenging every child so that no child is left behind.

Connect Locally and Statewide

We learn from one another. Our network of parent affiliate groups shares information and successes. We can help you find a group in your area or give you resources for starting one. Through regional events, our network helps neighboring districts share information and resources.

Get Involved

The OAGC Parent Division Council meets four times each year, generally at the OAGC Office, 501 Morrison Road, Gahanna, OH 43230.

Representatives from every OAGC affiliate group and other interested parents come together to work on issues of concern to you.

New parents are always welcome.

You Have Questions,

How can I meet other parents with kids like mine?

How can I help support and expand gifted and talented education programs in my child's school?

How do parent groups help families with gifted children?

What does the state law say about gifted identification and service?

How do other parents deal with social and emotional issues at home and at school?

How can I find enrichment activities for my child outside of school?

How can I learn about what is happening in gifted education in Ohio?

We have answers!

www.oagc.com