

# FULL SPEED AHEAD!

## Challenges in Treating Gifted Learners

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## The Gifted Learner

- Characteristics of Gifted Learners
- Federal and State Definitions
- Federal & State Laws affecting the Gifted Learner
- Outcomes for Gifted Learners
- Twice Exceptional Learners
- Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration
- Strategies for Successful Treatment with Gifted Learners

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## Facts about IQ and Giftedness

- IQ range of Typical & Gifted Learners
- Incidence of Gifted Learners
- IQ range of Intelligence Tests

(Webb et. al, 1994)

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## Characteristics

- Above average ability, high levels of task commitment, high levels of creativity
- Asynchronous development
- Heightened Intensity
- Rapid and accurate retrieval of information
- Attention control
- Memory efficiency
- Characteristics of Perception

(Renzulli, 1978; Heller et. al, 2005)

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## Characteristics in Preschool

- Early Awareness of Difference
- Use of unconventional objects in play
- Mature sense of humor
- Meta-cognitive control
- Precocious reading

(Cukierkorn et. al, 2007)

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## The Five Levels of Gifted

- Level One: 90<sup>th</sup>-98<sup>th</sup> percentile
- Level Two: 98<sup>th</sup>-99<sup>th</sup> percentile
- Level Three: 98<sup>th</sup>-99<sup>th</sup> percentile
- Level Four: 99<sup>th</sup> percentile
- Level Five: Above the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile

(Ruf, 2009)

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## Federal Definition

- "Children and youth with outstanding talent perform or show the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment. These children and youth exhibit high performance capacity in intellectual, creative, and/or artistic areas, possess an unusual leadership capacity, or excel in specific academic fields. They require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools. Outstanding talents are present in children and youth from all cultural groups, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor. "

(U. S. Department of Education, 1993)

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## Federal Laws Relating to Gifted Learners

- The Marland Report (1972)
- P.L. 94-142 (1975)
- P.L. 100-297 Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act (1988)
- P.L. 107-110 (2001)  
Elementary and Secondary Education Act (NCLB)
- TALENT Act (H.R. 1674)(S.857)
- Pending Reauthorization of ESEA
  - Defunding of Javits

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## Gifted Learners in Kansas

- "...performing or demonstrating the potential for performing at significantly higher levels of accomplishment in one or more academic fields due to intellectual ability, when compared to others of similar age, experience, and environment."
- 14, 376 children served across school districts

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## Gifted Learners in Missouri

- "...children who exhibit precocious development of mental capacity and learning potential as determined by competent professional evaluation to the extent the continued educational growth and stimulation could best be served by an academic environment beyond that offered through a standard grade level curriculum."
- 42,407 children served across school districts

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## Gifted Laws in Kansas and Missouri

### Kansas

- Programming is mandated
- Partially funded by the state

### Missouri

- Programming is not mandated
- Funding varies

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## Outcomes for the Gifted Learner

- High School Dropout Rate
- Significant Underachievement
- Mental Health Issues

(Tieso, 2007)(Streznewski, 1999)(Webb, et. al, 2005).

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## Challenges with Education

- Level of challenge in curriculum
- Pace of instruction
- Social-emotional needs
- Co-existence of learning disability or mental health

(Karnes & Bean, 2009)(Ruf, 2009)

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## The Twice Exceptional Learners

*Common dual diagnoses  
among the gifted  
population:*

- Dyslexia
- ADHD
- OCD
- ODD
- Bipolar
- Depression
- Learning Disabled

(Webb, et. al, 2005)

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## Co-existence or Misdiagnosis?

- Especially Controversial in Dual Diagnosis of Gifted and ADHD
  - Goerss, et. al, 2006
  - Mika, 2006
  - Tieso, 2007
  - Webb, et. al, 2005

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## The Twice Exceptional Learners

Gifted and Learning Disabled	Learning Disabled
Interests or Talents outside school domains	Frustration with school
Strong vocabulary	Inconsistency with academic performance
Big-picture thinking	Low self-esteem
Superior problem-solving	Slow pace of work
Insight and comfort with complexity	Poor short term memory
Creativity	Inflexibility
Curiosity	Poor organizational skills
Imagination	Impulsivity
Sense of Humor	Social skills deficits
Manipulation of World to compensate for weakness	distractibility
	Limited tolerance of frustration

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## Twice Exceptional Learners

- Estimated 360,000 nationwide
- Growing area of interest in Gifted Education research

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## The Twice Exceptional Learner

*What does the Speech & Language Literature have to offer us?*

- Oral Narrative Abilities in Adolescents
- Fluency Disorders

(Hayes, et. al, 1998)(Williams, 2008)

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## Dabrowski's Theory of Positive Disintegration (TPD)

- Kazimierz Dabrowski's Experiences
- Factors Influencing Development
- Personality Structure
- Developmental Dynamisms

(Dabrowski, 1964)

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## Dabrowski's Levels of Development

- Level I Primary Integration
- Level II Unilevel Disintegration
- Level III Spontaneous Multilevel Disintegration
- Level IV Organized Multilevel Disintegration
- Level V Secondary Integration

(Dabrowski, 1964)(Ackerman, 2009)

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## TPD's Overexcitabilities

- Psychomotor
- Sensual
- Intellectual
- Imaginational
- Emotional

(Dabrowski, 1964)(Ackerman, 2009)(Daniels, et. al, 2009)

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## Psychomotor OEs

- High energy level
- Less sleep
- Rapid compulsive speech
- Intensified physical activity and sensitivity vs. advanced physical activity
- May be outward expression of inner emotional tension
- Circle times may be excruciating

(Daniels, et. al., 2009)

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## Sensual OEs

- Heightened sensory awareness
- Picky Eaters
- Hands over ears to loud sounds
- Difficulty with haircuts, tags
- Needing comfort objects longer

(Daniels, et. al., 2009)

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## Intellectual OEs

- Insatiable curiosity
- Takes a flashlight and book to bed
- Endless questions
- Forever asking "why"
- "What if" scenarios
- Capacity for multi-tasking
- Intense focus on a topic of interest

(Daniels, et. al., 2009)

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## Imaginational OEs

- Imaginary friends
- Fantasy versus reality
- Divergent thinkers
- Daydreamers

(Daniels, et. al., 2009)

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## Emotional OEs

- Intense emotional responses
- Extremes in moods
- Considerate of other's feelings
- Perceive disconnects in what someone is saying vs. his/her body language
- Described as very loyal

(Daniels, et. al., 2009)

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## Overlap of Oversensitivities and Sensory Processing Disorder

- Dabrowski goes on to state that "Each form of overexcitability points to a higher than average sensitivity of its receptors. As a result a person endowed with different forms of overexcitability reacts with surprise, puzzlement to many things, he collides with things, persons, and events which in turn brings him astonishment and disquietude" (1964 p.7). Is Dabrowski describing something that Sensory Integration trained therapists would label a "sensory modulation disorder"? The two look the same to me as a clinician.

(Cronin, 2003)

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## Strategies for Successful Treatment

- Incorporate sensory diet/sensory processing strategies
- Analyze these based on the 5 types of OEs

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## Strategies for Psychomotor OEs

- Allow "Air time"
- Allow to stand up or move around for activities
- Plan for movement before and after periods of stillness
- Teach relaxation techniques
- Help the child identify signs of exhaustion

(Daniels, et. al., 2009)

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## Strategies for Sensual OEs

- Help them find comfortable clothes
- Limit offensive stimuli when possible
- Provide opportunities to dwell in delight
- Allow the child to control his own living and work space as much as possible
- Develop a menu of options to cope with irritating and annoying things

(Daniels, et. al., 2009)

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## Strategies for Intellectual OEs

- Help them find answers to their own questions
- Place in groups/activities with intellectual peers not necessarily age peers
- Honor their heightened need to seek truth, justice, understanding
- Accept intense sustained efforts

(Daniels, et. al., 2009)

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## Strategies for Imaginational OEs

- Help children distinguish between imaginary and real world
- Provide creative activities such as building, designing, writing, drawing, and acting
- Offer open-ended activities
- Use journaling

(Daniels, et. al., 2009)

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## Strategies for Emotional OEs

- Develop a feeling vocabulary
- Help them learn listening and responding
- "Temperature taking"
- Use journaling
- Teach relaxation techniques
- Choose activities with topics of social concerns

(Daniels, et. al., 2009)

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## Strategies for Successful Treatment

### *Classroom Service Delivery*

- Coordinating with Classroom Teacher, Gifted Teacher, & School Counselor
- Self evaluation of Clinician Behaviors
- Invitational Learning
- Finding Common Ground

(Karnes & Bean, 2009)

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## Strategies for Successful Treatment

### *Small Group Service Delivery*

- Ability Grouping
- Interest Inventories
- Incorporating Biblio-therapy Resources
- Critical Thinking Activities
- Consult with Gifted Teachers and School Counselors

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## Strategies for Successful Treatment

### *Individual Therapy Service Delivery*

- Teach at a faster rate
- Teach with less repetitions
- Use meta-cognitive strategies
- Praise the effort and not the result
- Do not praise excessively
- Remove the pressure with easily attainable goals

(Williams, 2008)

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## Resources That You Can Use!

- Publications
- Publishers
- Catalogs
- Websites

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## Resources That You Can Use!

- Additional Handouts of Resources Available
- Feel Free to Browse the Table of Resources

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## Thank You!

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