

## SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS

Parents faced with the challenge of raising a gifted child might find the following suggestions useful.

1. Since your gifted child can create ideas, surround him/her with the ideas of other great thinkers in order to enrich the child. Make plenty of books and a good encyclopedia available at home and/or through the library.
2. Take your child to see a variety of cultural events to encourage the development of the mind (like concerts, plays, intellectual debates and discussions and excellent movies).
3. Teach your child to develop his/her body through physical exercise and games. The body, if sick or poorly developed or undernourished, cannot sustain the mental activity of the child.
4. Show non-verbal caring for the child. Demonstrate love through touch. If you touch and hold your child, the clear message is you care for him/her.
5. Allow your child to fail. No one is perfect and what's more, we must fail to ever really achieve. Also, his/her superior ability to create meaning and patterns may be used to create standards which no one can achieve.
6. Realize that your adolescent gifted child may do poorly in school because of social demands to fit in and/or because of internal confusion due to bodily changes and changes in social expectations for the child.
7. Be patient with persistent questioning because this is natural for the gifted child.
8. Teach social skills such as small talk. Small talk often leads to big talk if another discovers you have similar interests and can and do respect others.
9. Be active in the P.T.A and other school groups to show your support of those who are working to meet the needs of all students.
10. Extend learning at home by emphasizing the higher level ideas which may be present in homework.
11. Avoid frequent reminders to your child of his/her potential. A person can only do what he/she can do and not necessarily what we expect him/her to do. No one can be at his/her best all of the time.

12. Teach your child to take a major responsibility for his/her learning. He/she has to be active in asserting his/her intellectual needs...but must also learn how to meet them on his/her own.
13. Teach him/her to respect other who are less able, we all have a need to affiliate which can be met...at least partially by others.
14. Teach the child that he/she is different, but not better than others.
15. Find suitable mentors (including yourself) to encourage your child's development.
16. Encourage task completion without discouraging task creativity. Science and art develop because people stick to the task, but also because they drop the task, if, and only if, they discover something of greater meaning and interest.
17. Teach your child "how-to" skills such as how to think, how to do experiments, and how to be patient. This will provide the skills to use to create meaning.
18. Teach your child to love people! This helps one maintain social support and avoid alienation.
19. Teach him/her to respect nature because without this we cannot exist.
20. Tell your child about Woody Allen's famous statement that "90% of life is just showing up." It is better to do something than to do nothing at all. Being perfect before we complete a task guarantees we will do nothing.
21. Teach problem-solving by isolating problems and brainstorming possible solutions. Teach children to set goals, outlining steps that will lead to their accomplishments.

Excerpts from  
Parenting the Gifted Child  
Phillip M. Powell

**“Children are educated by what the grown-up is and not by his talk”.**

**Carl Jung**