

Identification results of a national survey of 1039 parents of gifted children indicated that 70% of these children were identified as gifted accurately by parents by age three.

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The term “gifted and talented students” means children and youth who give evidence of high performance capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop such capabilities (Public Law 100-297, sec. 4103. Definitions).

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Parent Module
Identification of the Gifted
Notes and Activity Handout Page for Parents

Notes from Readings and PowerPoint:

Activity: How and When?

Take turns describing how and when you discovered your child's giftedness. How certain did you feel about the identification and your communication with the school on the topic?

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

My daughter learned the alphabet while listening to a cassette before she was two. We bought her a puzzle with letters, and she had them memorized by the time she was two and a half. Now she is four and reading. She is mature for her age in many ways; I can't go anywhere without someone saying, "I can't believe she's only four."

The problem is that her birthday is June 5, and the kindergarten cut-off date is June 1. The schools are very rigid about this. Our only option seems to be sending her to a private Catholic preschool where they teach the alphabet and how to count to ten (she can already count infinitely). They promise to keep her busy and out of trouble and will even let her work ahead if she needs to.

You say that children need to be challenged. Are we wasting this gift of hers? Should we push the issue more? Will she have problems in third or fourth grade if she does move into kindergarten?

Your daughter seems to be unusually gifted. If your school district is entirely rigid about early entrance to kindergarten, and some are, you might as well save your energy. If they have any flexibility at all, try to find a professional advocate who will conduct an evaluation of your

daughter and obtain some quantitative data, like IQ and achievement test scores, to back up your request. You won't have to worry about your daughter falling behind by third grade unless the school provides no challenge for her. Some children become so bored that they simply stop putting forth any effort.

If your school district won't provide early entrance, find out if there is any small private school in the area that will consider accepting your daughter into their kindergarten on a trial basis. Once she has completed kindergarten, your public school will be obliged to accept her into first grade. Incidentally, if your daughter is truly as capable as you describe, you may have to look for other challenges during her school years. I would also suggest that you get in touch with your state or local gifted children's association for support and information. The National Association for Gifted Children can also be helpful to you; they can be found at www.nagc.org.

I am wondering if I have a gifted child. My son is seven and in the first grade. At age two, he knew all of his colors and shapes, and could speak very well. Since the beginning of this past summer, he has been able to read almost anything at third- and fourth-grade levels. He does math on second- and third-grade levels. If he is gifted, how can I enhance his skills even more and keep him interested? He is very inquisitive and eager to learn everything.

Your description of your son sounds as if he is intellectually gifted. Such children often provide special challenges to their parents. You certainly should encourage your son's love of learning. Try to broaden his inquisitiveness and interest in his surroundings so he can enjoy learning about the community, nature, and other people. Encourage his ques-

tioning and enjoy the world of books, music, and movement with him.

Social and emotional learning are also important for your son. While you certainly can be pleased and excited about his learning, it's important that he not learn to define himself only by his brain. Being smart is an advantage, but being a good person extends his ability to make a contribution.

I have an eight-year-old son who has an IQ of 137. We have had him tested and I have asked the school for help, but they refuse. It took them six months to recognize (by the advice of their counselor) that he was indeed gifted.

The psychologist who tested my son said to have him skip third grade. The school tells me my son has behavioral problems and will not allow him to skip. I told them that if they gave my son some challenging work, he would not have the time to misbehave. To me, he does seem hyper, but only when he has nothing to challenge his mind. Does this sound like a normal problem with gifted children? Do gifted children act up if they are not getting enough mental stimulation? If he has something challenging to do that he likes, he will work on it until he masters it. If it is something he already knows, he gets bored. He cries not to go to school because he says he is bored there, and he's tired of hearing the teacher explain things "for an hour." The psychologist also said to get him into a Mensa Group, but I can't find one in the area. Can you tell me who to contact about this?

Although it is true that gifted boys who are unchallenged in school sometimes act up, your son also may be

misbehaving for reasons other than boredom. He probably knows about your disagreements with the teacher and assumes that she is wrong; thus, he has the right to be disruptive. You do need to make it clear to your son that there is absolutely no excuse for his behavior, and he may need to learn that the world doesn't revolve entirely around him. Furthermore, a little boredom is simply part of life.

The psychologist who tested your son can help you determine if he is truly unchallenged, and may be able to meet with the teacher to make some suggested changes in your son's curriculum so he can learn successfully in school. If there is a gifted coordinator in the school, you could also talk to that person or the principal. A grade skip may be appropriate, and it is possible that his behavior might improve after he is skipped.

To find out about Mensa, or a parent organization for gifted children, you can contact your state department of education or the National Association for Gifted Children at (202) 785-4268.

We have applied to a good private school for our son but are confused about what to do. With four children, we can't afford to send all four to private school, and we would rather have all our children at the same school. At first, our seven-year-old (oldest) first-grader thrived in public school. Overall, he is a happy child who is easygoing, follows instructions, works well independently, and has good friends. But, in school he is not really challenged and says he is bored. He is in a gifted pull-out program two times a week for about an hour each. Our son reads fourth- to sixth-grade material. His class is just beginning to add double digits, which our son could do in kindergarten. He can multiply, do some division, and some fractions.

Math used to be his favorite subject, but he hates it now because "it's boring." I am concerned about his attitude. He doesn't want to be different from the other kids. He has expressed a willingness to stay in the present school but understands why we are looking at a private school. I need/want so badly to know what to do.

Although there are many fine independent schools, there are also many excellent public school systems. Since you cannot afford to send all your children to private school, and you would rather have them all in the same school, why not persevere a bit longer to help the school provide for your son? The psychologist who evaluated your son might suggest grade skipping or some other way for grouping him in special programs within his class. Perhaps you can have your son pretested to determine whether he should have his homework replaced by enrichment. There are many options available, and it seems risky to put your family under financial pressure in order for your son to attend an independent school that may or may not provide for his gifted needs. There may be other factors encouraging your son's recent attitude change that also should be investigated. It seems he is beginning a pattern that could lead to underachievement, so you should take his lack of effort seriously.

How do we separate what may be learning disabilities from emotional responses to what goes on in our son's classrooms and school? We have been very frustrated in working with the teachers and counselors, some of whom are well-intentioned but ineffective, and some of whom, sadly, we have discovered, are at least borderline abusive. Whether or not the school can ever correct these teachers' behaviors, we need to help our son gain confidence and tap his talents. He is an outstand-

ing visual artist, very musical, and an excellent creative writer. His weaknesses are in math and social studies, but it is hard to determine how much of that is due to lack of interest. He is known for a sense of humor beyond his years. He is very sensitive, which has made him an easy mark for bullies. We have always encouraged him in his artwork and music.

From the description of your son, it does seem that he is vulnerable to peer and educational issues. First and foremost, I must suggest you get professional help to guide you through the system. Your son's combination of outstanding talent, learning disabilities, and sensitivity all need to be addressed.

Your son's talents can be addressed through private lessons or gifted programming that may be available in your schools. The psychologist can help identify more specifically your son's area of disabilities and advocate for you within the school to help provide an appropriate auxiliary program.

As to your son's sensitivity, the psychologist may also help him to develop social skills that are less likely to make him a victim. He also may need help in safely reporting bullies to the proper authorities.

Most of all, your son needs to continue to have open communication with both of you. You need to listen carefully so you can advocate for him, but you'll also need to be careful that he isn't blaming teachers and other kids in areas where he can assume greater responsibility for himself. Your son's situation is delicate and complicated and requires more assistance than can be given in this short space.

We are parents of two children: one strong-willed, argumentative eight-year-old girl and one easy-going three-and-a-half-year-old boy. Our daughter is prone to extreme temper tantrums and the inability to control

her frustration to resolve conflicts. She is gifted and was reading before she entered kindergarten. She has been at the top of her class since kindergarten, but unless she shows more willingness to work on her weaker subjects (such as writing, penmanship, problem solving, getting along with others), her classmates may eventually catch up with her and that would be a rude awakening.

Though children want to befriend her, she has little tolerance for those who she feels are less intellectually capable than herself. As her first and second grade teachers observed, the sarcastic nature of her comments is almost adultlike and far beyond her years.

Thinking that our daughter's problem was that she needed a greater challenge in school, we talked to the principal, and they allowed her to go part-time to a third grade class while still a second grader. Being with older (and smarter) children seemed to give her some humility.

We are concerned that she may grow up to be smart, talented, and sensitive to her own needs, but can she balance that with love and a conscience with goodwill toward others, and will she be a decent human being? We understand from experts who work with gifted children that much of what's described above is typical of giftedness.

The problems your daughter exhibits are not necessarily related to her giftedness alone, although her unusual ability can trap her into being defensive and competitive. There are many gifted children who do well with other children.

Was your daughter always this difficult, or did she change dramatically after her brother was born? If there was a dramatic change, her behavior might be due to "dethrone-

ment," which is described in *How to Parent So Children Will Learn* (Rimm, 1996). Dethronement takes place when a child who received a great deal of attention by adults feels rejected because another child is now receiving much attention. Since your daughter is very verbal, her large vocabulary and adult language may indeed have attracted considerable attention when she was younger. She may indeed be calling out to you, "Notice me; notice me; tell me how smart I am." Now she finds only negative ways to get attention.

Of course, a diagnosis can't be made without knowing your daughter, but she should receive counseling. She should have help with social skills, and you should get help with parenting her. It would be ideal to find a counselor who has special background with gifted children. Although children are born with varying temperaments, there is much that parents can do to prevent small problems from becoming larger ones.

Identification: Who is Gifted in Ohio by Law and Rule?

The information summarized in this document is based upon Ohio Revised Code 3324.01-07 (law) and Ohio Administrative Code 3301-51-15 (rule).

Children are identified as gifted in Ohio in four major categories: superior cognitive ability; specific academic ability; creative thinking ability; and visual or performing arts ability. There are four fields included in specific academic ability: mathematics; science; reading, writing or a combination of these skills; and/or social studies. The following table summarizes the eligibility criteria for each area. All tests and checklists used must be on an approved list prepared by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE). With the exception of the visual or performing arts ability area, the child must have achieved the required score within the preceding 24 months.

Superior Cognitive Ability	Specific Academic Ability in a Field	Creative Thinking Ability	Visual or Performing Arts Ability
Score two standard deviations above the mean minus the standard error of measurement on an intelligence test, perform at or above the 95th percentile on a basic or composite battery of a nationally-normed achievement test, or attain an approved score on an above grade-level standardized, nationally-normed test.	Perform at or above the 95th percentile at the national level on a standardized achievement test of specific academic ability in that field. A child may be identified as gifted in more than one specific academic ability field.	Score one standard deviation above the mean minus the standard error of measurement on an intelligence test and attain a sufficient score, as established by the Department, on a test of creative ability or a checklist of creative behavior.	Demonstrate to a trained individual through a display of work, an audition, or other performance or exhibition, superior ability in a visual or performing arts area and attain a sufficient score, as established by the Department, on a checklist of behaviors related to a specific arts area.

In addition to defining who is considered gifted in Ohio, the rule and/or law provides that:

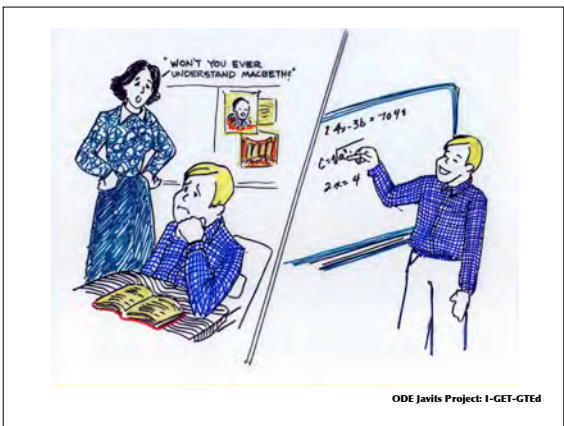
- Districts must have an identification plan and local board policy approved by ODE
- Districts must have regular opportunities for assessment for giftedness based on referrals from teachers, parents or other children
- Children who are culturally and linguistically diverse, from low socio-economic status, with disabilities and/or who are limited English proficient must be included in the identification process
- Parents must be notified of assessment results
- Parents have an opportunity to appeal
- Districts must accept assessments given outside the district by trained personnel
- Districts must distribute their gifted identification policy to parents

This document is only a global summary of the law and rule. For a complete copy, with all of the details, visit the gifted section of the ODE Web site:

http://www.ode.state.oh.us/exceptional_children/Gifted_Children/default.asp



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In Ohio

- Districts must have an identification plan and local board policy approved by Ohio Department of Education (ODE);
- Districts must have regular (twice yearly) opportunities for assessment for giftedness based on referrals from teachers, parents and any others.
- Children who are culturally and linguistically diverse, from low socio-economic status, with disabilities and/or who are limited English proficient must be included in the identification process.

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Ohio (cont.)

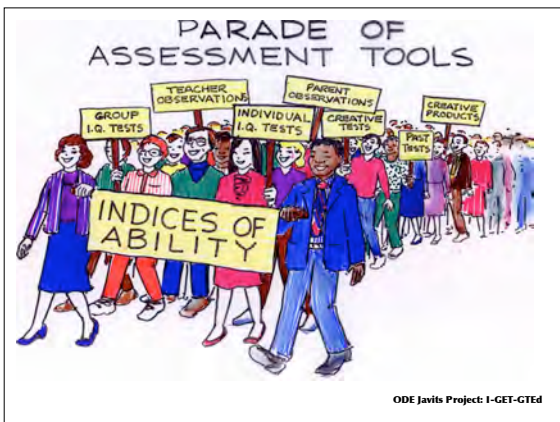
- Parents must be notified of assessment results.
- Districts must accept assessments given outside the district by trained personnel;
- Districts must distribute their gifted identification policy to parents.
- Parents have an opportunity to appeal;

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Who is Gifted in Ohio?

- Superior Cognitive Ability;
- Specific Academic Ability
(Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies)
- Creative Thinking Ability;
- Visual or Performing Arts Ability.

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Superior Cognitive Ability (ODE)

- Score two standard deviations above the mean minus the standard error of measurement on an intelligence test or...;
- Perform at or above the 95th percentile on a basic or composite battery of a nationally – normed achievement test or...;
- Attain an approved score on an above grade-level standardized, nationally-normed test.

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Specific Academic Ability (ODE)

- Perform at or above the 95th percentile at the national level on a standardized achievement test of specific academic ability in that field
- A child may be identified as gifted in more than one specific academic ability field.

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Creative Thinking Ability (ODE)

- Score one standard deviation above the mean minus the standard error of measurement on an intelligence test;
- Attain a sufficient score, as established by the Department, on a test of creative ability or a checklist of creative behavior.

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Visual Performing Arts Ability (ODE)

- Demonstrate to a trained individual through a display of work, an audition, or other performance or exhibition, superior ability in a visual or performing arts area and...;
- Attain a sufficient score, as established by the Department, on a checklist of behaviors related to a specific arts area.

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Reasons For Having Preschoolers Evaluated*

1. Children who are intellectually gifted may benefit from early entrance to kindergarten, special curriculum planning within kindergarten, or a uniquely enriched preschool environment, and early testing may confirm the need for such special programming.

*Keys to Parenting the Gifted Child (2nd Ed.) by Sylvia Rimm (Hauppauge, NY: Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 2001).

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Reasons For Having Preschoolers Evaluated

2. Test scores give quantitative data, which parents may or may not choose to share with the school when communicating about their child's special needs. The quantitative data is normative and permits parents to compare their child's intellectual development to that of a sample of average children of similar age. Test scores often communicate more efficiently and convincingly to educators than parent observations.

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**Reasons For Having
Preschoolers Evaluated**

- 3. Weak areas that may be masked by children's intellectual giftedness may be discovered by testing. Specifically, small muscle coordination and spatial skills are less easily identified by observation. Preschool testing permits parents to assist children in learning and practicing these skills that could result in future problems.

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**Reasons For Having
Preschoolers Evaluated**

- 4. Test scores give parents either confidence in their personal observations or the opportunity to correct their expectations appropriately. They can prevent parents from placing too much pressure on children. Hopefully, they will not cause parents to lose confidence in their children if their scores are not as high as expected.

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**Reasons For Having
Preschoolers Evaluated**

- 5. Early test scores provide baseline information for monitoring children's intellectual growth and progress.

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Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence
Third Edition
(WPPSI – III)

Subtests for ages 2 years 6 months to 3 years 11 months

Receptive Vocabulary Information (Picture Naming)	}	VERBAL TESTS
Block Design Object Assembly	}	PERFORMANCE TESTS

*Parentheses indicate optional tests

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Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence
Third Edition
(WPPSI – III)

Subtests for ages 4 years 0 months to 7 years 3 months

Information Vocabulary Word Reasoning (Comprehension) (Similarities)	}	VERBAL TESTS
Block Design Matrix Reasoning (Picture Concepts) (Object Assembly)	}	PERFORMANCE TESTS
Symbol Search Coding	}	PROCESSING SPEED

*Parentheses indicate optional tests

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Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children
Fourth Edition
(WISC-IV)

Similarities Vocabulary Comprehension	}	VERBAL COMPREHENSION
Block Design Matrix Reasoning Picture Completion	}	PERCEPTUAL REASONING
Digit Span Arithmetic	}	WORKING MEMORY
Coding Symbol Search	}	PROCESSING SPEED

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