Child Prodigies

Adolescents identified as gifted in their early teens were followed for 10 years in a longitudinal study. This is a landmark study. Never before has such a large a sample from this rare ability group been researched. The study found that this population continued to achieve throughout adolescence and into early adulthood. Seventy-Five percent of the males and eighty-one percent of the females were pursuing advanced degrees, 56% of the respondents were pursuing doctoral degrees. These students pursued doctoral degrees at rates in excess of 50 times expectations. Forty-two percent of the subjects attended universities ranked in the top ten. This intellectually elite population has great promise for academic and practical achievements that may add great value to society.

Some achievements from the population cited in this study:
- Finished bachelor’s degree and master’s degree in 4 years
- Graduated from M.I.T. at age 19 with a perfect 5.0 and graduated from Harvard Medical School at 23.
- Solo violin debut at age 13 (Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra)

Quick and Simple Recipes

How to make a prodigy

Recipe

Ingredients:
- IQ score of 180+
- Rapid speed in processing information
- Rapid and thorough comprehension of the whole idea
- High ability to think abstractly at an early age
- A spoonful of Intellectual curiosity
- 4 cups of extensive vocabulary
- Ability to perceive many sides of an issue
- A dash of argumentativeness
- High levels of energy
- A conviction of correctness
- Advanced visual and motor skills
- Early insight into social and emotional issues

You preheat your oven to 450°. Mix all of the above in a big, sweet bowl. Spray a glass casserole dish with cooking spray and pour. Let bake for 9 months and you have yourself a profoundly gifted child!

Dear Abbey

I really want to enjoy school, but am having trouble finding a balance. Even though I am taking classes in high school right now, it was only last year that I was in 6th grade. Last year, my day started off in a class where I already know what the teacher is talking about and I spent most of my time waiting on my classmates to complete menial assignments. I used this time to take a brief nap before my next boring class. In the following class period, because the assignments can feasibly be completed in under ten minutes, I tried to socialize with my friend for the remainder of the class, which inevitably lead to one of us getting called on by the teacher. Often my teacher sent e-mails home about how I distracted...
Is It a Gift to be Gifted?

There is much controversy about whether or not giftedness puts individuals at risk for psychological well-being. There is no concrete answer to this question. The research suggests that psychological well-being of gifted children is related to the type of giftedness, the educational services he/she receives, life circumstances, self perception and temperament (Niehart, 1999).

Educational placement seems to influence the emotional well-being of gifted individuals. Those individuals placed in full time segregated classrooms seem to struggle more than those gifted children placed in part time options. This would seem to suggest that gifted children flourish best when exposed to a variety of types of children.

There is no direct evidence that gifted children experience depression or suicidal ideation any more than their non-gifted counterparts. Levels of anxiety for gifted and non-gifted children have found to be similar.

Social skills in the gifted seem to vary with area of giftedness. Verbally gifted children seem to struggle more with social skills than the mathematically gifted child. Gifted children who report feeling different from other children also report social difficulties (Niehart, 1999).

We need to stop the myth that highly gifted children are vulnerable to social and emotional problems. There is no research to support such a claim, if highly gifted students are taught in an appropriate environment where they can achieve academically, we can expect them to be at least as well adjusted as their non-gifted counterpart (Niehart, 1999).

Professions of a Parent of Profoundly Gifted Learner

Every parent wants what is in the best interest of his or her child, but often making the best decision can be difficult. The parent of the profoundly gifted is faced with many difficult decisions beginning with the recognition of the child’s gift. A profoundly gifted learner needs to have her intellectual needs nurtured in a developmentally appropriate way. The learner needs to be exposed to a variety of experiences to explore possibilities to use of the gift as well as be taught skills that learners at each age should be taught.

As far as ensuring that the child is intellectually challenged, the parents have a number of options from which they may choose. One option is to homeschool to child to ensure the curriculum is rigorous and engaging for each subject. However, this would mean the parents would have to have access to the knowledge and materials necessary to create challenging activities, as well as the time to assemble learning units. Parents may alternatively choose to partially home school, where the learner completes a rigorous course at home, then goes to school for the remainder of the day to develop skills that all learners at that age are honing as well as to socialize.

If it is not reasonable for parents to homeschool due to a lack of knowledge, resources or time, the profoundly gifted learner can remain in public school and be accelerated to higher grade levels for specific subject areas, or skip a grade entirely. The downfall here, is that the child may not be physically or emotionally mature enough to keep up with his or her new found peers at the high level. Close monitoring of the child’s esteem and well-being should be done and a transitional plan should be in place.

Oh Snap!

The debate of nature verses nurture has been around since the chicken and the egg, but I am here to squash that fight when it comes to profoundly gifted children. The profoundly gifted child is described to have an IQ anywhere from the 160 to 180 plus range: this is said to be about one in 1,000,000. Now I don’t know about you, but I have never encountered a profoundly gifted person in my entire lifetime. So when people say they have nurtured their baby to be a profoundly gifted child, things just don’t add up. If the parents themselves are not profoundly gifted, then how can they foster an environment that ensures a prodigy child? If nurturing a child from an early age with books and vocabulary could make him/her profoundly gifted, then why aren’t more children producing IQ scores of 180+? Is it because parents are just too lazy these days? I can tell you from experience, being a teacher, that last statement is just NOT true. Nature is the only real explanation for children who are profoundly gifted. Now, I am not saying nurture is not to be credited. A combination of both nature and nurture; however DNA and genetics are the real players here. Carol Bainbridge is has made an analogy with brains to a rubber band. A small rubber band can stretch to be as big as a larger rubber band. But when you stretch the larger band, the smaller band will snap before it can match that size. I thought this was an incredible way to end this debate. While nurturing will expand the brain, it can only stretch it so far!
Annotated Bibliography

Bainbridge, Carol. (2012). Creating Gifted Children-Nurture or Nature?. About.com. Retrieved 10/01/2012 from http://giftedkids.about.com/od/gifted101/qt/nature_nurture.htm. This article brings up the debate of nature verse nurture when it comes to profoundly gifted children. It does not give a precise answer. The article tells how practice makes perfect to make smarter students; however and it gives an analogy of a rubber band only stretching so far. The analogy meaning a child’s brain can only learn so much, there is a stopping point to its potential.

This book gives a definition on the profoundly gifted population and provides common characteristics of the profoundly gifted. This book also tells about the emotion state of gifted children and how they may or may not be effected by educational experiences.

This website gave another definition of profoundly gifted, as well as provided more common characteristics of the profoundly gifted population.

This site describes the program this institute has put into place to serve the profoundly gifted. One can view entrance requirements, recent activities of the institute, as well as what one can expect from being served in this program.

This article described the negative outcomes of leaving the profoundly gifted learner in the traditional classroom setting. The main idea described here is “learned underachievement.” The articles also explains the term asynchrony which describes the discrepancy between the child’s intellectual learning and the other variables that play a role with the child’s well-being and adaptability.

Gross gives yet another definition and more characteristics of the profoundly gifted child.

This article explores the process of identity development in the gifted and the way that gifted individuals may malk their giftedness to be more socially acceptable.

Professions of a Profoundly Gifted Learner (cont.)
Indeed to dilemmas all parents face are challenging, but the parent of the profoundly gifted learner must give great consideration to the educational decisions and long-term impact these decisions have on the child.

See page 4 for the rest of our annotated bibliography.
This article explores the nature and extent of depressive disorders in highly gifted adolescents based upon current literature as well as case studies and focus groups.

This article combines a literature review about the highly gifted and reports the results of a 10 year longitudinal study following highly gifted subjects from early adolescence until early adulthood. This is a landmark study in which a large sample of profoundly gifted subjects are followed for a decade.

This article review the research on the psychological well-being of highly gifted individuals.

This site lists colleges by region which have programs to serve the profoundly gifted learner. This could be used to identify local programs or compare the rigor, requirements, and an overview of each program.

Profoundly and Exceptionally Gifted Youth(2010) Retrieved from PEGY.org/uk
This site described the manner by which students can be accelerated in the public school system and how the teachers would need to address the learners' needs. Numerous scenarios are explained in terms of the problems educators and learners can potentially face and how to respond to these issues.

This article described the process of partial homeschooling, the necessary planning involved, potential challenges, and the benefits of doing so for the profoundly gifted learner.

This article gives a definition of what profoundly gifted is, as well as list common characteristics found in profoundly gifted children. Tolan goes on to talk about the debate on nature verses nurture. She gives examples of both sides and also speaks about nurturing verses pushing.

This article describes a study done on parents and extraordinarily gifted students. It details the family values and education experience of the parents of the gifted students.