

PRAEDITUS

Latin praeditus adj. 1 cl. meaning gifted

A publication of Allen ISD Gifted and Talented Services



Psychomotor Overexcitability

Psychomotor overexcitability is a heightened excitability of the neuromuscular system characterized by high levels of energy. These kids may be misdiagnosed as ADHD but they are capable of focusing given sufficient mental stimulation. When feeling emotionally tense, individuals strong in Psychomotor OE may talk compulsively, act impulsively, misbehave and act out, display nervous habits, show intense drive, compulsively organize, or become quite competitive. They get great pleasure from their boundless physical and verbal enthusiasm and activity, but others may find them overwhelming.

Psychomotor Strategies

- Build activity and movement into their lives. Allow time for physical or verbal activity, before, during, and after school or daily activities.
- Be sure the physical or verbal activities are acceptable and not distracting to those around them.
- Provide time for spontaneity and open-ended, free-wheeling activities.



The Reluctant Writer

Most gifted children have a high level of reading comprehension and the ability to think abstractly. So why is writing so tough for many of them? These kids are often labeled “reluctant writers”. It’s a mistake to think that reluctant writers are poor writers; many are highly capable but they just don’t want to write. There are many reasons gifted children may become reluctant writers.

- They may feel that writing is a redundant step in the learning process. They know the information, they can verbalize it, so why bother writing about it, when you could move on and learn more.
- Physically, writing is a slow process that doesn’t keep up with how quickly your mind is moving.
- If you have perfectionist tendencies, the mechanics of writing may keep you from expressing ideas.
- When you know so much information about a topic, it may be challenging to organize it into a piece of writing.

Writing equals thinking... it’s not just a straight transcription of already worked out ideas. Gifted children need to understand that when you write you are working out solutions, imagining other perspectives, and sorting through ideas to communicate them effectively. It includes making connections, synthesizing, abstracting, and analysis... it is a valuable part of deeper learning and retention. What gifted children need is to quickly move from summary of information to the higher levels of thinking.

During the writing process, gifted children need teachers and parents willing to discuss their ideas with them and prompt them to go deeper with their subjects or to consider alternative perspectives. And when they do turn in a final product, they should get detailed written comments that include what they did well and what they should work on in their next writing assignment. Most importantly, gifted children need to see their written work as valued and as something they can be proud of.

Flexibility and Optimism in Growth Mindset

People with growth mindsets tend to be more optimistic and more flexible but it's a chicken and the egg situation. If you want to help your child develop a growth mindset, you have to raise them in a home filled with optimism and flexibility!

Fostering Optimism

To foster optimism, use the term “yet” when a child says they can't do something. For example, “Mom, I can't answer this problem.” may be answered, “I understand that you can't do it, *yet* but I feel certain that you'll be able to solve it soon. Where are you stuck?”

Look at negatives from a positive perspective. This can be challenging and fun. Did your child lose their homework? “I guess it will be pretty easy to get it done again since you already know the answers.”

Growing Flexibility

When plans change, talk though how you are going to adapt so kids see you working through the process. “Oh gosh, Grandma was going to come over to bake cookies with you today but she is going to be really late, so maybe we can bake the cookies together now and when Grandma gets here, you can cook dinner together.”

Praise kids for their own flexibility. “I know that you wanted to play soccer today but then the game got cancelled because of rain. I like how you pulled out some games and played with your sister.”

Flexibility and optimism not only help with growth mindset but they also make life so much easier.



Raising Principled Children

It's a fact: Children want to do good and they want to be good. To raise a principled child, parents need to build on that fact. Try these tips:

Be a role model

When your children see you in action are they seeing a role model of ethical behavior? Kids can spot a phony a mile away. How you behave speaks louder than any lecture or life lesson.

When no one is looking

“Character is what you do even when no one is looking.” Remind them that no one might know about an unethical choice such as lying or stealing, but in their own heart they know everything.

Praise moral conduct

Kids are faced with so many choices. When they choose what's right, we need to praise their good character to remind them that their good behavior is valued. We also need to praise kids when they correct their mistakes.

Connect behavior to character

If we connect behavior to character, we show children how their actions speak for the intentions in their hearts. When they make mistakes, it's OK for kids to feel bad! In fact, they ought to sometimes be ashamed of their choices and show remorse. This is how their consciences help them to see right and wrong in all things.

Practice through hypotheticals

When talking with kids, pose ethical problems such as, “Suppose you found a wallet on the ground...” Ask what a child could do, but offer variations on the problem as well. (“Now suppose your dog needed an expensive operation...”). Kids love to consider their ethical options!

According to gifted expert, Marybeth Hicks, “A principled child is one who understands how his actions can hurt or help others. Raising a child who stands on principle isn't easy, since the culture offers so many attractive, unethical choices. But a kid who grows in moral intelligence sees himself as an agent for goodness in his own world, and later, in a “real world” that desperately needs more principled geeks.”

Adapted from a seminar by Marybeth Hicks

SHARE WITH OTHERS: Registration for phase I testing for students currently in grades 1-11, opens January 26, 2021 and closes February 5, 2021. Access the registration form for more information, including testing dates, at <https://forms.gle/GRSfCChSGmccuBRZA>.

We love suggestions for articles! Is there a question you have about gifted kids? Please send requests for articles to [Præditus Feedback](#)