

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF GIFTED STUDENTS

Gifted children generally go through the same developmental stages as other children often at a much earlier age. Because of their accelerated and more complex intellectual development, they may experience unique, often extreme, social and emotional needs. These may include:

ASYNCHRONY

Not synchronized or uneven development such as having their cognitive abilities surpass their motor or emotional development



PERFECTIONISM

Sometimes taking the form of unrealistically high expectations of themselves, resulting in limited risk-taking for fear of failure, or feeling that their self-worth is dependent on their high, often unattainable achievement, and a tendency to be highly self-critical



OVEREXCITABILITIES

Gifted students exhibit intense emotional and physical sensitivities, such as: heightened empathy, deep concern for global issues, such as war and hunger, which may in turn lead to frustration and/or depression due to the students' perceived inability to effect change.



PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Navigating peer relationships can be difficult for gifted children—sometimes resulting in social isolation or being seen as odd or weird, “know-it-all” or bossy by their same-age classmates

IMPOSTER SYNDROME

An awareness of their differences and believing that, “I’m not as smart as everyone seems to think. If I’m not careful, people will find out that I’m not really gifted.”



MULTIPOTENTIALITY

Often gifted children have several advanced abilities and have difficulty deciding on which idea or ability they wish to pursue. They may immerse themselves in diverse activities to an almost frantic degree; often placing stress on themselves and on their families.

UNDERACHIEVEMENT

Gifted students can experience high frustration with unchallenging curriculum—preventing academic or intellectual growth which results in underachievement. In some cases, underachievement among profoundly gifted students does not reveal itself until students are finally in an environment in which they are being appropriately challenged.



Resources

Delisle, J., & Galbraith, J. (2002). When gifted kids don't have all the answers: How to meet their social and emotional needs. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit.

Webb, J., Gore, J., & DeVries. (2006). Guiding the Gifted Child, Revised and Updated. Scottsdale, AZ: Great Potential Press.