Social/Emotional Issues

- ▶ Perfectionism
- ▶ Underachievement
- ▶ Asynchronous development
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Heightened sensitivity, intensity, and overexcitability
- ▶ Introversion/extroversion
- ▶ Creative vs intellectual differences and needs
- ▶ Multipotentiality
- ▶ Entelechy

Taken From: _The Social and Emotional Development of Gifted Children_ by Neihart, Reis, Robinson, & Moon

Why should we be concerned with social emotional development in our children?

- Social-emotional development includes the child's experience, expression, and management of emotions and the ability to establish positive and rewarding relationships with others (Cohen et al 2005). It encompasses both intra- and interpersonal processes.The core features of emotional development include the ability to identify and understand one's own feelings, to accurately read and comprehend emotional states in others, to manage strong emotions and their expression in a *constructive* manner, to *regulate* one's own behavior, to develop *empathy* for others, and to establish and maintain relationships. (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child 2004, 2)
  - CA Dept of Education. http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/itf09socemodev.asp
- Most of us want to raise children with balance and the ability to be well-adjusted in our 21st century society.
- Social and emotional development is associated with academic achievement: When children are socially and emotionally well, they achieve better in school.
  - Joseph E. Zins, Michelle R. Bloodworth, Roger P. Weissberg & Herbert J. Walberg (2007)

A bit of history about this

- Lev Vygotsky and Erik Erikson, child developmental theorists from the last 1800's and early 1900's, were some of the first to identify the importance of social emotional development in children.
  - Social, emotional development begins with the first of Erikson's Psychosocial Stages, Trust vs. Mistrust. An infant develops trust when he experiences his needs being met in a consistent, nurturing relationship with a primary caregiver. In a secure relationship, an infant can form attachments. (Erikson,
  - Vygotsky believed in the sociocultural theory – that children learn actively and through hands-on experiences, and that parents and caregivers and peers have a role in a child's development. (Vygotsky,
- They changed the way schools look at children and work to meet needs in children; now we build this education into schools and classrooms.
- We see it in schools and classrooms through:
  - character education programs
  - discipline/class management plans and protocols
  - INTEGRATION OF PLAY AND SOCIALIZATION IN LESSONS
  - teacher training
  - teacher approaches to classroom teaching and learning

What current research is telling us...

- The stresses and demands on children in the 21st century are at an all-time high. (Gilder, 2012)
- The stresses and demands on schools are at an all-time high. (Howe & Strauss, 2007)
- The stresses and demands on the average American family are at an all-time high. (Colquitt & Judge, 2004)
- AND WE KNOW THAT STRESS AFFECTS OUR WELL-BEING, AND OUR SOCIAL EMOTIONAL HEALTH. (Berkman, Glymour, Kawachi, 2014)
- ...AND THIS IS ESPECIALLY CRITICAL FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE DEVELOPING personalities, dispositions, habits, and lifelong habits that determine where and how they will be, socially, emotionally, cognitively, and spiritually in their futures.
- THUS, IN LIGHT OF WHAT WE KNOW, IN OUR ROLE AS CARE-GIVERS, WE NEED TO TUNE IN AND TEND TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL EMOTIONAL NEEDS. (Dowling, 2009)

What are some ways we see social emotional problems of our children at times?

- anxiety
- depression
- hyperactivity
- worry and fear
- attention/focus issues
- perfectionism and control
- negativity
- aggression
- Lack of confidence/inflated confidence
- self-absorption

- ▶ play with siblings
- ▶ interactions with parents
- ▶ sleep patterns
- ▶ habits
- ▶ eating behavior
- ▶ play with other children
- ▶ school work
- ▶ attitude
- ▶ outside of home activities

Social/emotional needs

- ▶ Strengths and potential problems can be flip sides of the same coin.
- ▶ Gifted students' physical, emotional, social and intellectual growth is often uneven.
- ▶ Gifted students may doubt that they are actually gifted.
- ▶ Gifted students may face social challenges not just from peers, but parents and teachers as well.
- ▶ As they get older, gifted students may take fewer risks.
- ▶ Gifted students can have surprisingly heightened emotionally sensitivity.
- ▶ Gifted students are often shy, know they're shy, and know that shyness is often looked down upon.
- ▶ Gifted students' abstract intuition may conflict with teachers' desire for concrete thinking.
- ▶ Gifted students needs cannot be met by one style of learning.
- ▶ Gifted adults wish they were better informed about giftedness as children.

Taken From: www.birdseed.com
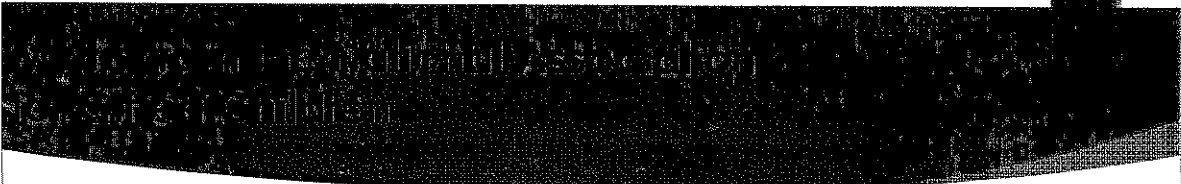
Myths and Stereotypes of Gifted Children

- ▶ They have no common sense.
- ▶ They have a hard time socializing.
- ▶ They are only interested in memorizing facts and details on a specific topic.
- ▶ They could be "NORMAL" if they tried….
- ▶ They are more likely to have psychological disorders.
- ▶ They are difficult to raise.
- ▶ They have "pushy" parents and this gives them their advantages, but also creates stress for them to live up to an "image".
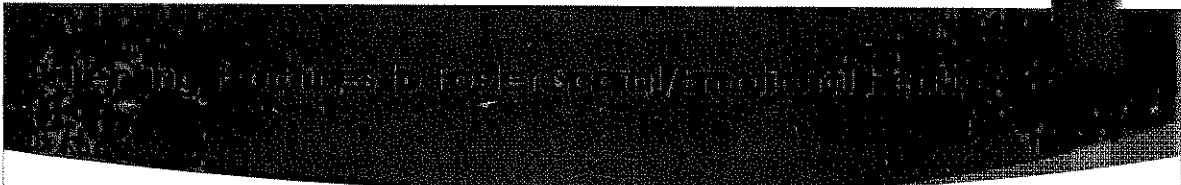
Taken From: Karen Rogers, PhD.

Myths About Schooling

- ▶ Gifted students should be with students their own age.
- ▶ Gifted students are better off if they are in with their age peers in a heterogeneous classroom all day.
- ▶ Becoming well-rounded is the most important goal for them.
- ▶ Being born gifted means not having to put effort in learning.
- ▶ Everyone knows about the social/emotional needs of gifted children.
- ▶ Adults (parents, teachers, administrators) know what gifted students experience: bullying, drugs, sexuality, and social pressures.
- ▶ Being too smart in school is a problem, especially for girls.
- ▶ All kids are gifted and no kids are gifted.

Taken From: Tracy L. Cross, PhD.

Myths in the National Association for Gifted Children

- Gifted students do not need help. They will do fine on their own.
- Teachers challenge all students, so gifted kids will be fine in the regular classroom.
- Gifted students make everyone else in the class smarter by providing a role model or a challenge
- All children are gifted.
- Acceleration placement options are socially harmful for gifted students.
- Gifted education programs are elitist.
- That student can't be gifted. He is receiving poor grades...has a disability, etc.
- Gifted students are happy, popular, and well-adjusted in school.
- Our district has a gifted and talented program. We have AP courses.
- Gifted education requires an abundance of resources.

Parenting Factors to Foster Social/Emotional Health

- Parenting values help determine areas of emphasis such as: ideas about finding and developing one's abilities, achievement at the highest levels possible, independent thought and individual expression, active recreational, cultural and intellectual pursuits. [In short: a love of work and learning.]
- Parents model personality traits such as risk taking and coping with setback and failures.
- Parents demonstrate the idea that success takes hard work and sustained effort over time.
- Parents can help their children build social networks that can provide emotional support for the abilities and talent development.
- Perceived "negative" family dynamics can also yield more independent and successful individuals.

Taken From: *The Social and Emotional Development of Gifted Children by Neihart, Reis, Robinson, & Moon*

Parenting styles that help a child _find_ his or her own identify, rather than prescribe it...

...allow for open expression of ideas and independent thought;

...reduce parent-child identification, but not necessarily affiliation or affection;

...and provide support in the presence of challenges, aids in the development of talent, creativity and good mental health.

So....parents need to bond with their children, but also allow them autonomy, independence, psychological and emotional space.

Strength of character is built by children experiencing challenges and difficulties and learning to cope with them.

So...parents should not shield or try to protect children from risks or hard work.

Taken From: _The Social and Emotional Development of Gifted Children by Neihart, Reis, Robinson, & Moon_

Coping strategies for stress:

...rich internal fantasy life

...use of time alone to decompress and rejuvenate

...expressions of emotions via creative work

...active use of leisure time

...other ways that help children gain control over their circumstances

Taken From: _The Social and Emotional Development of Gifted Children by Neihart, Reis, Robinson, & Moon_

A problem for some high-potential children is that they do not know how to make appropriate choices, manage their time, and identify their passions,
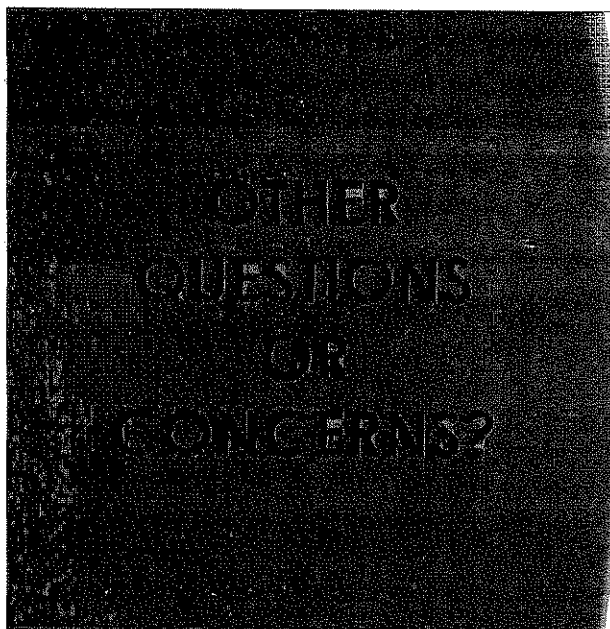
<u>Seven strategies for stress management:</u>

1. help your child identify their values, hopes and dreams
2. create opportunities to identify and explore the issues with your children (How they feel...what they think...what they want and need)
3. use family meetings to discuss and decide issues
4. Establish weekly 'walk and talks'
5. Create balance in your life
6. Encourage your child to have a creative outlet
7. Teach and model the use of stress busters: deep breathing, visualization, talking to someone, neck rolls

Taken From: <u>Parenting Gifted Children</u> by NAGC, Edited by Jolly, Treffinger, Inman and Smutny

1. What social emotional needs have you seen in your child or your child of concern/care?

2. What strategies and approaches have you used at home to assist with your child's or your child of concern/care's social emotional growth?

3. Do you know of children (or adults) who were/are A) very successful in school/life?B) have struggled in school/life? Why?

4. Do you believe gifted children have it easier or harder in school/life? Why?

5. What do you think is the most critical social emotional need for children of any age in today's society? How can we, as caregivers, help our children?

OTHER QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

THANK YOU FOR COMING TONIGHT. WE HOPE TO SEE YOU AT NEXT MONTH'S FORUM: TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 7-8 PM AT THE MET.

PLEASE TELL YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS TO JOIN US.