



GATCA WA

The Gifted & Talented Children's Association of WA (In

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The Grapevine



COMMITTEE DETAILS

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Vice President

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Treasurer

Rosemary Harding

Membership Secretary

Kriss Muskett

AAEGT Representative

Derrin Cramer

Committee:

Kate Brough
Tracey Taylor

South West Advocates for Gifted (SWAGS)

Contact

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For further information

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PRESIDENTS REPORT

As many of you will be aware, Lesley Sutherland has resigned as President of GATCA, as she has moved to Queensland to take up a teaching position and be closer to her family. Lesley has been a terrific President of GATCA and along with our thanks for all her hard work over the years, go our best wishes for the future.

The last month has been one of many changes. With Lesley's departure from Wesley College, we have been in need of a new home for GATCA. We are extremely pleased that Perth Modern School has kindly offered us a dedicated room for our library as well as space for our meetings and seminars. Thanks to Principal, Dr Robyn White and her team for their welcome.

Continuing her commitment to the gifted community, Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, recently announced funding of \$600,000 for 40 ten-day residential schools in gifted education for teachers and \$600,000 for 50 new workshops for parents of gifted children across rural, regional and low socio-economic metropolitan areas throughout Australia. Over the past twelve months GATCA has conducted workshops for parents in regional centers across WA, as a result of Federal Government funding, including in Karratha, Albany and Bunbury. These have been incredibly successful. The new round of funding will mean greater coverage of regional and remote areas.

You will have noticed a change to the format of the newsletter. We have decided to trial distribution of the NSW Gifted Association's newsletter to members with a WA specific insert. 'Gifted' now has a national and international writer-ship, with columns for country WA and from NZ as well as local content and things relevant to the whole of Australia. We have a 12 month subscription to 'Gifted' and would value your feedback on the magazine.

Congratulations to Susan McKenzie for getting the Graduate Program in Gifted Education up and running at Murdoch University; currently the only one of its kind in WA. With over thirty students enrolled this semester, this will be a terrific boost to gifted education in the state.

With all of these positive developments I am looking forward to a great year with GATCA. My contact details are on the website. If you have any ideas for the Association for the coming year, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Regards
Fiona Leonard

Publication deadlines October Newsletter

Advertising and articles must
be received no later than
21 September 2007
for consideration

Please go to www.gatcawa.org for
advertising guidelines and send
advertising to
derrin@thinkingahead.com.au

Please Note: the views expressed in this publication are those of the authors of the articles, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of GATCA WA.

What's New??

Discussion Boards: GATCA has set up **2 discussion boards** recently as a service to members. You can locate the discussion boards from the GATCA website at <http://gatcawa.org/>.

Individual or family members can register to access the Parents Forum, any teacher from a member school can register to access the Teachers Forum. We believe these discussion boards will provide a way for parents and teachers to share their successes, and their challenges and provide an opportunity for support for each other. Please register and make use of this new service to members.

The Discussion boards will also mean improved support for country members without the challenges of distance. Over the last 12 months, GATCA has made regional areas a focus and the establishment of these discussion boards will add another level of support.

SWAGS: Parents in Bunbury and surrounding areas have got together and formed a local group South West Advocates for Gifted. At the recent AGM this was ratified as a subgroup of GATCA and SWAGS has a representative on the GATCA committee. Where a regional group forms and is ratified, a portion of your membership can be returned to the local group to support local activities.

Study Scholarship: For the past few years GATCA has supported a number of teachers who have undertaken further study in the area of gifted education. From 2007 this scholarship will be available to teachers who undertake a course in WA. Some conditions apply, please contact Kriss Muskett or Fiona Leonard for more information if you are interested in applying.

Newsletter contributions: You are invited to send your experiences, children's stories, work samples or anything else that you want to see in the Grapevine to derrin@thinkingahead.com.au for consideration.

Websites and other places of interest.....



Water Aid International website online games

The importance of clean water to the people of the world is imparted through a selection of online games. You can be involved in helping a village build a clean water supply, discover the challenges of the local community in Ethiopia or try your hand as an investigative journalist in India. http://www.wateraid.org/international/learn_zone/games/default.asp

Test your urban myth knowledge

From pregnancy do's and don'ts to internet scams and your grandmother's home-cooked cures, urban myths and old wives' tales seem to have a life of their own. See if you can pick the facts from the myths. <http://www.abc.net.au/science/quizzes/urbanmyths/>

Word enigma - exchange letters to crack the code on today's quote
<http://wordzap.com/enigma/enigma.asp>

Smart Girls TV

This site is part of a study but also part of a study but also provides a chance for people to share their thoughts on smart girls on TV and in the media.

<http://smartgirls.tv/index.htm>

Overexcitability and the Gifted

This article will provide you with some good information as well as some strategies
http://www.sengifted.org/articles_social/Lind_OverexcitabilityAndTheGifted.shtml



Library Update

OPENING HOURS

The library will be open from 1-3pm
on Wednesday afternoons and by
appointment

From the beginning of August, the GATCA Library will be located at
Perth Modern School in the Thomas St Building.

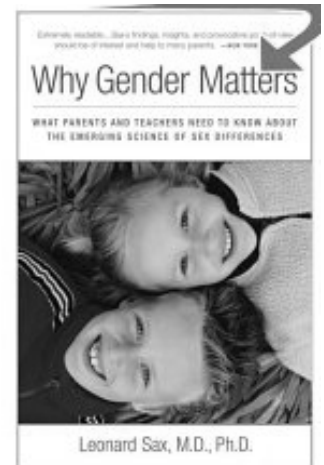
To find it, enter via Subiaco Rd - turn into the driveway on the east side of the gymnasium
(the only two storey building) and follow the signs from there.

New Books.....

Why Gender Matters by L Sax, MD PhD

What parents and teachers need to know about the emerging science
of sex differences.

In recent years scientists have discovered the differences between
girls and boys are more profound than anybody ever guessed. A girl's
retina is built very differently from the retina of a boy. When a girl and
boy look at the same landscape they are seeing very different
images. Girls and boys hear differently as well. These differences
have implications for best practices in education – and for effective
parenting. Teachers will learn how to encourage girls to excel in math
and science – and how to get boys to love reading novels.



Reviews by others can be found on Amazon.com

If you are interested in the subject of learning and the differences between boys and girls,
keep an eye out for the following titles:

Learning Like a Girl: Educating Our Daughters in Schools of Their Own by Diana Meehan

The Minds of Boys: Saving Our Sons from Falling Behind in School and Life by Michael
Gurian

**The GATCA library is currently undergoing a stock take. If you have a
library book on your shelf, we would appreciate it if you could return it
for counting.....**

**Please post to GATCA PO Box 436 Floreat WA 6014 or phone Kriss
Muskett on 9385-7962**

There are 10 human body parts that are only 3 letters long. Can you name them?

Answer: eye, hip, arm, let,
ear, toe, jaw, rib, lip, gum

Coming Events

Information Nights

These events are free to members. The venue for Term 3 Information nights will be Perth Modern School. Enter via Subiaco Rd (turn into the driveway on the east side of the Gym (2 story building) and follow the signs from there
Information Nights are held from 7.30 – 8.30 pm on the 1st Wednesday of each month. Discussion and coffee follows the information session.

August 8th **Growing Gifted Children**

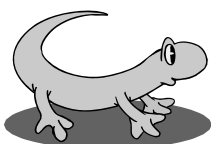
presented by Janelle McDonald, a previous president of GATCA WA now living in NSW.

This session will look at all the things parents can do, school aside, to help their gifted child including knowing the child, their learning style and the sorts of opportunities to look out for.

September 5th Topic TBA

October 3rd Topic TBA

Please phone Kriss on 9385-7962 to let her know if you will be attending



Geckos
The Geckos Group meets regularly. Contact Rosemary Harding for more information. Look out for a report on activities in the next newsletter

Early Learners Group

The Early Learners' Group is currently very quiet as the previous group of children have moved towards school.



If you would like to meet up with other parents with young children (or to co-ordinate a group), please get in touch with Nancye on **9380-6371**.

Psych Assessments

Fiona Smith will be returning to Perth again later in the year. Please contact Kriss Muskett on 9385-7962 to discuss testing for your child.

Events organised by others

20 August 2007. *Making a Difference: Gifted Students in the Classroom*. A one day **conference for teachers**. The keynote presenter is Dr Katherine Hoekman who will focus on **Scaffolding Self Directed Learning for Gifted Students**.

20 August Parent 7 – 9.30pm seminar with Dr Katherine Hoekman, topic **Motivating and Empowering Gifted Students: Practical Strategies for Parents**

Discounted registration available for GATCA members.
For more information go to www.thinkingahead.com.au/seminars_and_events.htm

Postgraduate Certificate in Gifted and Talented Education at Murdoch University

Enrolments welcome for Semester 1 2008. This is the first postgrad course in gifted education available in WA.

Short course format addressing the theoretical and practical aspects of gifted pedagogy and program delivery. Suitable for classroom teachers, educators involved in leadership. policy and program implementation at all levels from early childhood to secondary.

Physics, Chemistry and Maths Prep and Primer Classes

These workshops are held at Murdoch University South Street Campus each term.

Contact Jennifer Searcy at j.searcy@murdoch.edu.au or 9360 6015 or 9386 4783



The Australian Association for the Education of the Gifted and Talented (AAEGT) is a national body with representation from all Australian States and Territories

AAEGT Report

The AAEGT has continued to be actively lobbying at a Federal level, meeting with relevant politicians earlier in the year in the lead up to the Federal Budget, to ensure that gifted issues had the best chance of securing funds and attention. As a result of these efforts, the government announced \$1.2 million for gifted education in the next year. The projects this money will fund will be in place in 2008. Further lobbying remains to be done to ensure that the funding is ongoing and that gifted issues remain on the agenda and that more of the Senate Report of 2002 recommendations can be implemented.

The AGM for the AAEGT will be held on October 13 in Wollongong at which time AAEGT Council will meet and plan for the following two years. The WA representative on Council rotates between GATCA and ProAPT on a 2 year basis coinciding with the AGM. From October, ProAPT will take the seat on Council. As an affiliated association, GATCA will remain involved in meetings and teleconferences.

The national conference held in Fremantle last September was a successful event that returned a profit to GATCA and ProAPT as the organisers as well as to AAEGT. The next National Conference will be held in Hobart from 9 – 11 July 2008. The theme for this conference is *Celebrating Ability*. Preliminary information can be found from a link on the AAEGT website at <http://www.aegt.net.au/>.

TRIVIA

Each of the suits on a deck of cards represents the four major pillars of the economy in the middle ages: heart represented the Church, spades represented the military, clubs represented agriculture, and diamonds represented the merchant class

The word "lethologica" describes the state of not being able to remember the word you want.

Seeking Teachers who are also parents of gifted children.....

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY PROJECT

Ongoing project exploring the psychosocial supports needs of parents of gifted children. Victoria University have conducted a variety of interviews and focus groups in western Melbourne in the past and have presented at a number of conferences – both in gifted areas and in psychology.

After Adrian Fisher presented at Gifted2006 in Fremantle he was approached by a number of parents who were also teachers. They said that the findings resonated with them, but were often magnified by their dual and at times conflicting roles.

They are taking this line of research further, with Masters student John Mitchell taking the lead. Therefore, they are asking teachers who are also parents of gifted children if they would be willing to participate in this research.

So, if there are any members in this category, we would appreciate hearing from them. Please, in the first instance, contact John at: john.mitchell5@students.vu.edu.au; phone(03) 9687 6686 or 0415 722 293.

This research has received Ethics Approval through Victoria University

From other Research.....

Focus shifts in IQ Research

It's not just your IQ that counts at school but how well you are able to focus on a task.

IQ is used to measure intelligence (how smart a person is) and it has long been the marker for how good your results are at school - the higher IQ the more A grades. But new research shows it also takes a good attention span and the ability to train your mind to focus on the task right in front of you.

The research looked at a process called 'executive functioning', which describes your ability to reason and focus. 'Reason' refers to your ability to think logically and 'focus' describes your ability to ignore distractions and tackle the job right in front of you. The study shows that 'executive functioning' plays a critical role in learning, especially when it comes to math skills. How good is your executive function?

In this study 141 healthy children of preschool age took a whole range of tests that measured their IQs and executive functioning. Researchers found that a child whose IQ and executive functioning were both above average was three times more likely to succeed in maths than a kid who simply had a high IQ.

The findings suggest that school work should be designed to include more activities that improve reason and focus skills.

Is Joy Being Left Behind?

A smile is the universal welcome.

Max Eastman

According to Judy Ellis, writing in **Education Leadership** ("The Neuroscience of Joyful Education," Summer 2007), "Brain research tells us that when the

fun stops, learning often stops too." In the introduction to her article she summarize her views....

"Most children can't wait to start kindergarten and approach the beginning of school with awe and anticipation. Kindergartners and 1st graders often talk passionately about what they learn and do in school. Unfortunately, the current emphasis on standardized testing and rote learning encroaches upon many students' joy. In their zeal to raise test scores, too many policymakers wrongly assume that students who are laughing, interacting in groups, or being creative with art, music, or dance are not doing real academic work. The result is that so me teachers feel pressure to preside over more sedate classrooms with students on the same page in the same book, sitting in straight rows, facing straight ahead.

"The truth is that when we scrub joy and comfort from the classroom, we distance our students from effective information processing and long-term memory storage. Instead of taking pleasure from learning, students become bored, anxious, and anything but engaged. They ultimately learn to feel bad about school and lose the joy they once felt.

"My own experience as a neurologist and classroom teacher has shown me the benefits of joy in the classroom. Neuroimaging studies and measurement of brain chemical transmitters reveal that students' comfort levels can influence information transmission and storage in the brain. When students are engaged and motivated and feel minimal stress, information flows freely through the affective filter in the amygdala and they achieve higher levels of cognition, make connections, and experience 'aha' moments. Such learning comes not from quiet classrooms and directed lectures, but from classrooms with an atmosphere of exuberant discovery."

exchangeeveryday@ccie.com 12/07/2007