



GATCA WA

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

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The Grapevine



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Publication deadlines

February Newsletter

Advertising and articles
must be received no later
than **25 January 2007**
for consideration

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

PRESIDENTS REPORT

Since taking over the Presidency, one of the things I have really enjoyed is seeing all of the enquiry emails come through the website – these are all directed to my email account. We receive a steady stream of enquiries across a range of areas including general information on giftedness, questions about testing, holiday activities and information on schools. Every question that you have ever asked has and will be asked many times over! In light of all these enquiries I would like to say thank you for supporting GATCA. Your membership helps us to continue to support the people who use our services and to expand the range of our activities. Thanks also to all the people who refer others to GATCA.

Last month we were really pleased to receive confirmation from the Federal Government that they will fund a project developed by Committee Member, Kriss Muskett. This is a wonderful program that will provide mothers with the skills to support their daughters in the area of mathematics. The funding will go towards an initial pilot project and the development of a teaching tool that will allow us to distribute the program more widely. Congratulations to Kriss for her initiative on this terrific program. We are also very grateful to the Hon Julie Bishop MP for seeing the merit in this program and encouraging her Department to find a mechanism for supporting it.

Please make a note in your diary to keep 5 December free. We are extremely fortunate that Dr Peter Dingle has agreed to speak at our final information evening for the year. This will be a terrific way to finish the year and kick off the festive season. As a speaker Dr Dingle has been described as passionate, dynamic, enthusiastic and inspirational. His presentations are intertwined with personal and memorable stories, laced with a bit of magic (and the occasional spot of juggling)! He will be speaking about raising healthy, happy kids in today's world of pressure and quick fixes. He will also be talking about good food for kids - what it truly is, where to get it and how to use it. I look forward to seeing you all there.

Fiona Leonard

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: parents and teachers are encouraged to use the Discussion boards that have been included on the GATCA website. Follow the link from the navigation bar of www.gatcawa.org

Study Scholarship: 2 teachers were recently awarded \$500 each towards further study in the area of gifted education.

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.....



The Great Rubbish Roundup

interactive game Learn to sort rubbish suitable for recycling, green waste and toxic categories

<http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/BCCWR/assets/bcc/pop-ups/waste-roundup-game/game.htm>

Brain Pop Features Science, Biology and Technology subjects for 5-8 grades. Each subject contains a 3-4 minute Animated Movie, an Interactive Quiz, an Experiment, a Comic Strip, a 'How-To' application, a Timeline and a print-able Activity Page. Some parts are free access, some require a membership

<http://www.brainpop.com/>

Fun stuff with words –How well do you know the National Anthem? Rearrange the tiles to write the words of Advance Australia Fair

<http://community.reddamhouse.com.au/primary/MAGNETS/anthem.htm>

Energy in the Air - This site was made as an entry in the annual ThinkQuest competition and includes information about how sound is made, what it looks like when it is recorded, information on the instruments that play in the orchestra and sound clips of the orchestra playing music. There is also an activities section showing how instruments are made. You will need Real Player to access the sound files. <http://library.thinkquest.org/5116/>

Kids@nationalgeographic.com This is the 'kids' section of the National Geographic website and is a mine of information both in

text and graphics. Go to the Great Barrier Reef and take a deep sea dive without getting your feet wet or take a trek through Nepal without leaving home.

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/>

The Yuckiest Site on the Internet

Children have always been fascinated by the fact that we all burp, hiccup, poop, and vomit. On the Yuckiest Site on the Internet they can finally find out why their body needs to perform all these functions, get science questions answered, learn bug and worm secrets, and explore revolting games, recipes, and crafts. Great fun – and very yucky!!

<http://yucky.discovery.com/flash/>

Human Anatomy online Fantastic interactive site to help us all understand a little more about the bodies we live in!

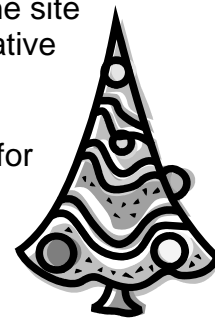
<http://www.innerbody.com/html/body.html>

Invention Playhouse. How many different ways can you help the ball reach its goal

http://inventionatplay.org/playhouse_tinker.html Have a look at other parts of the site for puzzles, word games and creative thinking

For Christmas shopping ideas for gifted kids check out Kidstuff and have a look at Bendominos or Air Traffic Control.

<http://www.kidstuff.com.au/>





Library Update

The GATCA Library is now located at

Perth Modern School in the Thomas St Building.

OPENING HOURS

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

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.

PLEASE NOTE: We are not able to open the library over the summer school holidays as the school is closed . Please contact Kriss to make arrangements if you are planning to borrow books over the summer.

New Additions to the Library

Motivating Gifted Students by F A Karens

This book is part of the "Practical Strategies Series" in Gifted Education – a series of monographs authored by the foremost authorities in the field.

Although gifted students are not normally considered at risk for academic failure, the seeming lack of motivation of many gifted students is an area of concern and frustration for teachers, parents and counselors.

This book explains crucial issues such as why some students fail to realise their potential offering research based strategies educators and parents can implement to motivate students to achieve academically

Developing Math Talent – A Guide for Educating Gifted and advanced Learners in Math by S Assouline and A Lupkowski-Shoplik

The authors are nationally recognised math education experts offering a focused look at educating gifted and talented students for success in math in elementary and middle school.

It features

- Strategies for identifying gifted math learners
- Strategies for advocating for gifted children with math talent
- How to design a systematic math education program for gifted students
- Specific curricular and materials that support success
- Teaching strategies and approaches that encourage and challenge gifted learners

Other new books include

Profiles of Influence by F Karnes and S Nugent

This book, through individual profiles, provides historical perspectives and future directions of gifted education.

How the Gifted Brain Learns by D Sousa

If you have any library books on your bookshelf, please contact Kriss to organise to return them.

Coming Events

Information Nights

These events are free to members. The venue for Term 4 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 – 9.00 pm on the 1st Wednesday of each month. Discussion and coffee follows the information session.

Please check the Parents Forum on the website for more information each month about the topic.

November 7th

Kylie Bice from the Association of Independent Schools will speak about the gifted policy guidelines that are being developed and other initiatives in AISWA schools.

December 5th

Dr Peter Dingle

See the president's report on the front cover for more information about this presentation

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



Geckos

The Geckos Group meets regularly. Contact Kriss Muskett on 9385 7962 for more information.

Early Learners Group

The children who previously attended the Early Learners' Group have grown up and moved on to school.

A number of parents



have recently been in touch with GATCA with young children. If you would like to meet up with other parents and their young children, leave your details with Kriss on 9385 7962. Hopefully another group will develop

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

Postgraduate Certificate in Gifted and Talented Education at Murdoch University

Enrolments welcome for Semester 1 2008.

This is the first postgraduate 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 AGM of the AAEGT was held on October 13th 2007 in Wollongong. The new President of the Association is Dr Wilma Vialle. The representatives from each state met during the weekend of the AGM to discuss the various projects that are planned and underway and set future directions. GATCA WA recently received a grant of \$500 from AAEGT for the printing of new brochures promoting the association.

The AAEGT is the peak national body for gifted education and all members of affiliated associations are also members of AAEGT. GATCA WA pays an affiliation fee of \$3 for each of its members each year.

The 2008 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.aaegt.net.au/>. Calls for Abstracts for the conference program was made recently. Please consider attending – it is a great opportunity to hear speakers and interact with other parents and teachers.

Derrin Cramer

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS OF GIFTED CHILDREN: *INTERACTIONS, CHALLENGES AND APPROACHES*

by Jenny Tayler Principal Education Officer (Gifted), DoE Tasmania

(Presented at the Tasmanian Association for the Gifted Conference “Gifted Education - Here and Now”, Nov. 2000)

1. THE CHILD-FAMILY-SCHOOL TRIANGLE: HOW DOES IT AFFECT INTERACTION?

Wherever a gifted child is enrolled in a school, there are three elements to the resulting interaction - the family, the child and the school. How do these elements affect the communication process?

FAMILY – CHILD INTERACTIONS

- Do both parents/carers agree that the child is gifted?
- Is the child a first or only child?
- Are any of the siblings gifted?
- Is there conflict between the child and siblings because of the child's giftedness?
- Does the child feel pressured to perform consistently?
- Does the child know he/she is gifted?
- Is the issue discussed openly in the home?

- Are the opinions or positions of the child given credence in the home?
- Are the child's sensitivities respected by siblings and other family members?
- Are families supportive of the actions of the school in their interactions with the child at home?
- Is there agreement between the parents about the child's schooling?

FAMILY – SCHOOL INTERACTIONS

- Does the school pursue a policy of encouraging and facilitating parents' involvement in their children's learning?
- Does the school support and encourage communication between parents and teachers?
- Are the modes of communication varied?

- Are parent-initiated inquiries responded to promptly?
- Does school-initiated communication occur about good things as well as perceived problems?
- Do the staff receive advice or professional development on effective communication with parents?
- Does the school atmosphere welcome parents?
- Are school-initiated requests responded to promptly?
- Do parents seek the school's position on an issue reported to them by their child before taking action?
- Do parents make appointments to speak with teachers?
- Are teachers made fully aware of the purpose of the appointment?
- Are teachers given adequate time to prepare for the appointment?
- Do parents communicate with the school about good things as well as perceived problems?
- Are parents appreciative of the demands on a teacher's time?
- Do parents understand the funding/staffing constraints on schools?
- Do teachers respect families' culture?
- Do parents appreciate teachers' life beyond the classroom?

SCHOOL – CHILD INTERACTIONS

- Does the teacher have the self-esteem to see a gifted child as a challenge rather than a threat?
- Does the teacher foster an environment where differences are valued?
- Does the child feel safe in speaking to the teacher about his/her frustration or unhappiness?
- Does the teacher have the courage to respect the child's position or opinions on his/her learning?
- Does negotiation on learning take place between the teacher(s) and the child?
- Does the child feel comfortable with his/her 'different'ness' in the school situation?
- Does the child have at least one friend in the class?
- Does the school pursue a policy of active acknowledgment of student achievement in all spheres of endeavour?

- Is knowledge or information about the child passed on from one year to the next?

2. APPROACHES TO EDUCATING A GIFTED CHILD: WHAT ARE THE PROS AND CONS?

Broadly speaking, there are three main approaches observed to the education of a gifted child.

PARENT-CENTRED APPROACH

Assumptions:

- Parents are responsible for the intellectual and affective development of their child(ren)
- Home environment is most important to the development of a gifted child
- Parents should seek outside experts or provide for enrichment opportunities if they feel the child needs them

Role of teacher or counsellor

- Essentially provide information and advice as to what parents can do
- Encourage parents to be active in seeking suitable experiences for the child

Role of parents

- Very active in providing for their child
- Role is as active as financial resources and parent interest will allow

PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

Assumptions:

- Teachers and counsellors have expertise that can be of benefit to parents of gifted children
- Parents of gifted children have knowledge and expertise that help the teacher and the counsellor understand their child
- Parents are partners with educators in meeting the educational and affective needs of gifted children
- Parents, with the support and cooperation of teachers and counsellors, can be actively involved in the learning process of their child

Role of teacher/counsellor and parents

- Work as a team
- Make joint decisions on the best direction(s) to meet the educational needs of the gifted child
- Exchange advice and information about the ongoing development of the gifted child.

SCHOOL-CENTRED APPROACH

Assumptions:

- School is responsible for the intellectual and affective development of children
- School environment is most important to the development of gifted children
- School should establish appropriate gifted programs

Role of teacher or counsellor

- Expert in providing for the needs of gifted children
- Help parents to see that the needs of their gifted children can be best met through experts and the school

Role of parents

- Passive participants
- Not seen as a teacher for their children
- Role of parents essentially confined to parent/school organisations, canteen etc.

3. WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES WE FACE?

Parenting a gifted child is a great challenge. But so, too, is teaching one! An examination of the challenges faced by parents and teachers raises some interesting similarities.

CHALLENGES FACED BY PARENTS OF GIFTED CHILDREN

- Being believed by teachers when trying to explain that their child is gifted
- Having doubts about whether their child really is gifted, or about the degree of giftedness
- Feeling unable to share their child's experiences with other parents, for fear of being seen as 'boasting'
- Helping their child to cope with peer pressure to deny or hide giftedness

- Deciding whether acceleration is an appropriate option for their child and/or which forms of enrichment to pursue
- Being accused by teachers of pressuring their child into learning 'too early' skills such as reading
- Dealing with a child who is frustrated and disappointed at the lack of challenge provided at school
- Keeping up with the demands of highly inquisitive and critical minds
- Helping their child to manage the increased sensitivity that can result from the capacity to 'see more' in things
- Steering the child along the fine line between maintaining high standards and ideals and avoiding the debilitating forms of perfectionism
- Living in a society where neglect of the gifted generally is not seen as damaging either to the individuals or to society

CHALLENGES FACED BY TEACHERS OF GIFTED CHILDREN

- Being believed by parents when trying to explain that the child is being catered for
- Having doubts about whether the child really is gifted, or about the degree of giftedness
- Being ridiculed by other teachers when expressing their opinion about a gifted child
- Helping the child to cope with peer pressure to deny or hide giftedness
- Deciding whether acceleration is an appropriate option for the child and/or which forms of enrichment to pursue
- Being accused by parents of ignoring the needs of the child
- Dealing with parents who are frustrated and disappointed at the perceived lack of challenge provided at school
- Keeping up with the demands of highly inquisitive and critical minds
- Helping the child to manage the increased sensitivity that can result from the capacity to 'see more' in things
- Steering the child along the fine line between maintaining high standards and ideals and avoiding the debilitating forms of perfectionism
- Working in an environment where neglect of the gifted generally is not seen as damaging either to the individuals or to society