



The Whole Gifted Child Presidential Session
Saturday, November 5, 2016
8:00am – 10:15am

NAGC President: George Betts, Ed.D.
Whole Gifted Child Task Force Chair: Angela Housand, Ph.D.

The goal of the WGC Presidential Session is to identify what we currently know about the multi-dimensional nature of gifted individuals, consider how what we know might affect gifted individuals' experiences, and begin to conceive of ways we might use our combined understanding to bring practical and proactive recommendations to foster the development of emotional health, engagement, achievement, relationships, and meaning in life.

Outcomes of our thinking and work may result in, but will not be limited to:

- Ideas for new directions in our thinking
- New areas of concern that we have not previously identified
- The development of practical applications for serving the Whole Gifted Child
- Implications for future research
- Revisions of our current working model of the WGC

Current Topics and Associated Working Definitions of the Whole Gifted Child

Presenters	Topic & Working Definition for Topic
<p>Dr. George Betts President, National Association for Gifted Children, Washington, D.C. Professor Emeritus, University of Northern Colorado george.betts@unco.edu</p>	<p>Autonomous Learner</p> <p>Autonomous learners perceive learning and living as two main components of their on-going development of potential in the cognitive, emotional, social and physical domains. Their motivation comes from within, they internalize skills, and passion learning is their driving force. Autonomous Learners are never satisfied, for they perceive their needs for a nourishing life, as well as the greater needs of society.</p>
<p>Thomas P. Hébert Professor, Gifted and Talented Education University of South Carolina</p>	<p>Social and Emotional Characteristics and Traits of Gifted Children</p> <p>The social and emotional characteristics and traits evident in the whole gifted child include high expectations of self, internal motivation, emotional sensitivity, intensity and empathy for others. In addition, the whole gifted child develops an advanced level of moral maturity and an appreciation for consistency between values and behaviors. This child also has a strong need for self-actualization and often exhibits a highly developed sense of humor and resilience. These different characteristics and traits must be considered within the context of the student's home and learning environment.</p>

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<p>Keri M. Guilbault, Ed.D. Assistant Professor, Gifted & Talented Education Notre Dame of Maryland University</p>	<p>Parenting the Whole Gifted Child</p> <p>The Whole Gifted Child approach goes beyond academic achievement to include all aspects of being and that influence the development, well-being and life satisfaction of gifted children. When gifted children are safe, healthy, supported, nurtured, challenged and engaged in meaningful learning experiences, they will be able to lead fulfilled lives and contribute in their own way to the lives of those around them.</p>
<p>Theresa Newsom, Ph.D. <i>Children with Promise</i> Educational Consulting Services CEO mstnewsom@comcast.net</p>	<p>Leadership Giftedness</p> <p>The whole gifted child is a multi-faceted and diverse individual. Beliefs, values, and personal temperament coupled with intellect, and creativity distinguish the whole gifted child's attributes. These attributes also include leadership potential and leadership giftedness. Leadership giftedness is defined as an innate attribute that uses influence, power, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, divergent thinking, and personal insight to make a difference in a diverse local world through lived experiences and personal temperament (Newsom, 2016). Identifying leadership giftedness in the whole gifted child supports the notion that regardless of whether leaders are born or made their attributes are recognized as an indispensable part of their total being.</p>
<p>Dina Brulles, Ph.D. Director of Gifted Education Paradise Valley Unified School District</p>	<p>English Language Learners & Underrepresented Populations</p> <p>The whole gifted child, as relating to ELL students and others from underrepresented populations, involves broadening our understanding of giftedness to factor in cultural, linguistic, and social differences that manifest giftedness differently from traditional ways in the mainstream culture. The differing cultural characteristics and facets of these students' mindsets and approaches toward learning, and how they pertain to school behaviors, must also be viewed within the context of the students' learning environment. The multitude of cultures assumed within this broad group requires deeper understanding of giftedness, acceptance, and a goal toward recognizing advanced abilities in students outside of mainstream populations so that all students can optimize well-being to realize their potential in all learning environments.</p>
<p>Christine Deitz, Ed.D Associate Director, Jodie Mahony Center for Gifted Education University of Arkansas at Little Rock mcdeitz@ualr.edu</p>	<p>Middle School</p> <p>During the middle school years, the whole gifted child is growing up. Like any experience that occurs over time, the middle matters greatly to overall physical health and personal development. Thus, the adolescent years between childhood and adulthood are influenced by memorable, complex, vulnerable, and transformative processes. As the whole gifted child matures, the middle school years must provide opportunities to explore, question, accelerate, investigate, stand out, belong, try –fail – and try again, play, and dive deeply and passionately into experiences that lead to an adulthood with multiple possibilities. Differentiated opportunities assist gifted middle school children in reaching their potential. Thus, programs must offer a meaningful variety of support and services in academic, creative, social, emotional, and extra-curricular activities as they are critical to the development of the whole gifted child during the middle school years.</p>

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<p>Ellen Honeck, PhD Dean of the Laurel Springs Gifted and Talented Academy and Director of Curriculum and Instruction, The Knox School of Santa Barbara</p>	<p>Curriculum and Personalized Learning</p> <p>From the lens of curriculum and personalized learning, the focus on the whole gifted is to foster individual growth across and in all dimensions. Fostering the cognitive, social, emotional and physical development of the individual involves providing the ability to find a connection with the content, possibilities to explore interest and passion areas with depth and complexity, development of an understanding of the larger construct of knowledge (themes and concepts), opportunities to think critically and creatively utilizing multiple perspectives, and focusing and discovering that content is integrated and interrelated.</p>
<p>Dr. Tracy Inman Associate Director, The Center for Gifted Studies at Western Kentucky University tracy.inman@wku.edu</p>	<p>Poverty as It Relates to the Whole Gifted Child</p> <p>Poverty often defines a person in all aspects of life. When giftedness enters the picture, those issues are exacerbated. Poverty adversely impacts every single dimension of the whole gifted child. Developmentally, without intervention, a gifted learner from poverty suffers emotionally, socially, cognitively, and physically. As to environment, poverty not only hinders identification and services in school but may also create a home lacking resources, opportunities for engagement, and educational support. When learners from poverty also belong to distinct identity groups such as GBLTQ or non-English speakers, the issues affecting these groups are magnified. Educators, parents, and other decision-makers must acknowledge and understand the role poverty plays on gifted learners then work together to remove the many barriers.</p>
<p>Maureen Neihart, Psy.D. Associate Professor, National Institute of Education Nanyang Technological University Singapore</p>	<p>Affective Curriculum</p> <p>The whole child is the unique unity of body, mind, and spirit present in every child. The whole child emphasizes the humanity of the child and his or her natural drive to grow and enhance him or herself. Recognizing the limitations of approaches that focus predominantly on learning or behavioral outcomes, a whole child perspective reminds us of the importance of the human spirit and the need to value and nurture each child's distinctive qualities.</p>
<p>F. Richard "Rick" Olenchak</p>	<p>Twice-Exceptional Learners</p> <p>The notion of the Whole Gifted Child refers to ensuring appropriate accommodations for the needs of each and every child who in any way demonstrates the potential for superior ability to reason and learn or who exhibits exceptional competence in one or more disciplines. Those needs demand scaffolds to create and sustain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • programming and environments conducive for sound physical and mental health; • settings and circumstances that promote physical and emotional safety and security; • active engagement in and connection to learning in school and in the broader community; • access to personalized learning that is tailored and monitored closely by nurturing adults; and • appropriate academic challenge in preparation for additional education and/or career development amidst a global environment.

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<p>Elizabeth Shaunessy-Dedrick, Ph.D. Professor of Gifted Education, University of South Florida</p>	<p>Secondary Students' Subjective Well Being</p> <p>Development of a gifted child is a process that involves interrelated functions of affect, cognition, and context. In terms of positive well-being, a gifted child's educational context, peer relationships, and inner resources for navigating life's complexities all affect the child's happiness, and this attainment of happiness may reinforce the child's abilities and strengths such that cognitive performance is activated to its fullest potential. Likewise, appropriate stimulation of a child's cognitive abilities through appropriate educational settings, relationships with educators, families, and peers of similar abilities has a reciprocal positive affect on one's well-being. Despite the interrelation of well-being and achievement, absence of one does not necessarily bode for poor outcomes. Furthermore, educators and families can positively influence a child's lifelong development of internal resources to achieve and maintain positive well-being.</p>
<p>Jennifer Ritchotte, Ph.D. Assistant Professor of Gifted and Talented Education, University of Northern Colorado</p>	<p>Underachievement</p> <p>Gifted underachievement can be simply defined as a discrepancy between test scores and grades. While a definition like this is useful, the emotional, social, and physical domains of the whole child are neglected. Not fully grasping why gifted children underachieve in school can lead to the practice of "ungifting." Educators and parents must look beyond failing grades and identify less visible factors that contribute to underachievement. Fear of failure, poor self-esteem, and emotional disengagement, for example, may not be easily seen and may take more effort to uncover. We owe it to our gifted children to put forth this effort. When we do not take the time to fully investigate why a gifted child is underachieving, we are only seeing a <i>student</i> and failing to see the <i>whole child</i>.</p>
<p>Brian Housand, Ph.D. Associate Professor and Academically & Intellectually Gifted Program Coordinator, East Carolina University North Carolina</p>	<p>Technology</p> <p>The Whole Gifted Child is growing up with unprecedented access to technology and digital devices that are bordering on omnipresence as they become increasingly more powerful and connected. These devices allow access to almost infinite amounts of information and content resources and allow individuals to learn anything, anytime, and anywhere. Today's technology also offers powerful tools for creative productivity and rapid dissemination to audiences worldwide. Finally, today's gifted youth are embracing a plethora of social media tools in ways that not only connect them with friends, but also allow them to connect to a larger group of peers regardless of geography. The Whole Gifted Child experiences technology as an integral part of their existence. This experience of technology extends beyond merely a collection of devices and is rapidly becoming an extension of their concept of the world as a whole.</p>