



Newsletter for the Special:

The Alliance

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Dear Special Schools and Program Division Members,

We are setting the pace with full steam ahead toward our 52nd convention! We highly encourage all of our division members to join us for this existing convention full of new initiatives and new formats. Within our division, we have initiated two opportunities to give back to our membership and the students for whom we advocate. Take a look within the newsletter to find our ***Student Award Drawing*** that will provide funds for the selected winner to attend a specialized gifted school or gifted and talented summer program. For our members, the ***Article Competition*** has been created to reward the research that propels our knowledge base forward and aids those who run schools and programs to make decisions that are grounded in data-driven, best practices.

If you are attending the convention, be sure to join the Special Schools and Programs sponsored Friday night event—The **IDEA EXCHANGE**. It is an opportunity for teachers, coordinators, principals and directors involved in special schools and programs to meet and discuss pertinent issues like funding, curriculum, identification, management, start-up and much more! Look within the newsletter for details and contact any of our officers with questions. If you cannot attend and would like to be part of the idea exchange, email your contribution to me at KML4H@virginia.edu and we will be sure to distribute your idea at the exchange and create a packet to send back to you! Whether you attend conference or not, please be a part of our idea exchange.

We continue to look for members who would like to join our other officers in strengthening the division's activities during convention as well as other times throughout the year.

We look forward to hearing from you throughout the year.

Karen Lelli Austin Division Chair



Newsletter for the Special Schools and Programs Division of NAGC

Save your seat for the 52nd annual convention in Louisville. It's an NAGC experience unlike any previous --- with newly designed features such as networking breakfasts and an enhanced meal service plan plus

[Marquee General Sessions](#)

<http://www.nagc.org/convinfo/kentucky/bigideas.html>

Along with the standard quality you've come to expect when the world of gifted gathers each November:

[Concurrent Sessions in 16 Strands](#)

Choose from 350 concurrent sessions in our itinerary builder

<http://precis.preciscentral.com/utis/ip/FindPresentation.asp?EventID=ac627ab1&bhcp=1>

[Special Sessions](#)

<http://www.nagc.org/convinfo/kentucky/phenoms.html>

Plus these popular pre-convention features

[Pre Convention Board Institutes](#)

<http://precis.preciscentral.com/utis/ip/FindPresentation.asp?EventID=ac627ab1&bhcp=1>

[Pre Convention Learning Labs](#)

<http://www.nagc.org/convinfo/kentucky/labs.html>

[Pre Convention Special Events](#)

<http://www.nagc.org/convinfo/kentucky/precons.html>

When every dollar counts, it's good to have this incredible fall experience to refresh our knowledge and renew our commitment. We'll see you in Louisville!

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Newsletter for the Specials Schools and Programs Division of NAGC

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

WHAT: CONVENTION ROOM HOSTS TO INTRODUCE THE SPEAKER, WELCOME THE ATTENDEES TO A SPECIAL SCHOOL AND PROGRAM EVENT, AND HAND OUT SESSION EVALUATIONS.

WHERE: NAGC 2005

HOW: CONTACT KAREN AUSTIN AT
<KML4H@VIRGINIA.EDU>

Special Schools and Programs Idea Exchange

Are you a program director, school coordinator, teacher in a special school or summer program, counselor, or curriculum developer? Join us for an evening of camaraderie as we exchange ideas that have helped build innovative and unique learning communities for gifted learners. Please come with your “entry card”-fifty copies of your best idea from your special school or program and pick up copies of other ideas to travel home with and put into practice in your own educational setting. In addition, we will have roundtable discussions based on topics such as

curriculum, fundraising, program philosophy, management and much more so you can get some in-depth information in particular areas of interest. Friday night at NAGC!



Newsletter for the Special Schools and Programs Division of NAGC

NATIONAL NEWS IN GIFTED EDUCATION

Dr. Scott Chamberlin and Dr. Alan Moore are studying the use of mathematical problem solving in middle grades. Specifically, they are investigating the most commonly used curricula, definitions of mathematical problem solving, and student affect as it relates to performance in mathematical problem solving. Participants in this study are gifted coordinators from the 50 largest school districts in the US as well as one gifted expert in each state (identified by state gifted association officers, state department of education officials, or university experts in GT). Hence, each state will have input for the study.

Data attained during this study will direct future research which entails the assessment of affect in mathematical problem solving with gifted middle grade students. Future research will be conducted by Drs. Chamberlin and Moore from the University of Wyoming and Dr. Marcia Gentry from Purdue University.

For results or more information contact Scott Chamberlain at <scott@uwyo.edu>.

NAGC was pleased to endorse a national report on academic acceleration strategies last year. The report, *A Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students*, was released last fall and has been widely disseminated. (The report is downloadable at < <http://nationdeceived.org/>)
The Belin-Blank Center at the University of Iowa is now working on a one-year assessment of the impact of the report on education, and has prepared a very brief survey (10 items) to help them collect information that will be helpful in assessing the impact of the report on policies and attitudes regarding the acceleration of gifted students. Dr. Nicholas Colangelo, the Center's director, will present a summary of the survey results at the NAGC annual convention in Louisville.

We urge you to take a few minutes to complete the survey, and to urge others to do so as well. Your responses and email addresses will be anonymous.

Thank you for your assistance, NAGC National Office



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR
Gifted Children

Newsletter for the Special Schools and Programs Division of NAGC

BOOK REVIEW: *MISDIAGNOSIS AND DUAL DIAGNOSIS
OF GIFTED CHILDREN AND ADULTS*

By Karen L. J. Isaacson

Seven-year-old Karrie can't sit still in class. Her hands fidget, her feet swing, and her attention darts from the clock to the window to the eraser on her pencil. She doesn't follow along with the rest of the class when the class reads aloud together, even though she thought she taught herself to read before she started kindergarten and is now reading on a sixth-grade level. When her teacher asks a question, Karrie either isn't paying attention, or she blurts out the answer before the teacher has a chance to ask for a response. When her teacher talks to her about her behavior, Karrie rolls her eyes in exasperation and sometimes argues insistently. Her abilities and skill levels are high, but her grades are poor. Her teacher recommends to Karrie's parents that Karrie might be ADD/ADHD (Attention-Deficit Disorder/ Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and that Karrie might do better in school if she receives counseling and perhaps some medication.

Imagine that you are her parent. What do you do?

Let's suppose that you then take her to the family physician. While in his office, Karrie is as fidgety as she is in class. The physician asks her questions, but she asks him more questions. "Why do your eyebrows move when you talk? Do they move when you eat a sandwich? Did your eyebrows move when you were a little boy? What happens when you're asleep? Do they move when you snore?"

Based on his fifteen minute visit with Karrie and her teacher's recommendations, the physician suggests that Ritalin is worth a try.

As a parent, what do you do then?

You agree that Karrie is often fidgety, even at home, but you have your doubts about the ADD/ADHD diagnosis. Her attention, while it is sometimes difficult for others to capture under certain circumstances, can always be captured by a good book. She is on her third Harry Potter book and shows no signs of stopping. Once she begins reading, she forgets everything else and won't even stop for cheese pizza, her favorite.

So, you have your doubts, but you want the best for Karrie. She needs an education, and she can't get one if she can't focus in school. You try one more venue. You try a psychiatrist.

And based on the teacher's evaluation, the physician's evaluation, and some of Karrie's behaviors in his office, he agrees that Karrie is probably ADD/ADHD and that medication might help. It's certainly worth a try anyway.

Now what? The diagnosis just doesn't seem to fit quite right, but who are you to argue with the experts?

As a parent, it can be a frustrating dilemma. You feel as though you know more about your child than anyone else, and yet you feel as though the professionals are not to be argued with, as they have degrees and a great deal of experience.

A recently published book, *Misdiagnosis and Dual Diagnosis of Gifted Children and Adults*, may be a lifesaver for parents and children who are in situations similar to Karrie and her parents. As the book points out, often teachers, and even competent mental health professionals do not receive enough education about the characteristics of intellectually or creatively gifted people. In many instances, characteristics that would, at first glance, denote an ADD/ADHD diagnosis, are

often more accurately attributed to characteristics of giftedness. The possibility that gifted characteristics, inadequately provided for or understood, are causing stressful situations for both adults and children is a possibility that needs to be explored before any firm diagnosis is decided upon.

Misdiagnosis and Dual Diagnosis of Gifted Children and Adults covers an entire spectrum of disorders, such as Asperger's Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Bipolar Disorders, as well as Learning Disorders, just to name a few.

It is truly amazing that many characteristics of giftedness can be easily confused with the characteristics of a multitude of disorders. This book tackles each disorder separately, and then clearly and concisely defines the differences between that particular disorder and giftedness. There is a wealth of information in the book for the mental health professionals, but it is written in a language that is easily accessible to the average parent.

The book also discusses situations where a dual diagnosis may apply. In other words, sometimes these diagnoses *are* accurate, but made more complicated when giftedness is figured into the problem.

Whether a misdiagnosis or a dual diagnosis, it helps to know what you are dealing with. It has been said that the first step to solving a problem is admitting that you have one. If that is the case, then the second step would be to define exactly what the problem is. If a person's heart is failing him, the doctor doesn't remove the appendix just because it is currently the trendiest operational procedure and hope that does the trick. It's not enough to take action, any action; we must know what action to take.

In Karrie's case, the problem wasn't entirely Karrie's. Yes, she had some areas she needed to improve upon. Giftedness should never be an excuse for bad behavior. But a large part of the

problem could have been resolved by providing a more stimulating and challenging educational environment for Karrie to thrive in. As *Misdiagnosis* points out, when the problem lies more with the environment or with the people surrounding the child, then that is what should be treated. Medicating the child simply to make life easier on the adults around her is not an ethical answer, and certainly isn't in the best interest of the child.

However, if a child truly has a specific disorder, then she deserves the best treatment available. It is the responsibility of both the parent and the professional to be aware of the possibilities and be sure that the child receives the proper diagnosis and the proper treatment. *Misdiagnosis and Dual Diagnosis of Gifted Children and Adults* will go a long way in making that job easier for both parties. It is an extremely important work.

The authors, James T. Webb, Ph.D., Edward R. Amend, Psy.D., Nadia E Webb, Psy.D., Jean Goerss, M.D., M.P.H., Paul Beljan, Psy.D., and F. Richard Olenchak, Ph.D. are a highly credible and qualified bunch. Among them, there are two clinical neuropsychologists, two clinical psychologists, the President of the National Association for Gifted Children, and a board-certified pediatrician formerly associated with The Mayo Clinic. Owning the book is like having access to some of the best expert help available, and there it is, right on your bookshelf. At such a reasonable fee too!

But what if your child isn't "gifted?" Well, if your child is struggling with some of the many characteristics listed in this book, you may be surprised to find out that she is indeed gifted. And if she is not, the book still provides a wealth of information. It defines each disorder with exactness and in a comprehensible manner. It addresses adults who have similar struggles, as well as relationship issues both inside and outside the family. After reading this book, you will not only

have a better sense of who your child is and why she does what she does, but you will know yourself and some of your friends better as well.

BOOK REVIEW: GRANDPARENTS' GUIDE TO GIFTED CHILDREN

By Karen L. J. Isaacson

The role of grandparents may be changing, or gaining importance for families in the 21st Century. With advances in health care, grandparents now live longer; with advances in technology, these lively and fit elders can be in touch with their grandchildren—thanks to cell phones, E-mail, family websites, and picture phones—even when they live miles away. Whether near or far, the contact is good for the grandchildren, who can benefit from an extra “ear” to listen or a voice to offer encouragement.

Caring and thoughtful attention from adults enhances children’s self-esteem. Bright and precocious children, who are usually intense and have hundreds of questions, may need this kind of attention from family members even more. Parents are often “worn out” keeping up with bright, gifted children. Grandparents, with their wealth of experience—and perhaps a little more patience than they had when they were parents—can help parents who are tied up in juggling schedules—work, sports, music lessons, extracurricular activities, laundry, meals, carpool and meetings. Grandparents are a family bonus—they usually have more relaxed and reflective time to read out loud, listen with a caring ear, or share a task or skill like gardening or cooking, where the child feels important and special.

Grandparent’s Guide to Gifted Children, by James T. Webb, Ph.D., Janet L. Gore, M.Ed., Frances A. Karnes, Ph.D., and A. Stephen McDaniel, J.D., A.E.P., E.P.L.S. offers many suggestions for grandparents who have bright, creative grandchildren. Although the book’s focus is on precocious, gifted children in particular, the information in the book will help any adult interested in building relationships with children.

Grandparents with passions or special interests can share those with their grandchildren as they explore the world together. One grandmother who loves science started a science club for her grandchildren and a few homeschooled children. Together, they are beginning to explore biology while they spend valuable time together. Grandparents who have traveled broadly can shed a different, and much more fresh and appealing light on a child's sometimes dull geography or social studies lesson at school.

First-time parents often do not recognize characteristics of a bright, gifted child, but a grandparent, who has more years of experience raising children, will be more aware of advanced milestones. These children need adults in their lives with patience and the wisdom to notice and understand their special needs. Grandparents are a positive influence just by caring and interacting with these children.

Just like a grandchild may have inherited the nose you were never too fond of when you looked at yourself in the mirror, or they may have inherited a cute dimple or a smile, they also quite likely have inherited your interests or talents, fascinations with certain subjects, or curiosities about the world and how it works. Whether grandparents see their grandchildren every day or must rely on letters or e-mails, whether the "grandchildren" are your own posterity or are "adopted" grandchildren, this book is a guide for improving relationships, and passing on memories and wisdom.

I highly recommend this book. The legacy you leave for your children and grandchildren, and even your great-grandchildren, may be the most important thing you ever do.

Karen Isaacson is the author of Raisin' Brains: Surviving My Smart Family, and the winner of the 2002 ForeWord Magazine Book-of-the-Year Gold Award for Humor. She lives in Montana with her husband and five gifted children. She has been involved with her local gifted education support group and gives presentations on the value of uniqueness.



Newsletter for the Special Schools and Programs Division of NAGC

STUDENT AWARD DRAWING
SPONSORED BY SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS
A Division of the National Association for Gifted Children

Eligibility:

Any child who attends a special school or program for gifted and talented children is eligible to apply. The school or program must be designated for gifted and talented children within their mission statement. All entries become eligible for publication in the Special Schools and Program's Division newsletter.

Directions:

Each child must complete the attached survey in order to enter the drawing. The winner will be randomly picked by a member of the Special Schools and Programs Division of NAGC and the entry will be checked for completeness.

The winner will be awarded a \$1000 scholarship to defray the cost of tuition at an academic special school or program of his/her choosing. The award will be sent directly to the institution for the 2005-2006 year. The award must be applied to a program by January 1, 2007.

Entries do not need to be typed, but must be legible for the reader. Entries are not judged on their length of response, but please follow the directions on length restrictions. Feel free to assist students who need aid in understanding the question.

Deadline:

Entries must be submitted via the internet and should be directed to the Chair of the Special Schools and Program, Karen Lelli Austin at kml4h@bellsouth.net. Entries must be received by January 1, 2006 5:00PM.



Newsletter for the Special Schools and Programs Division of NAGC

STUDENT SURVEY ENTRY
SPONSORED BY SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS
A Division of the National Association for Gifted Children

Your Name:
Address:
Email Contact:
Your Current School:

Limiting your comments to 150 words, please discuss the *benefits* of attending a special school or program for gifted and talented children. (If you do not currently attend a special school or program, discuss what you see the benefits would be to you in attending such a school or program).

If you were to *design* your own special school or program for the gifted, what would it look like? Consider the learning environment, the facility, the teachers, the information to be studied, and any special projects you would like to pursue. (Please contain your discussion to 150 words).



Newsletter for the Special Schools and Programs Division of NAGC

Article Competition

Our division is happy to sponsor a competition for research-based articles on special schools or programs for the gifted. The winning article, or an abridgement, will be published in our division newsletter. In addition, our division will pay the 2006 national convention fee for the author. (If the author(s) cannot attend the 2006 convention, the award may be deferred to 2007.)

Guidelines:

You must be a member of the Special Schools and Programs division to apply to the competition.

The deadline for submissions is January 31, 2006
Submit articles to Gina Lewis at gina-lewis@utulsa.edu or
Gina Lewis
10842 E 115 Place
Bixby, OK 74008

The winning article will be selected by a subcommittee of the division.

Articles with multiple authors will be accepted. If the winning article has multiple authors, the amount paid for each author will be equal to a single convention fee divided by the number of authors.

All authors must be members of the Special Schools and Programs Division of NAGC.

Articles must be research based.

The special schools or programs considered must show innovative programming that reflects NAGC standards.

The special schools or programs considered may be entirely independent, or they may be affiliated with public school systems, with private or parochial schools, or with public or private post-secondary institutions.

Articles may be of any length, but because of space limitations, longer articles may be abridged for publication in the newsletter.

Articles must follow the conventions of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th edition.

The convention fee for the winning author(s) will be paid directly to NAGC, not to the author(s).



Newsletter for the Special Schools and Programs Division of NAGC

SESSIONS

A REPORT CARD: MEETING THE NAGC STANDARDS IN A CONTINUUM OF SERVICES FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED

11/11/2005 10:45 AM RM 111 RICHARD D. COURTRIGHT

CREATING THE CLUSTER MODEL FOR TODAY'S EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

11/11/2005 10:45 AM RM 110 DINA BRULLES

MOFET PROGRAM FOR REALIZING STUDENTS' INTELLECTUAL POTENTIAL

11/11/2005 2:00 PM RM 100 MARK APPLEBAUM, ORNA SCHNEIDERMAN

TWENTY YEARS OF SELF-CONTAINED GIFTED SUCCESS-GRADES 4,5, AND 6

11/11/2005 2:00 PM RM111 JANICE C. BIZZARI, ELIZABETH PIEKARSKY,
LAURA HERSHBERGER, DONNA BERNENS-KINKEAD

PARENT-NOMINATION AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO STANDARDIZED ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

11/11/2005 3:15 PM RM 110 PAULA OLSZEWSKI-KUBILIUS
SEON-YOUNG LEE

THE LIGHTHOUSE PROGRAM: INNOVATION FOR THE HIGHLY GIFTED

11/11/2005 3:15 PM RM 111 WILLIAM D. KEILTY, JOHN MEISCH

TRENDS, TRAITS, AND TALES: WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED ABOUT EARLY-ENTRANTS

11/11/2005 4:30 PM RM 111 JAN WARREN

UNIVERSAL HIGH SCHOOL: A PUBLIC PROGRAM FOR CREATIVE, INDEPENDENT STUDENTS

11/12/2005 7:45 AM RM 111 DEBBIE HUTCHINSON, KIESA KAY

WANTED: SINGLE-SEXED SCHOOLS/CLASSES

11/12/2005 10:45AM RM 111 NANCY LASHAWAY-BOKINA

CONNECTING WORLDS/MUNDOS UNIDOS PROGRAM 'OUR DIVERSITY, OUR TREASURE'

11/12/2005 2:00 PM RM 111 FARA GREEN, SANDRA SPIVEY,
ERNESTO BERNAL, LAILA FERRIS



Newsletter for the Special Schools and Programs Division of NAGC

SESSIONS

INCREASING AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES' ENROLLMENT IN AP COURSES
11/12/2005 3:15 PM RM 111 JAMES L MOORE, TAREK C. GRANTHAM

**SIX STEPS TO SUCCESS: INCREASING MINORITY STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN
SUMMER PROGRAMS**

11/12/2005 4:30 PM RM 111 STEPHANIE FAVA ZENKER

**FAYETTE COUNTY KENTUCKY PUBLIC SCHOOLS GIFTED AND TALENTED
SECONDARY PROGRAMS**

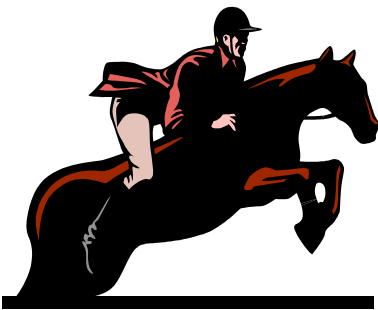
11/13/2005 7:45 AM RM 111 PEGGY WORKMAN, JACK, MOON,
CARLA BERANEK

WHY GIFTED PROGRAMS MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN STUDENTS' LIVES

11/13/2005 7:45 AM RM L7 SALLY M. REIS

MSTC'S CAPSTONE: MENTORSHIPS IN RESEARCH

11/13/2005 9:00 AM RM 111 JACK R. MOON



SETTING THE PACE...