

If you think your child is leaps and bounds ahead of the other kids his or her age, chances are that you have a gifted child. Children with high IQ's often display certain behavioral characteristics that we have outlined in this informative article. Identifying and determining whether your child is gifted may require the use of professional services.

Gifted Children Behavioral Characteristics



Whether or not giftedness can be precisely measured in its entirety, parents, psychologists, and educators know that it is an actual phenomenon that exists as part of the individual's personality. There are lists of behavioral characteristics of gifted

children available to help parents and educators to understand how to assess giftedness.

As already mentioned, characteristics of gifted children include, but are not limited to, an IQ of more than 132 [above 145 for highly gifted] on the standard intelligence tests. Characteristics of the gifted or highly gifted may also include children with musical or artistic gifts way beyond their chronological age, children who demonstrate an extreme capacity for creative or divergent thinking, or children who are psychological insightful or socially responsible with leadership abilities.

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Professor of psychology, Professor Ellen Winner [Gifted Children: Myths and Realities, Basic books, 1996] defines three atypical characteristics of gifted children that go beyond a measurement on an IQ test:

1. Gifted children are precocious and learn more quickly and easily than typical children.

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In the United States, the chances that parents will have profoundly or exceptionally gifted children are pretty slim. An exceptionally gifted child has an IQ greater than 160 and is found in only 1 in 30,000. While profoundly gifted children with IQ's above 175 occur in only 1 of every 3 million kids.

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2. Gifted children insist on marching to their own drummer, which includes the ability to learn quickly on their own, and the ability to make up rules as they go along. Very smart children solve problems in novel and idiosyncratic ways.
3. Gifted children have a strong desire for mastery. They are intrinsically motivated to make sense of the domain in which they show precocity which often includes an obsessive and sharp focus on their own interests.

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Gifted children are critical thinkers, creative, rapid learners; curious; capable of being highly communicative; extremely perceptive; able to retain information easily; and committed to a task, which they pursue resourcefully and in detail. Gifted children also are highly sensitive. In situations where they feel out of place or misunderstood, gifted children can act in highly anxious or in other emotional ways. Very smart children may have socialization problems and feel awkward because of their intellectual superiority in comparison to their peer group. Gifted children are often treated as strange by other children because they are so smart.

One important and difficult characteristic I have encountered and observed many times over with gifted children and their parents is perfectionism. Parents of extremely smart children are usually extremely smart as well. If they are involved with their children, parents want only the "best" for every child rearing situation. This intensity can create another layer of difficulty or stress for both the parent and child in day to day relations. The sense of urgency and entitlement that everything must be accomplished according to high standards leads me to conclude that most gifted parents tend to be perfectionists who over identify with

their children. Very bright parents may have unrealistic expectations for themselves and their children. This is definitely something to watch out for and try to avoid.

By contrast, parents who are mature and sufficiently satisfied with their own lives are better able to help their children develop their own inner talents and identity. Parents who have some insight into themselves and their children focus on realistic problems to promote their child's potential instead of creating or helping to create anxiety, depression, or burnout.