

The Spark

creating connections - creating community

Fall 2013

Volume 1, Issue 2

A Word From the Board

A brief look back at our first full year, and a look ahead to what the Chicago Gifted Community Center has planned.

Page 1

Upcoming Events

What's on tap for the CGCC this fall, with a handy-dandy chart to hang on the fridge.

Page 8



Is Executive Functioning the Missing Link for Many Gifted Students?

Executive functioning has to do with acting on knowledge. Many gifted kids struggle with this.

Page 2

Gifted and Sensational



Intense? Sensitive? Over-excitabilities? How these are connected to SPD.

Page 4

ADHD and Giftedness - A Coach's Perspective

Lessons learned from working with gifted and ADHD individuals.

Page 6

The Challenge of a "Just Right" Fit: The Learning Needs of Gifted Kids

Finding that elusive educational balance for a gifted child.

Page 3

A Word from the Board:

Dear CGCC families:

We've had an amazing year of growth, thanks to your support!

Programs from last year such as [Gifted Kid's Club](#), [Museum Classes](#), and [Parenting Seminars](#) are starting again this fall. We are also extremely excited to offer new programs such as [Book & Social Club](#), Game Days, [Origami Club](#), and [Math Club](#), all of which have grown directly out of the expressed interests and collaborative efforts of our members. It's active contributions from each of you that creates our community.



If you have an idea for a program in your area, please reach out and let us know. Our organization has nonprofit status which often allows us access to free or low cost space for programs, and we're happy to work with you to build programs. CGCC is an all-volunteer community organization and we want our members to drive our growth. We hope you are finding the [Members Only](#) content, which is available when you are logged onto the CGCC site, to be useful. The Events Calendar provides amazing low cost,

gifted friendly programs throughout the Chicago area. The family directory allows you to contact other CGCC families you may meet at events, or those with similar interests. The professional directory offers listings of professionals who work with and understand gifted.

Our annual board meeting is coming up in November; if you are interested in actively participating in CGCC or have comments or suggestions to pass along to the Board, please feel free to email me.

Looking forward to another amazing year!

Leslie Contos, CGCC President

lesliecontos@chicagogiftedcommunity.org

Leslie is the mother of a highly gifted teen whose needs often were not met by existing resources. She's currently working on her M.A. in Community Counseling, and understands that giftedness is an element of diversity which is frequently overlooked. Leslie is a founding CGCC board member; and organizer of Kid's Club @ NEIU, Parenting Gifted Series, and Youth Advisory Board.

Is Executive Functioning the Missing Link for Many Gifted Students?

— Amanda Vogel

Amanda Vogel is the Vice President of Nurturing Wisdom Tutoring and the director of [Nurturing Wisdom Academy](#), a private school in Hinsdale. She has a Master's degree in special education and over twelve years of experience in teaching, writing curriculum, and supporting educators. She developed Nurturing Wisdom's extensive executive functioning curriculum for both their tutoring and school programs.

Dean's Story

Let me share with you a story about a gifted child I know named Dean whose story might be familiar to some of you. At three, Dean could correctly identify every Thomas the Tank character that ever appeared on the show. At four, he figured out how to read on his own and by five, his obsession with presidents meant he could soon tell you the name, birthday, and interesting facts about every president. At seven, he was memorizing all of the chemical elements for fun. Dean has always had a voracious

appetite for reading, enjoys reading the same books over and over again, and could tell you detailed facts about everything he has ever read.

Now that Dean is eleven, it's puzzling to his parents that he can't keep up at school. His papers are a mess, riddled with dog-ears. He brought home three missing assignment slips just last week. He usually aces quizzes and tests, but when he doesn't get an "A," he's more likely to get a "D." While he completes homework in record time, it's a mystery as to how his teacher can decipher his illegible work. His mom is struggling to understand, "Why is my bright child struggling at school?" The answer can be found in his executive functioning skills.

What exactly is executive functioning?

When we think of traditional learning, we think of taking in facts and developing skills. These are both

examples of input. In Dean's case, his strength is input. In fact, his father has often described his mind as a "steel trap." Executive functioning ("EF") skills are an opposite set of skills: they include everything that has to do with acting on knowledge, or output. This means that "EF" includes organizing papers, writing down assignments, taking notes, studying, and even writing with structure. It's the output that Dean struggles with. Information goes in his mind very easily and thoroughly, and he has no trouble understanding what he's learning. When he tries to share that information or get through a homework list, however, the work product comes out very scattered.

Continued on page 5

A special thank-you to these CGCC professional members for supporting our programs:

Gretchen Glader
[Gifted Learning Center North Shore](#)

Catherine Gruener
[Gruener Consulting LLC](#)

Debra Johnson
[STEPS for Kids, Inc](#)

Kimberlee King
[Inspired Attention](#)

Tara Lenga
[Exceptional Kids](#)

Cathy Risberg
[Educational Consultant](#)

Sheryl Stoller
[Beyond Expectations, A resource for parents](#)

Amanda Vogel
[Nurturing Wisdom Academy](#)



CGCC LEADERSHIP

- [Leslie Contos](#), President & Chicago coordinator
- [Newenka DuMont](#), Vice President
- [Kim Beeler](#), Secretary
- [Linda Zanieski](#), Treasurer
- [Lauren Callaway](#), Youth Advisory Board coordinator
- [Tamara Grady](#), S. Suburban coordinator
- [Jen Merrill](#), N. Suburban coordinator & newsletter editor

Positions open ([contact us](#) for info):
Far West Suburban, Near West Suburban, and
Northwest Suburban coordinators

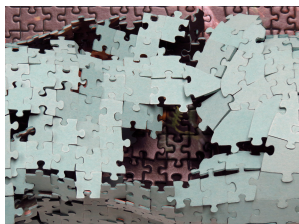
The Challenge of a "Just Right" Fit: Learning Needs of Gifted Kids

Gretchen Witte Glader

[Gifted Learning Center~North Shore \(GLC~NS\)](#) is a learning center created specifically for gifted and profoundly gifted students, including those seeking socialization support in an academic environment or whose "intensities" are often not a good fit for gifted programs with a traditional school approach. The center offers day classes, after-school and summer programs, and parent support groups.

According to the National Association for Gifted Children, there are approximately three million gifted and talented students in the United States or approximately six percent of the total school population. This suggests that about five to seven percent of the school population is capable of higher intellectual and/or academic performance than the general norm. This number increases when the parameters of identification are expanded to include various areas of giftedness, such as leadership, creativity, and the visual/performing arts. It is generally accepted, although not readily admitted, that for many of these gifted students, their learning and/or emotional needs are not met in the traditional classroom. Furthermore, this academic neglect often leads to frustration and negative behavioral changes in these students as well as significant underachievement. These students are in need of services or activities that are not normally provided by the school.

Chief among these students' sensitivities is their need for autonomy. Traditional school settings do not provide for a child's right of self-determination and choice, and a gifted child's need for autonomy can be the driving force behind the "issues" and "challenges" that are often misdiagnosed and misidentified. When gifted kids are asked what their main obstacle is they almost always answer "school." No Child Left Behind has compounded



the problem and changed the tenor of school by focusing on students who need help. For students with exceptional potential and capacity for learning, they are often caught in the mythology that surrounds gifted students and their educational needs. They are at best underserved and at the worst being ignored, lost in the momentum to meet standards and retain government funding. They are not viewed as needing help in the form of special education since

they are able to "meet or exceed" standards before instruction even begins.

There is an immense gap between the needs of gifted learners and the curriculum that is offered to them. We have also seen that this may cause serious motivational, social, and cognitive problems for the student. We know that these experiences affect the child's emotional development as well as his or her academic potential. Our experience with the public school system has shown that many regular education settings are not prepared for the gifted student who does not fall in the category of high achieving, and even when school systems have gifted services in place, they are most often pull-out, project-based approaches. Research reveals that educational functioning is better supported in a comprehensive, preventive approach rather than the fragmented, project based approach that prevails today, and that gifted students attending special programs perform better than peers in regular programs.



Most teachers recognize that instructional designs that are effective with inexperienced learners can, and do, have a negative effect when used with experienced, more advanced learners. These negative effects can also be seen in the social-emotional realm due to the impact of the intellectual dissonance experienced by an underachieving gifted child in a traditional program. The effects are profound and have a powerful and lasting impact on the whole experience of her or his childhood.

Researchers have come to understand that the "implicit curriculum" of the teacher's inner state shapes interactions in the classroom and sets the tone for learning. We know that while these effects can be subtle, they are pervasive and immediately recognizable by the children. This context exists between staff and students and among the students themselves. This is a concept that is well accepted in professional studies that address the psychology of humans. Mental health practitioners believe that the early environments set the stage for every aspect of the child's internal and external functioning, and that the child's relationship with caregivers acts as a template. This template permanently molds the child's capacities to relate on both interpersonal and intrapsychic levels.

Continued on page 4



“Just Right” Fit cont.

Those of us who work with this population need to understand the complex socio-cognitive context of our relationships with the gifted student and with the classroom as a whole. We cannot truly demonstrate care without being aware of the experience of each student. Above all, we need to create a place of safety where gifted children's voices can be heard because these students are confident that they will be listened to. This is a hopeful context for the gifted child's educational experience, and a necessary first step to creating the educational environment they deserve.

Clark Foust, R. Moritz Rudasill, K. Carolyn M. Callahan, C. (2006), An Investigation Into the Gender and Age Differences in the Social Coping of Academically Advanced Students. *Journal of Advanced Academics*. V 18, 1pp 60-80

Cloninger, K. (2008) Giving Beyond Care, An Exploration of Love in the Classroom, *Curriculum and Teaching Dialogue*, Volume 10, Numbers 1 & 2, pp. 193-211.

Cloud, J. Badowski, C. Rubiner, B. Scully, S. (2004) Saving the smart kids. *Time*; V. 164, 13 p56-61.

GIFTED AND SENSATIONAL

Debra Johnson, MS, OTR/L has 24 years experience as an Occupational Therapist and is currently owner/director of STEPS for Kids, Inc, where she specializes in treating children who have Sensory Processing Disorder and related conditions. She is the parent of a gifted child with Over-Excitabilities and sensory sensitivities who has influenced her work and fueled her passion in working with gifted children and their families.

Gifted children (and adults) are often described as being intense and sensitive. Dabrowski's Theory of Overexcitabilities (OE) specifically identifies the areas of Psychomotor OE and Sensual OE which include a surplus of energy with intense physical activity and an enhanced sensory awareness, respectively. Gifted children whose physical activity level or sensory sensitivities are great enough to be disruptive to daily activities are sometimes referred to occupational therapists and identified as having a sensory processing disorder (SPD). The question “is it SPD or OE?” then becomes central to understanding the child's behaviors and providing the right support for the child's well-being and development.

What is SPD? Originally presented by A. Jean Ayres, OTR, PhD in the 1970s, the theory of sensory integration is based on the premise that our central nervous system is designed to facilitate “the interaction and coordination of two or more functions or processes in a manner which enhances the adaptiveness of the brain's response.” (Ayres, 1972) Accurate processing of sensory information allows us to relate to the world around us with appropriate motor and emotional responses, resulting in efficient and effective performance of daily activities. Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD) is a term coined by Lucy Miller, OTR, PhD and is “a global umbrella term that includes all forms of the disorder, including three primary diagnostic groups and the subtypes found within each group. (Miller, 2004)

The three primary groups of SPD are modulation disorders (over-responsivity, under-responsivity and sensory seeking/craving), motor disorders (dyspraxia, postural disorder), and discrimination

disorders. A child with SPD may exhibit any one or a combination of these subtypes. The disorder is characterized by chronic and severe problems with turning sensory information into behaviors that match the nature and intensity of the message. (Miller, 2006)

SPD is a condition that can:

- Impact developmental skills (motor, social, emotional & cognitive).
- Disrupt family life and strain relationships.
- Make it difficult for a child to participate in activities due to impaired skills and/or related behaviors.
- Impact a child's self-esteem, confidence and competency in daily activities.

SPD & Gifted (from the [SPD Foundation](#), 2013)

Some studies of gifted children have found that gifted children are more likely than the general population to have symptoms of SPD with one study finding 35% of children at a GT center fitting criteria for SPD compared to 5% in the general population. Sensory modulation disorder is the most common subtype of SPD in the gifted population, but many gifted individuals also demonstrate signs of dyspraxia (motor planning impairments, incoordination). The higher the level of giftedness in a child, the more likely that introversion is linked with increased responsivity to pain, sound, touch, and smell.

Subtypes of SPD most often compared to or confused with OE theory are:

- Sensory Modulation Disorder, Over-Responsivity Subtype compared to Sensual OE
- Sensory Modulation Disorder, Sensory Seeking/ Craving compared to Psychomotor OE

So, what IS the difference between SPD and OE? “Overexcitability....means that the person may require less stimulation to produce a response, as well as stronger and more lasting reactions to stimuli. Another way of looking at it is of being spirited – more intense, sensitive, perceptive, persistent, energetic.” (from *Living with Intensity*, Daniels & Piechowski, 2009) SPD, however, is characterized by chronic and severe problems in responding to sensory information resulting in disruption of daily life.

Continued on page 5





Executive Functioning, cont.

Is this common in gifted children?

Not all gifted children struggle with executive functioning, but gifted children are often more likely to encounter these struggles than other students. Why? For starters, gifted children like Dean find learning and school to initially be very easy, sometimes even boring. When it comes to developing executive functioning skills, though, there really is a downside to school being “too easy.” If you are able to easily understand your lessons, memorize the key details, and recall them later, there is no need to develop a set of study skills.

Justin, a former student of mine who is now in high school, found this out the hard way. He breezed through elementary school and middle school. He consistently earned A’s without ever studying. That also meant that Justin was not practicing these skills. Even though his developing brain was primed and ready to learn these types of skills, he wasn’t getting opportunities to learn, practice, hone, and master studying. When he transitioned to high school and encountered a rigorous American history course, he had no idea how to approach that class. He floundered for the first time in his academic career.

This phenomenon isn’t limited to studying either. If Susie can memorize all of her assignments throughout grade school and never needs to write them down, she never has the opportunity to learn and practice assignment management. If Alex can fly through his homework each night in twenty minutes, he doesn’t have to learn to prioritize and organize his time. If Cheryl memorizes the details of a lecture right as she hears it, she’s not likely to learn good note-taking skills for when the lectures become much more advanced later on. Having a talent for taking in information can actually hamper the development of these output skills.

Don’t wait for disaster

Every executive functioning skill can be broken down, taught, practiced, and mastered. The key is

to learn these skills before they are critically needed for success in a tough class. If your child is going to be taking a heavy course load in the future, make sure that executive functioning skills are being learned early. The middle school years (grades five to eight) offer the ideal window for this. Even if your child doesn’t “need” to write everything down or study for his or her current classes, a tutor or teacher can help get these habits firmly established and set the stage for the future. At a minimum, every child should learn to organize school papers / materials, track and prioritize assignments, take notes on a textbook, study effectively (not just “look over” material), and write responses and paragraphs with structure. These skills are just as important as learning to solve equations or punctuate a sentence!

Executive functioning needs also provide another reason for you to work with your teachers and school to ensure that your child is being adequately challenged. “Too easy” is a problem that shouldn’t be taken lightly. Children who are not challenged enough miss out on an opportunity to practice critical executive functioning skills. They are also more likely to become risk-adverse and not tackle challenges that are out of their comfort zone. When kids are regularly challenged with work that pushes their intellectual limits, without putting them in a constant state of frustration, a lot of development can happen: both in terms of input and output!

Gifted and Sensational, cont.

Children with SPD tend to get “stuck,” and they are unable to modify their responses to their surroundings on their own or even with whatever strategies a parent may try to help the child.

A child who experiences Psychomotor OE will demonstrate a surplus of energy, desire for intense physical activity, pressure for action (e.g.: organizing), and marked competitiveness. Increased emotional tension may result in compulsive talking / chattering, impulsive actions, nervous habits, or acting out. Sensory Seeking / Craving type of SPD is characterized not by a surplus of energy and a drive to action, but by an intense need for obtaining sensory input. While the child with Psychomotor OE may want to participate in an activity to an intense level, it is usually done

with a purpose (to master the sport, to win the game, to feel the physical / emotional rush). For the child with sensory seeking / craving behaviors there is often no goal other than “crash and bump” play, often a lack of social interaction in the play, and a lack of play scheme or ideation of pretend play. These children often not only demonstrate impulsivity, but have poor ability to regulate their responses, often escalating in behaviors to the point of risk taking with lack of awareness for personal safety or dangers in the activity.

Piechowski identifies Sensual OE as enhanced sensory and aesthetic pleasure and describes it as including intense awareness of specific sensory experiences with “delight in beautiful objects, sounds of words, music, form, color and balance.” Children with an over-responsivity modulation disorder do not display appreciation of the sensory information, but rather experience the sensory information to an extent that is described as painful, are unable to regulate their responses to the sensory information, and demonstrate negative behaviors related to the stress and anxiety caused by exposure to the aversive sensory input.

Stress, emotional tension, anxiety and poor fit with the environment can contribute to increased behaviors associated with both SPD and OE. Children may then exhibit decreased flexibility, poor ability to adapt or transition, and increased need to control their surroundings. Children with SPD lack the ability to adapt and demonstrate poor coping skills when faced with a poor fit between their abilities and the environmental demands. Gifted children with OE may also have poor ability to adapt due to asynchronous development, lack of coping strategies, presence of strong Emotional OE, or immature executive function skills.

Whether SPD or OE, children benefit from similar approaches that limit the offensive stimuli, maximize comforting stimuli, foster the child’s control of their environment, provide for appropriate and safe movement, increase the child’s self-awareness of their own sensory needs, and facilitate self-acceptance for their own uniqueness.



ADHD and Giftedness - A Coach's Perspective

— Ian and Kimberlee King

Reprinted with permission of Inspired Attention, Inc.



Ian and Kimberlee King are Life Coaches/Consultants who specialize in working with people who are both Gifted and AD/HD. While not all their clients fall into this category, they have a unique approach and an understanding of this special group of highly talented people. Learn more about Ian and Kimberlee King at [Inspired Attention](#).

We have a very unique clientele. Our clients are, for the most part, gifted, even though many of them refute the label, and they all have AD/HD tendencies, some diagnosed, some not. We say AD/HD “tendencies” because many clients are never formally diagnosed and honestly, we could care less about the diagnosis. What we care about are the impacts these “tendencies” are having on the quality of our client’s life. AD/HD tendencies might include having 157 ideas all at once (usually most of them

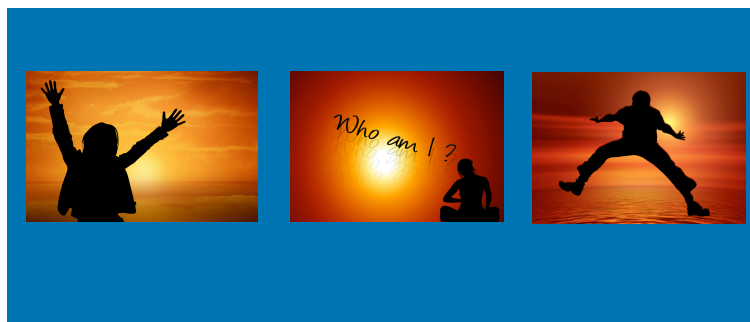
are really great!), starting many projects and finishing few, forgetfulness, poor time awareness, disorganization, transition problems,

Most people understand that AD/HD is a low dopamine state in the brain. And many who have AD/HD people in their families have done their

clients have a desire to master their tendencies, exploit their strengths, and grow beyond their current state. Some of our clients are successful entrepreneurs, executives, college students, families, adolescents...really, there is no “typical” client, although there are typical impacts. Our clients are all wildly unique and require a very holistic approach. Every gifted AD/HD person is like a wonderful puzzle that requires enormous patience and love.

Instead of repeating what others have said about AD/HD or even giftedness, we wanted to share with you some of our lessons learned about working with gifted and AD/HD individuals that might cause you to think, or even prove useful along your own path.

Continued on page 7



relationship challenges, intensity, demoralization, anxiety, depression, perfectionism, and addiction. Many are surprised to learn that the AD/HD brain is a highly addictive brain and that can dramatically impact one’s life.

research and understand the benefits of medication to mitigate this low dopamine state. Some of our clients have had great success with their medication, some have struggled to find a medicine that works for them, and others have chosen not to medicate. Medicated or not, all of our

Who We Are

The Chicago Gifted Community Center is a volunteer-based nonprofit organization created by parents of gifted children living throughout the Chicago metropolitan area. We found that while a patchwork of Meetup groups, school related organizations and parent groups existed, there was no unifying organization whose sole purpose was to serve directly the needs of local gifted families and to link them all together in a community.

We understand from firsthand experience how hard it can be for gifted kids to find a place where they feel they fit; a place where they can be their true authentic selves; where they can be welcomed, accepted and valued for who they really are. It is imperative for children to grow up with a sense of belonging, and gifted kids often have difficulty finding that in their daily lives.

With cuts in gifted funding for State of Illinois schools, and shrinking public resources for serving the gifted population, we felt the need to do something was urgent. We created this organization to fill this community need. We strive to be the organization that pulls together the people, ideas and resources to maximize the opportunities and connections available to gifted children and their families in the Chicago area.

Membership

CGCC exists solely for the benefit of gifted children and their families. Such families are encouraged to become members of CGCC. Professionals and niche organizations who serve the unique gifted community are encouraged to become members as well. Professional members might include schools, mentors, counselors and similar service providers who are committed to advancing the mission of CGCC to support families of gifted children and to create a cohesive community.

CGCC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all and does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, religious creed, disability, age, sexual orientation or gender in admission to or participation in its programs, services and activities.

Mission

The mission of the Chicago Gifted Community Center is to facilitate educational and emotional support for gifted children and their families.

The Chicago Gifted Community Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.



ADHD and Giftedness, cont.

1. "You have to capture the heart before you can open the head for change." --Peter S. Jensen, M.D., co-author of Super-Parenting for AD/HD

Gifted people, especially those who are working with a challenge like AD/HD, tend to better connect with a peer. This means that to coach a gifted person with a fast processing brain, you need to be able to keep up. Their humor is fast and complex and so is their internal defense mechanism. If the coach cannot keep up or provide stimulating conversation, the connection is weak and the client will have difficulty trusting that the coach is capable of understanding. Connection is critical for the client to feel safe to take the vulnerable steps necessary for transformative change. Also, someone with the personal internal experience of these issues is going to be a better fit as long as they are well-managed. An AD/HD coach with AD/HD must be extremely adept at managing their own tendencies. And if those tendencies are well-managed, the modeling is incredibly powerful.

2. "Your intellect may be confused, but your emotions will never lie to you." --Roger Ebert

Intensity - If you know anything about gifted people, you know they are intense. Their range of emotions is larger than most. That can be an incredible gift. And having such intense emotions, including tears of joy and existential depression, can be difficult at times to bear. A coach needs to be able to empathize with this intensity and help the client find the value of both the positive and negative emotions.

More than these things, our clients' intensities are some of their biggest strengths. Without intensity, there is little radical change in our world. Our clients are often change agents in their own environment. Sometimes to the positive, other times not. What we support in our clients helps them to work towards ownership and mastery of their impacts, allowing new possibilities that did not exist before.

3. "Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." --Albert Einstein

What is really necessary for sustainable change is training and learning a different internal decision making model. One must move out of a head-oriented decision making model into a body-oriented model. The head is a really wonderful processor of information, but a really bad place to find answers. Our "knowings" are in our body. Many of our AD/HD, gifted clients have taken refuge from their intense "feelings" in their bodies and taken up residence in their cortex. We teach them (and they teach themselves) how to move out of their heads to make decisions that line up with their true selves. When this occurs, that endless loop

of similar frustrations and recurrent circumstance changes radically.

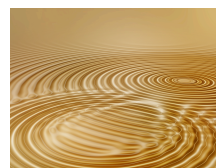
4. "Children require guidance and sympathy far more than instruction." --Anne Sullivan, teacher to Helen Keller

The demoralization that our clients have suffered has often turned them into their own worst enemy. Having endured a lifetime (however long it's been) of being told they are not living up to their potential or failing at school or at jobs or relationships, our clients have gathered enough emotional scars to shock even a seasoned psychologist. This must be addressed. The self limiting belief that they are broken or failures or lazy or unworthy must be turned around, and this can be no easy task.

Once the client has brought these false beliefs up to themselves, with a further understanding of their chemical make-up, gifts, talents, and strengths, they can often make extraordinary strides towards new places. Other times, if moving forward is not possible, we partner with therapists and other colleagues to augment our clients' strengths. Every person needs a team. We support our clients to be the captain of theirs.

5. "The medical diagnosis of the mind therefore risks creating new disorders, the disorders we've cited, such as shame, fear, inferiority, loss of hope, reduced enthusiasm, shattered dreams, and despair." --Edward Hallowell, M.D.

It takes a strength-based approach. We do not look at AD/HD as a dysfunction. Gifted individuals are wildly resistant to being viewed as broken despite their own raging inner critic. We look at it as functionality. This style of brain has huge gifts and what it is capable of doing is astounding. The client needs to understand how to exploit their gifts to an extreme. Then, the challenges begin to shrink, and the client begins to believe that they are capable of overcoming them.



In conclusion, we never see our clients as anything but creative, resourceful, and whole. They have all the answers they will ever need inside them. Gifted and AD/HD people are some of THE most brilliant people on the planet. Their gifts are limitless. Yet very often they do not thrive until one person sees them for who they really are. To be seen is all they need to find the inner courage to set aside their self-limiting beliefs and alter their negative perceptions. That is when we, as coaches, find our clients coming up with their own accommodations and strategies. Eventually they learn to coach themselves, and step into a new way of embracing their unique way of functioning.

Coming up

In handy “stick it on the fridge” form!

Activity	Ages	Dates	Location	Description
Gifted Kid's Club - NEIU	7-13	Saturdays, once a month 9:30 – 12:00	NEIU Student Union, Chicago	Project-based, kid-directed fun - year starting with stop motion animation projects and free choice of LEGOs and board games
Book & Social Club - Elmhurst	7+	Saturdays, once a month, 10:30 - Noon	Elmhurst Public Library	Open “play” with some time devoted to sharing a favorite book, game, hobby
Origami Club	All ages	Sundays, once a month, 1:00 – 3:00	Evanston Library	Families can learn, teach or watch origami!
Math Club	9-13	Sundays, once a month, 3:00 – 5:00	Evanston Library	Non-competitive student directed club for math passionate kids with a solid algebra background, mentored by Northwestern Graduate Mathematics student
Museum Classes	10-14	Weekdays	Various Chicago museums	October – Egypt Unwrapped November – Future Energy Chicago January – Lakeshore Ecology February- Planet Hunters March – The Great Fossil Hunt April – Exploring Anatomy: Squid Dissection

Upcoming CGCC events

As we head into our second season of programming, we are excited to see how our offerings have grown. Event details always can be found on the [CGCC Event Registrations](#) page of our web site. Above is a summary of our current kid and family activities to get you started, but check the Registrations page for new updates as several activities still are in the planning stages, including geocaching in the northern suburbs (November 23, inclement weather date December 7).

With the exception of the Museum Classes which have a small fee, all of the CGCC events are free but do require registration.

Parents, there also is something just for you. Our popular [Parenting Gifted Series](#) begins this year on Monday evening, October 28, with a talk on Living with Intensity by Dr. Michele Kane. Dr. Kane is the Coordinator of the Master of Arts in Gifted Education Program at Northeastern Illinois University. Her talk will help parents understand the developmental experiences of gifted youngsters, identify strategies for nurturing the inner life and provide support for the adults who help to guide these children. We are grateful to St. Matthias School in Chicago for providing space for our Series this year. Please invite your friends to our free monthly talks. It is a wonderful way to learn something new and meet others who share your journey. [Registration](#) is appreciated so that we can make adequate space arrangements.

Our [Calendar](#) also includes information on many public activities throughout the Chicagoland area. Are you looking for something to do this Saturday, October 19, for example? The calendar lists ideas for the entire family. Parents can attend a lecture at one of the Northwestern University Center for Talent Development Saturday Enrichment Program locations: [Evanston](#): “Balancing a Gifted Child with Non-Gifted Siblings,” [Palatine](#): “Twice Exceptional Children,” [Chicago](#): “Friend, Foe, or ‘Frenemy’? Helping Gifted Children Form Healthy Relationships in a Complex World.” Have a budding architect? Head to the [Robie House](#) where children can use LEGOs to create a 3D model of their own floor plan design or participate in [Open House Chicago](#). Open House Chicago offers free behind-the-scenes access to over 150 buildings across Chicago. Is science more your thing? It is well worth the drive to DeKalb to experience [NIU’s STEMfest](#) which features hands-on activities, demonstrations and exhibits of all things science, technology, engineering and mathematics. If you prefer literature, visual arts, linguistics and music, the 35th annual [Humanities Day](#) at the University of Chicago is for you. Please note, Humanities Day is free but some sessions do require pre-registration.

If you still are in need of additional support or enrichment, you can find more of both on the [Gifted Resources](#) website page. Listed there are many Chicago area resources for both parents and children.