

PROFILES OF HIGH LEARNING POTENTIAL CHILDREN

Summary

In 1988, following extensive research in gifted education, Maureen Neihart and George Betts proposed six profiles of children with high learning potential. The profiles have been widely used in supporting high learning potential children; they were revised in 2010 based on the authors' experiences since they were developed. This advice sheet is aimed at parents and carers wanting to find out more information about high learning potential or looking for ways to support their high learning potential child.

Introduction

High learning potential children are usually discussed as an undifferentiated group. When they are differentiated, it tends to be based on differences in intellectual abilities, talents, or interests rather than differences in terms of behaviour, feelings, and needs. Maureen Neihart and George Betts' "Profiles of the gifted and talented" provides a framework for a deeper understanding of these students by looking closely at their feelings, behaviour, and needs.

There are six different profiles of high learning potential children proposed:

The Successful

Successful high learning potential children have a good academic self-concept, are eager for approval from others and are, therefore, often motivated by others or by aiming for top marks. They often achieve good results, conform to social norms, and enjoy learning. However, they can sometimes become complacent about their ability or be highly self-critical. They may avoid taking risks due to a fear of failure, so may choose safe activities that don't go beyond their comfort zone or what is required.

The Creative

Creative high learning potential children can have high energy levels and often use these for creativity. They are often honest and direct, have heightened sensitivity (emotional or sensory), and stand up for their convictions. They express themselves creatively and persevere in their areas of interest. They are bored and frustrated when under-challenged or asked to do tasks that do not include a portion of creative problem-solving. They often enjoy ambiguity. They can be uncertain about social rules, question rules and challenge teachers. They may have poor self-control and may experience conflict with their peers.

The Dual / Multiple Exceptional (DME)

Dual / multiple exceptional (DME) high learning potential children are often good problem-solvers, think conceptually, enjoy novelty and complexity, and make connections easily. However, they may become intensely frustrated and can have poor self-control. They are prone to discouragement and may be disruptive in class. They can sometimes be disorganised and slow in information processing. They often don't see themselves as successful and can struggle to know where they belong. They may seem average or below average as their difficulties mask their ability, and their work can be inconsistent.

The Underground

Underground high learning potential children have a desire to belong socially and move from one peer group to the next. They often feel unsure and conflicted. They have a diminished sense of self and do not feel connected to either the teacher or their peers. They are ambivalent about achievement and may view good results as a betrayal of their social group. They often deny their talents, reject challenge, and are unsure of their direction in life. They have a tendency to internalise and personalise societal ambiguities

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and conflicts.

The At-Risk

At-risk high learning potential children may create crises and cause disruptions. They can be resentful, angry, defensive, reckless, and manipulative. They are often resistant to authority and critical of themselves and others. They pursue outside interests but often have low academic achievement. They are unlikely to be motivated by teacher-driven rewards but tend to work more effectively with guidance from a mentor. They are often creative, thrill-seeking and may isolate themselves from others.

The Autonomous

Autonomous high learning potential children often work independently, are self-motivated, self-directed, and are resilient. They tend to possess appropriate social skills and show tolerance and respect for others. They follow their strong areas of passion, seek challenge, and are willing to take risks and to learn from failure. They are usually ambitious but may not view academic success as one of their highest priorities. They are often self-confident, have a good sense of self, and are good self-regulators. They learn for depth and understanding.

Further Information

PA515 Supporting Successful Profile High Learning Potential Children	This advice sheet is aimed at parents and carers wanting to find out how to support a successful profile high learning potential child.
PA516 Supporting Creative Profile High Learning Potential Children	This advice sheet is aimed at parents and carers wanting to find out how to support a creative profile high learning potential child.
PA517 Supporting Dual or Multiple Exceptional Profile High Learning Potential Children	This advice sheet is aimed at parents and carers wanting to find out how to support a DME profile high learning potential child.
PA518 Supporting Underground Profile High Learning Potential Children	This advice sheet is aimed at parents and carers wanting to find out how to support an underground profile high learning potential child.
PA519 Supporting At-Risk Profile High Learning Potential Children	This advice sheet is aimed at parents and carers wanting to find out how to support an at-risk profile high learning potential child.
PA520 Supporting Autonomous High Learning Potential Children	This advice sheet is aimed at parents and carers wanting to find out how to support an autonomous profile high learning potential child.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240729625_Profiles_of_the_Gifted_and_Talented	Betts, George & Neihart, Maureen. (1988). Profiles of the Gifted and Talented. Gifted Child Quarterly - GIFTED CHILD QUART. 32. 248-253. 10.1177/001698628803200202.
https://slideplayer.com/slide/3131947/	PowerPoint by Neihart and Betts presenting the different profiles
<i>Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted: 30 Essays on Giftedness, 30 Years of SENG</i> by SENG Authors	To celebrate its 30th anniversary, Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG) offers a collection of 30 essays from leading experts in the gifted community.

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