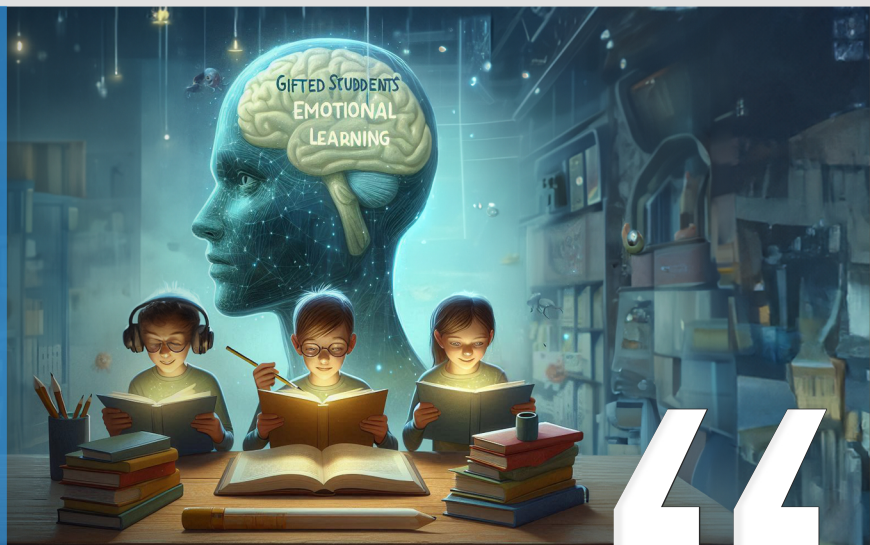


# WorldTalentWeb NEWSLETTER

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## WTW June 2024 Editorial

### Penina Kiss & Jennie Quinn

Welcome to the latest edition of the WorldTalentWeb newsletter - a summer Olympics season! Jennie and I have been eagerly following our Australian teams and the incredible athletes who will be proudly representing *Down Under* between July and August this year. For our global audience who enjoy elite-level sports, we know you'll be doing the same.

For those who prefer a wildly different flavour of creative competition, the recent 2024 Met Gala didn't disappoint. *The Garden of Time* theme embraced the Anna Wintour Costume Centre exhibition titled, *Sleeping Beauties: Reawakening Fashion*. It's currently being displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, an institution that is known for its origins dating back to the late 1800s in Paris, France for the purpose of educating the American people. (The Met, 2024).

Like most global trends, events and movements, the popular fashion extravaganza has had its fair share of criticisms. Claims such as the exorbitant amount of money spent on highlighting wealthy celebrities and the lack of sensitivity towards other more pressing global issues centred around warfare were expressed via social media platforms, masking some of the valid benefits of the event in the creative domain.

The funds raised from these annual events continue to resource the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute which houses a collection of over 33 000 pieces of fashion items ranging from clothes, jewellery and other accessories dating back to the 1400s (The Met, 2024).

*"When an item of clothing enters the Costume Institute collection, its status is changed forever. What was once a vital part of a person's life is now a motionless 'artwork' that can no longer be worn or heard, touched, or smelled. This exhibition reanimates these objects, helping us experience them as they were originally intended—with vibrancy, dynamism, and life."* (The Met, 2024).

The preservation of these unique artefacts that represent our global ingenuity in the creative and performing arts is necessary to ensure our emerging and eminent designers, artists and innovators, are continually inspired and highly valued in what is considered a superficial 'throw-away' society.

And for those who are more in tune with musical talent, the 2024 Eurovision contest also delivered an eclectic demonstration of creativity and controversial drama of its own. The iconic music competition, initially shaped from Italian musical festival influences back in the 1950s, was first performed in Switzerland in 1956 and was broadcast to an international audience. The evolution of this musical event has reached some intense heights, with technological advances, current political protests and dubious eliminations, all of which may be attributed to the creative minds of gifted and talented people.

*"Over the years the format has evolved into the week-long, boundary pushing, technologically innovative, multi show spectacular we enjoy today."* (Eurovision, 2024).

The creatively gifted population, (and combinations that complement this domain), have various opportunities to thrive in the here-and-now as adults, which is why talent development of our students is such an important aspect to deliberately foster in schools. We must systematically support their journey from *potential* towards *eminence* (Subnotnik et al, 2021). These events have been coordinated on smaller scales in schools and other learning institutions via enrichment, acceleration and alternate career pathways that partner with cutting-edge industries and business corporations that focus on design thinking.

In Australia, our primary schools celebrate Book Week themes each year as guided by The Children's Book Council of Australia (<https://cbca.org.au/cbca-book-week>). The August 2024 theme is titled, *Reading is Magic*. We know that most children positively anticipate the opportunity to creatively dress in the hope of best representing the theme, just like the Met Gala, though many parents and carers may also be looking forward to this time where they can release their own creative flair vicariously through their children. Sadly, the event does not typically continue into secondary school. It seems that reading may no longer be *magic* when you're an adolescent...but we suspect it's more to do with high school being a no-go-zone for mums and dads!

Our fabulous authors have shared with us their expertise in gifted education and talent development which may resonate with the valuable work we do in our educational communities across the globe. Madelaine Armstrong Willcocks discusses her work in New Zealand around a specialist programme called *MindPlus* which has led to a journey of change. Bernadette Bentley from Sydney Australia asks us to reflect on our meaningful work with gifted learners and if we are doing enough for their social and emotional learning needs in the context of today's social climate. Finally, the esteemed Dr Joseph Renzulli shares his views and strategies around promoting emotional development and social responsibility through the use of co-cognitive skills.

We look forward to seeing you on the other side of the Paris Olympics. Best of luck to all our international athletes!

Penina & Jennie

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## Our Journey of Change: Improving Access for Learners AND Training for Teacher

### Madeline Armstrong Willcocks for New Zealand Centre for Gifted Education

Presented at the World Council for Gifted Education 2023 Conference

Excellence without Borders - Gifted Education in a Changing World

New Zealand's education system is failing to adequately understand and respond effectively to the needs of gifted learners. There are pockets of excellence across our small country, but systemically, gifted learners are under-recognised and under-served. Currently only a tiny number of gifted learners are able to access specialist gifted education and only a similarly small number of teachers have encountered initial or ongoing training relating to gifted learners. Understanding these significant issues in the context of our changing educational landscape has enabled an innovation that provides BOTH specialist gifted education for students AND ongoing training for teachers.

#### The Context

New Zealand has a nationalised compulsory education system for children aged 6-16 years that specifically aims to respond to the "...uniqueness and diversity of all ākonga [learners] - their identities, languages, cultures and strengths." (Ministry of Education, 2023). Like many education systems internationally, ours is now in a period of rapid change to keep abreast of social, economic and political change. We currently have a large-scale refresh of our national curriculum in progress, with the explicit vision of inclusive, equitable and connected learner that achieves advances for all ākonga [learners]. Our Ministry of Education has an established strategy for supporting learners with additional learning needs, the Learning Support Action Plan (Ministry of Education, 2019). Gifted learners are a specifically recognised group in this plan, with a funded package of supports with an estimated budget of \$2million per annum over five years that includes:

- Out of school experiences and events for gifted learners
- Gifted learner awards allowing extension study and projects for learners
- Teacher study awards to build teacher capability in gifted education
- Supports for teachers in early learning services (children from birth to age 6, not currently part of the compulsory education sector)
- Access to One Day Schools (privately funded specialist programmes) or similar online learning opportunities

The Ministry of Education has not collected sufficient data about engagement in these opportunities or outcomes. This means that nationally we are unable to determine the success of this strategy.

#### The Problem

The most significant barrier to gifted learners accessing the support

they need lies with teacher professional learning. This barrier is arguably more significant than in other similar educational systems due to the unique requirements placed on New Zealand teachers and schools about defining giftedness and designing programmes for gifted learners.

The Ministry of Education advises each school to develop their own local definition of giftedness and then develop their own approach to serving the needs of gifted learners. Schools are given a general process to follow to do this but very little practical guidance (Ministry of Education, 2012). For teachers and schools to do this effectively, a well-informed and well-supported teaching workforce is essential. But there is a recognised dearth of teacher training in gifted education or neurodiversity more broadly, right from initial teacher qualifications through to advanced qualifications (Riley & Rawlinson, 2008). A recent unpublished survey of Gifted NEX members highlighted this in more concrete terms - 90% of members had no training in recognising or meeting the needs of their gifted learners. Gifted NEX is a Ministry of Education funded 'network of expertise' for professional learning and connection, taking a 'for teachers, by teachers' approach to teacher development.

When unprepared and under-supported teachers and schools are being tasked with first defining giftedness in their local community then designing and implementing specialist programmes for their gifted learners, the inevitable outcome is that gifted learners are not getting the support they need. Whilst there is a lack of recent research to support this logical conclusion, in 2008 the Education Review Office, whose remit is to evaluate and report on the education and care of learners in schools, found that only 17% of surveyed schools had effective provisions for gifted learners across their five key indicators of quality practice.

In response to this unmet need over time, outside-of-school specialist gifted education opportunities, offered at parent cost, have become well established in New Zealand, providing much needed support for gifted learners (Riley, 2007). These opportunities serve a small number of New Zealand's gifted children well, but only that small number, as an estimate less than 1% of school-age learners in New Zealand. These options for gifted learners are outside of compulsory schooling and unfortunately have done nothing over time to change the systemic issues around teacher and school development.

Therefore, change is clearly needed to better support gifted learners as well as their teachers and schools.

## The Change Journey

Our organisation, the New Zealand Centre for Gifted Education (NZCGE, [www.nzcge.nz](http://www.nzcge.nz)), has been on an intentional journey of change over the past two years to bring about systemic change so that gifted learners are well supported in our education system.

NZCGE is a small, not-for-profit organisation that has been offering direct-to-student services and professional learning for teachers for over 25 years. Our vision is that all gifted learners receive the specialist support they need to thrive and reach their potential, but this is not currently happening systemically in New Zealand.

Our specialist programme, MindPlus, brings gifted learners together in like-minded groups and supports their intellectual, social and emotional development, as well as helping them develop their strengths and talents. Our most recent impact surveys for students and their parents showed strongly positive outcomes for learning and social and emotional factors: (New Zealand Centre for Gifted Education, 2024):

- 89% of students were able to learn about themselves as gifted individuals
- 95% of students were able to develop their talents
- 93% of students felt understood by their friends and teacher at MindPlus, and 97% of parents agreed

To address the systemic barriers that are preventing all gifted learners getting the specialist support they need, we have invested in innovation to support teachers and schools. With a small group of pioneering schools, we have co-designed and tested an internationally unique new partnership programme, MindPlus Your School. This programme offers BOTH direct to student services (MindPlus) AND highly effective teacher professional development. Over our two year development period we have developed and tested the programme with a range of diverse schools across New Zealand.



MindPlus YourSchool is a partnership between NZCGE and schools, to deliver our student-facing programme, MindPlus, with a teacher in a school and our specialist coach. The student programme is specialised to meet the intellectual and social and emotional needs of gifted learners, is well-established as highly effective, and is adaptable to suit local and individual contexts. The professional learning programme that runs alongside the student-facing programme is online, self-paced over two years, and includes opportunities for live online coaching. It is neither a 'one-shot-wonder' programme nor is it time-consuming; it is on-the-job, just-in-time learning. The learning is designed so that teachers can

immediately apply their new learning in the MindPlus YourSchool programme and in the broader learning programme of their school.

As part of our journey of change, we investigated the impact of MindPlus YourSchool. Our internal survey (NZCGE, 2023b) was highly positive:

- 99% of Partner Teachers report that students find the work interesting and challenging
- 100% of Partner Teachers report a positive difference for their students and school
- 99% of Partner Teachers report that the professional learning programme is working well

We asked Impact Lab to externally evaluate MindPlus YourSchool to investigate further. They found the Social Return on Investment (SROI) for YourSchool is \$6.90 for every \$1 invested, or looking another way, a social value of \$6000 generated for each participant. They found a number of outcomes that contributed to this high SROI, including:

- Improved mental health - specifically improved emotional and behavioural regulation, increased resilience
- Increased academic achievement and educational engagement
- Increased awareness and inclusivity
- Reduced social exclusion, reduced psychological and social distress and reduced risky behaviour

They identify a number of 'Good Features' of MindPlus YourSchool that are research-identified contributors to positive outcomes, including creating lifelong learners, supporting wellbeing, training strong educators, and promoting community education and advocacy.

We now know that MindPlus YourSchool is a highly effective innovation that can potentially assist the New Zealand education system in overcoming systemic barriers that are currently preventing our gifted learners from reaching their potential and thriving.



### Where to next?

We are committed to our vision of supporting all gifted learners in Aotearoa and we are working with our Ministry of Education to work through barriers. Our next and most important step is to bring MindPlus YourSchool to as many schools as we can.

We are also advocating for a more inclusive approach to education that recognises and supports neurodiversity more broadly, through the Neurodiversity in Education Coalition (NiEC, [www.neurodiversity.org.nz](http://www.neurodiversity.org.nz)), a group of four peak bodies including NZCGE, ADHD NZ, Autism NZ and the Dyslexia Foundation of New Zealand, to advocate together for the needs of neurodiverse learners in our education system. The coalition's recent White Paper, Unlocking the enormous potential of neurodiverse learners (NiEC, 2023) advocated for three key changes in New Zealand

education, one of which is scaling up programmes that work, such as MindPlus YourSchool. The coalition is committed to ensuring the voices of young neurodiverse learners are heard at the highest levels, bringing together 15 Young Neurodiversity Champions to co-design 'what works' for learners, teachers and schools. (Education Gazette, 2023)

NZCGE's journey of change is one that recognises the current limitations of our education system and innovates solutions so that our gifted learners can reach their full potential and thrive.

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## Social and emotional learning – Are we doing enough?

### **Bernadette Bentley**

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#### **Introduction**

It is an observation, through discussions with educators and delivering professional learning to dedicated teachers and educational leaders, that there appears to be a distinct lack of knowledge of what social and emotional learning is and that there is a misunderstanding of social and emotional needs being inherently different to wellbeing. This lack of understanding may stem from social and emotional learning not being included in pre-service training, where the emphasis seems to be on academic rather than affective needs. It is a case of educators not knowing what they don't know. Students are not capable of realising their academic potential until their social and emotional needs (SEN) are met (Durlak et al., 2022; Greenberg, 2023; Taylor et al. 2017). When universal school based social and emotional learning is embedded into teaching and learning practices, academic achievement is enhanced (Cipriano et al. 2023). The importance of students' SEN is evident in the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#), with the first standard being 'know students and how they learn'.

How can our teachers meet our students' SEN, when there is a clear lack of awareness of what social and emotional needs are? One wonders if the affective needs were met for numerous talented musicians, actors, artists and those gifted in other domains who have taken their lives, if their fate would have been different if they had coping strategies to develop resilience and realise hope. Research suggests that gifted students are no more or less susceptible to suicide (Cross, 1996; Cross & Cross, 2021; Cross 2024). However, an empirical review proposes that creative adults are more at risk, although the research does not suggest a parallel with creative adolescents (Neihart, 1998). Lindt et al. (2021) also raised concerns regarding the lack of clarity surrounding the understanding of the meaning and consequences of being identified as gifted, not only among gifted children but also their parents, which poses challenges regarding student self-concept.

How can we meet the SEN of our gifted students and help them develop affective skills, particularly regarding social isolation, social impact (Cassady & Cross, 2006) and self-concept, if our educators are so unaware of social and emotional learning? The aim of this article is to introduce research and resources to assist with developing knowledge and associated strategies for educators to begin their journey in their understanding and implementation of social and emotional learning for gifted students.

#### **Background**

While the literature clearly indicates the positive effects of SEL for all students, those learners who are gifted have an acute need for the inclusion of SEL in their school experience. Due to their asynchronous development, many gifted students display high levels of emotional intensity and robust levels of moral justice (Silverman, 1997). In addition to asynchronous development, motivational factors, ineffective self-regulation, and frustration with school, may have the potential to spin a gifted learner into a period of underachievement (Hebert, 2010; Landis and Reschly, 2013; McCoach and Siegle, 2003; Reis and McCoach, 2000).

As a result, some of our most promising students may be floundering in boredom, consumed with apathy toward a system that appears irrelevant, or break down emotionally due to a lack of coping skills required to manage and maximise their potential for high achievement and creative thinking (Folsom, 2005; Kanevsky and Keighley, 2003; McCoach and Siegle, 2003; Pfeiffer and Stocking, 2000; Reis and McCoach, 2000).

"The promotion of social, emotional, and academic learning is not a shifting educational fad; it is the substance of education itself. It is not a distraction from the 'real work'; it is how instruction can succeed. (Source: [A Nation at Risk to a Nation at Hope](#))".

Helping children to learn social and emotional skills is essential for learning, particularly due to the results of Covid on our young people. "However, it is—and has always been—central to education. It is the reason that education begins with concerned and involved parents, who provide emotional support and set high expectations. It is the reason that schools that mentor children and encourage self-respect are essential allies of parents. It is the reason that good teachers can change lives, helping students find unsuspected gifts and inner purpose. And it is the reason that everyone involved in education shares an amazing calling: to foster in children the knowledge, skills, and character that enable children to make better lives in a better country ([A Nation at Risk to a Nation at Hope](#), p. 6)".

As all education involves social, emotional, and academic learning, we face two options: either ignore this reality and settle for unsatisfactory outcomes, or intentionally and effectively address our students' SEN.

## Definitions

Ensuring an understanding of the definitions of wellbeing and social and emotional learning is fundamental. There are a number of definitions, however, the following have been chosen for ease of understanding and accessibility.

### Wellbeing

*Wellbeing is a multi-dimensional concept (Kellock, 2020; Main, 2014) that takes into account physical, mental, emotional, and social aspects of health as well as individuals' capacity to achieve balance between facing challenges and having the resources needed to meet those challenges (Dodge et al., 2012). Source: [Fray, Jaremus, Gore & Harris 2022](#)*

### Social and emotional

*Social and emotional learning (SEL) is an integral part of education and human development. SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships and make responsible decisions.*

*SEL advances educational equity and excellence through authentic school-family-community partnerships to establish learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships, rigorous and meaningful curriculum and instruction, and ongoing evaluation. SEL can help address various forms of inequity and empower young people and adults to co-create thriving schools and contribute to safe, healthy, and just communities. Source: [CASEL](#)*

SEL is a component of wellbeing but it is not interchangeable with the term wellbeing - there is often some confusion with this concept.

From the definitions, the words that resonated with educators attending a professional learning session on SEL were used to create this wordle.



In the same SEL professional learning session, participants were asked the following questions:

Consider your own learning in SEL.

1. Did you have specific SEL activities embedded in each subject at school when you were a student?
2. Did you have SEL as a compulsory unit to complete at uni in your undergraduate teaching degree?
3. Do you have ongoing professional development of SEL at school?

The vast majority of participants indicated no to all questions above. More focus is required in this space.

A proactive, rather than reactive rationale for the embedding of SEL is suggested, not only to possibly lower the number of cases of gifted underachievement but also to support the development of SEL for all gifted students who require guidance in order to reach their actual level of potential. Investment in student SEL programs needs to be appropriately targeted, rather than supporting broad, generic programs for all students.

Gifted students at times require specific programs to accommodate their needs.

## Research and Resources

The following research and resources have been included to assist educators with their initial understanding of SEL and how to effectively embed it into their teaching and learning programs.

### Research

The dissertation of Koehle (2023) grounded on the work of Cavilla and Bandura, explores the effects of a differentiated affective curriculum on the social and emotional development of gifted elementary students. The study emphasises the importance of adopting affective curricula, differentiation in affective instruction, and integrating social and emotional learning into the educational experience to support the holistic development of gifted students. Koehle found that providing social and emotional instruction that is differentiated to meet the unique needs of gifted learners is effective in addressing their asynchronous social and emotional development. Targeted instruction based on identified areas of asynchronous development can narrow the gaps in development.

The chapter by Susen Smith *Responding to the Unique Social and Emotional Learning Needs of Gifted Australian Students* (2017) discusses the social and emotional learning needs of intellectually gifted students in Australia. It highlights that gifted students often experience and respond to external influences differently due to their asynchronous development and social-emotional complexities. The chapter emphasises the importance of understanding these unique characteristics and providing appropriate support to scaffold their social and affective growth for improved academic engagement.

Some effective strategies, suggested by Smith, for scaffolding the social and affective growth of gifted students to enhance their academic engagement and wellbeing include:

- Nurturing links with specific neuropsychological functioning using supports like think alouds, graphic organisers, visuals, imagery, mnemonics, acronyms, analogies, or metaphors to facilitate complex cognitive processing and behaviours towards successful outcomes.
  - Training mentors to support goal development based on student interests outside of the curriculum to enhance self-concept, self-efficacy, and self-regulation skills.
  - Reducing anxiety by providing learning choices and focusing on intrinsically motivated tasks with small step goals to foster efficiency, achievement, resiliency, and reduce underachievement.
  - Applying growth mindset strategies for talent development, such as teaching that challenges are opportunities for growth, providing cooperative learning tasks for choice and self-responsibility, modelling mistakes and how to overcome them, consistent practice, and self-evaluation opportunities.
  - Building social awareness by developing understandings of others, expressing empathy, acknowledging ethical norms, and recognizing supportive resources to help gifted students navigate their emotional experiences and interactions effectively.
- These strategies aim to support the social and emotional growth of gifted students, ultimately enhancing their academic engagement and overall well-being.

The resource; [Scaffolding the Social Emotional Learning \(SEL\) of Intellectually Gifted Children: The CASEL Approach](#). (Smith, 2017) is a succinct summary of the above paper.

The article "On Being Gifted, but Sad and Misunderstood: Social, emotional, and academic outcomes of gifted students in the Wollongong Youth Study" (Vialle et al., 2015), explores the experiences of gifted students in terms of their social, emotional, and academic outcomes. The study involved 65 gifted students from high schools in New South Wales, Australia, and aimed to compare them with their non-gifted peers. Various factors such as hope, affect, problem-solving orientation, conscientiousness, attitudes to school, self-esteem, social support, and

academic grades were measured to understand the differences between high achievers and low achievers within the gifted group. The findings highlight the social and emotional challenges faced by gifted students, emphasising the importance of providing appropriate support and understanding for this unique population.

The emotional outcomes of gifted students in this study differed from their non-gifted peers in the following ways:

- Gifted students reported feeling more sad and less satisfied with their social support compared to their non-gifted counterparts. This suggests that despite their academic achievements, gifted students may experience emotional challenges related to social relationships and support.
- Teachers rated gifted students as being well-adjusted and less likely to have behavioural or emotional problems than non-gifted students. This discrepancy between teacher assessments and student self-reports indicates a need for educators to remain vigilant in monitoring the psychological well-being of gifted students.
- Gifted students did not significantly differ from non-gifted peers in terms of self-esteem, trait hope, problem orientation, or attitudes towards education. This finding emphasises that gifted adolescents share more similarities than differences with their non-gifted counterparts in certain emotional aspects.

The study highlights the complex emotional experiences of gifted students and underscores the importance of providing appropriate support to address their unique social and emotional needs.

## Resources

### CASEL

An understanding of SEL and an implementation guide is available on the CASEL website. The CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) website is a comprehensive resource dedicated to promoting and advancing social and emotional learning (SEL) in education. It provides a wide range of tools, resources, and research to support educators, policymakers, and communities in implementing SEL programs effectively. The site includes information on SEL frameworks, evidence-based practices, and assessment tools. It also offers professional development opportunities, guidelines for SEL integration into school curricula, and case studies demonstrating successful SEL initiatives. The goal of CASEL is to ensure that all students develop the social and emotional skills necessary for success in school and life.

### SEL frameworks

A number of SEL frameworks have been devised. I have included my three favourites.

#### *The Model of Dynamic Differentiation (MoDD) Susen Smith (2015)*

The Model of Dynamic Differentiation (MoDD) explores the interrelationships between internal and external factors to support the unique educational needs of gifted students. This framework offers principles and strategies to help educators create quality educational environments for talent development in classrooms.

The Model of Dynamic Differentiation (MoDD) helps educators support the educational needs of gifted students by providing a framework that allows for the design and implementation of differentiated teaching and learning tasks tailored to the individual needs of each student. The MoDD emphasises the dynamic interplay between various socio-cultural and environmental influences within human processes, reinforcing the importance of considering both internal and external factors in supporting gifted students.

One key aspect of the MoDD is its flexibility and applicability across

different educational settings, from early childhood to tertiary environments, making it a versatile tool for educators working with gifted students. By incorporating principles and strategies from various models and processes relevant to individual educational needs, the MoDD can guide teachers in planning differentiation that addresses both enrichment and acceleration, catering to the holistic characteristics of gifted students.

The MoDD consists of four interconnected phases: assessment, enrichment, scaffolding, and self-regulation, which can be implemented in any order as needed throughout the school day. This dynamic interrelationship between the teaching processes within these phases creates a supportive learning culture for gifted students in the classroom, allowing teachers to adapt their approach based on the specific needs of advanced learners. "The MoDD is a framework for designing and implementing curriculum for all students; and can be flexibly applied across schools and settings from early childhood to tertiary environments" (Smith, 2015, p. 61).

#### *Cavilla's Taxonomy of Affective Curriculum (2019)*

Cavilla's Taxonomy of Affective Curriculum addresses the disparity in focus between cognitive and social and emotional learning for gifted students by providing a structured framework that emphasises the importance of affective skills alongside cognitive abilities. The taxonomy guides gifted learners through levels that focus on developing social-emotional competencies such as responsibility, empathy, self-regulation, and self-esteem in parallel with their cognitive growth.

By incorporating specific social and emotional abilities into the curriculum, the taxonomy ensures that gifted students receive comprehensive support for their emotional intelligence and moral development. This approach helps to reduce the imbalance in attention between cognitive and affective domains, enabling gifted learners to reach their full potential by nurturing both their intellectual abilities and social and emotional needs.

#### *Teaching for Intellectual and Emotional Learning (TIEL) Christy Folsom (2009)*

The TIEL Curriculum Design Wheel, also known as the TIEL Wheel, is a graphical representation of Teaching for Intellectual and Emotional Learning (TIEL). It combines academic and affective learning by integrating fundamental intellectual and social-emotional processes necessary for moral-ethical development.

The TIEL Wheel consists of two main components:

Thinking Operations (Academic Learning):

- Cognition
- Memory
- Evaluation
- Convergent Production
- Divergent Production

Qualities of Character (Affective Learning):

- Reflection
- Empathy
- Ethical Reasoning
- Mastery
- Appreciation

By visually representing these components in a colour-coded graphic, the TIEL Wheel helps educators understand and implement a curriculum that addresses both cognitive and affective aspects of learning. This integration of academic and affective learning aims to support the intellectual and moral development of all students, including gifted learners.

## Conclusion

Explicitly teaching social and emotional learning (SEL) is crucial for the academic success and overall development of gifted students. SEL promotes holistic growth, well-being, social competence, and self-regulated learning, and can help prevent underachievement. By incorporating SEL practices into gifted education, educators can support the social and emotional growth of gifted students, enhance their academic achievements, and help them realise their full potential. This approach equips students with coping strategies, providing them with hope and resilience rather than leaving them feeling hopeless. Let's rise to the challenge: "Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can" (Arthur Ashe).

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## The Other Goal of Gifted Education: Promoting Emotional Development and Social Responsibility Through the Use of Co-Cognitive Skills

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**The things that will destroy us are politics without principle; pleasure without conscience; wealth without work; knowledge without character; business without morality; science without humanity; and worship without sacrifice.**

*Mohandas Gandhi*

### Background

I have been asked numerous times about the purpose of gifted education and my answer has always been: “*To increase the world’s reservoir of creative and productive people that will help to make the world a better place.*” But making the world a better place means that our programs need to provide the opportunities, resources, and encouragement for young people to engage in activities that do-good things to help other people, their schools, communities, and even the world at large. For example, a group of students at a local school wrote a proposal, raised money, learned new skills about horticulture, and designed and planted a beautiful garden at their school to commemorate the memory of a classmate who died of cancer. And good works contributions can even affect larger audiences such as the work of Greta Thunberg, the young Swedish girl who addressed the United Nations about the dangers of climate change (<https://video.nepm.org/video/extended-preview-jklvrq/>).

Persons who have made contributions to all areas of human accomplishment have been recognized because of their abilities, creativity, and task commitment. But there are other characteristics that can be found in truly remarkable people, and especially people who have used their gifts and talents to promote various forms of social capital such as: civic engagement; ethical business and governmental practices; social justice; equity for underrepresented segments of our nation’s children, aged, disabled, and poor constituencies; and a greater concern for the preservation of the Earth’s precious resources. People such as Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Rachael Carson, to mention only a few, have used these traits to bring about important changes in the quality of life for countless people around the world. What is significant about these traits is that they are found in individuals across a broad spectrum of age levels, socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds, and levels of educational opportunity. In other words, these traits *defy* the typical “normal curve”

assessments that have been so popular when examining the potentials of young people for traditional lesson-learning giftedness that still dominates many programs.

It is for this reason that we have termed these traits *co-cognitive* characteristics. They are the kinds of characteristics that give rise to the development of cognitive abilities in challenging problematic situations where critical thinking, creative problem solving, and other forms of constructively intelligent behavior are called for. Most importantly, these traits serve as the triggers-for-action through which committed individuals and groups have *applied* their scientific, artistic, and cultural knowledge to making improvements in the quality of life, the creation of community, and the pursuit of happiness. We view this goal of learning as a transformation from knowledge acquisition to the application of knowledge to wise choices, decision-making, and purposeful action. This is how we help young people develop wisdom, which we define as (1) the possession of knowledge of the best ends and best means (including discernment and judgment), and (2) the capacity to make good use of that knowledge, discernment, and judgment. In other words, wisdom requires not only a level and type of knowing or thinking but also the application of those abilities to a socially constructive purpose. Capabilities without *action* are simply potentials, rather than manifestations of potentials. None of us is affected by unrealized potential; we are all affected by positive *action*.

Our research (Renzulli, 2006) thus far has identified the following six factors depicted in Figure 1 below that make up the co-cognitive characteristics that are important contributors to socially positive action.

- *Optimism*. Optimism includes cognitive, emotional, and motivational components and reflects the belief that the future holds good outcomes. Optimism may be thought of as an attitude associated with expectations of a future that is socially desirable, to the individual’s advantage, or to the advantage of others. It is characterized by a sense of hope and a willingness to accept hard work.
- *Courage*. Courage is the ability to face difficulty or danger while overcoming physical, psychological, or moral fears. Integrity and strength of character are typical manifestations of courage, and they represent the most salient marks of those

creative people who actually increase social capital.

- *Romance with a topic or discipline.* When an individual is passionate about a topic or discipline, a true romance, characterized by powerful emotions and desires, evolves. The passion of this romance often becomes an image of the future in young people and provides the motivation for a long-term commitment to a course of action.
- *Sensitivity to human concerns.* This trait encompasses the abilities to comprehend another's affective world and to accurately and sensitively communicate such understanding through action. Altruism and empathy, aspects of which are evident throughout human development, characterize this trait.
- *Physical/mental energy.* All people have this trait in varying degrees, but the amount of energy an individual is willing and able to invest in the achievement of a goal is a crucial issue in high levels of accomplishment. In the case of eminent individuals, this energy investment is a major contributor to task commitment. Charisma and curiosity are frequent correlates of high physical and mental energy.
- *Vision/sense of destiny.* Complex and difficult to define, vision or a sense of destiny may be described best by a variety of interrelated concepts, such as internal locus of control, motivation, volition, and self-efficacy. When an individual has a vision or sense of destiny about future activities, events, and involvements, that vision serves to stimulate planning and to direct behavior; it becomes an incentive for present behavior.

Of course, many interactions take place between and among these six components. We will refer to these components as *co-cognitive factors* because they interact with and enhance the cognitive traits that we ordinarily associate with success in school and with the overall development of human abilities. Admittedly, these characteristics are much more complex and difficult to study than typical cognitive ability and test score-based research, but they are, nevertheless, the things that have characterized influential people over the centuries who have made a difference in the improvement of the human condition.

### Teaching Strategies For Internalizing Co-cognitive Characteristics

The big challenge, of course, is developing teaching strategies for internalizing these characteristics. *Internalizing* simply means that traits will become a meaningful part of the young person's attitudes, beliefs, values and behaviors rather than doing something they do to earn a good grade or material reward. Figure 2 below depicts a range of intervention strategies ranging from low to high impact and are briefly described as follows:

- The Rally-Round-the-Flag Approach, sometimes referred to by others as "the cheerleading method," involves visual displays (posters, banners, bulletin boards) featuring certain values, slogans, or examples of virtuous behaviors.
- The Gold Star Approach is not unlike the ways in which we traditionally have rewarded students for good academic work. The approach makes use of techniques such as providing positive reinforcement through merit badges, placement on citizen-of-the-week lists, extolling good behavior at award assemblies or other events.
- The Teaching-and-Preaching Approach consists of the direct teaching of noncognitive material and is probably the most frequently used method to promote attitudes and behaviors related to character and value development. This approach resembles the kinds of training commonly used over the centuries in religious instruction and in situations in which the transformation of information, skills, and ideologies are the goal of persons responsible for the curriculum.

- The Vicarious Experience Approach is often used as an extension of direct teaching and consists of vicarious experiences that places students in situations in which they are expected to encounter a particular personal or emotional reaction to situations in which a specified non cognitive goal is being pursued.
- Direct Involvement I consists of ways in which students come into direct contact with situations and events where affective behaviors are taking place. Community service, internships with provisions for helping others or remediating injurious events, and participation in events where social or political action is being formulated or taking place are examples of this type of direct involvement.
- Direct Involvement II consists of situations in which young people take on *active leadership roles* to bring about positive social, educational, environmental, or political change, especially change that promotes justice, peace, or more harmonious relations between individuals and groups.

### Adding it All Up

A more detailed explanation of these strategies can be found in Renzulli, J. S., Koehler, J., & Fogarty, E. (2006). The internalization of co-cognitive attitudes, beliefs, values, and behaviors cannot be achieved through any one of these interventions alone. Schools should adopt several approaches. If our goal is to move more students toward initiating action and promoting social capital, then our schools need to provide them with more opportunities to achieve higher levels of social engagement in areas where students have expressed a strong interest. School environments that intend to foster the production of social capital should offer students experiences at every stage of these approaches, but Direct Involvement I and II opportunities produce the best results for strong internalization. An excellent resource on ideas and strategies for promoting social capital can be found in Barbara Lewis' Book referenced below (1988).

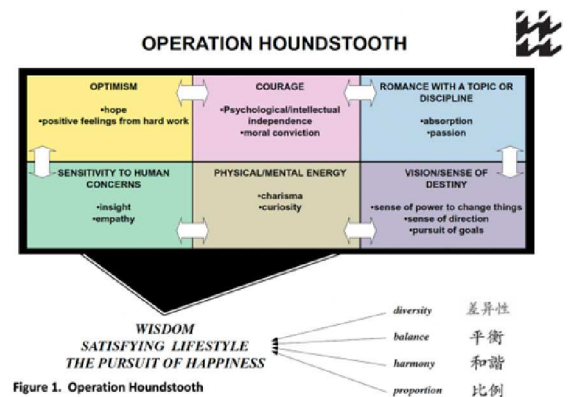


Figure 1. Operation Houndstooth

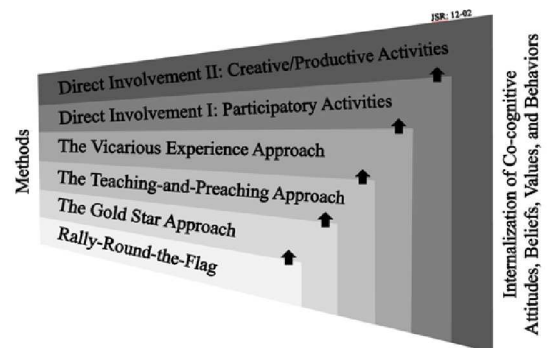


Figure 2. Interventions Designed To Promote Co-cognitive Characteristics

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## Call for Articles

We would like to invite you to write an article for the WorldTalentWeb newsletter. The theme and writing style are open for the author to determine. Articles could take the shape of an interview with a specialist in the field, a report on research or a recent event, a book or resource review etc. The guidelines for the article are listed below.

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### **Guidelines for submitting an article for the WorldTalentWeb newsletter**

1. A submitted article should be between 800 to 2000 words, not including references.
2. WorldTalentWeb newsletter caters to the international community and thus, all articles should be written in English.
3. American or British spelling is accepted.
4. All non-native English speakers should make sure to check their articles for language accuracy before submitting them.
5. The article should be in Times New Roman font, size 12 pt.
6. Authors should avoid using footnotes.
7. Authors should adhere to the APA style and/or formatting guidelines provided in the APA Manual, 7th Edition.
8. The article should be submitted with embedded photos, and tables, and figures if relevant.
9. The article should be submitted as an email attachment as a Microsoft Word document.
10. Articles should be word-processed and single-spaced with 1 inch (2.54 cm) at the top, bottom, left, and right of every page as per the APA 7th edition requirements.
11. Authors should strictly observe the copyrights-requirements and cite the work of others correctly.
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