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School Violence and Its Implications for Gifted Children

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to review the research of school violence, the emotional needs of gifted and talented students, and the implications of school violence for gifted students. The violence which has occurred during the past two years in the United States, not only in the high schools but also the middle and elementary schools, has been widely publicized in current periodicals, television, radio and newspapers.

The questions I have addressed in this article include: What is violence? What is school violence? What does research say about the emotional needs of gifted students? What are the implications of school violence for gifted students? Why is suicide a major implication of violence for gifted and talented students? What can administrators, teachers. and parents do to nurture these emotional needs in spite of school violence?

My use of these questions to review this vital educational issue attempts to present the implications of recent school violence for gifted and talented students. It also addresses how teachers, counselors and administrators can support the emotional needs of gifted and talented individuals, as well as all students, to make this nation's schools a safe and nurturing environments.

School Violence and Its Implications for Gifted Children

A Publishable Article Submitted to the

Division of Gifted Education

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Education

University of Northern Iowa

by

Nancy Schuldt

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nurturing environments.

This research paper by: Nancy K. Schuldt

Entitled: School Violence and the Emotional Implications for Gifted Students

has been approved as meeting the research paper requirements for the Degree of Master

of Arts in Education.

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July 16, 1999

Susan Johnsen, Ph.D.,Editor
Gifted Child Today
Baylor University, School of Education
P.O. Box 97304
Waco, Texas 76798-7304

Dear Dr. Johnsen:

I would appreciate your consideration of the enclosed manuscript for publication in Gifted Child. I received my Bachelors of Arts in Education from Hope College in Holland, Michigan. I have written "School Violence and the Implication for Gifted Students" in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Master of Arts in Education of the Gifted from the University of Northern Iowa. I am currently a gifted education specialist with the Cedar Rapids Community Schools in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

The accompanying article was written to examine school violence, the causes, the emotional needs of gifted children, the effect violence has on the gifted and talented population and the presentation research based recommendations for teachers, parents, and administration. The manuscript is 26 pages long including title page, abstract, text and references. Throughout the manuscript, I have followed the guidelines established in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Fourth Edition.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this manuscript, you may contact me at the address below, by telephone (319) 366-6723, or by e-mail, RNSCHULDT@worldnet.att.net .

Thank you for you attention to this manuscript.

Sincerely,

Nancy Schuldt

encl.

The tragedies which have transpired in our nation's schools over the past several years impact not only the lives and families of the students directly involved but also everyone who works to enrich the existence of our young people. One cannot pick up a daily newspaper to read without finding details of students who are victims of violence.

School violence is a current issue in which I became interested because of several instances involving students in the educational environment in which I teach, and because of my own personal experiences as a child in elementary school. In this article, I attempt to answer specifically posed questions and offer strategies that teachers and administrators can implement to make schools emotionally healthy environments where children can feel safe.

The first questions I address are: What constitutes violence? What defines school violence? What is being done to curb school violence? Next, I share information regarding research findings related to the emotional needs of gifted and talented children and how school violence affects these children. Finally, I make research based suggestions for school administrators, teachers, and parents as to how they can nurture a safe environment for gifted/talented children and all children where learning can take place without interference.

What is Violence?

In the report, Creating Caring Relationships To Foster Academic Excellence: Recommendations for Reducing Violence in California Schools, Dear (1995) defined violence as, "a public health and safety condition that often results from

individual, social, economic, political, and institutional disregard for basic human needs"

(p.5). According to the Commission, this includes physical and non-physical harm which

causes damage, pain, injury, or fear. Andel (1993) contended that the existence of such

events tends to disrupt the school environment and results in debilitation of personal

development which may lead to hopelessness and helplessness.

If a continuum of violence were developed, on one end it would show life

threatening acts of violence, such as shootings, rape and physically violent acts, fights

and other forms of assault. At the other end of the continuum one would find other forms

of aggression, such as psychological forms of violence consisting of put-downs and other

verbal abuse to social forms of violence. These would include social isolation and

ostracism, developmental forms of violences such as neglect, and the failure to empower

students to achieve (Furlong, Morrison, & Kingsford, 1990)

Dear (1995) reported our society has become has become increasingly more

violent. Indeed, violence has become a public health and safety issue endemic in our

society. Thus we assume that, when an individual is damaged by violence, society is

diminished. He also points out that violence is reciprocal and communicable: It is

contagious. It is transmitted by overt, indiscriminate aggression and in subtle,

unintentional ways. Violence, Dear stated, is not the human condition; rather it is a

learned behavior which is preventable. He argued that all forms of violence are harmful

and damaging and that physical, psychological, social and developmental violence

includes neglect, inconsistent behavior and low expectations by peers and adults.

He also concluded that violence cuts across all lines of culture and ethnicity and is not exclusive to any single group or socioeconomic class. Prevention of violence requires education of and by all segments of society. Therefore, prevention of violence requires education of and by all segments of society. As important, it requires a reassessment of how conflict is viewed and resolved (Dear, 1995).

<div align="center">What is Violence in Schools?</div>

The historical development of this society has been based on violence, and violence continues to be a cultural norm. Therefore, it is important that individuals should be educated to understand that they have choices in the way they behave and express their feeling and that they are responsible for the consequences of their actions. Effective resolution of violence requires early intervention that respects the integrity and dignity of all concerned (Andel, 1993).

In order to establish safe schools, school personnel need to be increasingly aware of the nature and implications of violence in their schools and should be trained in ways to deal effectively with that violence. Furlong (1994) has shown a direct connection between serious acts of violence and the more subtle forms of injury such as pushing, shoving, name calling, and various other forms of harm. His findings indicated that school personnel and teachers can stop these more insinuated and subtle forms of harm before they evolve into seriously violent acts. Indeed, many times school officials just need to be made aware of these situations. There is a need to remember to model appropriate behavior: to set high expectation levels for all students. Dear (1995) has

indicated the need for teachers to be consistent in enforcing school rules, regulations and discipline procedures, and to show concern and caring for not only students but also colleagues within the school environment .

Many agree that the school should focus on basic academic development and the personal and social enhancement of its clients. On the other hand, severe acts of violence such as shootings, rape, and assault are best handled by the criminal justice system and law enforcement (Goldstein, Hootman, Conoley, 1994).

The issue of violence is so pervasive within our nation's schools that it has been included as the sixth goal of Goals 2000: By the year 2000 every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning (Montecel, 1997, p.3). The goal includes seven objectives for schools to accomplish: a firm policy on drugs and alcohol use; collaborative planning with parents, businesses, governments and community organizations; a local policy against violence and weapons; a drug and alcohol prevention education program for children; a drug and alcohol curriculum in health education; supportive community based teams; the elimination of sexual harassment. It is interesting to note that the close relationship of issues of school safety have become important topics of the discussions concerning violence in our schools.

Montecel (1997) also reported on the results of a 1994 survey conducted for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) which suggest that unsafe schools are a reality for most U.S. students (p.4). One important finding of the survey was that half of

sixth through twelfth grade students personally witnessed some type of crime or the victimization of an individual. Victimization was defined as direct personal experience of threats of harm as well as knowledge or witness of a crime or incidents of bullying at school.

The survey results also indicated that witnessing incidents of bullying, physical attack or robbery does not vary significantly for students of different grade levels. Students' worries about victimization decreased after middle school. More elementary students (29%) and middle school students (34%) said they worried about becoming victims at school than did high school students (20%).

The results of this study published in the IRDA Newsletter also found that a greater percentage of students at schools containing six hundred or more students, (as compared to those attending schools of fewer than three hundred students) reported knowledge of crime or threats at school and witnessing of crime. There appeared to be no difference in worry about crime or in actual victimization of students at larger schools. The study also showed that exposure to crime and threats at school crosses racial and ethnic boundaries. Worry and victimization did not differ by student's race or school racial composition.

On the basis of these findings one might conclude that the educational system cannot handle everything. Schools must search for and seek help from the community leaders and members because of the increasing problems, differences, and circumstances that students bring to school. Each student is as different as the behavior patterns, racial, ethnic, social, behavior and lifestyles which accompany him or her.

Teachers, administrators and school support personnel must be committed to serve the educational environment, but they also must reach out to parents for help.

What Are the Emotional Needs of Gifted and Talented Students?

Thus far I have examined definitions of violence and the results of its extension into the learning environment. This examination seems to point to the development of feelings of worry and victimization as well as to the emotional needs on the part of the total school population. Now let us look briefly at emotional needs from the viewpoint of the gifted and talented.

Nail and Evans (1997) did research similar to Terman's (cited in Grossberg & Cornell, 1988) to discredit the belief that gifted children are more emotionally maladjusted than their nongifted peers. Grossberg and Cornell stated that the longitudinal studies of Terman refuted the stereotype associating maladjustment and giftedness and hypothesized that the emotional adjustment of gifted children is similar to or better than that of non-gifted peers. Gallagher (1990) stated that results of the studies by Terman in actuality suggested that the emotional adjustment of gifted individuals was better than their nongifted counterparts. Nail and Evans (1997) concluded that personality functioning of gifted subjects is similar to or more developmentally mature than cohorts of average ability and comparable chronological age.

However, research in behavioral psychology points to circumstances under which gifted and talented children may be impacted by violence in schools (Dabrowski, 1966).

Gifted and talented students' moral and ethical values are more mature than age mates of average intelligence. Therefore, it may follow that these gifted and talented children may be impacted more by violent acts.

According to Mendaglio and Tillier (1992), psychological growth is a series of disintegrations: progressive contradictions and conflicts that arise from a person's experiences of life. When individuals have negative experiences, people tend to be passive and fail to see these contradictions allowing their views to be formed for them, largely by society. Positive disintegration is a developmental process that calls into question our readily accepted adaptations to life. Individuals come to question basic reactions to things, are no longer able to simply accept what we are told or to follow the behavior of others. Individuals also begin to differentiate attraction to or rejection of objects and goals based upon accumulating experience, feelings and conscience. Overtime, conflicts produce increasing inhibition, cautiousness and reflection that increasingly influence decisions and behaviors (Dabrowski, (1966), Mendaglio, & Tillier, 1992). From these findings one might conclude that the emotional maturity that gifted and talented children may have causes them to worry about and internalize what could happen should violence occur in their school.

Mendaglio, Tillier (1992) outlined five levels to describe the process of psychological development. Advanced development begins when the previously socially integrated self Level I undergoes varying degrees of disintegration, starting with the simple, isolated, spontaneous and uncontrollable disintegrations common at Level II. Conflicts at the third level take on a broad vertical mature, reflecting the

introduction of higher versus lower, multi-level conflicts. Conflicts begin to wane at Level IV as development increasingly becomes global, self-directed and organized. At Level V, the highest level, a second functional integration occurs. This re-integration is comprised of a critically thinking, autonomous self-governed by authentic emotions.

One might conclude from the cited research studies that teachers and administrators need to be cognizant of the emotional needs and be reassuring, not only to all students, but especially to gifted and talented children. These children need the opportunity to address questions, voice their concerns and have open, honest discussions with teachers and other gifted and talented peers.

What Can Be Done to Nurture Safe School Environments?

Research by Bracey (1995) reports that one U.S. periodical is worried that all schools have become "violent cesspools," while another claims that suburban parents are foolish to spend their money on private school. Whatever the setting, for teens in poverty settings, violence is a common experience. Haberman & Dill (1995) explored the conditions children face outside school, how these conditions affect their lives in school, and how schools can be more or less effectual in alleviating some of their problems. According to them, the children in poverty who attend schools today - including suburban and rural schools - experience violence with grim outcomes in many aspects of their lives. They conducted workshops with younger and older teens in which they discussed conditions under which children think it is acceptable to kill someone else. While some reasons given were reactions to violence being afflicted on themselves or on a family member, some reasons were trivial, ie., "if someone stared at me weird; if someone

bullies me in front of my peers; if someone calls my mother names" (p. 185). Haberman and Dill (1995) made this commentary:

> It is noteworthy that students never even mentioned reporting violence or murder to the police or school authorities. Personal and swift revenge is highly valued by students; these characteristics define an individual student's status or worth among his/her peers. Further, little weighs in as heavily as peer approval. Students' knee jerk reaction to aggression is to escalate the process. (p.185)

Haberman and Dill found that in successful schools teachers showed students that they had alternatives to violence, expressed sincere concern for how the students feel, showed students that they were responsible for their learning, and showed students that they were accountable for the will of the group.

In their study, Haberman and Dill (1995) developed what they called Three Principles to Live by in Counteracting School Violence. A brief explanation of each principle follows.

Principle One states that whatever is illegal outside school cannot be treated as if it were not a crime inside school. If a student sets a fire or carries a weapon, it is not within the purview of the principal to decide that, "no one was really hurt or that the school program was not impeded in any way" (p. 185).

Principle Two states that the processes of school management and discipline are more important than the outcomes. How their particular cases are handled teaches students more than whether they get detention or are suspended.

Students must not be reinforced in their belief that power is everything; that who can do what to whom is all that really matters.

"Thinking, reasoning, and working through problems" must be the behaviors that are learned and reinforced. "We can be certain that a system of only enforcement and control, impersonally administered, with an emphasis on punishment will make matters worse" (p. 186).

Principle Three states that dealing with problems of school violence is not an intrusion on the school program; it is an integral part of the school program.

Making the building safe is a necessary but not sufficient condition; teaching students to care about and predict the consequences of their behavior is the goal. Options to violence - such as peer mediation or conflict resolution - must be actively modeled every day in class. It cannot be assumed that forms of communication which help resolve conflicts are things students in poverty come to school with or somehow know naturally, or think up on their own. (p. 186)

Haberman and Dill (1995) conclude by reminding educators that sometimes poor children are put in school settings that can make the problems worse:

Poor children are less likely to be in academically enriched environments and more likely to be repeatedly drilled in basic skills. Large-group instruction or computer generated electronic worksheets do not improve interaction skills in poor youth; rather, youth perceive themselves relegated to roles in which or how compliant they can be for extended periods. . . . Isolation is particularly pernicious to adolescents. (p.186)

Suicide: A Major Implication of Violence for the Gifted and Talented

One of the implications for gifted students is the violence which is inflicted to oneself: suicide. This implication rings true personally. There are two of my students who are very bright, but because of violence inflicted on them as younger children (sexual abuse and neglect), began self mutilation and ultimately attempted suicide. They both are now in the care of a mental health institution obtaining the help and counseling they so desperately need.

Cross (1997) completed a study regarding the suicides of three adolescent gifted male students. These three young men attended a residential, state-funded high school for academically talented eleventh and twelfth grade students in the Midwest. The psychological autopsy was designed to assess a variety of factors including behaviors, thoughts, feelings and relationships of the individual who has committed suicide (Ebert, 1987). It was originally developed as a means of resolving equivocal deaths with the intention of reducing their likelihood in similar groups of people (Jones, 1977; Neill, Benehsohn, Farber & Resnick, 1974). It can be used as a posthumous evaluation of mental, social, and environmental influences on the suicide victim.

Information for the study was obtained from two areas: interviews with people who had significant relationships with the victim (parents, teachers, friends, siblings) and archival information (school records, test information, medical records, personal diaries, art work). This information was analyzed to identify themes and issues that may be valuable in the prediction of suicide within similar groups of people.

The results were organized into three categories: commonalities with adolescent suicide, commonalities related to their giftedness and themes that emerged across the three cases (Cross, 1996). The following is a list that includes factors found in each of the three cases. (1) All subjects were adolescent Caucasian males. (2) They all manifested four emotional commonalities: depression, anger, mood swings and confusion about the future. (3) They all exhibited three behavioral commonalities: poor impulse control, substance use and abuse, extensive journeling. (4) They all manifested four rational commonalities: romantic relationship difficulties, self-esteem difficulties, conflictual family relationships, isolation from persons capable of disconfirming irrational logic. All subjects shared warning signs: behavioral problems, periods of escalation problems, withdrawal from friends, talk of suicide, changes in school performance, and family history of psychological problems. Often, the students attended residential school as a means of escape from family or hometown.

There were also commonalities among these three adolescents in relation to their giftedness. They exhibited over excitabilities expressed in ways beyond the norm even among gifted peers. They had minimal prosocial outlets. They experienced difficulty separating fact from fiction, especially overidentification with negative asocial or aggressive characters or themes in books or movies. These adolescents experienced intense emotions, felt conflicted, pained or confused and devalued emotional experience, with the exception of pain. They expressed polarized, egocentric value systems. They would

engage in group discussions of suicide as an honorable solution. Their expression of

behavior is consistent with Dabrowski's Level II or Level III of Positive Disintegration.

Specific themes surfaced across the three cases. First of all, all three suffered

from depression. Second, suicide was a cultural component of music. Third, they had

many characteristics identified as over excitabilities (very sensitive, two were

vegetarians, fantasy, mixing truth and fiction). Fourth, suicide had a social component.

Finally, the topic of suicide was discussed openly among students and their peer group.

The issue of control over others was present in two cases. In one of the cases, control

resulted in attempts to harm.

At the conclusion of his study, Cross (1996) had many unanswered questions.

What is the effect of residential schooling which encourages self-exploration and being

with students who may have similar high risk factors? What is the extent of influence that

over excitabilities play in suicide behavior? What is the influence of popular cultural

icons who commit suicide on suicide behavior of gifted students? What does the role of

popular media, with its emphasis on violence and homicide, have on suicidal behavior?

Upon reflection, many of the themes, warning signs, emotional commonalities,

behavioral commonalities and relational commonalities were present in many of the

recent violent acts that have happened at middle and high schools across the nation. All

of the accused were male, exhibited relationship difficulties, had a history of

psychological problems, experienced difficulty separating fact from fiction, and exhibited

peer difficulties (Adler, 1999; Begley, 1999; Begley, Foote, King, Clemetson, 1999; Cloud, 1999; King, 1999; Pitts, 1998; Wall, 1999).

Recommendations to Parents, Teachers and Administrators

Cross (1997), has spent several years conducting research, working directly with gifted youth in the role of teacher, counselor, and program director, and has read others' studies on the topic of social and emotional needs of gifted students. He presents some recommendations and suggestions for curbing and preventing school violence to parents, teachers, and school administrators and toward those individuals who work with gifted and talented students. These suggestions are also appropriate when working with all students.

Cross (1997) urges us to remember that the gifted and talented child is a child first. Adults often forget that the young person they are dealing with is, in fact, a child. It is difficult to remember when listening to a gifted child talk about academic topics that that same child is very likely to be at the same general developmental level in the social and emotional domain as nongifted peers. Thus he or she should be treated as a child first; tending to specific gifts should come later.

Cross (1997) points out that communication among the three groups of adults, (parents, teachers, counselors) is vital. Each group needs a clear understanding of the child and the parents' and teachers' goals for the child. These three groups of adults often have different goals for students. Consequently, it is important to share appropriate information.

Cross (1997) urges that we try to understand the social environment of the school,

or the classroom through the eyes of a child. Social expectations for students need to be

discussed openly so they are understood by the students. Students have varying opinions

about what they think being a student means and how they should behave. Talking about

expectations can help students feel comfortable in the school. Teachers need to share

information about gifted students by having meetings or sharing literature. Individual,

group or family counseling must be made available for gifted students and their families.

We need to learn about each child's personality and social choices. Very Important, we

must teach the child how to understand better his or her nature and to anticipate how to

react to circumstances and events in his or her life.

Cross (1997) feels that we must provide opportunities for the gifted children to be

together. This can help to alleviate some of the pressures they feel. The subjects of his

study often report feeling different than other students, except when they are together

with other gifted students. When they are together there is profound relief of knowing

there are other people like themselves who have many similar interests and qualities.

In addition to Cross's excellent discussion, Knox (1996) has stated the focus of the

school is or should be totally student oriented. The goal of today's schools must be to

develop strategies and provide resources that will reduce the acts of student violence in

both number and intensity. He points out the goal of today's schools must be to develop

strategies that will reduce the acts of student violence in both number and intensity. Also,

whenever student misbehaviors occur, the symptoms as well as causes should be

reviewed and addressed if possible. Well disciplined schools would rather catch students

doing something right, he states, than catch them doing something wrong. Finally, he believes that well disciplined schools are sensitive to their students' racial and socioeconomic concerns and how these are manifested in the instructional program.

Reflections on Decreasing the Impact of Violence for Gifted/Talented Students

Violence has become a reality in American schools whether we admit that what is happening in the schools mirrors society or whether it occurs because of media influences. The fact is: It happens. In this article, I have presented a definition of violence and presented information stating that violence is more than random shootings. Violence includes psychological pain as well as physical injury. I have presented research which shows that school personnel needs to become increasingly aware of the nature of violence and implications. In addition, available studies indicate that school districts need to make sure that everyone who works with gifted and talented children, as well as all children, be trained in ways to deal effectively with violence and the emotional needs of gifted and talented students.

Giftedness adds a special dimension to self-understanding and self-acceptance. If gifted youngsters are to develop into self-fulfilled adults, they need to understand ways in which they are different from others and ways in which they are the same. These children need to accept their abilities, talents and limitations. In addition, they need to develop social skills and to be understood and accepted by others. Finally, they need to understand the need to develop understanding of the distinction between "pursuit of excellence" and "pursuit of perfection."

Based on my observations, we as educators need to focus on the emotional as well as the academic needs of our clients. Teachers need to be educated about the emotional maturity gifted and talented children possess and to be sensitive and understanding. They need to help each gifted child understand and cope with his or her intellectual, social and emotional needs during each stage of development. In some ways, the needs of gifted students mirror the needs of more typical children.

In addition, teachers must provide gifted and talented children opportunities to ask questions, to talk with them in an open and honest manner where they are given the chance to voice concerns. Giftedness does not mean instant mastery or winning rewards. Teachers need to set realistic expectations for efforts and achievements and help the student choose appropriate goals. It is important to recognize and appreciate the efforts and improvement. On the other hand, giftedness permits people to learn and use information in unusual ways. Given parental support and encouragement, personal motivation, and opportunities to learn and apply their knowledge, gifted and talented students may enjoy the processes of creating new ideas especially if they believe it is all right to think differently than age mates.

Teachers and parents must aid each gifted and talented student in becoming a whole person. Gifted individuals are children first and gifted second (Cross, 1997). While their learning styles may be special, they are individuals with emotions, likes and dislikes, and unique personalities. They will not wake up one day and be not gifted. They should not feel responsible for solving world problems, nor does the world owe them a tribute. It is up to each student to make life meaningful. Understanding these limits can

and used as a valid basis for appropriate behaviors.

Adults need to show patience. Let students select and strive toward their own goals. Do not compare them or their achievements to others. Some gifted and talented students are intensely curious and may have less tolerance for ambiguity and unpredictability than their age mates. Help them to develop patience with themselves.

Adults also need to show acceptance and encouragement. They need to encourage students to work thoughtfully, purposefully, and thoroughly and to do the best they can. It is not necessary to excel in every situation. Gifted and talented students need help in developing priorities to decide which tasks require the best efforts and which require simply good enough. Parents must learn to accept and reward efforts and the process of working on tasks. Each child has control of outcomes of tasks he or she undertakes.

Parents, teachers, and other adults must encourage flexibility and appropriate behavior. Curiosity is frequently mentioned as a characteristic of gifted and talented learners. Gifted students seem to question rules automatically. Concerned adults can reduce stress on these children by helping them to distinguish between hard and fast rules and those that can safely be questioned or altered and help them understand why rules sometimes change from time to time. It is important to recognize that new ideas come from reshaping and discarding old notions or right and wrong. Parents and teachers want students to be inquiring, creative and resourceful thinkers. In our society, flagrant rule breakers may be penalized and shut out of opportunities for further growth and enrichment. Our students will become better thinkers by learning that rules are man

made guides to behavior, not perfect or divine; but they are to be learned, understood and followed appropriately in certain situations.

Adults need to let students live their own lives. Caring adults support, encourage and celebrate students' efforts and successes, but they stand back a bit from these efforts and achievements. They let students select and master activities for personal enjoyment. Unfortunately, some students wonder whether their efforts and gains are for personal satisfaction or to please overly involved parents, teachers, or others. When students give up an activity that no longer brings them pleasure, they fear they will disappoint others, and they are likely to feel trapped.

Caring adults need to be available for advice. Some gifted and talented students appear to be more mature than their chronological age indicates. They have more advanced verbal skills and can talk a good line. They are still children and need realistic, clearly stated guidelines about limits, values and proper behavior. These young people may not have enough information or experience to make wise and effective decisions. They may not understand the decision making process and may need wise adults to listen and guide as they talk through the problem, the alternatives, and the pros and cons. They need to be given the opportunity to try out choices. They need to know that they can be independent and still talk through their thoughts with others without losing face. Attentiveness to these actions reduces stress for these students.

Gifted students need to hear adults openly state some of their perspectives so that they will better understand expectations and acceptable limits. These students are very perceptive, but they cannot read minds.

They need these expectations and consequences spelled out for them. In this way, they are able to make educated choices for the decisions they need to make.

Gifted and talented students may know more about their interest area than their parents and other adults. However, they have not lived longer and need loving concern and guidance. Caring adults need to share examples from their own lives. Examples of decisions and outcomes demonstrate to children what can happen when the right or wrong decision is made and what the consequences of the decision were. Children should have the opportunity to learn from past successes and failures of adults they believe in and trust.

Finally, teachers, school administrators and parents need to reach out to the community for help and support. Many organizations want to help curb school violence and reassure the nation's children our schools are a safe place to them to learn. Local police departments, court systems, child welfare organizations and job placement agencies can provide schools with additional intervention strategies and resources that can be brought to bear on the needs of students and their families (Heller, 1996).

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APPENDIX

Gifted Child Today Magazine Guidelines for Authors

The *Gifted Child Today Magazine* is a bi-monthly publication for parents, teachers, and other professionals who are interested in gifted education. Manuscripts may address all areas of gifted education that pertain to practices, policy, or applications of research.

The *Gifted Child Today Magazine* is a peer-reviewed publication. The editor refers manuscripts to qualified reviewers who have expertise in a specific area. Reviewer's comments are then provided to the author by the editor. To avoid delay in the publication process, the author should follow these instructions:

1. Manuscripts should represent only original work that has not been published previously or is not being considered for publication elsewhere. If copyrighted material is used, copies of letters granting permission for publication should be included.
2. Manuscripts should be between 1,500 and 4,000 words long.
3. References should follow the APA style as outlined in the fourth edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.*
4. Send four copies of the original manuscript. They should be typed, double-spaced on one side of the page only. Each page should be labeled with the page number and the working title in the upper right-hand corner. They should be sent on letter-bond paper or heavier. Manuscripts should include at least a one-inch margin around each page. In addition to a title page, a cover page must be attached that includes the author's name, title, school and program affiliation, and home and work addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers.
5. Place tables, figures, illustrations, and photographs on separate pages. Illustrations must be in black ink on white paper. Photographs must be glossy prints, either black and white or color, or transparencies. Each should have a title.
6. Include a full reference for each citation that is mentioned in the text on a separate sheet at the end of the manuscript.
7. Authors of accepted manuscripts must transfer copyright to the *Gifted Child Today Magazine,* which holds copyright to all articles and reviews.
8. Upon acceptance, the author must submit a brief 50–100 word biography. Final copies of the manuscript are to be prepared along with a hard copy and a diskette. On the outside of the diskette the author should indicate the brand name of computer or word processor, the word processing program used, title of the article, and file name.

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