

PARENTS, PHYSICIANS, AND GIFTED CHILDREN

Your child's physician is in a position to recognize early behaviors associated with giftedness and to recommend appropriate interventions.

Physicians will be able to see if child development is appropriate, lagging behind, or exceeding development milestones.

An informed physician can be a source of reassurance for both gifted children and their parents.

HOW DO YOU SHARE INFORMATION WITH YOUR PHYSICIAN?

- Create a positive, proactive relationship with your child's physician. Clear communication will help develop a relationship to understand the overall health and well-being of your child.
- With knowledge about giftedness and its implications, early recognition and intervention can be especially helpful to later adjustments.
- Giftedness does not define a child, but it does directly impact social, educational, and emotional aspects throughout a person's life.
- Keep in mind, physicians may need to develop a basic understanding of giftedness and its implications before they can play a role of support and advocacy for your gifted child.
- Learn together. Misinformation, myths, and censoring are barriers to understanding giftedness and to providing appropriate resources or services.
- When giftedness is contributing to school problems, appropriate interventions cannot happen without knowledge about giftedness and its implications.

(Jolly, Treffinger, Inman, Smutny, Parenting Gifted Children, 2011)



IOWA TALENTED AND GIFTED ASSOCIATION



DID YOU KNOW?

The physician cannot only help you maintain your child's good physical health and mental health and diagnose and treat ailments, but also help advocate for appropriate gifted services in the school setting.

The physician can provide support and guidance to you and other parents, who also may have limited understanding of the implications of giftedness in one's life.

Practitioners need not be experts in gifted education to be effective, as long as they can provide appropriate referrals to resources.

Physicians with general knowledge of the characteristics of gifted children can lead parents to books and online resources regarding gifted children.

Learn together. Misinformation, myths, and censoring by parents are barriers to understanding and to appropriate resources or services.

(Jolly, Treffinger, Inman, Smutny, Parenting Gifted Children, 2011)

RAISING RELATED CONCERNS WITH PHYSICIANS

Physicians often hear about behavioral issues and will begin by determining if the problem is a medical or a behavioral concern.

Physicians need to know about frequency, intensity, and duration of the problem.

Inform physicians of physical symptoms or complaints that may be linked to school problems related to giftedness.

A variety of physical complaints may have organic origins and the same symptoms are also indicators of gifted students placed in misaligned or unsupportive school environments.

Inform physicians of issues with school avoidance or behavior problems in school, which could be indications of larger problems. (nature of the problem)

WHERE DO YOU START?

Physicians' time is at a premium. Small doses of information are the best way to educate your physician.

Start small by asking permission to include brochures for gifted associations in the waiting room.

Provide small bits, 1-2 pages, of information with some highlighted sections to physicians or concise fact sheets from well-known organizations (NAGC, SENG)

Peer-reviewed journals may be viewed as more valid than something off the Internet.

When offered the opportunity, gifted children are often able to verbalize feelings, situations, offering a valuable perspective.



PARENT PROMPTS FOR SHARING CHILD'S INFORMATION WITH PHYSICIAN

- I noticed my child...
- What else should I look for...
- My child has said, exhibited, displayed...
- My child is... Is that above/beyond normal development?

PARENT PROMPTS FOR RAISING CONCERNS ABOUT CHILD WITH PHYSICIAN

- Should I be concerned if...
- How do I respond when...
- What are healthy rewards for...
- Should my child be... at this age?
- How do I know if...
- My child speaks like...
- My child does...
- My child is concerned about...