

Gifted students think, learn, and behave differently when compared to traditional students. Students who are gifted will often show persistent intellectual curiosity by asking questions and showing deep interest in subject areas they find interesting (Kregel, 2015). Most gifted students may need assistance learning social adaptations skills, such as understanding the differences between competition and cooperation, and when each is appropriate (Kregel, 2015). This can help students who are gifted work and play well with others, while also improving group skills. Many gifted students may need practice working in group activities because of struggles they may face due to strong views of being right (making it more difficult to compromise with others and appreciate the perspectives of others) and fear of struggles or setbacks in the group that may cause them to not perform as well as they feel they should (Kregel, 2015). Cognitive and intellectual development can progress more rapidly for gifted students than their physical, social, and emotional development which can cause gifted students to have heightened interests more typical for adults, or to have more mature passions than typical children of their age (Greene, 2006). This can create the feeling of asynchrony, making it more difficult for gifted students to fit in with their peers.

Gifted students aspire to reach mastery in subjects that interest them, perfectionistic behaviors can help drive them to success. Perfectionism can either be healthy, or unhealthy. Unhealthy forms of perfectionism in gifted students can cause them to struggle with their self-esteem (Green, 2006). Gifted students may feel pressure from others in their lives, such as parents and teachers to reach their fullest potential, which can cause perfectionistic behaviors and anxiety, which can affect their academic potential (Greene, 2006). Gifted students may also become underachievers when they feel like they are not being academically challenged, or when they begin to voluntarily place limits on what they think they can do (often due to unhealthy

perfectionism). Course curriculum can be adapted for gifted students to help them find learning enjoyable, challenging, and help them effectively deal with their social and emotional needs (Kregel, 2015).

Numerous counseling strategies can be used with students who are gifted. School counselors should be able to help students learn how to build social support networks and teach stress management techniques. When counseling gifted students who struggle with perfectionism, school counselors can use Cognitive Behavior Therapy or Solution Focused Based Therapy, along with applying strategies, frameworks, and interventions that were developed for anxiety (Kennedy, 2018). When school counselors implement CBT with gifted students, they will work to actively evaluate their thoughts. Helpful thoughts will be strengthened, while disoriented or unhelpful thoughts will be modified to help students be less critical about themselves. SFBT can be used with gifted students by helping them to focus on their strengths and to consider a broader sense of thinking about problems. School counselors who use SFBT with gifted students can help students to expand their self-identity by separating themselves from their problems (Kennedy, 2018). Using expressive writing with gifted students can help reduce academic anxiety, while also helping students better understand, differentiate, and identify their emotional experience (Kennedy, 2018). Group counseling can also be implemented by school counselors when working with gifted students to help students cope with social challenges they may face associated with their giftedness and/or asynchronous development. Gifted students who also struggle with asynchronicity can benefit from role play strategies to practice age-appropriate conversation topics (Kennedy, 2018). Resources that can also be helpful for gifted students are meditation, mindfulness, deep breathing, guided imagery, and progressive muscle relaxation (Kennedy, 2018).

Resources:

Greene, M. J. (2006). Helping build lives: Career and life development of gifted and talented students. *Professional School Counseling, 10*(1), 34-42. doi:10.1177/2156759X0601001S05

Kennedy, K. (2018). Counseling gifted students: School-based considerations and strategies. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education, 10*(3), 361-367. doi:10.26822/iejee.2018336194

Kregel, E. A. (2015). *Addressing the social, emotional, and academic needs of gifted high school students*