



Journey

TWICE-EXCEPTIONAL KIDS ARE EDUCATION'S CANARY IN THE COAL MINE...

By Kathleen Humble

Gifted and twice-exceptional (2e) children are homeschooled at a much higher rate than average. And it is often the last resort for children who have fallen through the cracks.

The Canary in the Coal Mine

In 2016, the Home Education Network in Victoria, Australia, surveyed their members on why they homeschool. I presented these findings at the World Conference for Gifted and Talented Children at the University of Sydney in 2017.

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GHF connects all sorts of people who love gifted learners. We offer both family and professional memberships to support individuals working to create new ways of educating students. Our members homeschool gifted and 2e kids, run homeschool co-ops and micro-schools, mentor students, teach online classes, and more. We'd love for you to join us. **More...**



It showed homeschool was rarely the first choice for families. In fact 59.5 (± 8.0) percent of homeschoolers pulled their children from school.

Home education in Victoria in 2016 was used by 1 in 200 children. But the data also showed that home education is used by 1 in 11 to 1 in 5 twice-exceptional children.¹

Twice exceptional children are home educated at 17 to 37 times the average.

From the little data we have, this is not isolated to a small state in Australia but appears to be universal in many other states and countries.²

The Destructive Clash of Ableism and Tall Poppy Syndrome

Twice-exceptional children are failed by the education system due to the destructive clash between ableism and tall poppy syndrome.

Twice-exceptional kids are not identified if their disability is identified first.

They are unlikely to be referred for gifted testing or inclusion in gifted education programs, even if they are high achieving.³

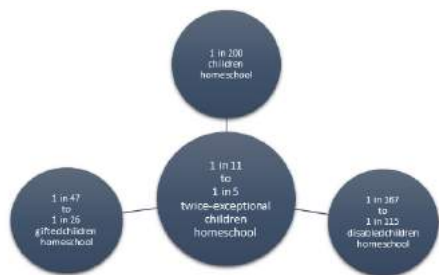


Figure 1 Homeschooling in Victoria, Australia 2016



There are low achievement ceilings for disabled kids.

Individual Education Plans will include provisions to help with disability, but rarely include extension—even if this will stop behavioral problems. All disabled students are subject to what Children and Young People with Disability Australia calls the “Systemic Culture of Low Expectations.”⁴

This is particularly acute if they are also ESL or Indigenous students.

There is built in legal discrimination against disabled kids.

Disabled children are often forced to sit exams without help, sometimes to ‘prove’ their disability.

In New South Wales, Australia, in 2016, in order to get disability adjustments for year twelve, schools had to provide evidence of “*Timed essays/extended response (at least one of which must be an assessment task)*” that “*actually address the difficulty a student has in reading and/or responding to the examination paper.*”⁵

This assumes students are not high achievers, so they won't be affected by a few 'low' marks.

Gifted entry requirements exclude twice-exceptional kids.

In many places, gifted programs either

accidentally or explicitly exclude disabled students. For example, entry to NSW selective schools in 2016 specifically excluded “extra time or a person to write for them and cannot use computers” for entry tests—no matter the disability. For interstate and international students, entry requirements only included provision for full scale IQ— not the GAI.⁶

So, why does this happen?

There are actually four different groups of children labeled gifted. Most teachers will only learn about one of these groups.

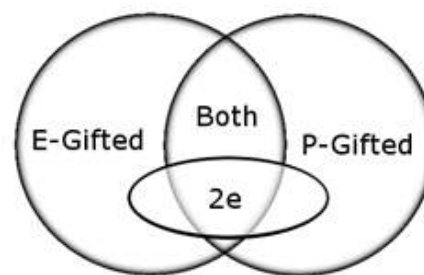


Figure 2 Different Gifted Groups

The E-Gifted Group

Educators define gifted as children who achieve in the top 10 percent of school or school assessments.⁷ There is no IQ test and no behavioral characteristics. There's only one criteria— high achievement.

This group of kids are generally well-behaved. They like learning at school, are socially



well-adjusted, and are well-liked. They have fewer mental health problems. They will often have high-achieving careers and a higher-than average number of degrees, journal articles, and end up in the top rungs of their profession. They are relatively easy for teachers to spot in a class.

I call this group E-gifted (short for educationally gifted).

The P-Gifted Group

This group will have an IQ score in the top 2.1 percent of the population, which is two standard deviation from the norm or average score. For the WISC-V, this would be a score of 130+. For children with a diagnosed disability affecting their communication or motor skills, they will instead have some subscores in the top 2 percent and an average score, if it can be calculated, at least one standard deviation above average. For the WISC-V, this would be 115+.⁸

These children are more likely to have problems in school. They are more likely to be tested for disabilities, even if none are present. Most will have behavioral characteristics that are often described as OEs (over-excitabilities⁹) but can also be described using the Five Factor Model of Personality¹⁰ as an overabundance of Openness.¹¹ They also are much more likely to have sensory processing issues significant enough to be

classified as a sensory processing disorder.¹²

They are not all high-achieving. They are present in all populations and at all socioeconomic levels. If they are from a minority group or a poor background, they are unlikely to be identified.¹³

This group is the group more likely to show up at testing centers, like the Belin-Blank Center¹⁴, or to psychologists and counselors.

I call this group P-gifted (short for psychologically gifted).

The Both Group

This group is both E-gifted and P-gifted. They have a high-IQ score; they are also high-achieving. Every single longitudinal study of giftedness (at least nine!) has focused on this group. Neurologists like to study this group when doing brain scans or genetic studies on inheritance. It fits nicely into all definitions of giftedness, it's easy to find, AND it has a repeatable, reproducible study group. The 'both' group is the medical model of giftedness.

The 2e group

Twice-exceptional (or 2e) children are a subset of all the gifted groups. These are the group of children who are gifted and also have a disability. They are also called Gifted Learning Disabled.



A small amount of may end up in the 'both' group—but most of them will be missed. If accommodations are lacking, they won't achieve highly enough to be placed in the E- group and may not even be identified as P-gifted.

They will almost certainly NOT get the accommodations needed in school and are drastically more likely to drop out of school or be home educated.^{1, 14, 15}

Why does this cause problems?

When a child is identified as gifted or twice-exceptional by a psychologist for an assessment, the psychologist will write a report on the child's needs. The psychologist identifies a child using the P-gifted, 2e, or 'both' definitions.

When educators read the report – they see the

word gifted and think E-gifted. But each group is different and needs different accommodations. What works for one group won't always work for the other groups.

In Conclusion

There is a systemic problem in identifying and serving gifted and, particularly, twice-exceptional children in school. As a result, an estimated 1 in 11 to 1 in 5 twice-exceptional children are homeschooled in Victoria, Australia, alone. Many of these problems could be addressed if educators were aware of the different definitions of gifted and how to apply interventions to different populations.

KATHLEEN HUMBLE



Kathleen Humble writes from Melbourne, Australia at YellowReadis.com, about giftedness, disability, and homeschooling her two twice-exceptional children. She has also worked as a mathematician, researcher, computer programmer, and puppeteer. Her work has appeared in *Victorian Writer*, *The Mighty*, and *Otherways*. She was recipient of a 2018 Writers Victoria Write-Ability Fellowship.



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CELI TREPANIER ON GIFTED MYTHS ...

Gifted myths—those widespread, erroneous, dreadful little legends that promote the misunderstanding of giftedness. And they often torment us because we know how unfounded they are.

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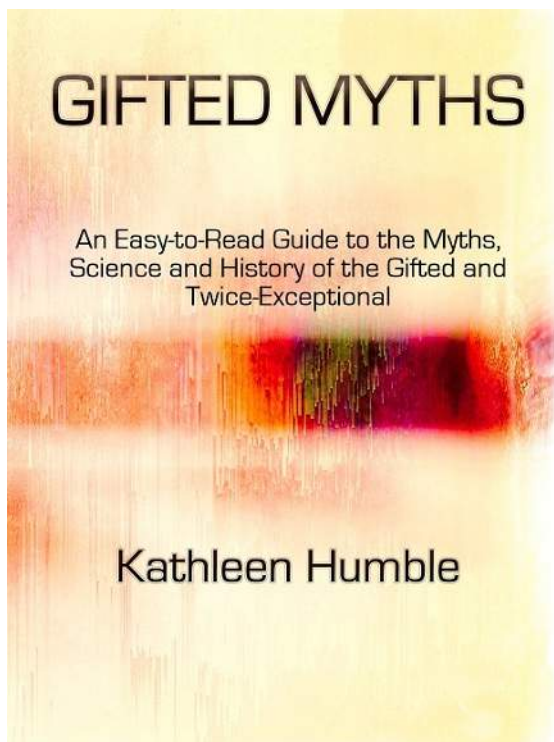
Kathleen leaves no stone unturned, and she doesn't mince words about what is fact and what is fiction. This book is the definitive guide for dispelling the myths plaguing gifted children, adults, and families.

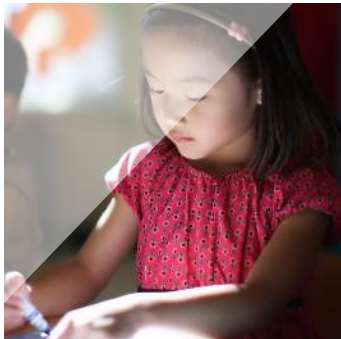
You will want to read *Gifted Myths: An Easy-to-Read Guide to Myths on the Gifted and Twice-Exceptional* yourself and you'll want to buy one for your child's teacher, your therapist, or your teen's physician to educate and enlighten them about giftedness and its impact on our daily lives. And after you've read Kathleen's book, can we kindly ask you to leave a review about GHF Press's newest publication on Amazon?

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Celi Trépanier

Editorial Director for GHF Learners





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Our members homeschool gifted and twice-exceptional kids, run homeschool co-ops and micro-schools, write to foster understanding of gifted and twice-exceptional learners, mentor students one-on-one, teach online classes, provide services specifically designed to meet the social and emotional needs of gifted and twice-exceptional learners, and more. We'd love for you to join us.

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