

Giddings GT News

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Fall 2020

Dear Families of GISD Gifted and Talented Students,

A year ago, we never thought we would be at this place in education. However, Giddings ISD is still committed to deliver the most appropriate education and challenge to your GT student. It may be through a Zoom, on a virtual platform or in a classroom with a mask. Our educators are continuing to train on curriculum and ways to stimulate your child's learning. In addition to this newsletter, there are other resources you can check out to view or read. Please contact the GT website <https://www.giddingsisd.net/o/giddings-isd/page/gifted-talented-program--7> for more information.

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WEBINAR FOR PARENTS:

Tuesday, September 15, 2020, 6:30 p.m.

[Helping Kids Thrive in Today's World](#)

Presented by Christine Fonseca

Life can feel overwhelming, especially in today's world of pandemic illness, school disruptions, and other anxieties our children are facing. This workshop provides parents with real-world tools and strategies to help children thrive in spite of the overwhelming current events. Registration required.

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_HRV0PhL6SXGdjbMuECx1cQ

There are lots of free GT parenting webinars recorded at <https://tempo.txgifted.org/>

Families of GT students statewide are invited to join a new network for Texas GT families! The Gifted Education Family Network (GEFN) is a new opportunity for GT families to receive support, information, and connections with other families, facilitating positive advocacy for Texas GT programs, GT funding, and excellence in gifted education. GEFN is committed to equity and diversity in gifted education. We support the annual GT Parent Conference at the Baylor Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development and other low-cost opportunities for parent engagement across the state. GT parents from all regions of Texas are invited to join us for free, to subscribe to our e-mail news (<https://giftededucationfamilynetwork.org/subscribe/>), to explore our website, and to follow us on social media (please visit our site for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram links: <https://giftededucationfamilynetwork.org/>).

Center for Gifted Studies at West Kentucky University – Student Opportunity

Join us for Virtual Fall Super Saturdays! Dates: September 12, 19, & 26

Place: Online **Time:** 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. CT

Tuition: \$80 (some financial assistance available: email gifted@wku.edu)

Virtual Fall Super Saturdays offer 17 classes for students in grades 1-6 that give high-interest young people the ability to explore minds-on, hands-on classes in art, math, science, filmmaking, and so much more! Each class is taught by an experienced teacher via Zoom. Students register for a class and connect with other like-minded kids all three Saturdays. Classes are fun, fast-paced, and filled with learning opportunities. A full list of classes can be viewed at https://www.wku.edu/gifted/super_saturdays/. The Center for Gifted Studies at WKU has nearly 40 years of experience offering educational programming to students. We strive to make online learning as engaging and enjoyable as the in-person programming we're known for.

To learn more or to register, visit https://www.wku.edu/gifted/super_saturdays/. Questions? Reach us at gifted.studies@wku.edu or by calling 270-745-6323.

Mensa for Kids

Mensa for Kids has a variety of options for gifted learners to explore and access as they seek opportunities to make connections [.https://www.mensaforkids.org/](https://www.mensaforkids.org/)

Organization Skills Parents often ask how they can help their child develop organizational and self-regulation skills. If disorganization is contributing to your child's achievement problems, try to think about the possible causes.

- Is he bored or too challenged?
- Is there a learning issue?
- Is he just not interested in school or cleaning his room.
- Is he overwhelmed because of perfectionism?

Is your child troubled by his lack of organization? How your child views the situation will make a difference in how you can best approach a solution.

In any case, it's going to take time and patience to unravel the problem and address it. Here are some ideas to try:

- Sit down with your child and scan some study guides and strategies to see if he or she thinks any are worthy of a try,
 - Have your child choose one to implement for a few days (or a week, if older), and
 - Keep a chart to rate the different options based on their success and general enjoyment.
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The more strategies your child has, the more successful he will be in handling different types of challenges. Involving your child in this experiment will work with his natural curiosity and encourage self-motivation.

What to Say to Help an Anxious Child Calm Down

- **“I am here; you are safe.”** Anxiety has a way of making things look worse and feel scarier than when we are not feeling worried. These words can offer comfort and safety when your child is feeling out of control, especially if they are at the height of their worry. If you’re not sure what to say, this is an excellent go-to phrase!
 - **“Tell me about it.”** Give your child room to talk about their fears without interrupting. Some children need to have time to process through their thoughts. Do not offer solutions or try to fix it. Children sometimes do better with a set amount of time: “Let’s talk about your worries for 10 minutes.”
 - **“How big is your worry?”** Help your child verbalize the size of their worry and give you an accurate picture of how it feels to them. They can represent their worry by using arm length (hands close together or arms stretched wide apart) or by drawing three circles on a paper (small, medium and large) and choosing the one that applies.
 - **“What do you want to tell your worry?”** Explain to your child that worry is like an annoying “worry bug” that hangs around telling them to be worried. Create a few phrases, then give them permission to talk back to this “worry bug.” They can even [be bossy](#): “Go away!” or “I don’t have to listen to you!” Use silly voices, and try it loud and quiet.
 - **“Can you draw it?”** Many kids [cannot express their emotions with words](#). Encourage them to draw, paint or create their worries on paper. When they are finished, make observations, and give them a chance to explain the significance: “That’s a lot of blue!”
 - **“Let’s change the ending.”** Anxious children often feel stuck in the same pattern without a way out. Help them see different options by telling their story, but leaving off the ending. Then, create a few [new endings](#). Some can be silly, but at least one should be realistic for your child. Focus on your child conquering their fears with confidence!
 - **“What other things do you know about (fill in the blank)?”** Some children feel empowered when they have more information about their fear (especially things like tornadoes, bees, elevators, etc.). Grab a book from the library, do a science experiment, research together online: How often does your fear happen? How do people stay safe?
 - **“Which calming strategy do you want to use?”** Work proactively to create a [long list of calming strategies](#) your child enjoys. Practice them during the day, at random times when your child feels calm. When your child feels a worry sneaking into their thoughts, encourage them to [pick something from the list](#).
 - **“I’m going to take a deep breath.”** Sometimes our children are so worried that they resist our encouragement to pick a calming strategy. In this case, use yourself as the calming skill! Verbalize what you are doing and how it makes you feel. Some people hold their children close so they can feel the rise and fall of their chest as they breathe.
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- **“It’s scary AND...”** Acknowledge your child’s fear without making it even more frightening by using the word “AND.” After the word “and” you can add phrases like, “You are safe.” or “You’ve conquered this fear before.” or “You have a plan.” This models an internal dialogue your child can use next time they are feeling worried.
- **“I can’t wait to hear about...”** It’s hard to see our kids suffer with worry. Many parents rush in to rescue their child from an anxiety-producing situation. Encourage your child that they will survive this difficult feeling by bringing up a topic to talk about when you’re together later — what they did at recess, who they sat by at lunch, etc.
- **“What do you need from me?”** Instead of assuming that you know what your child needs, give them an opportunity to tell you what would help. Older kids may be able to verbalize if they need you to listen, give a hug, or help them find a solution. If you can’t do it, give them their wish in fantasy: “I wish grown ups could go to kindergarten too!”
- **“This feeling will pass.”** This may be a phrase you can both use when your child is at the height of panic. All feelings pass eventually. It often feels like they will never end, you won’t make it through, or it’s too hard. And that’s OK. Don’t let your brain get stuck in that moment; focus on the relief that is on the horizon.

Anxiety and worry look different for every child. Not every one of these strategies will work for your kids. You are the expert on your child. If you try something and it makes their worries worse, don’t panic. Just pick something else from the list to try next time. Eventually, you will find a few phrases that are effective for sending a calm, encouraging and empowering message to your child.

YOU KNOW YOUR CHILD IS GIFTED WHEN...



He knows everything there is to know about giraffes...and chess, and Top 40 music, and Humphrey Bogart movies.

Giddings ISD

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