

Summary

What Education Services Are Available for the Gifted and Talented?

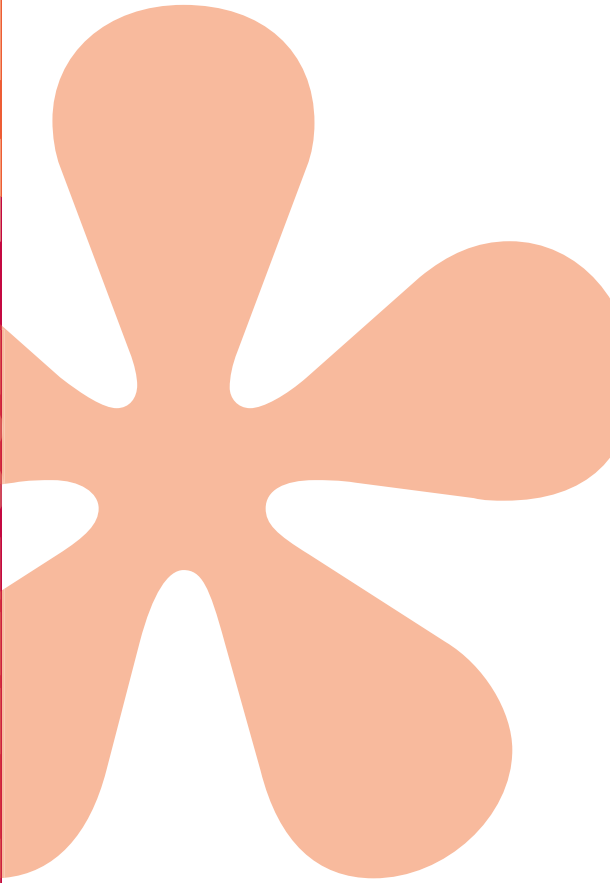
- The Ministry of Education provides policy advice to the Minister of Education and oversees implementation of all government policy decisions about education.
- Early childhood services are funded and regulated separately from the compulsory school sector.
- *Te Whāriki: He Whāriki Mātauranga mō ngā Mokopuna o Aotearoa/Early Childhood Curriculum* is founded on the principles of equitable opportunities for learning and on recognising, acknowledging, and building on each child's special strengths.
- The Ministry of Education publication *Initiatives for Gifted and Talented Learners* sets out policy direction in regard to gifted learners.
- Support is available for schools in the form of gifted and talented education advisers, the *Gifted and Talented Students* handbook, and the Gifted and Talented Community on the TKI website, which is also available to parents.

How Can We Work Together?

- Gifted and talented children must be identified and have their learning needs addressed with appropriate learning opportunities.
- Such learning opportunities should be matched to the child's intellectual and emotional needs.
- Parents, teachers, and the gifted child themselves can work together to enhance the child's learning achievements.
- Some gifted children also experience learning difficulties or disabilities. Such children need to receive support for their difficulties while being challenged to build on their strengths and interests.
- Parent-teacher conferences can help both parents and teachers to set goals and make plans that will suit the needs of the child.



A Final Word



A Final Word

Research and common sense highlight that parents play a vital role in nurturing and developing their children's gifts and talents. Hopefully, the information contained in this book will be helpful to you in this role. This book will not have answered all your questions, but the resources listed may lead you to further useful information and assistance.

There are two final, important messages. Although parenting a gifted child is an important part of your life, it is not your whole life. It is very easy to become overly concerned about assisting your child to develop their potential. James Webb, Elizabeth Meckstroth, and Stephanie Tolan point out in *Guiding the Gifted Child* (1982) that "it is easy to let the entire family focus on gifted children, with resulting depression and underlying resentment in you or elsewhere in the family" (page 200). Therefore, it is important that you work on meeting your own needs just as conscientiously as you strive to meet the needs of your gifted child. Seek help from others: friends, family members, parents of other gifted children, teachers, or anyone who understands the challenges you face and can support you. Sound advice comes from Judy Galbraith:

Even if your child is the most profoundly gifted person in the history of the world, parenting is only part of who you are. Some moms and dads literally live for their gifted kids. There's more to life! Love your child. Do your best to meet his needs at home. Spend time together. Try your best to get him an education that's stimulating, rewarding and satisfying. Be there for him. And make time for yourself ... When you take care of yourself, you teach your child to do the same.

Galbraith, 2000, page 107



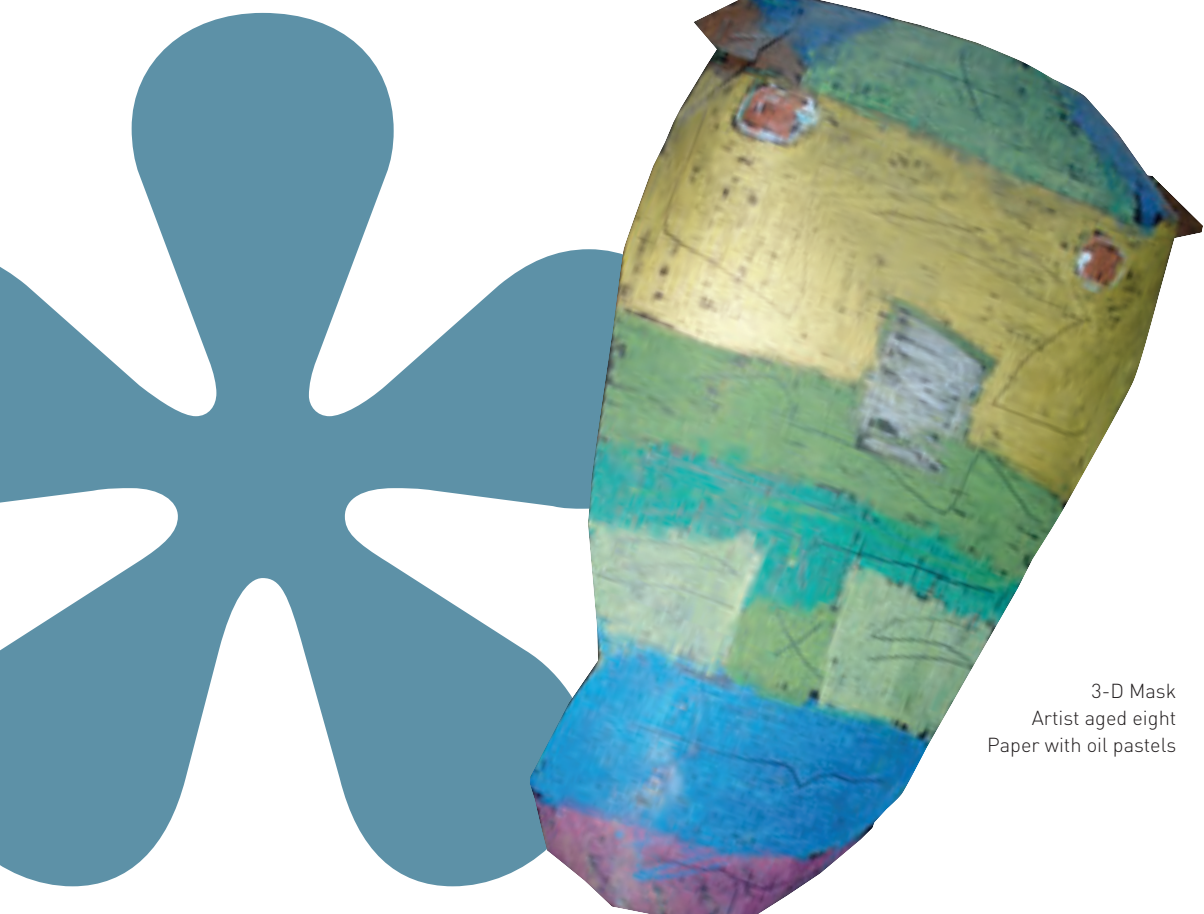
The second message is to appreciate the positives of having a gifted child. As parents point out:

“ *They are wonderful, a joy, so special, so wise, so understanding and continually shock and surprise with their insight and depth.*

Our gifted son is biologically eight (but three going on sixteen emotionally). His egocentricity makes him immature but his feedback in very difficult situations is wiser at times than I could have worked out! ”

Gifted children intrigue us and make us laugh because they read stories to the cat, know every detail of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, take a pocket encyclopedia to bed, or see a playground slide as a gravity slope.

“ *If you had one wish, what would it be? Mine would be to have more wishes because then I could have everything I wanted.* ”



3-D Mask
Artist aged eight
Paper with oil pastels