

# November: Parenting Your GT Child

East Central BOCES Gifted & Talented Parent Newsletter, 2022

## Gifted Students and Underachievement

Underachievement is commonly defined as a discrepancy between a student's potential and performance, that has persisted for at least a year and is not due to a physical, mental, or learning disability. Common characteristics of gifted underachievers may include disruptive, aggressive, or immature behavior in class; poor attendance; low self-esteem; victim mentality; lack of motivation; poor organizational skills; lack of goals; procrastination; depression; anxiety; and what appears to be laziness. Just as there are many characteristics, there are also many causes. Some causes may include social emotional issues, family problems, peer pressure, boredom due to a lack of academic challenge, or an undiagnosed disability.

Several authors describe four types of underachievers as Involuntary, Classic, Selective, and Under the Radar. Involuntary Underachievers are those students whose academic needs are not being met due to a lack of resources in their schools. They may work hard but do not have opportunities for the type of growth they are capable of. These students may become bored, distracted, and disruptive. Others may coast through, earning good grades but never reaching their full potential.

Classic Underachievers usually underperform in many areas. It is common for this type of underachievement to begin in middle school. As a result of their cognitive ability, they often come up with a long list of logical reasons for choosing to not work hard. These students typically resist teachers' and parents' efforts to encourage and support them.

Selective Underachievers make choices to work hard and excel in classes that interest them or in classes with teachers they like and respect. They may completely shut down in their other classes. While they make growth and earn good grades in the areas they choose to pursue, they may sabotage their chances of getting into certain colleges or receiving scholarships because of their poor grades in other classes.

Under the Radar Underachievers usually look like high achievers. They may coast through their education but do not reach their potential. They may be afraid to take risks which means they don't have opportunities to learn from their mistakes or develop resilience. They may encounter these lessons later in life, in college or in a career, and may feel unprepared.

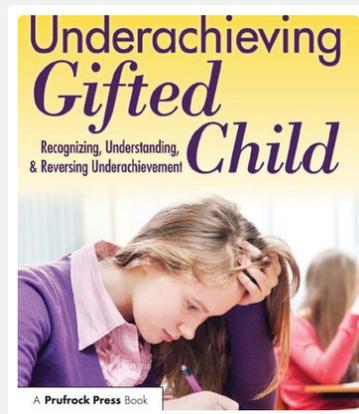
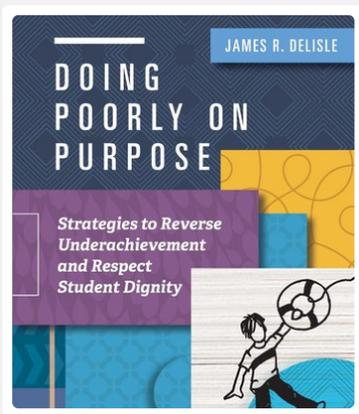
Whichever category an underachiever falls into, the first step to improvement is understanding the cause(s) of the underachievement. This may take some time and could involve a team approach between the student, the family, and the school. Take a look at this [short video](#) to find some simple steps to try.

For more information, check out some of the resources below.

[Doing Poorly on Purpose: Strategies to Reverse Underachievement and Respect Student Dignity](#), a book by Dr. James Delisle

Video: *Jim Delisle Doing Poorly on Purpose*, a 4- minute compilation of his presentation at a national gifted conference. [Youtube Link](#) There are additional youtube videos of his entire hour-long presentation as well, if you are interested.

[The Underachieving Gifted Child: Recognizing, Understanding, and Reversing Underachievement](#), a book by Del Siegle



## Student Regional Events

### Upcoming Summit Event

The Summit event is for 7th - 12th graders who are invited by their school GT coordinators. The upcoming event will be November 16th at Lincoln Health Community Hospital. The students will learn about several different careers in the medical field. This event is close to capacity and registration closes Friday, November 4th.



### Random, Weird, and Interesting Links for Gifted Students

Take a minute to preview each link before sharing with your child.

[Crash Course Kids](#) "Science with a side of awesome."

[TED-Ed](#) Full of "carefully curated educational videos" with a wide range of interesting topics.

[National Geographic Kids](#) Games, videos, articles, crafts, and more!

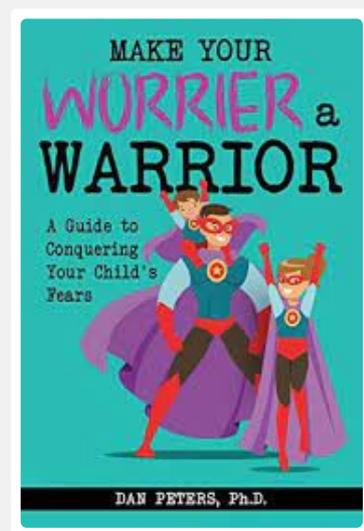
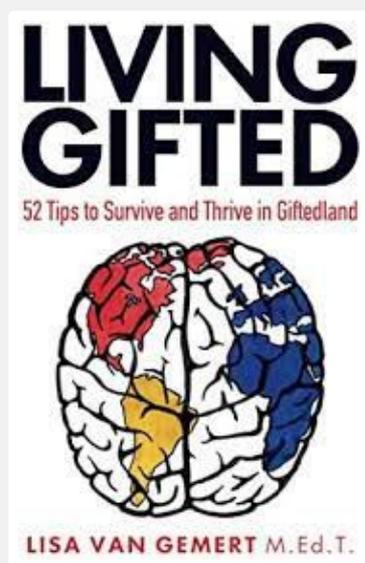
[Pumpktris](#) - a fully functioning game of Tetris embedded in a pumpkin!

[Incredible Dinosaur Costume](#) - start building now and you can wear it next October!



## Book Study for Parents

This semester's parent book study, [Living Gifted: 52 Tips to Survive and Thrive in Giftedland](#) is starting later this month. If you weren't able to join this one, consider joining the second semester book study, [Make Your Worrier a Warrior](#). More information will come in January.





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