

Abstracts for
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Recommended Keynote titles:

Raising Topsy-Turvy Kids, I Can't See It!, This is an E-Ticket Ride!

Recommended Half- or Full-day Sessions:

The Visual-Spatial Classroom: Differentiation Strategies that Engage Every Learner,
Raising Topsy-Turvy Kids, Maintaining Harmony

Recommended Breakout Sessions (please allow 90 minutes unless otherwise noted):

Raising Topsy-Turvy Kids, The Visual-Spatial Classroom, Nothin' But the Facts,
“Seeing” How to Read, Write and Spell, Putting the Pedal to the Metal, This is an E-Ticket Ride, Bringing Gifted Kids Home, Maintaining Harmony, Peas in the Family Pod

**Raising Topsy-Turvy Kids:
Successfully Parenting Your Visual-Spatial Child**
(Based on the book of the same title)

Do you have visual-spatial children? Children who would rather spend the day with a new box of LEGOs™ than do nearly anything else in the world? Kids who can get so absolutely absorbed in creative play and art of any medium that they lose all sense of time? Kids who can find joy and appreciation in watching the bugs in the grass-- excitement is all around them? These are obviously bright children who can tell you the inner workings of your computer, refrigerator or vacuum. They are the same children, however, who don't do well on standardized tests and are not always recognized in the classroom for the gifts they possess.

Often labeled disorganized, unfocused, poor spellers or worse, these “topsy-turvy” kids can be equal parts pleasure and frustration to raise. What I call “topsy-turvy” others have termed “upside-down,” “right-brained” and “Edison-like.” In this presentation, I'll share what's worked in raising my own visual-spatial kids and what hasn't, what's helped at various stages of development and what has failed. Success stories not just within my family and our home, but from other families as well. You'll hear stories of identifying, nurturing and teaching these remarkable children. Children who share a state of being utterly unpredictable, totally out-of-sync with their age peers, blissfully unaware of time ...*topsy-turvy!*

**The Visual-Spatial Classroom: Differentiation Strategies
that Engage Every Learner**

*(Typically done for grades K-5 and separately for grades 6+;
Based on the book of the same title)*

Do you have students who love LEGOs, computers, building, art, science or music, but can't memorize their math facts, show their work, spell, handwrite or manage timed tests? Do they have wonderfully creative ideas but their written work is several grade levels lower than what they just told you? While many students have strong right hemispheres (the source of visual-spatial ability), some are extraordinarily visual-spatial and require specific enhancements to the curricula. For these students to understand what they are learning, they must create permanent mental images. They need to *see* the new material (not just hear it) and have time to translate their images into words when recalling it. This workshop will provide participants with specific strategies for reaching this type of learner. These strategies, based on the latest brain research, actually enhance learning for all students, visual-spatial and auditory-sequential.

Nothin' But the Facts!

A Visual-Spatial Approach to the Times Tables

*(Recommended for 50-minute Breakout Sessions;
Based on the book of the same title)*

Few subjects frustrate visual-spatial learners more than the drill and repetition involved in memorizing the times tables; even gifted students can find themselves struggling with this subject. By incorporating activities that activate the right hemisphere: rhyme, finding patterns, using music, color and humor, and creating permanent mental images, you can teach all 169 facts in one week or less—with consistent and accurate recall. This session, based on the book, *Nothin' But the Facts*, will show you how easy it is to conquer the times tables and move on to the higher level math your visual-spatial students are hungry for!

“Seeing” How to Read, Write and Spell

A Visual-Spatial Approach to Language Arts

*(Based on the book, I Can't See It: A Visual-Spatial
Approach to Language Arts)*

Reading and spelling, when taught in a traditional, phonetic approach, are extraordinarily difficult subjects for any student to master. The act of writing and the art of organizing one's research can be equally as complicated. These subjects are particularly challenging

for visual-spatial learners who think and learn in images, not words, and who don't process their thoughts in a step-by-step manner that allows them to generate reports and other written projects efficiently. This fun and engaging session, based on the book, *I Can't See It: A Visual-Spatial Approach to Language Arts*, will show you how easy it is to turn the spotlight on your visual-spatial students' strengths when teaching reading, spelling and writing and not focus on their weaknesses.

Putting the Pedal to the Metal

Acceleration for Gifted Students: From Early K to Early College

Acceleration, in its many varied forms, is often a misunderstood practice within the field of education. While most teachers and school administrators fear for the overall development and well-being of the student, study after study demonstrates that grade skipping, compacting, and/or early entrance (kindergarten or college) for gifted students—particularly highly gifted students—can be of tremendous benefit with little or no negative consequences. This workshop will explore various means of accelerating students, the myths surrounding those options and the research to support incorporating such approaches at various stages of a student's educational career. Participants will also review predictors of success for early entrants and how best to determine if acceleration is the best course of action for a particular child.

This is an E-ticket Ride!

The Rollercoaster Ride that is Parenting Gifted Children

Gifted children are expensive, exhausting and time-consuming. They usually need less sleep than you do, ask more questions than you can answer, want 100 percent of your attention 24 hours a day, have obsessive hobbies, and are under-stimulated by traditional school curriculum. They react intensely to everything, endlessly long for a best friend who understands them completely, hold perfectionistic standards for themselves and you, and they keep their bedrooms in a condition you can never show company. A bad day to a gifted child is, "the worst day of my life;" one argument with a friend and suddenly, "everybody hates me!" Life with a gifted child means fastening your seatbelt for the most extreme rollercoaster—an "E-ticket ride!" In order to be the perfect parent, you need a checkbook as gifted as they are, the patience of a saint, an encyclopedic mind and someone to sleep for you. In this session, we will discuss recognizing your child's giftedness; understanding introversion, perfectionism, intensity and sensitivity; and the need for parent advocacy. There will be a question and answer period, but I don't have all the answers. **Trust Yourself!** No one knows your child better than you do.

Peas in the Family Pod A Look at Sibling and Gender Issues Among Families with Gifted Children

Sibling rivalry or a band of brothers? Sisterhood or sister battle? More so than siblings within “regular” families, the brothers and sisters of gifted families face a unique collection of issues including personality adjustment, underachievement, self-concept issues, jealousy and competitiveness, and the stress that accompanies parental/societal expectations. What happens when one sibling is identified as gifted? Can only one sibling be gifted? What happens when it’s the first-born or male child? This session will explore the latest research regarding gifted siblings and the families they are raised in with a special focus on the likelihood that when one is gifted, so are the others!

Homeschooling Your Visual-Spatial Child: Maintaining Harmony While Honoring Learning Styles

Does your homeschooled child love LEGOs, computers, building, art, science or music, but struggle to memorize math facts, spell accurately or handwrite legibly? Does your child have wonderfully creative ideas but is hopelessly disorganized? While many students have strong right hemispheres (the source of visual-spatial ability), some are extraordinarily visual-spatial and require specific enhancements to the curricula. For these students to understand what they are learning, they must create permanent mental images. They need to *see* and sometimes even feel, what they are learning. This workshop will provide participants with specific strategies for enhancing home learning with your visual-spatial child of any grade level.

Bringing Gifted Kids Home – for School!

Someone once told me, when my oldest son was just four, that I would need to homeschool him in order to meet his advanced intellectual ability and need for challenge. My response? “Pull every one of my teeth out first!” Two years later, following disappointments and near disasters at nearly a half dozen private schools for the gifted, found us bringing our gifted children home for school. How does your life change when you are suddenly the principal, curriculum coordinator, teacher, coach and parent all in one? In this session, I’ll share what worked and what didn’t during the five+ years our family homeschooled. We’ll discuss how best to plan your school-at-home, what it means for your lifestyle, afterschooling, unschooling, socialization issues of homeschooled kids, resources for gifted homeschoolers, and more.