



Gifted & Talented Leadership

Leadership within the Gifted & Talented population is a concept that is often overlooked. Emphasis and development is often placed on skills such as critical thinking, intellectual curiosity, academic achievement, etc. Children who possess gifts and talents may exhibit leadership attributes. These leadership qualities need to be identified, encouraged, and developed within their programs.

According to creativity and intelligence psychologist Robert Sternberg, children possessing gifts and talents that are also leaders exhibit creativity, intelligence, and wisdom. Problem solving skills are also an important as leaders are often faced with novel problems without a blueprint for how to solve those situations. Problem solving skills allow leaders to remove barriers that prevent them from reaching their goals.

Parents can also help children further develop their leadership qualities by providing opportunities to develop their leadership skills. Extracurricular activities involving groups allow students opportunities to belong, support and encourage others, and engage in conflict resolution. This allows students the opportunity to interact with diverse groups of people while working towards a common goal.

Traditional notions of leadership emphasize tasks such as taking charge, directing activities, making decisions for large groups of people, and giving commands. However, children becoming leaders in the twenty-first century will experience a world characterized by constant change, with information being more complex and delivered faster than at any other time in history. Thus, leaders in the twenty-first century may be in need of additional sets of skills.

Increasing technological changes in the 21st century bring about changes that are challenging for emerging leaders. With the increased speed at which information travels, emerging leaders need to be in possession of excellent communication skills, problem-solving skills, creativity, and emotional intelligence. Parents of children with gifts and talents play a significant role in the development of their leadership.

Parents of children possessing gifts and talents can help them to develop their leadership characteristics by ensuring that their children are involved in activities that foster their leadership growth. Creative drama, simulations, group play, modeling and collaborative work all help to develop leadership qualities. Additionally, children can be exposed to biographies of successful leaders, identifying different problems they faced and how they overcame them.

Resources:

1. [Hawley, M. \(2023, March 17\). Mastering the Art of 21st Century Leadership: 13 Skills to Lead With Confidence. reworked. https://www.reworked.co/leadership/mastering-the-art-of-21st-century-leadership-13-skills-to-lead-with-confidence/](https://www.reworked.co/leadership/mastering-the-art-of-21st-century-leadership-13-skills-to-lead-with-confidence/)
2. [Karnes, F. A. & Bean, S. M. \(1990\). Developing Leadership in Gifted Youth \(ED329410\). ERIC. https://www.hoagiesgifted.org/eric/archived/e485.html](https://www.hoagiesgifted.org/eric/archived/e485.html)
3. [Oak Crest Academy. \(2017, August 9\). Does Your Gifted Kid Have Leadership Characteristics? Oak Crest Academy. https://oakcrestacademy.org/gifted-kid-leadership-characteristics/](https://oakcrestacademy.org/gifted-kid-leadership-characteristics/)