

Abstracts for Alexandra “Allie” Golon

Raising Topsy-Turvy Kids: Successfully Parenting Your Visual-Spatial Child

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!*

HELP! MY CHILD IS GIFTED!

Gifted children are expensive 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, are under-stimulated by traditional school curriculum, react intensely to everything, endlessly long for a best friend who understands them completely, hold perfectionistic standards for themselves and you, want to know the meaning of life when other children only want to know how to whistle and keep their bedrooms in a condition you can never show company. In order to be the perfect parent, you need a checkbook as gifted as they are, unlimited patience, an encyclopedic mind and someone to sleep for you. In this session, we will discuss such issues as parents as primary identifiers of 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.

Showing Your Work and Other School Dilemmas Facing Visual-Spatial Learners

(A session for VSL kids ages 8-12)

How do you show work to a math problem when you just “see” the answer? How do you drill and repeat your math facts when you know them as permanent images? How do you create an outline (a detail version) *before* the full report (the big picture)? In this session, we'll explore how different learning styles effect communication. If you're a visual-spatial student with an auditory-sequential teacher, you're bound to see a breakdown in communication at some point. Taking notes in pictures, memorization techniques, the art of writing and honing organizational skills will be presented in a fun and engaging workshop that honors the tremendous gifts of the right hemisphere.

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, socialization issues of homeschooled kids, resources for gifted homeschoolers, and more.