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# *Social and Emotional Issues, Underachievement, and Counseling*

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The National Association for Gifted Children has made the social and emotional development of gifted children a high priority for the twenty-first century by creating two task forces to examine social/emotional issues. The first task force was formed in 2000 and called the Social and Emotional Issues Task Force. It completed its work in 2002 by publishing an edited book, *The Social and Emotional Development of Gifted Children: What Do We Know?*, that provides an extensive review of the literature on the social and emotional development of gifted children (Neihart, Reis, Robinson, & Moon, 2002). In 2002, the Affective Curriculum Task Force was formed to develop a companion book which will provide a conceptual framework for creating educational curricula to promote positive affective development among gifted and talented children.

More is known about the social and emotional characteristics of gifted children than is known about methods of facilitating optimal affective development in such children. The sixteen seminal articles included here provide a sampling of work published in *Gifted Child Quarterly* on the social and emotional characteristics of gifted students, in general, and underachievers, in particular. They also provide an introduction to the clinical literature on counseling the gifted, although much of that literature has been published in journals outside the field. These sixteen seminal articles will be discussed in three groupings: social and emotional issues, underachievement, and counseling.

## SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL ISSUES

This volume includes nine empirical articles published in *Gifted Child Quarterly* on social and/or emotional characteristics of gifted students. The research designs utilized vary considerably. Seven of the studies are quantitative; two are qualitative. Five of the quantitative studies compare gifted students to average students on social/emotional variables. Only one of these included a mental age comparison group as well as an average chronological age comparison group, a recommended design for gifted education (Robinson, Zigler, & Gallagher, 2000). Several of the studies examined within-group differences among gifted students. Two of the studies explored affective differences students with different levels of giftedness (Baker, 1995; Sayler & Brookshire, 1993). Three studies investigated within-group differences among gifted students by creating subgroups of the gifted population on the basis of social/emotional variables like popularity (Cornell, 1990), loneliness (Kaiser & Berndt, 1985), or adjustment (Sowa & May, 1997).

Together these studies provide an illustrative sampling of the research on social and emotional issues among high ability youth. These articles are not exhaustive because many research studies on social and emotional issues have been published in journals outside the field of gifted education. Nonetheless, the nine articles in this volume represent seminal studies on the social and emotional issues experienced by high ability youth and illustrate both the strengths and the weaknesses of the current literature on social and emotional issues in the field of gifted education. Each of the nine studies is briefly described below in the context of the larger literature. The studies are discussed in two broad categories: quantitative comparison studies and descriptive and modeling studies. Then, directions for future research are suggested.

### Quantitative Comparison Studies

Much of the empirical literature on social and emotional issues of gifted students uses causal comparative designs to compare characteristics of students who have been identified as gifted with one or more comparison groups. Sometimes the comparison groups are students who are achieving at average levels; at other times the comparison groups are subpopulations of gifted students. Some studies include both types of comparisons. Studies comparing subpopulations of gifted students have created groupings based on variables such as level of giftedness and psychological characteristics. The studies in this volume are good examples of the quantitative comparison literature.

*Comparisons to Average Achievers.* Early studies on social and emotional issues tended to focus on comparing the social and emotional characteristics of academically gifted students and students who were achieving or functioning at average levels. The oldest study in this collection of seminal studies was one of the first studies of this type to focus on young children (Lehman & Erdwins, 1981).

Lehman and Erdwins compared third-grade students enrolled in a gifted program in a suburban public school with children in the same school in grades three and six who had average IQ scores (range = 90-110), a gifted student versus chronological age comparison group vs. mental age comparison or CA-MA design. They found that gifted students exhibited excellent personal and social adjustment, especially with respect to their CA peers. With respect to their MA peers, gifted third graders were superior to the sixth graders on several personal and social variables (such as self-esteem, sense of personal freedom, family relations, lack of antisocial tendencies) and similar on others (such as self-direction, withdrawal tendencies, social standards, and social skills). The only area where the gifted students showed less positive adjustment than their MA peers was on nervous symptoms. These findings suggest that gifted children who are participating in gifted programs in suburban school districts have strong families and self-esteem and precocious social and self-direction skills.

Four other studies in this collection compared the adjustment of gifted students with that of average students and found that the gifted students exhibited similar or superior adjustment. One of these studies compared scores of gifted students ages 11-12 from the National Educational Longitudinal Study with those of average students on locus of control, self-concept, popularity, and behavior problems and found that the gifted students exhibited generally superior adjustment (Sayler & Brookshire, 1993). Another compared academically achieving high school students with students with an average class ranking and found no statistically significant differences in incidence of depression (Baker, 1995). A third study reported no statistically significant differences from norms in the scores of gifted adolescents on measures of depression, anger, and stress. The fourth, and most recent, study of this type compared the social competence of the top 3% of third grade students from a National Head Start project to the remaining students and found that the top students were perceived by both teachers and parents as superior in personal and social adjustment (Robinson, Lanzi, Weinberg, Ramey, & Ramey, 2002).

These four studies are consistent with the overall comparison literature in finding that gifted students generally exhibit similar or superior adjustment when compared to average-ability peers (Keiley, 1997; Neihart, 2002a, 2002b). Robinson and Lanzi, et al.'s (2002) study is one of the few that has examined investigated personal and social adjustment among high ability students from poverty backgrounds.

*Comparisons of subtypes of gifted students.* Four of the comparison studies examined differences among subgroups of gifted students. One study compared gifted eighth grade students who had been accelerated with gifted students who were in gifted classes and found no differences in their perceptions of social relationships, emotional development, or frequency of behavior problems (Sayler & Brookshire, 1993). Another compared highly gifted thirteen-year-olds (top 1% in scores on off-grade level SAT) with academically gifted high

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school students (top 5% of class rankings in suburban high schools) and found no differences in the incidence of depression (Baker, 1995). These studies are typical. Most studies comparing students with different levels or types of giftedness, have found no differences on mental health variables such as depression (Metha & McWhirter, 1997; Pearson & Beer, 1991) and behavior problems (Cornell, Delcourt, Bland, Goldberg, & Oram, 1994).

However, comparison studies have found differences among students with different levels and types of giftedness in the area of peer relationships and friendships (Dauber & Benbow, 1990; Swiatek, 1995). Highly intellectually gifted students and verbally gifted students appear to have more difficulty with peer relationships and fewer friends than more moderately or mathematically gifted students. In addition, highly gifted children have been found to have more mature conceptions of friendship than their chronological age peers (Gross, in press).

In contrast, subtype comparison research consistently finds group differences when gifted students are grouped by social and emotional variables. For example, gifted students differ in their ways of coping with the "stigma of giftedness" (Cross, Coleman, & Terhaar-Yonkers, 1991) and exhibit different emotional responses to self-contained programming (Moon, Swift, & Shallenberger, 2002).

The seminal studies in this volume illustrate some of the methods of studying individual differences among gifted students on social and emotional variables. One common methodology is to assess gifted students on a social or emotional variable and then create comparison groups based on these scores. This was done in the study of unpopular gifted students included in this volume (Cornell, 1990). First, gifted students were categorized as having high, average, or low popularity using combined peer nomination and peer rating scores. Then popular and unpopular groups were compared on self-reported personality variables such as self-concept, emotional autonomy, and anxiety, as well as on teacher ratings of academic self-esteem. The researchers found that unpopular high ability students differed from the average and popular students in family social status, social self-concept, and academic self-esteem. They did not differ in emotional autonomy or anxiety. Descriptive studies, such as this one, can inform counseling, program development, and policy.

Similarly, Kaiser and Berndt (1985) assessed a group of high school students attending a Governor's school on a variety of emotional variables including anger, depression, stressful life changes, and loneliness. Although they found the group to be relatively well-adjusted overall, 15-20% reported significant distress on one or more of the measures used. These researchers then moved beyond description to prediction. Using regression analyses, they were able to determine that depression, stress, and anger predicted loneliness among these gifted students. This method of studying within group differences has three advantages. First, it demonstrates that even though most gifted students are well-adjusted, a minority may be at risk for social/emotional problems. Second, regression designs retain all of the information in continuous variables and most social/emotional assessment scales are continuous in nature. Third, prediction

models may be able to identify specific gifted students who are at risk for social/emotional adjustment problems and/or might benefit from counseling.

### **Descriptive and Modeling Studies**

The final category of studies is descriptive and modeling studies. Some of these studies used survey methods (Moon, Kelly, & Feldhusen, 1997), while others used qualitative methods (Coleman, 2001; Sowa & May, 1997). These studies were designed to describe social and emotional characteristics of gifted students and their social systems or develop models of adjustment processes among high ability students. Because the focus is exclusively on high ability students, these studies are more likely to be published in journals within the field of gifted education than in journals in related fields such as counseling or psychology. Hence, some of the best examples of such studies are those included in this volume.

The survey study investigated adult perceptions of the need for differentiated counseling services (Moon et al., 1997). Parents of gifted students, coordinators of K-12 gifted education programs, community counselors, and professors were surveyed. All groups believed that gifted youth and their families could benefit from specialized counseling and guidance services. The social and emotional issues that were perceived to warrant specialized and differentiated counseling services included peer relationships, emotional adjustment, social adjustment, stress management, and underachievement.

These strong perceptions of the need for counseling services for gifted students are somewhat at odds with the group comparison literature discussed earlier which suggests that gifted students are as well or better adjusted than most other students. There are two possible explanations for these apparently conflicting results. First, the adults in this study may have been thinking of the minority of gifted and talented students that the within group comparison studies discussed above clearly indicate do have social/emotional issues. Second, the adults might have been commenting on the need for differentiation of the counseling process when counseling is provided, rather than saying that all gifted students need counseling. This interpretation is supported by the strong support respondents voiced for training programs for teachers, principals, counselors, and psychologists.

Sowa and May (1997) used qualitative research to create a prediction model for functional and dysfunctional patterns of adjustment among gifted students. Their model was based on observations of students and interviews with families, teachers, and friends about coping styles. Although their sample was small, as is typical in qualitative research, it was one of the few samples in the social/emotional literature that was diverse. Out of 20 students 7 (35%) were ethnic minorities. The model they developed uses both environmental variables (family functioning) and individual variables (adjustment mechanisms) to predict social/emotional adjustment. Like the within-group comparison studies, this study reminds us that gifted students are diverse with respect to social/emotional

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variables, with some being well adjusted and others having adjustment problems. This study also provides guidance on family and psychological risk factors that can increase the chances that gifted students will experience adjustment difficulties. It provides a theoretical framework for developing and evaluating interventions to increase the resilience of gifted students by targeting family functioning and/or individual coping styles.

The final descriptive study used ethnography to conduct an in-depth investigation of the social system that existed at a state high school for gifted students (Coleman, 2001). More than any other study in this collection, this one gets inside the heads of gifted adolescents, helping us to understand what they experience in an academically rigorous, residential environment. The study suggests that residential schools for gifted adolescents can facilitate the creation of an atypical adolescent social system with many positive characteristics such as appreciation of diversity, support for academic achievement, and absence of physical violence. The study also highlights some of the stressors that gifted students can experience in this type of environment such as busy schedules, omnipresent deadlines, and pressure.

### Directions for Future Research

*Group comparison studies.* Researchers have consistently found few differences or differences favoring the gifted group when comparing gifted students to norms. However, most of the studies comparing gifted students to average students have focused on gifted students attending fee-based summer programs or predominately Caucasian samples from suburban gifted programs, limiting generalizability of the findings to other populations of gifted students such as those who have never had the opportunity to participate in a gifted program or who are not Caucasian. Hence, future research of this type should include more ethnically diverse populations of gifted students and gifted students who are not receiving any special programming.

In addition, future research should focus on within-group differences among the gifted using a wide variety of grouping variables including gender, age, type of giftedness, level of giftedness, availability and type of GT programming, ethnicity, and characteristics of motivation, emotions, personality, and family. This research should create complex models that will predict when specific subtypes of gifted students are likely to experience social or emotional stress.

*Deficit model vs. positive psychology.* Most of the studies in this collection come from a deficit model of psychological functioning, i.e., they are investigating vulnerability and psychological problems. Future research should also be conducted from within the positive psychology framework and investigate factors that increase resilience (Neihart, 2002c) or personal talent (Moon, 2002, November) among gifted students. The Sowa and May (1997) study moves in this direction because it identified processes that influenced both positive and

negative adaptation to stress. Future research should go even further, looking for factors that facilitate optimal or extraordinary psychosocial development among gifted students.

*Cross-sectional vs. longitudinal.* Most of the studies in this volume, like the rest of the social and emotional literature, are short-term, cross-sectional studies. Since psychosocial development is a process that takes place across time, longitudinal studies are needed to fully understand the social and emotional issues of gifted students (Peterson, 2002; Robinson, Reis, Neihart, & Moon, 2002). Methods like growth analysis could be used to illuminate patterns of change over time on social and emotional variables among gifted students. Longitudinal studies would also facilitate more accurate prediction of risk and resilience factors.

## UNDERACHIEVEMENT

The underachievement of gifted students is a puzzling phenomenon that has been the subject of sporadic attention in the field of gifted education for many years (Dowdall & Colangelo, 1982; Reis & McCoach, 2000; Rimm, 1995; Whitmore, 1980). Research on underachievement is hindered by lack of a consensus on how underachievement should be defined, the small number of gifted students who underachieve, the hidden nature of much underachievement, and the complexity of the phenomenon (Reis & McCoach, 2000). There is little conclusive research in this area but there are some interesting possibilities, some of which are suggested by the five papers on underachievement in this volume.

The only quantitative study in the group compares achieving and underachieving gifted high school students on satisfaction with school, aspirations, and need for services (Colangelo, Kerr, Christensen, & Maxey, 1993). This study is from the "comparison of subtypes of gifted students" tradition discussed in the previous section. The other three empirical studies are all qualitative investigations of interventions to reverse underachievement (Baum, 1995; Emerick, 1992; Hebert & Olenchak, 2000). The final paper in the set is a comprehensive review of the literature. These papers answer three questions about underachievement: (a) What is it? (b) What factors are associated with underachievement among gifted individuals? (c) How can we reverse poor school performance among gifted students when it occurs?

### Definitions and Models of Underachievement

In their comprehensive review of the literature on underachievement, Reis and McCoach (2000) address all three of these questions. To answer the "What is it?" question they note that many operational and conceptual definitions of underachievement have been proposed in the literature, all of which have problems of one kind or another. They recommend widespread adoption of an

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operational definition of underachievement as a severe discrepancy between expected achievement (measured by tests) and actual classroom achievement (measured by grades and teacher evaluations) that persists over time and is not the result of a diagnosed learning disability. All four of the studies in this volume used some variation of this definition to select their underachieving subjects. Although this definition may not be relevant to underachievement in nonschool settings and will miss hidden gifted students who are underachieving, such as gifted students who are unable to show their abilities on standardized achievement tests, it is a good working definition for research on poor school performance among gifted students.

Several authors have proposed models of underachievement to answer the question "What factors are associated with it?" (Baker, Bridger, & Evans, 1998; Rimm, 2003). Generally, these models propose that individual, family, and school factors can all cause underachievement, singly or in combination. The Reis and McCoach (2000) review suggests that the situation is actually more complex than these models suggest. Peers can also influence underachievement. In addition, although many individual characteristics have been found to be associated with underachievement, these characteristics are so varied and idiosyncratic that it is not possible to identify a single underachieving personality (Baum, 1995). The influence of the three areas (family, individual, and school) also appears to vary greatly. For example, there is no consistent evidence that all gifted underachievers come from dysfunctional families or experience inappropriate schooling. Finally, these models do not capture the role that culture, ethnicity, and socialization can play in underachievement, particularly among minority populations. Hence, new models are needed that can take these additional complexities into account.

#### Characteristics of Underachievers

One stream of research on underachievers has examined the individual characteristics of the students. This research tradition is represented in this collection both in the review paper (Reis & McCoach, 2000) and in the quantitative comparison paper (Colangelo et al., 1993). Table 5 in the review paper provides a comprehensive summary of research on personality characteristics, internal mediators, differential thinking styles, maladaptive strategies, and positive attributes that have been found to be associated with poor performance in school by bright children. Most of the characteristics are negative and many of them are also associated with learning disabilities and/or AD/HD, suggesting that it is important to assess gifted underachievers for hidden disabilities as a first step in intervention. Colangelo et al.'s study suggests that underachievers also have fewer out-of-class accomplishments and lower educational aspirations than their high achieving peers.

A second stream of research on underachievers has examined the characteristics of their families (Fine & Holt, 1983; Fine & Pitts, 1980; Green, Fine, & Tollefson, 1988; Moon & Hall, 1998; Rimm & Lowe, 1988; Zuccone & Amerikaner, 1986). This research is not well represented in this volume, probably



because research on families is still not a major theme in gifted education so the studies published in *GCQ* from this stream would tend not to be cited as often as those from the individual characteristics stream. In addition, some of the research from the family literature has been published outside the field of gifted education in journals that focus on families and family interventions.

In both the individual and the family streams, the characteristics research is primarily descriptive. Only a few studies have attempted to determine causality (Dias, 1998). Most of the studies are cross-sectional so we know little about how underachievement changes over time except through a handful of retrospective (Emerick, 1992; Peterson, 2001b; Peterson & Colangelo, 1996) and longitudinal (Peterson, 2000, 2001a, 2002) studies. There is a great need for more longitudinal research on underachievement from an eco-systemic perspective, that is, research that follows achievers and underachievers over time, assessing not only their individual characteristics but also the characteristics of their families, peers, and schools. A good exemplar of this type of research is Peterson's (2002) fascinating study of the post-high school development for fourteen gifted adolescents who were at risk for underachievement. By following the students for four years from an eco-systemic perspective, Peterson was able to observe and report on their development as it unfolded after high school. There is also a need for more studies of specific subpopulations of underachievers, especially those from populations that have been historically underrepresented in gifted programs (Dias, 1998; Ford, 1996).

### Reversing Underachievement

Increasing numbers of studies of underachievement have focused on interventions to reverse the poor school performance. As might be expected from the models of underachievement described above, this research also has three streams. It includes studies of *educational interventions* (Whitmore, 1980), *family interventions* (Fine & Pitts, 1980; Moon & Hall, 1998; Moon & Thomas, 2003; Wendorf & Frey, 1985; Zuccone & Amerikaner, 1986), and *personal interventions* (Siegle & McCoach, 2002). A few studies, especially the retrospective ones, have examined all three of these types of interventions at once (Emerick, 1992; Peterson, 2001b).

This collection includes three studies of educational and personal interventions to reverse underachievement: one retrospective, eco-systemic study of reversals of underachievement without formal intervention programs (Emerick, 1992) and two studies of the effectiveness of planned interventions (Baum, 1995; Hébert & Olenchak, 2000). Emerick investigated 10 students aged 14-20 who had demonstrated a sustained period of average or below average school performance followed by a sustained reversal that produced above average school performance. Her qualitative investigation yielded six emergent themes that describe factors related to the reversal of underachievement: out-of-school interests, supportive parents, classes with specific characteristics, career goals, caring and enthusiastic teachers, and personal growth. Baum et al.

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investigated the effectiveness of Type III investigations in reversing poor academic performance among 17 students aged 8-13 who had diverse profiles of factors contributing to their underachievement. They found that 82% of the participants experienced a sustained reversal of poor school performance during the year of the intervention and the year immediately following. Improvement was noted both in grades and in behavior, especially self-regulated and classroom behavior. Hébert and Olenchak (2000) investigated the effectiveness of mentors in reversing poor school performance in three male students of widely different ages (elementary school to college). They found that mentorship relationships could reverse underachievement when the mentor was open and nonjudgmental, provided consistent and personalized support, and created strength and interest-based intervention strategies. Taken together, these three studies suggest that individualized, approaches based on student interests and strengths can help underachieving gifted students reverse patterns of poor school performance. Such interventions can be implemented by a variety of caring adults including parents, educators, and mentors.

## COUNSELING GIFTED STUDENTS

The field of gifted education has focused much more time and energy on researching the need for and the efficacy of differentiated educational services for gifted and talented youth than it has on differentiated counseling services. As a result, little is known about the types of counseling services that could provide the greatest benefit to specific gifted students at specific points in their development.

Most of the literature that does exist on counseling gifted students is clinical rather than empirical. It consists of reports by clinicians on their practice rather than investigations of the efficacy of specific counseling strategies with gifted and talented students. In addition, much of this literature has been published in books (Kerr, 1991; Silverman, 1993; VanTassel-Baska, 1990; Webb & DeVries, 1993) or in journals outside the field of gifted education, especially journals for counselors or psychologists such as *The Journal of Counseling and Development* (McMann & Oliver, 1988; Myers & Pace, 1986; Peterson & Colangelo, 1996; Zuccone & Amerikaner, 1986), *The Journal of Counseling Psychology* (Kerr & Cheryl, 1991), *The Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* (Moon & Hall, 1998), and *The School Counselor* (Lester & Anderson, 1981). Hence, the three seminal papers in this volume represent only a small part of the existing literature.

### Counseling Needs

As noted above, there are contradictions in the literature regarding the need for specialized counseling services for gifted students. On the one hand, clinicians who work with gifted children and their families report that they need assistance in

addressing affective concerns related to giftedness such as identity development, multipotentiality, perfectionism, introversion, peer relationships, and sensitivity (Jackson & Peterson, 2003; Mahoney, 1997; Mendaglio, 2003; Peterson, 2003; Silverman, 1993). There is also some clinical evidence that giftedness can mask symptoms of mental health problems such as behavior and depressive disorders (Jackson & Peterson, 2003; Kaufmann, Kalbfleisch, & Castellanos, 2000; Kaufmann & Castellanos, 2000). On the other hand, as noted earlier, studies comparing gifted students with average students on affective variables generally find that the gifted students meet or exceed norms on these variables.

The survey study discussed in the section on social/emotional development provides a different perspective on counseling needs (Moon et al., 1997). In this study parents, school personnel, and related counseling professionals were surveyed to determine their perceptions of the needs of gifted students for specialized counseling services. The results supported the clinical literature more than the group comparison literature. All three groups felt that gifted students would benefit from specialized and differentiated counseling services. Recommended services included career assessments, talent assessments, and guidance for both parents and students. This study supported the need for differentiation of counseling services to address unique issues of gifted individuals. Unfortunately, very few empirical studies have been conducted on how to differentiate counseling when working with gifted and talented students.

### Counseling Models

The remaining two papers on counseling in this volume proposed models based on clinical practice (Buescher, 1987; Dettman & Colangelo, 1980). These papers are typical of the large, clinical literature on counseling gifted students that spans a continuum from prevention to intervention (Moon, 2002, 2003). The models included here represent the preventative end of the continuum.

One of the models suggested that differentiated, affective curricula can help gifted adolescents address four critical issues: adolescent development, identity and stress, relationships, and career development (Buescher, 1987). This curricular approach is similar to that proposed in dimensions one and two of the Autonomous Learner Model (Betts & Kercher, 1999; Betts, 1985). The goal is to help gifted adolescents understand themselves and develop personal talent (Moon, 2002, November, 2002, October). The NAGC Affective Curriculum Task Force is currently working along similar lines to develop a comprehensive framework for affective curricula that will promote the social, emotional, and personal development of gifted individuals.

The other paper, one of the oldest in the collection, provided a model for school counselors to use in working with parents of gifted students (Colangelo & Dettman, 1981). The model was based on a review of the early literature on the needs of parents of the gifted (Colangelo & Dettmann, 1983) and described three approaches school counselors could take in assisting parents of gifted students: the parent-centered approach, the school-centered approach, and the

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partnership approach. The partnership approach was recommended because it encompassed the strengths of the other two approaches and promoted joint responsibility for the welfare of gifted children. Although this model makes intuitive sense, it has never been empirically tested or validated and provides only very general guidance to school counselors on how to create parent-school partnerships.

There are no papers in this volume representing the intervention end of the counseling model continuum, probably because there have not been very many studies of therapeutic interventions with gifted individuals. The handful of studies that have been conducted have often been published elsewhere, i.e., in therapy journals (Adams-Byers, Whitsell, & Moon, 2004; Moon, Nelson, & Piercy, 1993; Thomas, 1999; Wendorf & Frey, 1985) or other journals in the field of gifted education (Bourdeau & Thomas, 2003).

## CONCLUSION

Clearly, there is a need for more attention to the affective development of all gifted students, as well as for increased attention to the affective needs of special populations of gifted students, such as underachievers, who are at risk for failure to achieve their potential. There is also a need for more empirical studies on "what works" with these students, both in terms of preventative strategies such as affective curricula, and with regard to more intensive interventions such as individual, group, or family therapy. Good counseling models have been developed, but they need to be rigorously evaluated to determine the conditions under which they are most effective. In addition, research is needed on affective and counseling interventions with specific subtypes of gifted students such as Asian Americans, African Americans, and twice-exceptional students (Ford, Harris, & Schuerger, 1993, March/April; Moon, Zentall, Grskovic, Hall, & Stormont, 2001; Plucker, 1996; Zuccone & Amerikaner, 1986). For this to happen, researchers in the field of gifted education will need to collaborate with researchers from affective fields such as personal and social psychology, counseling psychology, family therapy, and psychiatry. Working together, we can learn how to intervene most effectively with gifted individuals who have mental health problems and how to help all gifted persons achieve optimal social, emotional, and personal development.

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