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## QUICK LINKS

[www.australiangifted-support.com](http://www.australiangifted-support.com)

[www.starjump.com.au](http://www.starjump.com.au)

[www.nswagtc.org.au](http://www.nswagtc.org.au)

[www.gifteddevelopment.com](http://www.gifteddevelopment.com)

[www.eyecanlearn.com](http://www.eyecanlearn.com)

[www.fortoptom.com.au](http://www.fortoptom.com.au)

## August 2010 update

When speaking with teachers and parents it is often stated that all the research we see about giftedness comes from overseas - US, Canada, UK or Europe. In actual fact there is a large amount of research that is happening here in Australia, and has been for the past few decades at least.

For some time now I have wished for a simple way for us to be able to access this local research regarding giftedness in Australia. Easy accessibility to this research would enable parents in better understanding how to assist their children, inform teachers of current research about best practice for Gifted children and would identify for researchers areas that require further investigation.

**I'm excited to announce that at AGSC we have taken one step further in having this resource available.**

We now have an up to date, online, searchable database of Australian Research Theses, articles and publications freely available to everyone via our webpage. This is maintained by ACER and would normally only be available to those linked to an organisation that has subscribed to the ACER service - eg university libraries.

Here is the link to the resource on our website [Research Database](#)

If you have any feedback after you have used this site we would love to hear from you.

## Article: The Lazy Child

It is always concerning when I meet a child who is obviously bright but for some reason is failing at school. So often when I read their school reports there is a repeated pattern of comment in them '*just needs to try harder*'; '*need to focus*'; '*easily distracted*'; '*needs to concentrate*'. When I speak with their parents they talk about '*lack of motivation*'; '*doesn't bother*'; '*doesn't try*'; '*is lazy*'.

In my 40 years of working with children in many different capacities and more recently 20+ years working with gifted children I doubt I've met many if any who didn't like to learn, like to be successful, enjoy doing things well and receiving the positive feedback that goes with that. These comments and judgments made by the adults in these children's worlds are suggesting that the student is actively choosing to perform in a way that is



## CAMPS

Camps provide gifted children with the opportunity to spend time with likeminded peers. They can engage in interesting or challenging activities and fun social experiences which is vital for their wellbeing. Themes of camps range from Harry Potter to Time Travelling and incorporate activities around reading, creativity, space and science.

For the first time, AGSC is bringing camps to NSW, ACT, VIC and WA.

## SOCIAL SKILLS

Social skills are the foundation stone of a child's development. With better developed social skills children can have greater school success, increase their independence, interact with others more positively and establish and maintain quality friendships.

The Stepping Stones program is a specially designed course aimed to teach strategies to support gifted students in the development of pro-social skills, emotional regulation, anger management, friendship building, conflict resolution, anti-bullying strategies and 'getting along' skills.

Our aim is to develop

contrary to what we want of them. To me, they are warning bells that something is going on for that child that we don't yet understand. Something, that impacts on their ability to be successful academically, socially or in their day to day tasks. In a recent research study conducted in Queensland 85% of the children in their small "study of 'lazy' children" did in fact have an unidentified specific learning difficulty. To read more about the study visit [QUT eprints](#)

In the many hundreds of underachieving gifted children who have come to the AGSC in the past 12 years this pattern has also often been the case. Our approach is to see this disengagement or underachievement as the flag that something is going on for the child that has not yet been identified. Even if some co-existing problem has been identified and provisions or interventions implemented, and there is still some problem, then it is us, the adults in the child's life who still haven't got it right, not the child who is not *'trying hard enough'*.

I remember years ago reading on a report from a therapist a list of all the interventions that had been used for the child, and then the conclusion that since all this had been done and the child was still having difficulties, that the child was not trying hard enough so it was his fault. Interestingly this was a child whose teachers regularly made comments about how hard he tried and how enthusiastic he could be in subjects or activities he liked (translate *'that he could do'*).

In working with families we have always collected a comprehensive range of information about the child we are working with and this has become even more focused and precise with the introduction last year of the Starjump Student Management Assessment System. For more information on this service visit [Starjump](#) and view the Introductory Video.

Richard Lavoie's DVD on Motivation, excerpts of which can be viewed on [Youtube](#); provide some interesting aspects to consider when working with underachieving gifted children.

### **Article: Relationships among intelligence, sensory stimulation, and energy**

Marlo Payne Thurman has developed a theory based on her 20 years of working as a psychologist and educator with twice-exceptional children. In a two-part article she discusses the unique relationships between intelligence, sensory stimulation and energy.

The article is an interesting discussion about the levels of cognitive energy children have and how these levels of energy impact on learning, social and emotional function, and the mental and physical health of our gifted and twice-exceptional populations.

[Read More >](#)

### **Article: Anxiety**

Anxiety is thought to affect around one in ten children, which makes it a very common, if not the most common, childhood

an individualized social skills program that is tailored to meet the needs of each child.

## STARJUMP

Starjump creates Self-awareness in children by Teaching them to Accept themselves for who they are while Recognizing their strengths. Through teaching them how to Juggle life's challenges using their strengths they will Uncover their skills and be adequately Motivated to achieve the Performance /dream that they are aiming for.

The aim of the assessments is to identify highlight strengths in your child and also any possible learning differences, or issues, they are facing that might impact on their development. These will then be analysed and a formal written report will be completed. This process will enable us to provide a comprehensive program that meets the specific needs of your child.

In addition to this we will also be starting to offer a computer based literacy program which also offers access to modules in behaviour, emotions, social skills and attention. This program is suitable for all children who are not reaching their potential and is particularly visual in its orientation.



wellbeing issue. Yet parents of children with anxiety are often confused. It may seem that anxiety is part of your child's personality, so how do you change it? And fears are a natural and important part of growing up, so how do you tell when your child has a problem?

[How to Help Your Anxious Child](#) is an interesting article from The Happy Child Website which talks about treating anxious children. More information about this new web site below.

## Article Update: Visual Processing

Further to the feature we did in the May 2010 newsletter on visual processing I'm pleased to announce that a new Behavioural Optometry Service is now available in Sydney. Bryan Smith who has recently been training with Michael Christian in Queenscliff in Victoria in Somatic Integration is now offering this as part of his Behavioural Optometry Service in both Brisbane and Sydney. For full details on this approach to vision issues and his services visit [www.vsi.net.au](http://www.vsi.net.au). He will be operating from Petersham Eye Health Centre, 35d New Canterbury Rd, Petersham NSW 2049, 02 9572 7421



## Fun stuff: Magazine review - Kiki

Kiki is a magazine for creative, intelligent girls who love life, being artistic and want to learn.

The magazine helps inspire girls to tap into their creative side, whether it be by sewing garments, taking photos or tie dying. There are inspirational articles about creative icons and fashion history as well as information about the world to encourage girls to think and dream bigger than where they are now. There are sections on boosting self-esteem and surviving school and fun bits of info about movies and TV shows.

Visit the website to learn more about this positive fun magazine [www.kikimag.com](http://www.kikimag.com)



## Fun stuff: The Job Game

This is a fun game to play for kids or with kids. It would be especially helpful when travelling or waiting in queues.

1. One person tries to think of a job for everyone else to try and guess.
2. Someone asks a question about the job such as 'Do you work outside?' and the first person says 'Yes' or 'No' for the answer.
3. Everyone takes turns asking questions that can be answered either 'Yes' or 'No' until ten questions have been asked in total.
4. If someone thinks they know the answer, they may guess at any time in the

game. If they're right, they've won. If not, the guess counts as one of the ten questions.

5. If no-one has guessed the job after all ten questions have been asked, the person who thought of the job has won.

### **New Website: The Happy Child**

Many of you will have received copies of The Happy Child magazine that I've been forwarding to some of your groups over the past year. The great news is that their website is now up and running so you all can have access to this amazing resource. Below I've copied the introduction to their current lead article and I encourage you to visit the site to read the full version and also the many other interesting things. Yvette has also written a blog about emotional intelligence in gifted children which offers some food for thought.

Visit the website at [happychild.com.au](http://happychild.com.au)

### **Coming events - Nutrition Talk: Healthy Brain, Healthy Body**

Diet is a powerful tool. The choices we make about what to eat and what to feed our children have significant impact not just on their health but on their learning and behaviour as well.

The brain is affected by the biochemistry generated in the body which is why allergies and nutritional deficiencies can often be misdiagnosed as behavioural and/or learning disorders. Families today also need to be aware of how the overuse of additives in our food supply has had an important part to play in the rise of childhood disorders of the body and mind.

Presenter: Ruth Fellows - Clinical Nutritionist

**14th September 7 -8.30pm, AGSC @ Seven Hills**

To book visit [www.australiangiftedsupport.com](http://www.australiangiftedsupport.com) Information Seminars

### **Coming events - Social Skills : Stepping Stones**

Two new Stepping Stones courses have been organised. We are now offering our popular primary school workshop for children 6 - 12yr olds and, for the first time, a program for Adolescents' in years 7 - 10. We are excited about this new course as it is something families have been requesting for many years and we are pleased that we are now able to offer it. The adolescents' course will cover:

- An understanding of themselves
- A positive self concept
- Risk taking in talent development
- Friendships and relationships including managing online friendships
- Habits of Mind, individual learning strengths and other strategies for successful learning
- Emotional regulation including managing stress, anger, frustration, competition

**27th September, AGSC @ Seven Hills (children aged 6-12)**

Also sessions on 17th & 31st October  
To book visit [ssterm3.eventbrite.com](https://ssterm3.eventbrite.com)

**6th October, AGSC @ Seven Hills (adolescents)**

Also sessions on 24th October, 7th November & 21st November  
To book visit [socialskillsoctnov.eventbrite.com](https://socialskillsoctnov.eventbrite.com)

**Coming events - Holiday programs**

Our programs for the September holidays are now finalised and on the web site. We have a new range of courses on offer this time, along with some old favorites. For the first time we are offering workshops from our expanded premises at Seven Hills.

**30th September, Lindfield Public School**

Grades 3-6 Theme: Web of Life  
To book visit [weboflife.eventbrite.com](https://weboflife.eventbrite.com)

Grades 3-6 Theme: Halloween Science & Grossology  
To book visit [halloweenandgrossology.eventbrite.com](https://halloweenandgrossology.eventbrite.com)

Grades 3-6 Theme: Science Faction  
To book visit [sciencefaction.eventbrite.com](https://sciencefaction.eventbrite.com)

Grades K-2 Theme: INVENTIONS - How Stuff Works!!  
To book visit [inventions.eventbrite.com](https://inventions.eventbrite.com)

**30th September, AGSC @ Seven Hills**

Grades K-2 Theme: Herbology with Professor Sprout  
To book visit [herbology.eventbrite.com](https://herbology.eventbrite.com)

**7th October, AGSC @ Seven Hills**

Grades K-2 Theme: Build a Village  
To book visit [buildavillage2.eventbrite.com](https://buildavillage2.eventbrite.com)

**Coming events - ACT workshops**

Our in-school programs are all on the web site now and we are aiming to organise a school holiday program as well. Once this has been finalised we will post it to the web site.

**24th August, St Anthony's - ACT**

Grades K-2 Dragonology  
To book visit [dragonologysaps.eventbrite.com](https://dragonologysaps.eventbrite.com)

**25th August, St Anthony's - ACT**

Grades 3-6 Dragonology  
To book visit [dragonologysaps3-6.eventbrite.com](https://dragonologysaps3-6.eventbrite.com)

**7th September, St Clare of Assisi - ACT**

Grades K-2 A Bugs Life  
To book visit [abugslife.eventbrite.com](https://abugslife.eventbrite.com)

**8th September, St Clare of Assisi - ACT**

Grades 3-6 A Bugs Life  
To book visit [abugslifesca3-6.eventbrite.com](https://abugslifesca3-6.eventbrite.com)

**14th September, St BEDE'S - ACT**

Grades K-2 3rd Rock from the Sun

To book visit [3drockstbedes.eventbrite.com](http://3drockstbedes.eventbrite.com)

**15th September, St BEDE'S - ACT**

Grades 3-6 3rd Rock from the Sun

To book visit [3drockstbedes.eventbrite.com](http://3drockstbedes.eventbrite.com)

**Coming events - Camps**

Planning continues for the next 2 camps.

**Morisset 17th - 19th September, 2010 WEC Camp**

Theme: Calling all Time Travellers - Space and Science

To book visit [timetravellerssept2010.eventbrite.com](http://timetravellerssept2010.eventbrite.com)

The Time Travellers program in Morisset includes a Dr Who workshop, measuring the speed of light, the concept of time, science fiction or fact?, evening star gazing and more. As usual there will be plenty of time for the low ropes course, board games and free time.

The format of the camp generally and the workshops particularly suits all gifted kids including GLD kids. Activities are very hands on and don't use traditional classroom approaches.

**Victoria 15th - 17th October, 2010**

Theme: Harry P and the Professors - Hogwarts in the Melbourne Hills

To book visit [harrypcamp2010vic.eventbrite.com](http://harrypcamp2010vic.eventbrite.com)

More program details about Harry P in Melbourne will be available in the next AGSC Update.

Both camps are filling up so book early to avoid missing out.

[Read More >](#)