

THE EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES OF GIFTED & TWICE-EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN & HOW TO HELP THEM RISE ABOVE THEM

Webinar Facilitator's Guide



TEXAS ASSOCIATION FOR THE
GIFTED & TALENTED

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- In the video, *An Animal School: A Tale of Gifts*, each animal represented a possible scenario that gifted and 2e learners often experience as students in school. Now think of a child/student in your life who might metaphorically match up with one of the animal characters. Make a list of the emotional implications that this child/student may be experiencing. If you could make a poster of mantras for this student, what would it say?
- Why is being able to identify and address the emotional implications of gifted and twice exceptional students so important for all staff in schools to understand? What issues arise when there is a lack of this knowledge?

- After viewing Andrea's presentation, what are some changes you would like to see in your child/student's home and/or school environment that would support their wellbeing? What specific things can you do to make these changes come to fruition?
- Think of a gifted or 2e student/child in your life. With their passions and interests in mind, make a list of positive adult mentors in your community who may be able to share those same interests with the child.

- Reflect on your parenting or teaching journey- or on your life in general. Do you have a “fail” that you can openly admit? Share the lesson that you’ve learned from experiencing that “fail”. How did you work through the emotions? What actions, if any, did you take to improve upon your experience? (Remember, we learn and then grow from our mistakes and when we are out of our comfort zones.) Do you have any “fails” that you could share with a child/student that would model resilience?
- With a child/student in mind, what are some elements that can nourish the child’s hope and optimism? What does this child already do or have that are elements of hope and optimism? Do these elements outweigh the negatives in their life? (Think of the Tipping Scale.) If not, is there something more or different that you can think of that would further equip them with resiliency when their worlds seem to be crumbling down?

About Andrea Brucella Finnegan

Our gifted/2e students often experience more adversity in school due to their complex, cognitive nature. They are often misunderstood or thought to be doing fine, when on the inside, they may not be. Low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression are just some of the emotional issues that this population of wonderfully neurodiverse children and teens are prone to struggling with, and some are silently struggling without parents or teachers even aware. Explore the emotional implications of common scenarios in school that fuel difficult emotional challenges for neurodiverse students. Help to remedy these struggles by learning about what parents and teachers can do to create support and resilience.



LEARN MORE ABOUT ANDREA

Andrea Brucella Finnegan (she/her) is a passionate advocate for neurodiversity and gifted/ twice-exceptional students. She is a SENG community support facilitator and a U.S. national and international speaker of neurodiversity topics among children and professional educators. Andrea has experience advocating for the needs of people of all ranges of abilities. She serves as director for Operation House Call at the Yale School of Nursing, a program that teaches confidence and sensitivity towards individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Andrea is currently a doctoral student at Bridges Graduate School, studying cognitive diversity in education. She is a mom to three wonderful children who inspire her field of work each day.

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