



Advocacy for Gifted and Talented in New York

Are we Failing our Brightest Students

Some of America's best and brightest, like Netscape guru Jim Clark and comedian Chris Rock, were high school dropouts. Jan and Bob Davidson, authors of *Genius Denied* (Simon & Schuster), think they know why: They say that up to 20% of dropouts are "gifted" but quit school because they feel ignored and unchallenged, bored and frustrated. "It's a misconception that gifted kids are always model students," says Jan Davidson. Many get pegged as having social or emotional issues because they think faster and may not relate to their peers. "If your kid complains about being bored in school, look into it," she adds. "We are neglecting kids with great potential and hurting our society. Bright kids need an opportunity to learn in a classroom with their intellectual peers." Gifted kids have one or more of these traits:

- 1) The ability to learn rapidly.
- 2) A need to explore subjects in depth and curiosity to learn how things work.
- 3) An extreme need for mental stimulation.

If you think your child is gifted, the Davidsons suggest getting a full assessment (beyond a standard IQ test), and do it early—in grades K-2. Hire a clinical psychologist if your school district is reluctant. Visit www.ditd.org for details.

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