



Raegan's Reading Clinic

Empower your child!

A Guide for Parents

www.raegansreaders.ca

Empower and inspire your child!

The purpose of this guide is to offer you a few tips to get you started on the path of empowerment for your child. It is written for parents of children who learn differently; children who are very bright, yet for some reason are not thriving in the regular school system. I affectionately call these little wonders our creative “right-brainers”.

(For simplicity sake I have used the pronoun “he” but please substitute “she” as you read!)

Some of the traits you may have noticed are:

- very bright and articulate
- sensitive
- creative: art, music, individualized sports, building (lego)
- computer/tech savvy
- intuitive
- nature lover
- animal lover
- compassionate and wise beyond years
- surprising long term memory (will remember details, conversations you have long forgotten)
- excellent story telling skills but inability or unwillingness to put thoughts on paper
- disorganization in daily tasks

- forgetfulness
- hyper focus on projects of interest (or computer games) and little to no focus on anything else (school/homework, chores...)
- thinks in pictures rather than words
- difficulties with spelling, handwriting, organization, reading, math facts...
- appears to “space out”
- slow to answer questions but when given time to process, the answers are surprising and insightful
- poor test-taking skills
- anxiety
- awkward social skills
- relates better to adults (or animals) than peers
- non-competitive
- marks on tests and report cards do not reflect true ability or knowledge

Many of these children may get labelled as having learning differences or attentional issues and although this may be true this by no means truly identifies who they are or what they are capable of!!!

I have devoted thirty years of my life to these special children and I truly believe these are the children of the future, highly evolved with skills, gifts and sensitivities that are critical at this time to help shift the world and humanity to a place where the future is bright! They are natural leaders, but don't know it yet. They are creative thinkers with the ability to solve problems in a non-linear and progressive way. They are highly intuitive and insightful and able to read people naturally and see through dishonesty. They are deeply



compassionate and sensitive to the feelings of others and are true altruists.

They are unable to thrive in a system that is outdated and rightfully so. It is time for the system to change and evolve so that these children are understood, validated and given every opportunity to succeed.

It is quite likely the system will not change quickly enough for your own child so it is my goal in this short easy to read guide to offer you some strategies so that you may pave the way for your child's success. My goal is to keep it simple, lighthearted and friendly!

First step!

The very first and most important part of this exercise is to BELIEVE that your child WILL SUCCEED. How you perceive your child is the foundation for how he perceives himself. The messages you send, either verbally or non-verbally will stay with him forever. So immediately tell yourself that your child is gifted and he will succeed. You may not have all the tools at this time but trust that they exist. You may not even see the gift but BELIEVE there is one!

Sometimes the gift is obvious. Your child spends hours and hours building with Lego, drawing, painting, playing sports, dancing etc. and excels. Other times the gift is not so obvious. Some of the best authors, poets and story tellers perceived themselves as terrible writers because their spelling, grammar and general presentation was very weak. Similarly some of our greatest mathematicians failed miserably at high school math! With a little probing we will always



find the GIFT. It is usually where the focus and passion are the strongest.

Step two!

The next step is to discover your child's strongest learning modality; in other words how does he take in and process information. The easiest way to do this is to OBSERVE and to LISTEN. When he is giving or recalling information does he refer to what he has SEEN or what he has HEARD?

You may even want to start with finding out about yourself! Are you and auditory or a visual person? What do you remember most?

Once you have discovered this very important piece of the puzzle it will be SO much easier to begin structuring an environment that will accommodate your child! If he remembers mainly what he sees (visual learner) it will be challenging for him to remember information that is only delivered verbally, for example in a classroom where the teacher is talking to him all day! At home this will show up clearly when you give him a series of instructions, for example; go upstairs, brush your teeth, get dressed, grab your knapsack, make sure your lunch and all your homework is in it, put on your coat and meet me at the door. Quite likely your little one may only remember one or two of those instructions. So you may find him standing in his room doing something else completely or staring blankly into space trying to remember what you have said. A simple solution is to have visual cues! Create a checklist with words or pictures that will help him to remember what to do. It sounds very basic but it is a very important strategy!

Use the STRONGEST modality as a segue to success. Begin to structure his world so that it works for his unique processing style. You may be raising a future engineer, mathematician, pilot, doctor, film director, entrepreneur or civil rights lawyer! You need to understand how he learns so that you can teach him how he learns! Also you will need to speak to his teachers to make sure they too understand how he learns. You will have to be his biggest ADVOCATE until he learns to advocate for himself. If he does by chance have an IEP set up please be sure that the accommodations address his learning STYLE as well as his NEEDS. Visual and/or auditory cues are critical to his learning.

Step three!

Along the same lines as working with your child's strongest modality is STRUCTURING and ORGANIZING his world so that it guarantees success. The right brain is not fond of small steps. It sees the big picture, the solution and the end result and it is not really concerned with going through the tedium of getting there. In other words, our future visionary needs help breaking projects big and small into tiny manageable achievable steps. Daily plans for long term projects are critical. Learning to "show your work" will be arduous, so you will have to gently explain the benefits of breaking problems and answers into smaller chunks or steps.

When completing written work, which may be very challenging for the "appletree kid", mind mapping, semantic webbing, dragon dictation and spell check are indispensable tools. Taking breaks is also very beneficial. And when it is time to EDIT, please focus on only a few corrections at a time so it does not look like the entire passage

is a complete disaster! One achievable goal at a time is our mantra.

Step four!

This step is paramount. I call it the power of POSITIVITY. Your child is deeply sensitive. He is very much in tune with your emotions (and everyone's) and internalizes much of his world, consciously and unconsciously. Although we cannot control everything that he is surrounded by we certainly are able to keep his reality positive and supportive.

The easiest way to do this is by SPEAKING POSITIVELY. Almost everything can be framed in a positive way if we are MINDFUL of what we are saying and how we are saying it. Always, always find something to validate or even celebrate when your child accomplishes something. Please look at every mistake as an opportunity to fine tune the process of teaching and learning. Your child needs extra time to process information so allow him to take a few minutes before moving on to the next topic. He is full of wisdom, guaranteed, and it is up to you to really listen and RESPOND to him in a POSITIVE way. A simple "way to go" or "what an interesting idea!" goes a long way.

I also highly recommend HUMOUR! Lightheartedness gives true perspective and helps everyone move forward without ANXIETY. Your child may tend to see potential negative outcomes in many situations; he is a creative thinker after all! It is up to you to offer a positive perspective before anxiety issues begin to develop.

Step five!

My last tip is to HAVE FUN! As a parent of a 21 year old I can assure you the time truly flies by and all the issues that seem insurmountable become smaller and smaller and eventually are forgotten. What is remembered is the FUN, the play time, the laughter, the milestones, the love and the joy. Spend as much time as you can outdoors, in nature, breathing fresh air. Your little ones NEED to run around outside, under the trees and the stars. They do not need to be medicated; they need natural light, a healthy diet, exercise, quiet time in the woods, love, understanding, advocacy and validation.

Please listen very carefully to what they say to you. They know what they need and what they don't need! And listen to your own INTUITION. Deep down YOU already know what is right for your child.

I wish you all the best. You are blessed to be raising a very unique little person! The world is ready!

Raegan

Raegan Hornby, OCT, is the Director and Founder of Appletree Empowerment Centre and Raegan's Reading Clinic. She has dedicated thirty years to Special Education; teaching, learning, consulting, counselling, developing curriculum, training teachers and mentoring parents. She has witnessed hundreds of children thrive academically, socially and emotionally when given the appropriate resources and guidance.

Raegan is passionate about the empowerment and validation of the creative spirit and knows that the future of the planet will be brighter as these luminary change agents come into their own.



If you would like to book a consultation with Raegan to find out more about how to empower your child please [contact us at raegan.elisa@gmail.com](mailto:raegan.elisa@gmail.com)

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