

5 Qualities of an Exceptional Child with a Thirst for Learning

TODDLER

ARTICLE

DEC 20, 2021

Help your child become an exceptional child by encouraging him or her to be curious, confident, and persistent, have empathy and good communication skills, and to think creatively.

[Read more](#)

As active learners, kids thrive through active exploration and any environment can stimulate their senses.

Who is an exceptional child? A little one whose mind is fueled by a never-ending curiosity for exploration, discovery, and learning has the makings of becoming exceptional. We all want our children to be exceptional, so that they achieve personal growth, and happiness in life, and a well-balanced future of success and satisfaction.

A little one who is truly exceptional shines across all spheres—not just academics—and displays other remarkable qualities from a very young age. That's why it's important for us parents to be aware of these qualities, so we can cultivate them by engaging our kids in simple, day-to-day activities.

1. An exceptional child is curious.



One of the main markers of an exceptional child is his/her curiosity about the world. In fact, recent research shows that CQ, or the curiosity quotient, is as important as IQ in predicting a child's academic success.

All those "whys" you've been getting from your child? Not going to end. And your kid will only keep following up your answers with another set of "whys."

Exceptional children are never satisfied with a simple answer. They will dig deep to find out what things are and how they work. They're not just trying to learn from books or from what they've been told, but they're looking to learn from different places.

So you'll rarely see exceptional kids cramming or being in a hurry to absorb new information. They take their time, slowly but surely, in order to make sure that they have a full understanding of whatever they are learning.

Be prepared with other ways to answer your child's questions. If they ask, "What is a submarine?" Don't just explain it; show it! Google it on your phone and show them a picture. Even look for an audio file of what a submarine sonar ping sounds like underwater. Try to use all five senses to stimulate your child's learning.

2. An exceptional child is confident.

Confident children believe in themselves. Such children have the ability to bounce back from mistakes or failures and learn from them in the process, making them truly exceptional. You'll see traces of this in your toddler as he/or she bounds back from falling down two steps, and bravely tries again, but this time with the knowledge that

holding on to the railing will help him/her.

Nurture this exceptional trait in your kids starting young. Give your children opportunities to do a good job and offer the right amount of praise upon completion of the task. That way, you boost their self-confidence, and make them feel encouraged, positive and motivated.

But don't stop at just giving compliments and affirmation. Instead, refine your praise by giving positive feedback on specific things they can control like dedication and hard work: "You really worked so hard," "You did not give up." This way, you can teach your child to look at not just the result but the whole process that was needed to get it.

3. An exceptional child thinks creatively.

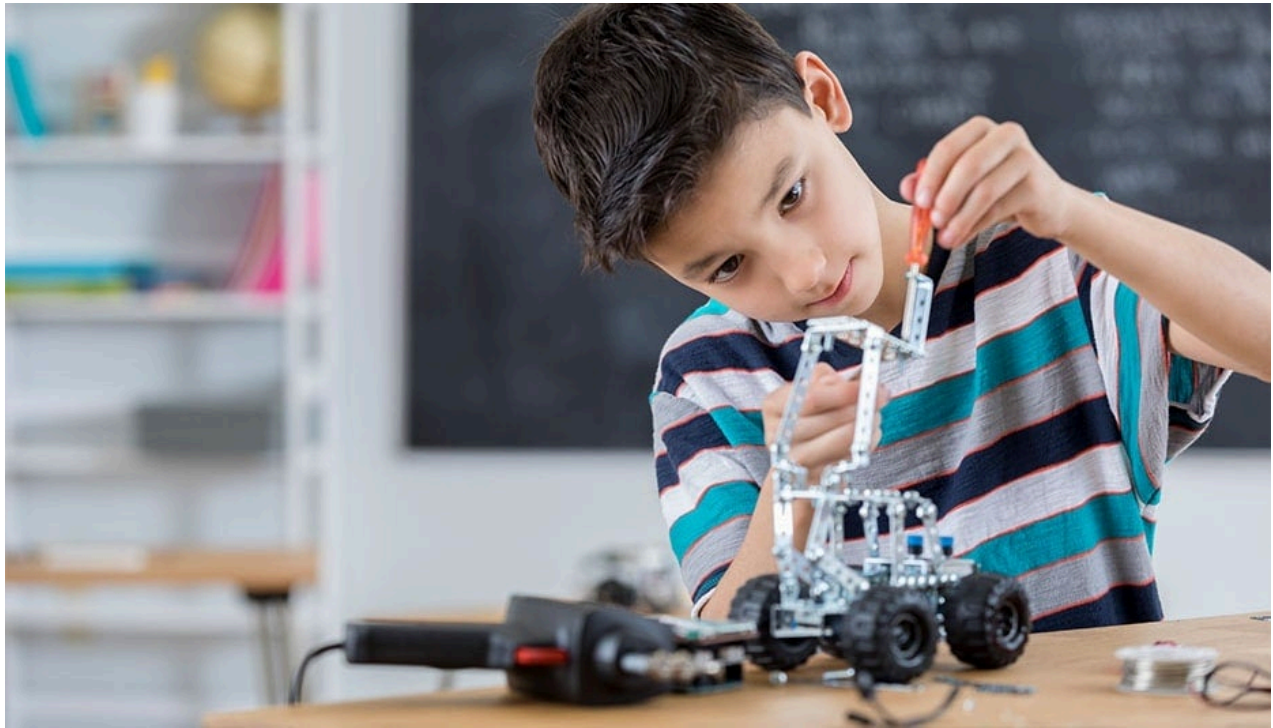
Creativity is not just for artists. Driven by curiosity and the urge to have it, taste it, touch it, play with it now, a child who thinks creatively or has the ability to think outside of the box will think in unexpected ways to assess a situation from different angles and try various approaches to addressing it.

Let's take, for instance, this scenario: a two-year-old, Mummy's purse of wondrous sundries, and a tall table between them. A toddler would typically try to reach for Mummy's purse by simply extending his/her arms—and may cry out in frustration if that attempt doesn't work.

Urged on by the "need" to have that purse and see what's inside, a child with a creative mind may take the next logical step: get something he/she can climb or step on, like the chair beside the table. Or, the child may simply resort to using his/her toddler charm to convince a grownup to carry him/her up to the table (and with less effort at that!). Either way, the child is using his/her inventiveness to get closer to the target.

Creativity, while innate in some, is also shaped by exposure to and experience of new ideas and situations, and hence can be nurtured in children. As active learners, kids thrive through active exploration and any environment can stimulate their senses. So try your best to be flexible in your restrictions, bearing in mind your child's safety.

4. An exceptional child is persistent.



Problems are not roadblocks in the eyes of an exceptional child. Instead, he/she would look at a problem as a challenge to overcome, and will do everything in order to succeed. Not just that though. Such a child will endeavour to turn the ordinary into something extraordinary through his/her persistence.

You can witness this exceptional sense of persistence in a toddler who doesn't give up in completing a six-piece jigsaw puzzle or in balancing a set of blocks until the tower is tall enough. When you observe a kindergartener who's reading a new book and sounding out the words, it's that tenacious quality that's egging the child until he/she has learned to pronounce the words properly.

Our advise when we see our children struggling? Let them be. Exceptional children are not only eager to explore, but are also inclined to test their limits. Simply observe from a safe distance to make sure they don't hurt themselves.

Let them fail, too. It's a mark of exceptional character for children not to let failure hold them back; and to not look at failure as something to be avoided, but rather an opportunity to test their limits, improve themselves, and grow.

5. An exceptional child is a leader.

Exceptional children are born to lead. They display leadership traits, such as empathy, good communication skills, logical thinking, and problem solving abilities early on. Such children are also able to inspire and move others through their personality, actions or behaviour. You can see these qualities shine in exceptional children when they mingle with their peers, whether at school or at the playground.

The exceptional young leader is the child to whom other children naturally gravitate. He/she is able to successfully prevent his/her friends from getting into a fight, or diplomatically settles an argument. The exceptional child sparks inspiration in others to be the best possible version of themselves.

You can help develop your child's potential for leadership by providing real-life opportunities to practice. For example, leaders are skillful at finding solutions to problems that others might deem are impossible to solve. In order to motivate your child to practice his/her leadership skills, allow him/her to solve challenges alone. Leaving the decision-making to your child can help him/her assess the situation carefully, analyse the pros and cons of each option and understand the concepts of responsibility and consequences of making a decision.

So, if you're still wondering "Who is an exceptional child?"—then you don't need to look very far anymore. That's right... that exceptional child is your little one, well on the road to being a learner for life!

References:

1. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/our-innovating-minds/201707/creativity-whats-curiosity-got-do-it>
2. <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2017/07/the-underrated-gift-of-curiosity/534573/>
3. http://www.creativitypost.com/education/want_to_foster_creativity_in_children_science_says_nurture_curiosity
4. <http://www.easternflorida.edu/community-resources/child-development-centers/parent-resource-library/documents/curiosity-and-wonder.pdf>
5. <http://blog.montgomeryschool.org/developing-curiosity-through-reading>

