****“David Sheldon, you are distracting your neighbor again,’ said Mrs. Gorski with her serious voice. ‘You are going to have to stop making that noise with your pencil!”**

**It seems that David has the “wiggle fidgets.” His mind wanders, his legs want to move. He thinks of the greatest ideas and inventions, and wants to show everyone. But he doesn’t think through the consequences of his actions – or experiments.
When David’s teacher, Mrs. Gorski, calls his parents in for a conference, David decides to come up with a cure for the wiggle-fidgets.**

Explosions of ideas are common conditions in the minds of gifted students. Ideas are wonderful but sometimes they come so fast and furious that keeping track of them and staying on task becomes impossible. What’s more, realizing the possible consequences of actions often happens much too late.  Students who struggle with paying attention and sitting still are often labeled with Attention Deficit Disorder, but these same symptoms can also be symptoms of giftedness. In either case, students need strategies for staying on task, working through distractions, and learning as much as they can without the “fidgets” getting in the way.

*The Wiggle Fidgets* explores the life of David who seems to be infected with the wiggle fidgets. It is an excellent book to help children realize that their difficulty in paying attention doesn’t mean they are dumb or bad. They also learn some strategies to help them better attend and advocate for themselves. They realize that they have the power to find solutions that they can share with their parents and teachers.

**The following book review was written by a younger student, Victoria, a wonderful student with the insight and compassion often associated with individuals “gifted” with dyslexia! Please read!**

***Mrs. Gorski, I Think I Have the Wiggle Fidgets*** *This is the story about a student who had a hard time focusing in class and helped come up with the solutions to help himself. Often, kids like us, can come up with creative solutions if we are made a part of the process. I think this book is about a student with ADHD and I think many kids can relate to it, even if they don’t have ADHD or just have dyslexia. This book helps teach students creative problem solving and self- advocacy skills. The message in this book is that each person learns differently and sometimes the general solution doesn’t work. Students who read this book might also recognize things in other kids in their class.*

***![C:\Users\HPG60\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\L6T8WM2Y\dglxasset[2].aspx]()Although each child should be treated as an individual, with their own strengths, challenges, and needs, here is a list of the most commonly experienced issues for students with ADHD. You will be able to tell the audience of this list of requests most likely is teachers, but students are “teachers” too, so many of these requests could be ideas for peers as well.***

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**1. Please don't ever humiliate me.**
 I have a condition called Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder. It is a real medical condition that doctors define as impairment to my executive functions (cognitive management system) in my brain. That means that learning is hard for me. The part of my brain that manages these skills is like an orchestra conductor who tells all the musicians how to play together and on time to make beautiful music. My conductor has trouble communicating with the musicians, so I need your help.

**2. I am not crazy, lazy, bad, or stupid.**

In fact, my IQ score is most likely above average, and many people with ADHD are also gifted. But because my brain is wired differently than that of regular students, I sometimes feel stupid or bad. Sometimes it’s hard for me to admit that I need help. Sometimes it’s easier and less humiliating to act like I understand or to act angry to distract you from finding out that I am having trouble and so that the other kids in the class don't know that I’m struggling. I need to know that you won’t make fun of me and shame me when I ask for help.
Another challenging thing about having ADHD is that one day I can do something really well but the next day, I can't. Please don’t make me feel bad by saying, “I know you can do this if you really try, you did it yesterday.” Instead, show me how to get started just as if I was learning it for the very first time.

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3. Because you cannot see my ADHD, you might have trouble remembering that I need your help.**

When you look at me, pretend that I am a blind student and think about how you would feel about helping.

**4. I have a lot of trouble controlling my behavior sometimes.**

Being inside my head is like having several radio stations all playing at the same time, so it’s hard to just listen to one. It’s very stressful and frustrating, and so sometimes when you ask me to do something and I respond in a negative way, it’s because I can't handle any more stress.
 You can help me by pretending that you’re my coach. Good coaches get the best performance from their players by encouraging them, rewarding them, and praising them immediately, especially in front of others. Punishment for things that I’m not very good at only makes me feel worse about myself. And please don’t embarrass me in front of the class. Please talk to me privately about issues. I sometimes have trouble making and keeping friends and responding appropriately to social interactions. Please coach me on how I can do things better. Show me in detail; model it for me. I don’t tend to learn well if I’m just told how to do something. And give me praise and encouragement when I try.

**5. To help me remember the rules, please post them somewhere where I can constantly see them**.

 I’ll need your help to know when I’m breaking a rule and reminders and warnings to follow the rules. I need practice to follow the rules. Let me know right away if I’m breaking a rule, and let me know what I should be doing instead.

**6. I’ll need your help to learn and practice: organization skills.**

![C:\Users\HPG60\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\PK240RPY\MC900441896[1].wmf]() (things like writing assignments in my agenda, planning them out, completing them, and getting them back to you when they're due), note taking, study skills and test taking strategies. When you mark my work, please look for areas that I am struggling with and show me how I can do better.

**7. It’s hard for me to remember lots of instructions when you give them all at once.**

Please give me one instruction at a time. For assignments, it really helps if I have written instructions, so I don’t have to remember everything.

**8. I feel the need to move.**

![C:\Users\HPG60\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\QP9QPUWS\MC900439921[1].wmf]()Movement helps me to learn. Sometimes it helps if I can stand while you’re teaching. Sometimes I need to work off the energy because it feels like I’ve got high-voltage electrical currents running up and down my arms and legs. Let’s develop a private signal that lets you know that I need a break from sitting still. I could run something to the office for you, hand out or collect papers, or wipe off the board. Or you could involve the whole class in a stretch break, and no one would know that it’s really just to help me.

 **9. I have trouble making transitions from one task to another especially if I’m doing something that I enjoy.** Sometimes I can hyperfocus, and it’s hard for me to stop and change tasks. You can help me by giving me advance notice that we will be starting something new in a few minutes. It gives me the time that I need to work on putting the brakes on in my mind. Changing from doing something active to doing seatwork (coming in from recess or gym) is especially hard for me. Help me by slowing me down gradually and rewarding me when I settle quickly.

**![C:\Users\HPG60\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\VO9FAANI\MC900013243[1].wmf]()All students, whether identified with giftedness or ADHD, or twice exceptional—having both giftedness and ADHD—deserve to have an appropriate learning environment so they can soar!!! It is our hope that by sharing ideas such as these with you and your children, we will all become more aware of the learning needs prevalent in our schools today, and respect all strategies that promote growth and challenging learning for all!!**