



WITH UNDERSTANDING
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Compassionate guidance. Durable strategies. For the 2e Community.

Gifted Characteristics vs. ADHD Characteristics

Characteristic	Gifted	ADHD
Sustaining Attention	Poor attention often due to boredom; daydreaming	Difficulty with sustained attention; daydreaming
Listening Skills	Preoccupation with own ideas and concepts; appears bored.	Diminished ability to listen attentively.
Task Completion	Completion of tasks directly related to personal interests.	Problems with independent task completion.
Motivation	Lack of persistence on tasks that seem irrelevant.	Avoids and dislikes sustained mental activity unless interested.
Organization	Organization may be seen as unnecessary depending on the task.	Messy and may misplace items needed for work; disorganized.
Following Directions	Questions rules and directions.	Difficulty following directions.
Energy Level	Frequent high activity level	Heightened activity level.
Impulsivity	Highly sensitive but judgment lags well behind intellectual development.	Impulsive; poor judgment in interactions (not waiting turn, interrupting).
Verbal Manifestations	Magnified curiosity and need to prove yields much talking.	Excessive talking.
Reactions to Authority	Intensity that leads to struggles with authority	Problems adhering to rules for behavior regulation.

Edited Chart from To Be Gifted and Learning Disabled, Baum et al, 2017.

ADHD Characteristics from DSM IV-TR, APA, 2000

Gifted Characteristics from Piechowski, 1991; Renzulli et al, 1976; Silverman, 1998