

# Helping gifted kids fit in

## Seminar gives parents resources

By **BRIAN ABERBACK**  
STAFF WRITER

**TEANECK** — Parents of gifted children have it made, some might think. They don't have to worry about their kids grasping the latest math concept, falling behind in their reading or finishing their homework.

One parents of gifted children everywhere rolling their eyes.

Those with children intellectually advanced beyond their years face a

### Fast facts

Resources for parents of gifted children:  
**Gifted Child Society** (based in Glen Rock): [gifted.org](http://gifted.org)

**New Jersey Association for Gifted Children**: [njagc.org](http://njagc.org)

**New Jersey Parents' Interactive Network for Gifted Education**: [njping.org](http://njping.org)

**National Association for Gifted Children**: [nagc.org](http://nagc.org)

number of educational, social and emotional challenges.

On Saturday, some 150 parents gathered to discuss the hurdles at the

biennial Conference for Parents of Gifted Children at the Marriott at Glenpointe Hotel.

Annetta Gallagher's son, for example, scores off the charts when it comes to math and science. But the exceptionally bright 8-year-old is not excelling as quickly in social interaction with kids his age.

"He's used to talking to adults," said Gallagher, a River Vale resident. "The question is: 'How do you get them to socially connect?'"

Marlene Griffin of Wyckoff struggles to keep up with her 5-year-old son's frenetic pace. He was reading and writing by age 3 and is a Revolutionary

See **GIFTED** Page L-5

# Gifted: Parents learn strategies

From Page L-1

War and NASA buff.

Robin Schader, the event's keynote speaker, empathized with the parents.

"There's an implicit responsibility" in raising a gifted child, said Schader, an assistant research professor at the University of Connecticut who holds a doctorate in educational psychology with a concentration in gifted and talented education.

"You feel the weight of [your child's] potential," Schader said.

Ensuring that a gifted child's potential is maximized in the classroom is another problem parents face.

School district resources are primarily focused on meeting the standards of the federal No Child Left Behind Act, which stresses raising the achievement levels of under-performing students, said Carol Ann Williams, a speaker who conducted a seminar called "Parents and the School Maze."

## "There's an implicit responsibility" in raising a gifted child.

ROBIN SCHADER, EVENT'S  
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

"We're not a priority," said Williams, a retired Cape May County teacher with a concentration in gifted education. "Gifted education is on a downward cycle."

Williams noted that gifted and talented programs in New Jersey generally do not receive state funding and that educators who teach the programs are not required to have gifted and talented certification.

Williams urged parents to take action as advocates for their children's education.

"Parents have to get really involved," she said. "We need to start at the grass-roots level."

The Gifted Child Society, the non-profit group that organized the conference, has numerous resources for parents looking to become active in their children's education.

The Glen Rock-based organization, which formed in 1957, offers year-round Saturday programs for gifted children ages 5 to grade eight. The group also has a summer day camp program, testing and evaluation services and advocacy activities.

Perhaps equally as important, the organization provides parents a peer network that can help ease the stress of handling the trials that come with raising a gifted child.

"Many parents come to the workshops just to talk to other parents," said Bruce Thaler, the organization's communications director. "They share their experiences and find they're not by themselves."

E-mail: [aberback@northjersey.com](mailto:aberback@northjersey.com)