

in this issue >>>

Why is it Important to be Aware?
Differences Between Healthy and Unhealthy
Perfectionism
How You can Help
Try it at Home!



Orlando
Gifted
ACADEMY



Perfectionism and the Gifted Child

from *the nest*

perfectionism >>>

Why is it Important to
be Aware?

By understanding the differences between healthy and unhealthy perfectionism tendencies, parents can intervene if necessary to help their child.

Parents and children can work together to manage their perfectionism by learning coping strategies that children can use on their own.

Differences Between Healthy and Unhealthy Perfectionism

Healthy perfectionism is a person's ability to do their best and then move on. They are able to set high standards while still being able to accept their imperfections.

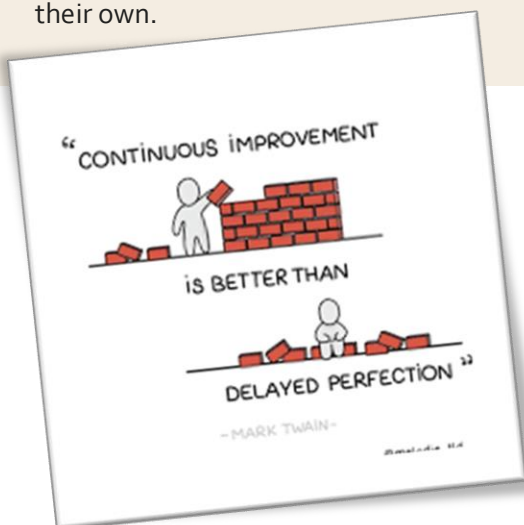
Unhealthy perfectionism is when there is a bigger emphasis on performance, feeling that one is never good enough, being continuously dissatisfied, and having feelings of guilt. Unhealthy perfectionism is a dichotomous way of thinking; it's perfect or it's worthless.

A healthy perfectionist may demonstrate:

- ❖ Organizational skills
- ❖ Self-acceptance of mistakes
- ❖ Positive ways of coping with their perfectionist tendencies

Unhealthy perfectionist may demonstrate:

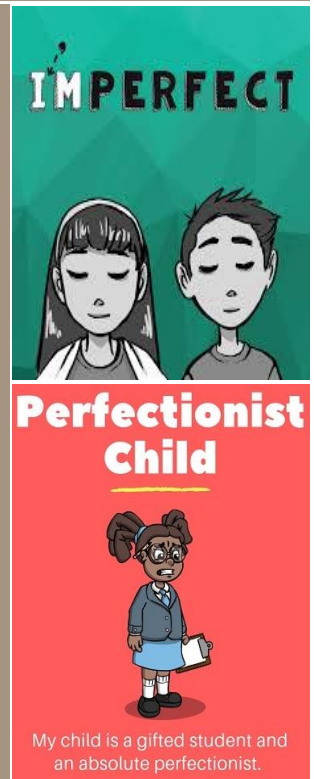
- ❖ High anxiety about making mistakes
- ❖ Extremely high standards that are unachievable
- ❖ Continues need for approval from adults/ and/or peers



A person who NEVER
MADE a mistake,
NEVER
TRIED anything NEW.
-Albert Einstein

How You can Help

- ❖ Work together to set realistic goals
- ❖ Share your own mistakes with your child
- ❖ Ask children to keep a journal to express their feelings
- ❖ Provide support if they perform at a level lower than they expected
- ❖ Avoid comparing children
- ❖ Even if they fail, let them know they are loved
- ❖ Model perseverance when faced with a difficult task
- ❖ Challenge their belief if they call themselves a failure
- ❖ Have them practice saying kind comments to others around them
- ❖ Prioritize tasks and break down assignments into manageable parts
- ❖ Read biographies of successful people that overcame failure and achieved greatness, such as Albert Einstein
- ❖ Avoid using words such as, brilliant, genius, and perfect
- ❖ Create opportunities for success that will enhance their self-confidence
- ❖ Give specific praise



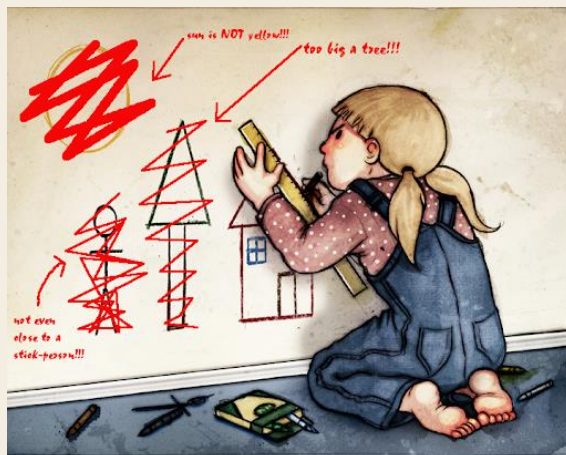
Perfectionism vs The Pursuit of Excellence

Perfectionism

- ✓ Thinking less of yourself for getting a B over an A.
- ✓ Being hard on yourself for not being equally talented in all areas.
- ✓ Beating yourself up because you lost an opportunity.

The Pursuit of Excellence

- ✓ Thinking about what you might do differently to earn an A the next time.
- ✓ Choosing things, you know you'll be good at and will be good for you.
- ✓ Congratulating yourself because you were given the opportunity.



Try it at Home! Challenge Their Thinking!



In the heat of the moment, use empathetic comments like, "I can see you're angry because you want this to be perfect."

Then, have your child reflect on these questions:

- What's the worst thing that could happen?
- What is a more positive way to this about this?
- What part of your problem can you solve now?

