

Shining with ADHD by The Childhood Collective

Episode #208: Twice Exceptional Kids and ADHD: What Parents Need to Know

Dr. Chris Wiebe: You focus on students' individual strength and interest and potential rather than their areas of challenge or their deficits. So, it's not a, oh gosh, what does this student lack? We need to fix that. But what is this student interested in and good at? Let's lean in on that. And in leaning in and putting the focus there, will very likely start to grow.

Katie: Hi there. We are The Childhood Collective, and we have helped thousands of overwhelmed parents find joy and confidence in raising their child with ADHD. I'm Katie, a speech language pathologist.

Lori: And I'm Lori.

Mallory: And I'm Mallory. And we're both child psychologists.

Lori: As busy mamas ourselves, we are on a mission to support ADHD parents on this beautiful and chaotic parenting journey.

Mallory: If you are looking for honest ADHD parenting stories, a dose of empathy with a side of humor and practical tools, you are in the right place.

Katie: Let's help your family shine with ADHD. Today, Lori and I are interviewing an expert in a topic that comes up often from our community, gifted students who also have ADHD. These kids are incredibly bright and curious, but they also face unique challenges in the school system. So, our guest today is Dr. Chris Wiebe, an educator with nearly two decades of experience working with twice exceptional students. Kids who are both gifted and have learning differences like ADHD.

Lori: Yes. Chris has been a classroom teacher, curriculum designer, and an administrator supporting neurodiverse students. And most importantly, Chris is also the parent of a gifted child with ADHD. Welcome, Chris.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Thank you very much. So wonderful to be here.

Lori: Yes, we're happy to have you.

Katie: It's great to have you. And it's actually a really unique thing because this is the first time we've ever had a guest on where we were actually introduced by a member of our community. So, your wife set us up on this blind date and we're just so excited to be here. So, thank you.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Certainly. Yeah, it was kind of interesting. She was just loving all of your content and you were so responsive getting back to her when she had questions. And then there was just a post looking for folks with twice exceptional experience. And my wife was like, wait a minute, I have one of those in my house, so here we are.

Katie: So, shout out to all the wives who are making those connections. We love it. That's great. Well, just to start us off, can you tell us a little bit about your background and how you came to specialize in working with twice exceptional students?

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Yeah, certainly. You know, I, sort of went into education by way of journalism, you know, interestingly enough, and I kind of hit a point where I enjoyed writing in journalism, but wasn't too fired up about getting in people's business and so this career is not for me. And, moved into education and really found a private school that served twice exceptional kids very, very quickly. I think they hired me because I had real world working experience in addition to, you know, education. Because, you know, a little bit of a teaser, twice exceptional kids really do connect with, you know, teachers who have had a lot of life experience and perhaps have worked in the various academic disciplines. And then I really just took off and I mean again, starting as an English teacher and then moving into curriculum coordinator and really designed a program, which we called the Young Expert Program, specifically for 2e kids to follow their interests and passions with a lot of support and coaching from we educators. And after doing that for a while, here I am, kind of a later in life dad and I managed to get a 2e kid at my home now. So, I kind of feel, I do feel very fortunate about the fact that I, as I say, had a career and really learned quite a lot. So, I come to the table with, with a little more information and experience to support my kiddo.

Lori: Yeah, it's always amazing how that happens when you have a background and then you are blessed with a child with the same needs. But I don't know about you, but it's, I think it's a

little bit different in the sense that when you're a parent it's just, you can't, it's not like working with a student. You know, it's harder to be objective with your own child.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: It is. And there's, and there's more skin in the game. You know, I remember when I, when I was a teacher, I would always, you know, success cases the parents were always just so, you know, gracious and oh, you're so great, I'm so glad you helped my kid, thank you so much. And I'm like, hey, I only have them for six hours a day. Like, you are the hero. You are the one who's, who's really, you know, doing the heavy lifting on this.

Katie: Yeah, I think that's so true. And I think a lot of what we're going to talk about today, if you're listening and you're like, oh, I don't know if my child is twice exceptional or gifted. I still think that a lot of your experience, Chris, is going to be so helpful for parents. So definitely stick around even if you're not sure. He's going to talk about a lot of really great strategies that can be used for all kids with ADHD as well. So, let's dive into it.

Lori: Yeah, well, let's start with some basics. So, for parents who might be wondering, how do you know if your child is gifted and how does that differ from just a child who seems maybe bright or curious?

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Sure. Well, I'm going to take a step back and talk about just giftedness in a singular way and then bring the two together. So early 90s, there was a group of advocates and gifted scholars, they called themselves the Columbus Group and they defined giftedness as, and I'm just paraphrasing, here, asynchronous development in which advanced cognitive abilities and heightened intensity combine to create a different experience in the world. And so as pertains to giftedness, there are a number of measures that psychologists and educators use to determine that. The WISC, Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, which will render the full-scale IQ and if it's 130, you know, congratulations. The issue with twice exceptional kids is that they will often not be identified as gifted via these standard measures. And that is because these tests are split into sections and you might have your verbal comprehension index, your visual spatial reasoning index, your processing speed. And I've seen it dozens, maybe hundreds of times when you have a student, very gifted, 99th percentile in verbal comprehension index. And I think anyone with a ADHD kid who is very bright knows what 99th percentile looks like, in terms of kid's ability.

Lori: And just to kind of help people understand, 99th percentile, meaning they're doing better than 99% of other kids their same age in their vocabulary and their expressive language and how they talk to other people. So that's very high.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Absolutely. And so, say you have that high score, but in an area like processing speed, which can be an area of challenge for ADHD kids, perhaps that's actually very low and they had very low scores, which will then pull down the full-scale IQ and perhaps render a child not traditionally gifted.

Lori: Yeah. And I would say most kids that I see that have ADHD, whether or not they're in that gifted range, if you're giving them an intelligence test, most of them struggle with processing speed or being able to kind of do tasks quickly and that working memory, is very hard for kids with ADHD typically. So, I see the same thing where they can be very high in certain areas but then struggle in other areas.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Yeah, absolutely. So, to hit your question directly, I mean, what should parents be looking for? The indicators as you know, described. These kids are often highly verbal. They may have very intense interests that they will always hyper focus. Of course, the other side of ADHD, there's the distractedness and then the hyper focus. So, you may also see that. But what perhaps gets a little kind of complex there is, I would say hyper focus is both a characteristic of giftedness without ADHD and ADHD without giftedness. So, you can see how murky, you know, the territory is. And so, for that reason I really tend to have a pretty broad, you know, definition of giftedness. And the reason is why do we need to diagnose a kid as gifted? Well, to find out the best way to support them and to know which toolbox we're using, which strategies. And so, I have worked with plenty of twice exceptional kids who don't really show a lot of strength in really any of the academic subjects, but something I see a lot is they may be gifted in a physical sense. I've seen a lot of ADHD kids who are just like fantastic skiers or snowboarders operating at an elite level and that is an elite talent. And whether they're in that classroom, you know, or not, they're going to require to thrive, to do their best work; more of a giftedness lense.

Katie: Yes. Absolutely.

Lori: Yeah. And it's hard because in the schools we're kind of measuring, it's frustrating in the sense that you might see your child really excelling in reading, but when they go to measure

what they're measuring to qualify for giftedness, it actually isn't academic tasks. It's more their kind of overall reasoning skills or verbal abilities. And sometimes those things don't correlate and that's very confusing to parents. Or your child's gifted in music or art or like you said, in a physical area. And we don't measure that in the schools, sadly, but they can definitely show giftedness in those areas.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Absolutely.

Katie: So just to clarify, you know, what you guys are saying, so if a parent does suspect that their child is gifted, you're saying there is sort of this broad way to interpret that, but really the only way to quantitatively know is to actually have testing, is that right?

Dr. Chris Wiebe: It depends on which school of thought. I think your very traditional giftedness scholars would concur with exactly what you said. But, a large portion of educators that work with gifted kids aren't going to need that. They might see, you mentioned music, I've seen this very often. You might see an obviously precocious portfolio of compositions and recordings that they may have done on GarageBand and can't even play an instrument. But you may see that and for me that can be evidence really in two ways. Number one, this student is highly capable and number two, I have now an area where I need to fuel this perhaps at the expense of the academic side in order to really get this kid happy and thriving and engaged and moving forward.

Katie: Okay, I love this. The other thing I wanted to ask about is you've mentioned twice exceptional and I just wanted to take a second to really define that for people who are listening. So, we're talking about the gifted piece. So, what does that look like then when we're thinking of are kids specifically and how does that relate to being twice exceptional?

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Yeah, absolutely. So just the sort of most concrete definition of twice exceptionality is that the student is gifted or high ability and also has some sort of a learning difference or learning disability. There's of course difference in disability comes with a different mindset. So, in the twice exceptional community we tend to use difference and that can be any number of things. It can be anxiety, ADHD, spectrum, you know, you'll you know, see it can be you know, social emotional issues. But one aspect of giftedness that I think is important to acknowledge and appreciate is without learning differences, giftedness does come with social challenges. When you're interacting in the, you know, world, it's sort

of, not to sound elitist, but at you know, a higher level than perhaps your peers, more advanced that can really impact you socially, you know. And so by and large, you know, twice exceptionality is the combination of gifted education and special education because for years those two, you know, schools or those two lenses didn't necessarily meet. You know, and I think it was, you might want to fact check me on this, but I think it was the early 80s when there were books like very influential book by Susan Baum, To Be Gifted and Learning Disabled, was the language at the time these two worlds started to come together. And now these days, I mean if you, you know, do some browsing around, there are just so many people doing so much great work in this area and really, I don't mean to sound melodramatic but totally changing the course of families and students' lives because there is an understanding of the twice exceptional lense.

Lori: You know, so many people still, when I talk with parents, they look at their child and they're not able to read for instance, right. And they're really struggling, like, I think they have dyslexia. And the idea of them being so behind in reading in school compared to other kids, they, it's hard to comprehend that my child could also be gifted at the same time. And that does happen, where you have a child who's verbally gifted, but they are really struggling to learn how to read. And those are signs, you know, a parent might be like, they're very verbal and they're very verbal at a very young age. And they can have these conversations and they have this excellent vocabulary, but then they're not reading and it doesn't make sense to me. So yes, you can definitely see both at the same time.

Katie: That kind of brings us to my next question. So, when we think about kids who are gifted and also have specifically ADHD, right. So that's the twice exceptional. Another way you might hear it is 2e. What are some of those challenges that you might see with those kids?

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Sure. Well, I mean, the fact is school as a concept is just plain not designed for ADHD kids.

Katie: Okay, so first challenge is school. I love it. We're starting with the macro.

Lori: Everyone listening is like, yes!

Katie: Next, what do we do? Yeah, no, we'll get there. But that's great. So, I'm teasing a little bit, but okay, so big challenges that school is just not designed for kids who learn that way. Absolutely. Tell us more.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Yes. And of course, the things I think a lot of us are familiar with is, of course you're going to have challenges with focus. You're going to have challenges with sitting still, taking, you know, staying on-task, listening to the teacher. Social interactions will also be amplified and perhaps very conflict ridden. You know, there are a lot of transitions, that are going to happen during school. Transitions are notoriously difficult, you know, for your ADHD kids. And, now I'll step onto the gifted side, what is kryptonite for ADHD kids? Boredom. When they are bored! And so, if you have a gifted kid who is in an environment where everything that they're hearing is like, oh, my gosh, I understand this, why isn't everybody else understanding that? Giftedness may exacerbate these, you know, symptoms of ADHD.

Katie: And the lack of ability to regulate those feelings. Like, I'm bored and now I'm just mad.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Yes.

Lori: Yeah. And I think some parents will see, like, their kids are looking very bored or up and doing other things and thinking it might be ADHD, when in fact it's actually, you know, giftedness. And sometimes that can be really confusing too.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: That's right. Yeah. You know, one thing that you'll see, especially as a student gets older, because, that's the challenge, you know, there's an old saying, old saying, but a saying, if you've met one 2e kid, you've met one 2e kid. They all look just so different. And it also, you'll see a lot of differences as kids get older. And so often in the elementary school years what you will see the most is a lot of outbursts and lack of resilience. And the lack of resilience will hit, I know that sounds paradoxical, like I'm contradicting myself, but if first through fourth grade was super easy, the moment you hit and it's often like fractions or decimals in the fifth grade you don't have the resilience to struggle, you know, through that. And so being advanced for all these years is actually going to, you know, be a little tougher when you get to stuff that you encounter that is a challenge. In high school that tends to be Algebra 2. And you know where you hit this part, well, okay, it all breezed through. And if

your kid got through elementary and middle with no intellectual challenge whatsoever and here they are in high school, Algebra 2 I found is the next gatekeeper. Which is actually to now talk a little bit about the tension between the expectations of traditional education and the readiness and the needs of twice exceptional kids, Algebra 2 is kind of a gatekeeper for college admission. Especially here in California where I am, The University of California system requires as a basic requirement had for years, Algebra 2. Fortunately, I'm happy to report for those of us who struggle with Algebra 2, several years ago UC actually adopted an alternate computer science related curriculum to satisfy this Algebra 2 credit. Now that is tailor made for our 2e kids because if they're into coding or games or something, they will be able to access that same knowledge, you know, check that box, make that application.

Lori: That's great.

Katie: Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. And I see that a lot with kids also in speech, you know, the kids that kind of fly through those earlier skills and then you get to the hard ones and it's like you really, parents are like oh, he just has no emotion regulation. He gets so upset so fast. But you're right, I mean the key ingredient there is resilience. And the only way to build up the resilience is to encounter these like slightly difficult things, right. And find that you can get through them. And so that is really a challenge for those kids who, it really isn't hard for them.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Right. Absolutely.

Lori: Well, let's talk a little bit more about school because I know that is such a pain point for so many people that are listening. So, some of our listeners, I'm sure, are feeling like my child just doesn't fit in a traditional school system. What would you consider like an ideal learning environment for a gifted student with ADHD?

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Yeah, I often, this is a very flippant answer, but I do believe in it. I think it should be a massive airplane hangar with every machine and tool and book imaginable and you just set 2e students loose and you say, do whatever you want, break everything. And then behind all of these things you have very knowledgeable, skilled mentors and coaches who when a student has torn apart the machine and can't get it back together, there is an engineer standing there. Now we have our learning moment and we can take, you know, you through it. Obviously, my airplane hangar school likely will not emerge, anytime soon. So, you know,

to talk about that at scale, I, mean number one is interest and strength driven work. Opportunities to delve very deeply into their areas of interest and strength and actually spend, and this is where it really does run up against the traditional school, that can be at the expense of your other classes. You know, you only spend two hours a day in the core, but you spend four hours a day on this lovely project, you know, that you're working on and a strategy for giftedness. you know, it's called chunking. Where you will take perhaps a curriculum let's say there's 10 lessons and because the kid is advanced, squeeze that down to three lessons, foundational concepts. That's how you would make time, you know, for the 2e kid to spend more time in that area of interest. But in a lot of traditional schools, and I don't mean to deride traditional schools because I think things are really getting better. And some districts and some states just do amazing work with 2e kids. But if you're looking at a seat time, how much time is a kid in this class? How many days are there if you have a seat time mentality that really doesn't quite measure up with what I just described, where I want him doing four hours for that strength and interest-based work.

Lori: Yeah. And as far as like looking at schools, because I know many families might be like, well, should they be in a public school, should they be in a private school, should they be in a charter school? I know in Arizona, like we have some districts that have twice exceptional programs or they have gifted programs and then there are charter schools that maybe are arts focused or have, you know, focuses in the area that your child really excels. And there might be private schools that focus on twice exceptional students. I know we have some in Arizona. So, yeah, I mean there's lots of options out there. It's hard, I think it sometimes can be hard for parents to know what's best.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Yes. And you, I mean, I'm glad you mentioned the you know, kind of the magnet school, as well as, you know, the private school because, yeah, if you have a music and arts, you know, centric school, it's a pretty good chance that your 2e student will thrive there. And it's also a pretty good chance that they already prioritize that area of strength and so you'll get the attention you want. Oftentimes your smaller private schools are going to be a great option because they tend to be more nimble, you know, where certainly the student teacher ratio usually being a little smaller will be advantageous for ADHD kids. But you might have that organic thing that comes about when a teacher can really begin to, and here's another big word of course, come together and personalize learning, you know, for the for the student.

Katie: Yeah. I'm curious, so I think we have, we come from a place of just total privilege being in Arizona where there are so many options. I know my husband grew up in rural Iowa and he always jokes, but it's not totally real that it took five counties to make one public school that they all came to. And you know, he's really funny when the kids are drama. He's like, guys, I rode a bus in negative 11 degrees in the dark at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. And anyway, it's a whole story, but kind of thinking about families who don't have access to so many options and schooling options and private school, you know, is just not an option for a lot of families, I'm sort of thinking about those families. One thing that comes to mind is maybe if your child is in more of a traditional school or a public school, really trying to provide those gifted opportunities in the afternoon. Like thinking about, you know, you said, like put them in the hangar and let them go to town. But, I think we could replicate a very, very micro version of that at home, right? Like getting out techniques or art or different books, like just going to the library and finding books about space, books about all different kinds of things and letting your kids just have the time and space to just deep dive into that. I don't know. What would you say to a family that's like, we don't have a private school option, but my kid really needs this. Any other thoughts like that?

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Yes. And, you're right on point about being able to create something. And I'll give you like a very extreme scenario. A couple of times I've seen a student who his issues will manifest as, you know, his or her issues will manifest, as school avoidance. And they just plain cannot get the student to come out of bed and get to school at all. And there are a number of strategies that one can go through to help with that, but sometimes you get to the end of that road and you still haven't made any progress. And so, you can start to create this just whole path, you know, and it's a lot of labor for the parent and a lot of creative thinking but you can create a path. You know, let's say you have your fifth-year senior who's no closer to getting his, you know, his diploma, and you manage to populate his day with. Let's say you're a cooking example, for sure. We have a cooking class as a part of that day. We are studying for the GRE or not the GRE, we are, studying for the GED, in, you know, in order to just get that high school requirement out of the way. Maybe we're picking up a community college class, you know, in Jazz Appreciation, something just off of the map a little bit. We're looking perhaps for an internship. We may even be looking at being a bagger at a grocery store. Because the fact of the matter is, in that type of thing is resilience is all sorts of

opportunities for social, emotional growth. And so, in effect you kind of construct an ecosphere where a kid is doing enough of these things that do serve their growth. Another thing I think cannot be understated is the importance for twice exceptional students of finding your people. Meaning that, the way school is organized, you know, with everything just sort of sealed into subjects, you have to be a generalist and you have your algebra and your English and your history. And this is, life isn't actually like that. You know, we find our people. We gravitate to the areas where we do have interest and strength, and that's where we spend our time and that's where we thrive. So again, for, as you say, that parent who's like, look, I just don't have options. You know, luckily, there are options, but they do take a lot of work. You know, you have just become, you know, kind of the coordinator of, you know, of your child's learning. And I know I described kind of an elaborate network of things, but you can really simplify that with just this phrase - parent as opportunity maker.

Katie: Oh, I like that. Parent as opportunity maker.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: On the eye, keeping your eye out for those experiences that you know will be valuable.

Katie: Yeah. So, everyone's going to add that to their resume. We have so many things on our resume. Chauffeur, now I'm the parent opportunity maker or something. That's a lot, but we're going to write it down. Okay, I actually had a question about that too, though, because you mentioned the social piece at the beginning and now again with finding your people and I think that is such a huge challenge for parents. And I know that that's where a lot of kids end up online doing video games, because it's like, oh, he's socializing. Any tips for parents for helping their child find their people, even their one person that they have in common with? Because exactly like you said, you know, these kids, they are in many ways ahead of their peers, and it can be really challenging. So, what would you say to a parent that's like, I don't know where the people are?

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Yeah, no, great question. And I mean, the web is both a great tool and a completely terrifying tool. And we know why it's terrifying because, you know, it can be a time drain, and it can also just be a safety issue. Who are these, you know, strangers? But, yeah, but the other side is, you know, the Internet does afford very specialized places to share interests. So, I will have to say, with heavy supervision, you know, I think it can be a very good option. And there are also, you know, a number of online programs that will that will

tend to attract, you know, twice exceptional kids, so that there is still an adult coach and it is a class related to something. But, you know, and they have all sorts of things like a Dungeons and Dragons, you know, sort of thing. A lot of 2e kids are interested in that or astronomy or, you know, whatever. And so then in that environment, they will necessarily, even if it's virtually, they will have this interaction. And now here are people, students who are very likely, you know, again, what would qualify as, you know, "my people", you know. Back to kind of hop in the real world a little bit, you can you know, certainly look for anything like a club or you know, I had, I worked with a family. It was very similar to the school avoidance scenario I just gave, wasn't getting his diploma, but ended up just going to like an engineering club at a community college that he did not attend. Like he wasn't actually taking any class.

Katie: Really outside the box. You're not even near the box. I love that.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Yeah. And, and there is where he met, you know, his people. Certainly, you can also go at it in more of a real-world approach through the lense of a project. You know, I, there was a student who was into blacksmithing, which was just an amazing, right. I mean some of these interests.

Lori: My brother's a farrier, he shoes horses. So he's, I know a lot about that.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Yeah. So, so I mean he spent a long time just, and as the educator, this is where I'm a little anxious. Like, gosh, this kid sure does watch a lot of videos about blacksmithing, you know. But then over time. Yeah, but over time, you know, he then reached out and he went to a forge that was in town and started making things and here we are now we're in touch with our people.

Lori: Yeah, it sounds like a lot of what you're saying is really finding, again, like Katie said, a lot of times parents can't find that perfect school situation. And I think that's very hard, practically speaking, for a lot of families. But I think finding extracurricular activities that really dive into their interests or where they can find their people essentially and you know, get those opportunities that they need.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Absolutely.

Lori: So, we've heard you talk a little bit about a strength-based approach in educational settings. Can you talk a little bit about what that means, how it applies to gifted kids with ADHD?

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Yeah, for sure. I mean it's an approach, both a philosophy and a practice that says you focus on students' individual strength and interest and potential rather than their areas of challenge or their deficits. So, it's not a, oh gosh, what does this student lack? We need to fix that. But what is this student interested in and good at? Let's lean in on that. And in leaning in and putting the focus there will very likely start to grow those areas of, you know, deficit. And so, the core principles of this approach is, I mean, number one, just kind of a general, acknowledgment that every student has strengths. You know, they may be academic, they may be social, emotional. You know, I just love the kind of archetype I often, you know, I worked in 2e education for so long that I started to recognize this sort of 2e archetypes, you know, and there's an archetype that there's you know, a type of 2e kid that they're all individuals. Of course we're all snowflakes. But where the strength and, I just love it I'm almost getting chills, the strength is work ethic. And they may not have, you know, and they might not have any great ability there or they might not have you know, any really, truly manifest talent. But the work ethic is there, and so if you step in and give a student a plan to something, they are going to follow it. So that's an example of I've identified the strength as not cognitive or creative, but as just, you know, as a care, as an element aspect of this student's character. So, in a strength-based model, relationships are critical as you know, we'll hear a lot I think in the ADHD literature, like at the end of the day your connection, like that's your bread and butter. And so, strength-based education also will have that aspect. Personalizing learning is another aspect of the strength-based approach. Again, just aligning what kids do with their interests, and their learning preferences and you know, kind of the big thing is just language. You know, just language. You're talking to students and always affirming and using empowering language. When challenges come up, you shift that from the I can't do this to the, you know, we, this is an area for growth and you know, how....

Lori: Can't do it yet.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: I can't do it yet.

Katie: When you add yet to the end, it does change it.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Yes, right. And, and it sounds like perhaps a small thing, but the language that we use is really critical. And so, you know, strength based is a lense.

Lori: I love that. And kind of practically speaking I want to touch on a little bit, because this is in an area we are experts in because in Arizona we don't have something called gifted Individualized Education Plans. We've talked on a podcast a lot about individualized education plans or IEPs for kids who, and again twice exceptional kids might have them because they have learning needs and goals, which tends to be more let's develop these areas of weakness, right. But there are other states and I want parents to kind of know this, that where you can do testing for giftedness. And there are gifted IEPs that are, I think, more strength-based, to kind of personalize their learning. So that is an option in some public schools in some states. Unfortunately, not in Arizona. I don't think in California either, but.

Katie: Yeah, but maybe you could tell us a little bit about that. Like what should a parent be looking for? Do you think that is a good idea for them to pursue? What would that look like?

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Is it a good idea to pursue kind of a gifted IEP? Yeah, sure. I think it is, something to pursue and it's because of the process that is involved with, you know, such a thing. When I think about what are the best drivers of success for a family with a 2e student, it's a team dynamic. You are not going to do that alone. You are going to need your teacher on board, perhaps some, you know, a therapist, a mental health professional, certainly a talent development, you know, voice present there the parent voice. So, when you have, you know, a gifted IEP that is necessarily like, you know, a template for a process that will set goals and keep people accountable and assign who's going to be taking care of what. So, I certainly would, you know, as long as the lense is, you know, strength-based, I think that that's there. And I mean, I'll be honest, my, you know, I think it always depends on the team too. Because I think there, I've seen plenty of examples where it's not a gifted IEP, you know, it's just an IEP. But everybody in that room knows very well that, you know, that we are dealing with a gifted kid. And so, there's the stuff that we have to do for the IEP, but let's really focus on where we're developing the talent.

Lori: Right? And even like in Arizona, where you might not have a gifted IEP and maybe you're listening and you're like, my child is gifted, how do I develop something that's more focused on developing their strengths? I think what you said is so important. Let's say your child has ADHD and they have a 504 plan at school, which many of you will be in that

situation. Having a gifted educator on that team when you are developing accommodations and developing a plan is so critical, right. Because they can help that classroom teacher find ways within the day to provide challenges or projects or things that they can do that. Again, maybe you're not in a public school that offers that and you're in a rural setting, but maybe there is somebody who can consult, or they can hire briefly to consult a gifted educator to come in and kind of help that teacher provide some ideas and challenges for your child throughout the day.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Yeah, absolutely.

Katie: Chris, this has been such a great conversation and we are just truly so grateful for all of this information that you shared. And I know there's going to be families who want to continue down this path. So, do you have any resources that you could share with our community that they could continue to learn more about 2e?

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Yeah, certainly. You know, I've been really impressed by the work of a woman mental health professional named Emily Kircher Morris. And she has one specific to teachers and one book specific to parents, you know, Raising Twice Exceptional Students. So, I love both of those you know, books so, I'd recommend that. And another, you know, there are more and more actual programs, you know, where you can learn a lot. And you know, rather than, well, here's a book on this, you know, here's a certification you have, can get. Here's a degree that you can get. And just, you know, where I worked at school they have a graduate program and it's called the Bridges Graduate University and that you can get a certification in twice exceptional education. And so, you know, and that's not the only one, there are plenty of them out there. So a fairly you know, efficient Google search, I think you, your eyes might just immediately just be thinking, thrilled with you know, the trove of what you're going to see.

Katie: That's a great suggestion. I know a lot of families, you know, end up diving more into topics that because of their kids and then they end up turning it into maybe a career or part of their professional development too, so that is a great recommendation. We really appreciate it.

Lori: Yeah, we'll make sure to link all of those kind of resources that he's mentioned in the show notes, so check those out there if you're interested in learning more. And again, we are

so grateful for having you on and for your support of twice exceptional students and families. Thank you so much for being here.

Dr. Chris Wiebe: Oh, thank you. No, it's a joy to be able to share, you know, because I've had such just wonderful experience with these kids and so I just get a little giddy when I tell their stories.

Katie: Thanks for listening to Shining with ADHD by your hosts, Lori, Katie, and Mallory of The Childhood Collective.

Mallory: If you enjoyed this episode, please leave us a review and hit subscribe so you can be the first to know when a new episode airs.

Lori: If you are looking for links and resources mentioned in this episode, you can always find those in the show notes. See you next time!