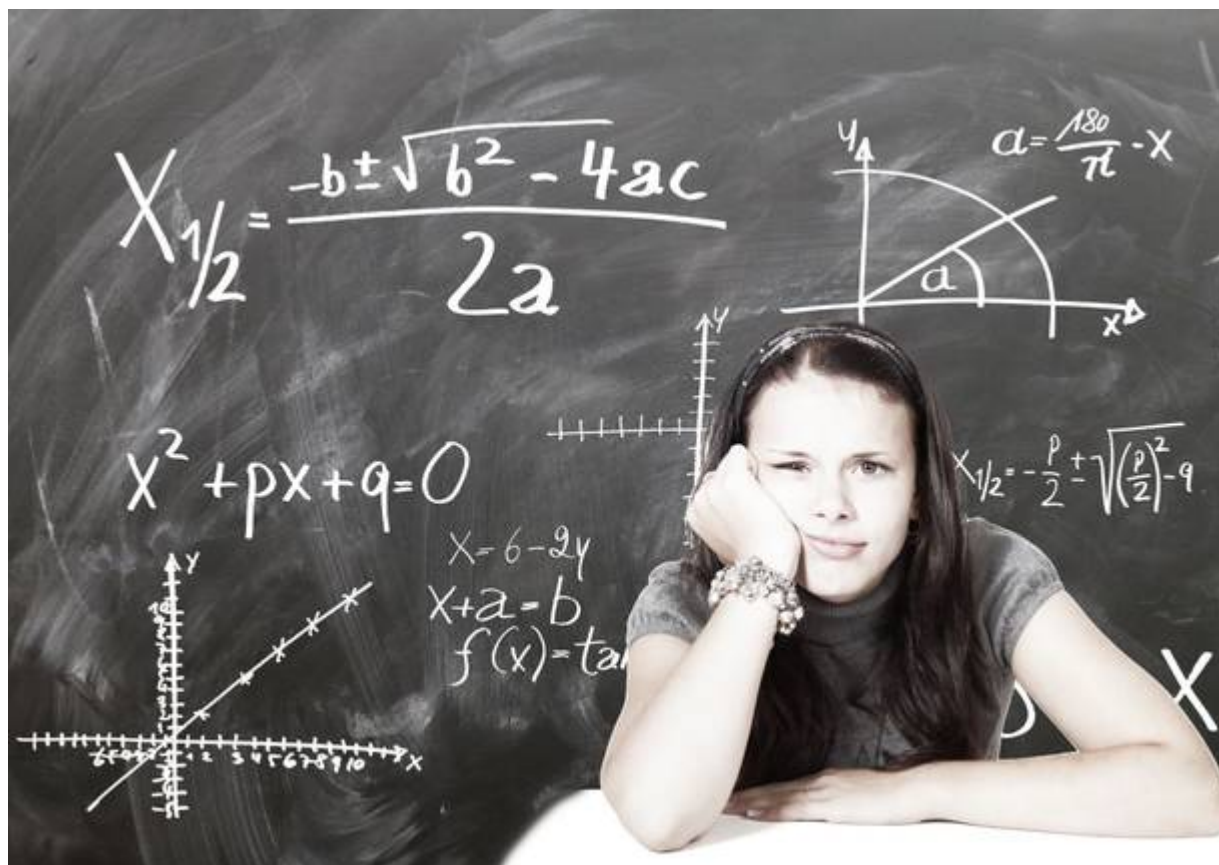


Children that are gifted, or that have a high cognitive potential: instructions for use

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Children that are intellectually gifted, or that have a “high cognitive potential”: potentially, there is one in every classroom, but it is not easy to recognise them, and it is even more difficult to cultivate this gift and prevent it from being lost.

This is the topic of the webinar, on 22 April, at 5.30 p.m., “The intellectually gifted: instructions for use”, for parents.

The event, which is being promoted by **Plusdotazione Varese**, in collaboration with **Mind Room** and **PSI** (Professionals supporting the individual), will be led by the psychologists **Valeria Resta** and **Federica Grilanda**, and by the educator **Maria Chiara Moneta**, who will explain the world of high cognitive potential and present a cycle of activities for children, which have been scheduled for the month of May, at the Belforte Oratorio.

The intellectually gifted: risks and potential

“We’re beginning to know a little more about the intellectually gifted, also in Varese, there are headteachers and teachers who are beginning to be interested in the topic, but it is **difficult to find professionals trained on this matter**,” Valeria Resta explained. “The main problem with these children is that if they’re not recognised and understood, as they always feel different from their peers, **they might end up abandoning school**.” So, they become an intelligence that is lost even before they are recognised, “because there’s no guarantee that a child with a high cognitive potential does well in school. In fact, it may be that his performance is low, because he is demotivated, bored and so easily distracted.”

Most children that have a high cognitive potential **learn easily**, learning to read early and independently, and **have a rich and fluent use of language, which they apply in arguments that are full of insights** and metaphors, which also make conversation with adults enjoyable. They are **sensitive and empathetic**, have a great memory, are curious, they explore and **have a wide variety of interests**.

Activities and workshops

Mind Room and PSI have devised a programme of **analytical workshops and activities on a variety of topics**, ranging from science to sports and art. “The workshops **are open to all children**, not only those judged to be gifted,” the promoters explain, specifying that the initiative is intended to be inclusive, an opportunity for children with a high cognitive potential or even just a particular interest in a topic, to explore what excites or interests them most. “**These opportunities should be stimulating for children and teenagers, both cognitively but also and above all emotionally.**”

At the same time, the families will be getting a service and an opportunity to understand better some of their children’s behaviours, “because sometimes people turn to consultants that are not specialists, that can come to the wrong diagnosis, mistaking a high cognitive potential for hyperactivity or discomfort,” the people at Mind Room explained.

In May, there will be another workshop, which will also be free of charge, for teachers to help them create an environment at school that focuses on the differences, specificities and peculiarities of each individual so that these can be encouraged.

Translated by Sara Mentasti and Mariachiara Bignoli

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