**Case Study – Matthew (Gifted)**

Matthew had been identified as gifted - he was imaginative, creative, and analytical. His conceptual understanding, reading, and writing were all at a very high level. He was also a very gifted artist and athlete. Matthew’s greatest gift was in writing, where his first poem, written for Remembrance Day, was publishable material. Matthew was polite and cooperative, always doing what was asked of him in class. However, to those close to him, he expressed frustration at having to hear instructions and explanations given many times over, and referred to being “able to take the chains off” when he got home.

Matthew was a popular student amongst both teachers and peers. He had one “kindred spirit,” Alex, whom he spent all his time with. However, Matthew seemed very fragile emotionally. His last year’s teacher noted that he often burst into tears if he made a mistake, and was highly self-critical. He tried to do exceptional and creative work every time, and became anxious when told he needed to be realistic given time lines or other demands. He often overwhelmed himself with his projects, and had trouble setting goals and keeping organized with his materials. He reacted to news stories so deeply that his parent stopped getting cable or the newspaper. Matthew was empathic towards others, and often seemed upset by any other child’s struggles as well. When his teacher criticized the class for wasting paper and “destroying the forests” Matthew went home crying and wrote “I’m stupid” all over himself in marker. On a personal planning sheet that asked the question “what would you do if your best friend moved away?” he wrote “commit suicide.” Matthew’s parents were involved and provided a very rich, stimulating environment for their son. They were both high level corporate executives, and worried that Matthew was “going to have to get a thicker skin if he was going to make it in the corporate world.”