

**Table 1: Unique Shared Characteristics of Gifted and GLBT Youth**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Description</b>
Invisibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty in finding peers or others who are also gifted and/or gay</li> <li>• Assumptions based on majority – straight and average in intelligence</li> <li>• Isolation</li> <li>• May be extremely creative</li> <li>• May need more time alone than others</li> <li>• May be more likely to be introverted</li> </ul>
Must <i>come out</i> in order to reveal/claim their identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May feel compelled to hide their differentness in order to gain acceptance</li> <li>• May feel being in the gifted program or being gay discloses them to others by whom they want to be accepted but who may not be accepting of giftedness or diverse sexual orientation</li> <li>• Heightened sense of being different</li> <li>• Heightened sensitivities</li> <li>• Impostor syndrome – feel others do not recognize them as they really are and that they are less worthy than other people believe</li> <li>• Psychological distress (trauma, depression) that stems from isolation, fear, unhealthy perfectionism, lack of resources and support</li> <li>• May feel internal and external pressure to disclose sexual orientation prematurely, especially if peer group is older</li> </ul>
Family may not understand/support if they are not also gifted or gay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be/feel significantly different from other family members</li> <li>• This factor may go against the family’s culture or belief system</li> <li>• The stress affects the entire family, not just the young person</li> <li>• Fear withdrawal of parental/guardian/family love and support for failure to live up to expectations or individualistically standing out too much</li> <li>• May make several moves in search of a good fit educationally and socially</li> <li>• May be more likely to challenge the status quo in family and/or community</li> </ul>
Feeling unprotected and unsafe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some form of discrimination likely (e.g. lack of educational and financial support for gifted programs or legislation specifically denying equal rights to GLBT)</li> <li>• Fear of bullying and violence when being gifted/gay is disclosed</li> <li>• Aware of a societal lack of acceptance</li> <li>• May not have specific protections in non-discrimination policies</li> <li>• Difficulty in seeing the future and themselves in it especially if role models are invisible</li> </ul>
May have less rigidly defined gender-specific interests and behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict between expectations of “gender appropriate” interest and one’s true interests</li> <li>• Overt and covert discouragement from following passion areas when nontraditional and/or not high in 3 Ps (power, pay, prestige)</li> <li>• May push self to extreme in order to achieve at the highest level – related to</li> </ul>

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perfectionism that validates the gifted label and helps “balance” the *Big Secret*

- May set very high or even unattainable standards for self

Lack of safe places to meet others like themselves

- Early/late sexual activity (may be a greater concern when radical grade skipping has been employed or when self-identifying as GLBT before age eighteen)
- May have difficulty finding others who share interests that are unusual for one’s gender and/or age