



THE ELEMENTARY YEARS (K-6)

Choose your child's school with **CONFIDENCE**

INCLUDES
Easy to Use
Tool Kit



religious?
magnet?
home?



Which School?



public?
private?
charter?



Bryan C. Hassel, Ph.D. & Emily Ayscue Hassel

PUBLIC IMPACT



Step Two: Chapter 2

Your Child: Overview

This downloadable PDF is an excerpt from:

Picky Parent Guide: Choose Your Child's School with CONFIDENCE

**Get all the chapters in electronic form, for free, at *PickyParent.com*, or
purchase the paperback at *Amazon.com*.**

**© 2004-2010 Armchair Press, LLC and Public Impact, LLC. All rights reserved.
Public Impact encourages the free use, reproduction, and distribution of this
material for noncommercial use. We require attribution for all use of material
herein in whole or in part. For more information and instructions on the
commercial use of our materials, please contact us at *PublicImpact.com*.**



LIGHTNING LIST

What To Know from Chapter 2

- **A Great Fit school will meet your individual child's most important needs.**
- **The child characteristics most helpful for picking a school** are sorted into the **four Fit Factors:**
 - ✓ **What Your Child Learns** – these are things about your child that indicate *what subjects and at what level of difficulty* your child should be taught.
 - ✓ **How Your Child Learns** – these are things about your child that indicate *how a school should teach and interact with your child*.
 - ✓ **Social Issues** – this is your child's own desire and need to attend school with *friends*.
 - ✓ **Practical Matters** – this includes scheduling your child's essential *non-school activities* (as well as any practical concerns arising from other child needs).
- **You can identify the parts of each Fit Factor most important for your child** in four ways:
 - ✓ **Observe** your child directly, alone and in groups of other children.
 - ✓ **Compare** your child to other similar-age children.
 - ✓ **Test** your child formally through a professional educational tester or psychologist.
 - ✓ **Get Smart** about the characteristics that may be most important for your child.
- **Every aspect of every Fit Factor is not important for every child.** You must prioritize to find a school that meets your child's few top needs.
- **Even if you identify only one critical need of your child's**, and seek to meet it through school or at home, **your child will be far better off** than without your effort.
- **The less certain you feel about identifying your child's top needs, the more important Great School Quality Factors #2 and 3 become** in your school hunt.

Chapter 2

Ladies and Gentlemen, Introducing...Your Child

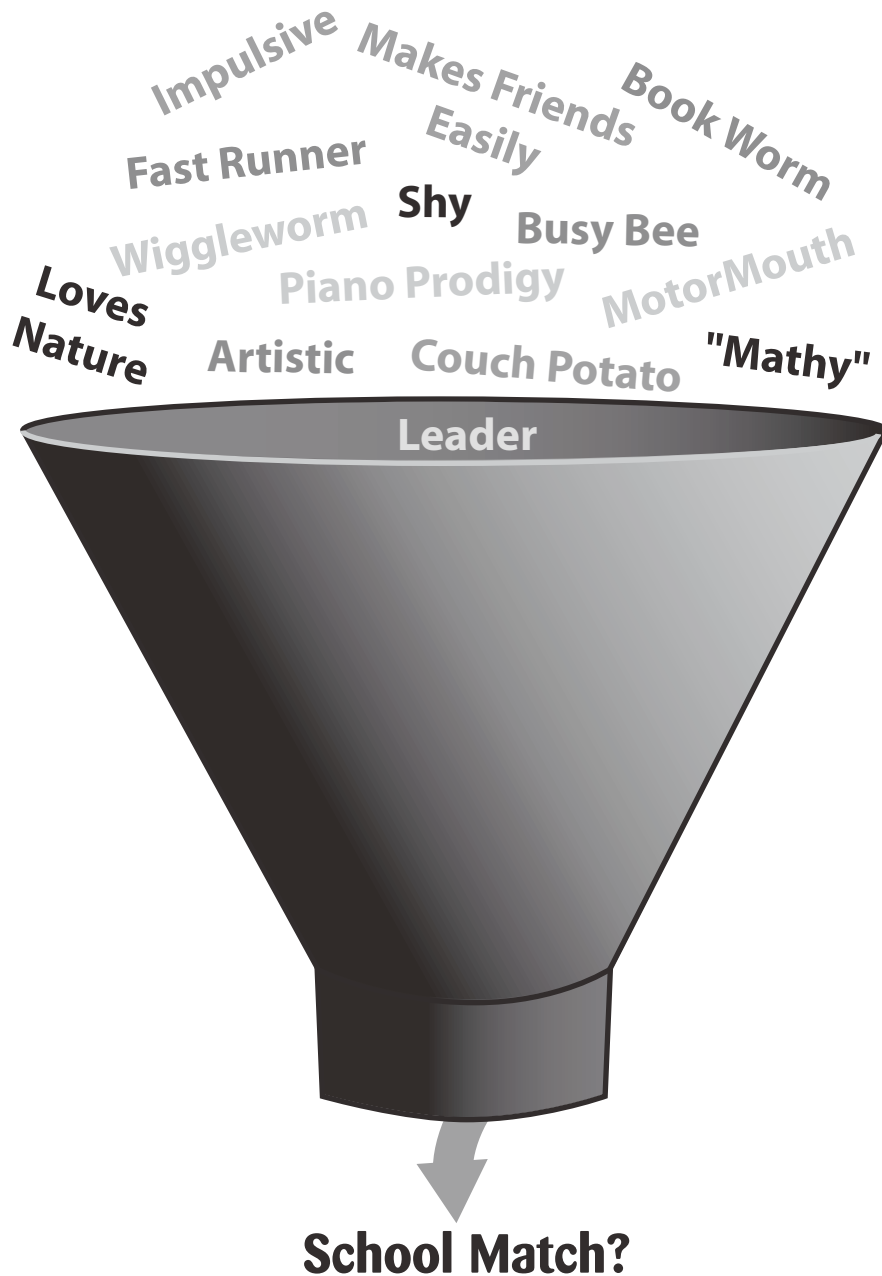
Amy soars academically, as long as she can discuss her ideas. Make her sit quietly and do worksheets all day and her mind wanders away from the task at hand. Margaret excels in art. She also writes complicated, detailed stories – as long as she can start with a picture. Sonya loves math, and she can see the symbols and do problems in her head. Sure, she can read and write well enough, but it's math that makes her feel supercharged about school. Arthur does well enough in school, as long as he has one or two close friends to pal around with during recess and lunch. Take that away and he shuts down. A solid student, Mark's behavior unravels without very clear rules and consequences. Give him clear rules, and he actually turns into a class leader. Alexander thinks of complicated science projects and experiments he wants to pursue every week. He bemoans going to school, since it takes his time away from his "real work."

Sorting Out Your Child's Unique Needs

Children vary in so many ways! Your child is like no other, yet possesses so many qualities in common with others. Like a star that twinkles a little differently with each view, your child may seem to be many different people combined into one. Through the still unknown recipe of genes and upbringing, your child is a unique concoction of capabilities, wants, needs and motives.

Indeed, children's bodies, minds, emotions and spirits combine to make unique individuals. This mix affects the kind of environment in which each child learns best. As a parent, you probably have some sense of this. But many of us feel at a loss to understand and respond to our own children's capabilities, needs and personalities, even in our daily parenting, much less for school.

What Matters for Matching My **Child** to a School?



Parents aren't the only ones to wonder what really matters. For decades, educators and child development experts have considered children from many angles, and they have sliced this apple many different ways. Every leading expert's ideas are useful for understanding some children better. Every leading expert's ideas are useful for teaching some children better. (See the box *One Child, Many Viewpoints* on page 29 if you'd like to know more.) But for the most part, parents have been left in the lurch when trying to discern what their individual children need at school.

At one time or another, most of you will feel stuck on one of these challenges:

- You need help understanding what your child is really like.
- You understand your child quite well but aren't sure which characteristics are important for school.
- You know what aspects of your child will affect his school success but are uncertain of exactly what he needs at school as a result.
- You feel uncomfortable asking for "special favors" from a school to meet your child's particular needs.

Regardless of how prepared you feel right now, we say this: ***you the parent are in the best position to know your child's needs and ensure that they are met, at school and elsewhere.*** Most parents know far more about their own children than they will admit even to themselves. If you feel cloudy – or even clueless – about any of these matters, read on. This book will:

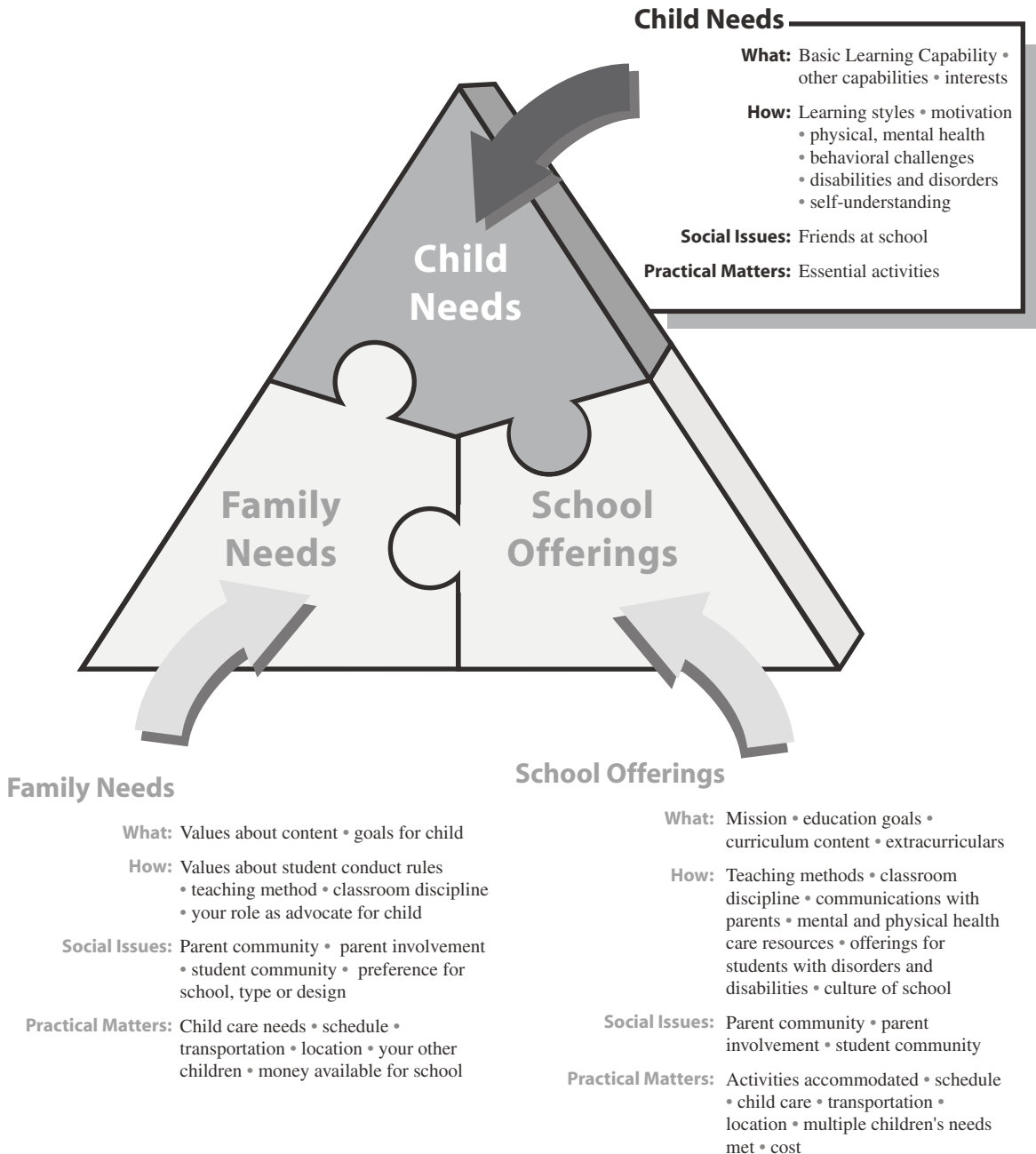
- Focus you on *your* child
- Help you figure out what is important for choosing a school for your child
- Prepare you to hunt for a school that meets more of your child's needs from the start
- Help you find a school where you'll have fewer "favors" to request because the school already does the things your child needs
- Equip you to help teachers meet your child's needs
- Equip you to help your child outside of school

The Great Fit Triangle

The burning question for you now is this: which qualities, in their unique combination within your child, really matter for choosing a school? Which of your child's features will help her learn and feel better in some schools – with certain teachers, peers, materials, and expected ways of learning – and worse in others? Which of your child's strengths and weaknesses can be addressed at school, and which can be developed at home?

Great Fit Triangle

Matching Child and Family Needs with School Offerings



When your child's and family's needs fit well with what your child's school offers, we call it a "Great Fit." We use the Great Fit Triangle to illustrate how these "pieces" work together.

Focus on the Four Fit Factors

Fortunately, we can focus on a limited number of characteristics that affect how well children fare in different kinds of school environments. We developed this targeted list by scanning the research about child development and by talking with parents of many different kinds of children about their children's needs. From all of that information, we organized the many characteristics of children into four easy-to-grasp categories: the four Fit Factors. These Fit Factors are simply a way of sorting out your child's (and later, your family's) many features in a way useful for identifying your school needs. The four Fit Factors for children include:

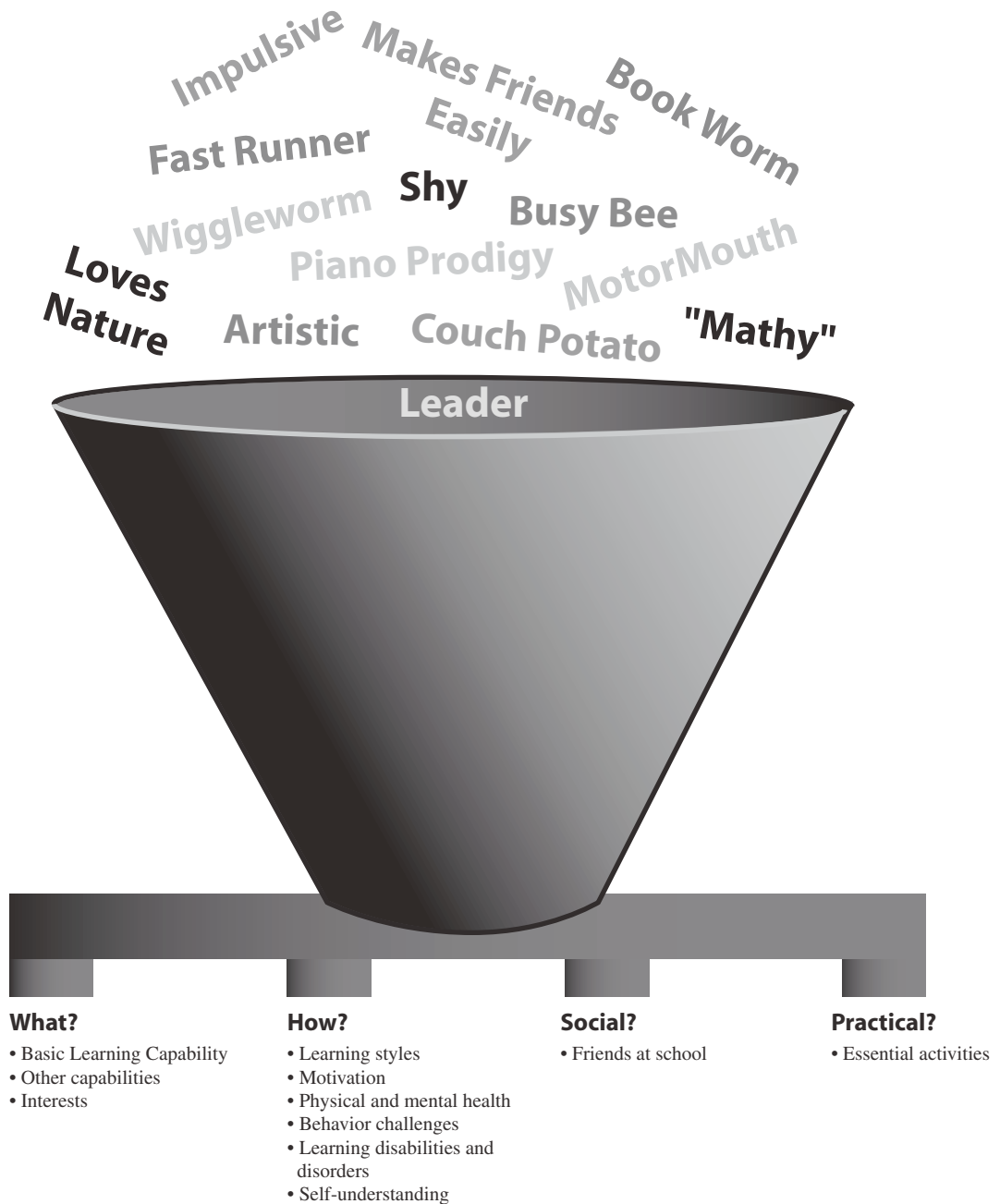
- **What Your Child Learns:** these are aspects of your child that affect *what subjects and at what level of difficulty* your child should be taught at school. These include your child's Basic Learning Capability, other capabilities, and interests.
- **How Your Child Learns:** these are aspects of your child that affect *how a school should teach and interact with your child* both in and outside of the classroom. These include your child's learning styles, motivation, physical and mental health challenges, behavior challenges, learning disabilities and disorders, and self-understanding.
- **Social Issues:** this includes the need for social contact with particular friends from the *child's* perspective.
- **Practical Matters:** this includes essential extracurricular activities that may be compelling choice factors for some children.

The four Fit Factors help you by taking the jumble of characteristics that define your child and funneling them down into a manageable set. And this book will help you narrow even that organized list down into your own personalized high-priority list of your child's needs.

In the following three chapters, we'll describe the child characteristics within each of the four Fit Factors in detail. If you find that your child has additional needs that must be met at school, fear not. Chapter 10 will help you think for yourself to find the right school. For now, take a peek at the *Child Needs Summary* on page 38.

The burning question for you now is this: which qualities, in their unique combination within your child, really matter for choosing a school?

What Matters for Matching My **Child** to a School?



How to Learn More about Your Child

Not every Fit Factor characteristic is important for matching every child to the right school. You'll need to decide which ones are really important for your child. To do that, you'll need to take a fresh look at your child now.

Know that many parents find it challenging to see their children in the truest light. Naturally, we want to think our children will be standouts in anything they undertake, especially in the first societal litmus test of success: education. In fact, your child has a much greater chance of success in school and life if you approach this process with an honest and open mind about your child's strengths and challenges. By finding a good fit for your child, you'll place him in a school environment that makes the most of his strongest abilities, while also recognizing and developing his weaknesses.

Viewpoint

One Child, Many Viewpoints

People are complex, no doubt. A visitor from outer space would be hard pressed to describe humans along any one dimension. Our bodies alone include multiple physical and chemical systems working together. Our minds alone are complex and, to some extent, still unfathomable. Even when we understand, we do not always know the importance of each aspect of our incredible brains and how they interact with the world around us.

The very best thinkers and experts have tried repeatedly to explain humans in straightforward terms, using lists and scales simple enough for the rest of us to understand. Great thinkers and educators have in recent decades come to see children as a unified collection of critical characteristics, though they may disagree about what those critical characteristics are. Notable experts and viewpoints include Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences, Mel Levine's eight learning abilities, learning styles, whole child thinking, and a rainbow of others focusing on narrower aspects of child development.

Viewpoint boxes appearing throughout the Child chapters include sketch summaries of some popularly accepted ideas about what is most important for children's growth, development, and learning. We've highlighted some of the most influential and complete models of children's minds and ones you are most likely to run across in parenting life. Use them to improve your thinking and understanding of your child, but know that we have included them all in some way in our four Fit Factors to help you determine what your child needs from school. If something jumps out at you as "just the thing" that describes your child, make a note of it.



If all children were formally assessed at preschool age and reassessed throughout the school years, you would have a “moving profile” of your child. This kind of tool would be invaluable for school placement, teacher assignment, teaching and parenting. Many Great Schools do this with their current students. But when you are choosing a school, it’s up to you to lead the process of gathering the information you need to understand your child.

You will best understand your child if you have had time to observe, compare with other children and discover more about the child characteristics important for choosing a school.

You should *start with those things about your child that really stand out*: obvious strengths and challenges, likes and dislikes. Our *Child “Quick Think”* activity on page 37 will help get you going.

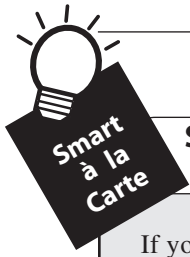
Then, in the following chapters, we’ll give you specific ideas for clarifying and organizing your child’s needs using the four Fit Factors. The suggested activities will include a combination of these:

1. *Observe*
2. *Compare*
3. *Test*
4. *Get Smart*

There’s no need to dive into these activities right now. As you consider each of the four Fit Factors, we’ll prompt you with specific ideas about what to observe, how to compare, what tests to consider, and how to “get smart” by reading more about specific topics. For now, though, here’s an overview of each way of getting to know your child better:

- *Observe* – if you have spent a fair amount of time alone with your child and have observed her in a group setting, you may have a good grasp of her needs already. If not, and you have some time before you’ll need to choose a school, make the most of the opportunities you have to observe your child directly.
- ✓ Think about how well your child’s current school or child care setting fits. The box Signs of a Great and Not-So-Great Fit can help
 - ✓ Schedule one or more appointments to observe your child at school or day care (it is best if you can observe without your child seeing you, but this is not always possible)
 - ✓ Pay attention when your child has friends over to play
 - ✓ Watch your child at the park
 - ✓ Use other chances to observe how your child works and plays, both alone and with others, at home and elsewhere
 - ✓ Follow our specific advice in the following chapters for characteristics that really jump out at you

Focus on those one, two or few things that matter most for your child. Meeting just those needs, at school or home, can significantly improve your child’s life and school performance.



Signs of a Great and Not-So-Great Fit Between Child and School

If your child is in school, even preschool or day care, you may have gotten an intuitive feeling already that the situation is a Great Fit for your child – or not. If your child has not participated in any group learning yet, you may have no idea. But if yours has – as most young children in the U.S. have – you may recognize some signs of a great or poor fit.

Signs that a school or other group setting *fits your child* include these:

- Your child is eager to go to school (or preschool or day care)
- Your child acts energized and happy at the end of the school day
- The pace of learning in core subjects is, overall, about right for your child: challenging but achievable
- You see tremendous progress in your child's overall development – academic, physical, social and emotional – throughout each school year
- Your child feels that her abilities and interests are appreciated at school
- Your child is achieving and performing academically (“cognitively” in younger years) at the level of which he is capable
- Your child has friends and acquaintances who like and accept him at school
- School work and friends are important, but not all-consuming, parts of your child's life

If school or another group setting is a *poor fit for your child*, you might see some of these signs:

- Well into the school year, your child is hesitant, or even adamantly opposed to going to school (and other stressful events in your child's life, like a new baby, can't explain these feelings)
- Your child is not just tired, but worn down and unhappy at the end of most school days
- Your child has made little progress in the past year, either academically, socially, emotionally or physically
- Your child often says “school is boring”
- Your child is not performing as well academically as you think he can
- Your child expresses little interest in what she's learning at school
- Your child often says that teachers or other kids do not understand her or do not like her
- Your child doesn't seem to have any close friends or friendly acquaintances at school
- Your child shows symptoms of stress only when school's in session (e.g., sleeplessness, fatigue, excessive clinginess and whining, new nervous habits, regressing to younger behaviors)

You can learn a lot just by interacting directly with your child and by noticing what your child is like when playing alone and with other children.

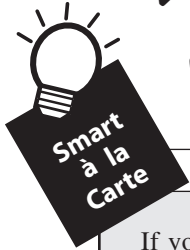
- **Compare** – for choosing a school, it is helpful if you understand how your child is similar to or different from other children of the same age. Your child’s teachers and other caregivers often are in a terrific position to give you valuable details about how your child acts in a group and how your child compares to others of the same age. Ask questions, listen and learn. Some parenting books include “typical” child development schedules, and those can be helpful for comparing your child’s current capabilities to others of the same age. If you’ve got more time and energy, use opportunities to observe and get to know other similar-age children, either with your child present or not, such as:
- ✓ Volunteer in your child’s classroom (or another of same-age children)
 - ✓ Teach a class of similar-age children at your religious institution
 - ✓ Invite children over to play with your child, one-on-one or in a playgroup
 - ✓ Observe other children (and compare your child to others) in informal play at the park, birthday parties and so forth
 - ✓ Observe other children (and compare your child to others) in structured, non-school, group activities – while your child participates in athletics, for example
 - ✓ Follow our specific advice in the following chapters for characteristics that really jump out at you
- **Test** – seek limited or complete testing through a combination of public schools, private psychologists and education counselors. You may be able to obtain basic test results only, or you might choose comprehensive parenting and school choice counseling. Many of you will find that testing is not necessary, as your child’s most outstanding characteristics are relatively easy to pinpoint.

But if:

- ✓ Your child has an extreme characteristic that you want to understand better, or
- ✓ You’ve had little time to observe your child, or
- ✓ You do not feel confident making judgments about your child after reading this book, or
- ✓ You want a thorough assessment of your child’s capabilities and needs, or
- ✓ You feel more comfortable taking action with the backing of an objective, expert assessment,

then consider seeking professional testing and counseling. See our box, *Getting Help*, to get started on finding and working with a professional tester. And visit *PickyParent.com* for information about common child assessments.

- **Get Smart** – use books and other tools for understanding more about children who you think may be *similar to your child*. Your time is limited, so focus your research carefully. Easy-to-obtain resources include:
- ✓ Other books about specific characteristics of some children (such as gifted or learning disabled). See our Resources for Parents section starting on page 354.
 - ✓ Websites for helping parents and children with specific needs, also listed in our Resources section.
 - ✓ *PickyParent.com*, for up-to-date links and resources.



Getting Help: Professional Testing and Counseling

If you decide to get help from a professional counselor to identify or clarify your child's needs, your first task will be to find one. Ask your child's teacher, principal or school counselor, or even your friends (or look in your local phone book) for names of child psychologists and education counseling specialists who do school-related assessments. A private tester will cost at least a few hundred dollars for a basic I.Q. test, perhaps one other short test, and simple feedback for you.

You may find free or less expensive alternatives in your community. If your child has indication of certain learning disabilities, public school systems provide free testing (call your local school district central office). Many private schools offer assessments as part of the admission process, though feedback may be too late to help you target the right schools. Some preschools offer inexpensive developmental assessments for current students and, if they have a kindergarten or "junior" kindergarten program, prospective students.

Your counselor need not have a Ph.D., although the more thorough the testing, the more important training in use of assessments will be. Whatever your counselor's background, testing should include use of "standardized" scales that compare your child to many other similar-age children, not merely the counselor's personal opinion.

Before you get help from professionals, ask what kind of tests they do, whether testing is done individually or in groups, how long testing takes, what kind of feedback you will get and when, and the total cost. The younger the child, the more important it is to have individual testing. You may find the range of tests fairly limited. At the least, most such counselors can assess your child's I.Q., academic development (yes, even for preschoolers), learning style preferences, and major learning disabilities. The feedback that you get from such testing may be limited, but you most certainly will find it helpful to learn about or confirm characteristics of your child important for choosing a school.

Prioritizing Your Child's Needs: Must Haves and Nice to Haves

You're on your way to knowing your child. In the following chapters, we will walk you through each of the four Fit Factor characteristics for children and help you identify which are most important for your individual child. You will quickly see that many issues are not critical for your child, and you can avoid bogging down your school hunt by setting these aside.

Most children will have only a *small number of characteristics that are top priorities* for selecting and working with a school. These we call “Must Haves,” simply because your child really must have these needs met, ideally at school. If you see other non-essential needs – ones that just aren't a top priority or that you can easily address at home – consider them “Nice to Haves.” We call them this simply because it would be *nice to have* these needs met at school, but not really essential. Later, you can use your Nice to Haves as tiebreakers between equally appealing schools. Do your work well, and this will be your prize: you can focus on finding a truly Great Fit school for your child's top needs.

Viewpoint

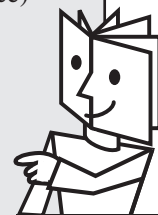
Whole Child

One field of thinkers and experts focuses on the “whole child.” Several such authors have called for education, parenting and child care to focus on the various aspects of children's development, rather than on “subjects” we want to teach children (e.g., math, reading). Elements of the “Whole Child” that experts have addressed include these:

1. **Cognitive** – how children think and learn in traditional academic areas. This includes memory, problem solving, connecting old ideas and creating new ones in language, math and other subjects.
2. **Social** – how children get along with others, both one-on-one and in a group (as leader, follower, team member).
3. **Emotional** – how children feel, understand their feelings and control their behavior in response to feelings.
4. **Physical** – how well children perform using small motor skills (e.g., hand-writing, building with small objects), large motor skills (e.g. running, dance) and coordination of the body in general.

In addition, some have included a fifth element:

5. **Spiritual** – How connected does your child feel to a higher power beyond human beings or to a sense of oneness with humanity as a whole?



For many parents, what rises to the top of the Must Have list for school will depend on what you, as a parent, can offer your child outside of school. If your budding musician's needs can be met with private lessons in non-school hours and you can foot the bill, then this interest/capability may be just a Nice to Have at school. If you, upon realizing that your child's lack of social skills is holding him back, feel very capable of helping your child close the gap (e.g., with lots of play dates and positive coaching), then choosing a school with the perfect-fit social group becomes less important.

But you must be honest with yourself. Accept the fact that there may be things you cannot or do not want to do for your child outside of school. If one of these barriers realistically will keep you from meeting your child's important need elsewhere, then make the need a Must Have and seek to meet it through school:

- You face practical or logistical barriers (time constraints, multiple children's schedules, lack of money, conflict with your work and so on)
- You do not want to push your own child academically or otherwise and would feel more comfortable having other adults play this role
- The basics of parenting – keeping your child fed, warm and safe, let alone teaching discipline, manners, morals and values – are daunting enough, and you don't want to add to an already overfull parenting basket

Viewpoint **A Rainbow**

Some experts and authors have focused on characteristics that seem to make certain children stand out, but are not described with just one dimension or scale. Some popular examples include the “Spirited Child,” the “High Need Child,” the “Difficult Child” and books describing common differences between boys and girls. If your child fits one of these models, then these categories can be helpful for guiding much of your parenting life. But for choosing a school, you will need to peel apart the layers of these categories, as they typically include a combination of child characteristics that may demand different school settings. You can use our Fit Factors as a guide to untangle this web both for choosing a school and parenting outside of school. For example, if your “High Need” child is gifted academically – as a good portion of these children seem to be – then she really needs a school that meets her academic needs (or you will need to accommodate elsewhere in her life). Similarly, your “spirited child” may be a very strong visual learner and thus have a very high need for visual order in the classroom (e.g., few class changes, a neat classroom, a space of her own) regardless of other characteristics that make her “spirited.” Your boy may need extra emotional skill development – or not. Your girl may need help balancing her social concerns with setting high goals for herself – or not.



Conclusion

The one sure bet is that there are no “generic” children. Your first job as a parent is to *know your child* so that you can make great choices about his school and life. Sound daunting? After you’ve read Chapters 3 – 5 about your child, you will find your confidence rising: you can not only understand your child but find the right school to fit his needs. (And if you do the *Snap To It* Activities you’ll feel all the more confident, and rightly so.)



What To Do

- **Use *Child “Quick Think”*** on the next page to “brainstorm” the things about your child that you think really stand out compared to other children. Estimated Time: 10 minutes
- **Skim the *Child Needs Summary*** on page 38 to get a complete preview of the specific child characteristics included in each of the four Fit Factors. You do not need to follow the instructions at this time – we will walk you through each item in Chapters 3-5. Estimated Time: 5 minutes

Need more? Want more? Got more to share? Visit PickyParent.com.

Child "Quick Think"

Stop and think for a few minutes about your child. Write your responses here or on a separate page. Compare and discuss your answers with anyone else involved in school decision-making (e.g., your spouse or child). Keep your notes handy to use later in your school hunt.

What strengths, challenges and other characteristics stand out about your child?

➤ What your child likes or is able to do well

➤ What your child doesn't like or has difficulty doing

➤ How your child works and interacts best with adults and other children

Child Needs Summary

How to Use This Summary:

- Use this checklist to help identify your child's most important characteristics for choosing a school. Use Chapters 2-5 and the *Know Your Child's Needs* table on page 368 for further clarification.
- Write an "M" in the square box beside needs that are Must Haves: truly essential for your child's school to address. Most children will have a small number of Must Haves.
- Write an "N" in the square box beside needs that are Nice to Haves: not essential, but helpful for school to address.
- Leave empty boxes beside items not important for choosing a school for your child, because either (1) an item is not important for your child or (2) you do not need school to address an item.
- Record Must Haves and top Nice to Haves on your *Personalized Great Fit Checklist* on page 59.

WHAT YOUR CHILD LEARNS

☐ **BASIC LEARNING CAPABILITY:** A child's readiness for learning in core academic subjects. A Must Have for all. Check highest category that fits.

- ☐ **Extremely Challenged:** very delayed math, language; or I.Q. below 70; social difficulty as peer of Typical children
- ☐ **Challenged:** consistently delayed in math and language; or I.Q. between 70 and 85
- ☐ **Typical:** close to expected math, language, but may be somewhat behind or ahead; or I.Q. between 85 and 120
- ☐ **Bright/Gifted:** advanced or learns quickly; 90th-97th percentile on achievement tests; or I.Q. between 120 and 130
- ☐ **Highly Gifted:** very advanced math and/or language; 97th percentile and up on achievement tests; or I.Q. over 130; may have social difficulty as peer of Typical children

OTHER CAPABILITIES: look for strengths (early or very strong capabilities) and weaknesses (late or very weak capabilities) compared to other children of same age. A Must Have only for extreme strengths and weaknesses. Mark Must Haves ("M") and Nice to Haves ("N"), if needed.

- ☐ **Musical:** senses, appreciates, composes, and/or performs music, including rhythm, pitch, and tone
- ☐ **Artistic:** understands and appreciates others' art; creates original works of art pleasing or interesting to others
- ☐ **Physical & Hands-on:** displays strength, agility, speed, balance and/or flexibility; or uses all or part of the body to create ideas or objects and to solve problems
- ☐ **Social & Leadership:** understands & interacts well with many kinds of people; or organizes/ leads other children
- ☐ **Creativity:** thinks of new ideas and ways to do things, rather than imitating others; may apply to varying activities
- ☐ **English as Second Language:** understands, speaks, reads, and writes English at age-appropriate level

☐ **INTERESTS:** something your child loves to do or think about often, regardless of skill; interest must be long-held and something your child wants to continue pursuing frequently at school to make it a Must Have. Write interest here, if any: _____

Child Needs Summary *...continued*

HOW YOUR CHILD LEARNS

☐ **LEARNING STYLES:** a Must Have if child is very strong in one style only or very weak in one style. Check extreme strengths or weaknesses below.

- ☐ **Visual:** learns best seeing things written or in pictures; stimulated by how things look; bothered by disorder, clutter. Strength or weakness?: _____
- ☐ **Auditory:** learns best listening, talking, discussing; stimulated by sounds; bothered by loud, disorganized noises. Strength or weakness?: _____
- ☐ **Kinesthetic:** learns best moving body; and/or using hands ("tactile"); stimulated by activity; bothered sitting still. Strength or weakness?: _____

☐ **MOTIVATION:** how self-motivated is child to achieve academically? A Must Have if this is a strength or weakness. May be a Must Have if child is Typical and parent cannot provide general supervision of child's work and progress. Check category that best fits.

- ☐ **Strength:** child sets challenging goals for self, tries hard things on own, works to overcome barriers and problems
- ☐ **Typical:** child works to meet goals set by teachers, parents; or sets achievable goals for self; stops if problems arise
- ☐ **Weakness:** child not bothered when does not perform well; or is bothered but takes no action

☐ **PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES:** any physical restrictions or handicaps; ongoing illnesses requiring daily treatment or special facilities; or ongoing or recurring emotional upset (severe depression, anxiety, other mental health challenges). Write here, if any: _____

☐ **BEHAVIOR CHALLENGES:** significant, unresolved behavior or discipline problems in group settings that prevent your own child or others in class from effectively learning.

☐ **LEARNING DISORDERS AND DISABILITIES:** a Must Have for any recognized learning disability; or learning disorder severe enough to require special services at school to meet academic, social, emotional or physical needs. Write disability here, if any: _____

☐ **SELF-UNDERSTANDING:** child's demonstrated ability to understand self, including own strengths, weaknesses and interests and to use that understanding to make decisions. A Must Have only if child is very weak in this area.

SOCIAL ISSUES

☐ **FRIENDS:** a Must Have if your child has well-established friendships with children attending a certain school, and your child does not have social skills to make new friends, and you are unable to help your child continue current friendships outside of school or establish new friendships. List specific friends here, if any: _____

PRACTICAL MATTERS

☐ **ESSENTIAL ACTIVITIES:** Must Have if child has non-school activities that must continue and can't be done at school. Write activity here, if any: _____



PARENTING/EDUCATION

**"Phenomenal"! "Indispensable"!
"First Rate"!**

See more praise inside front cover...

You can now take charge of your child's educational destiny!

If you are one of the tens of millions of parents picking a first school or considering a change for your child, **Picky Parent Guide** is the **definitive action manual and reference guide** you need. Built off decades of the best research, **Picky Parent Guide** delivers simple wisdom that works. Easy to grasp and inspiring to use, the Confident Choice Tools make choosing and working with your child's school a snap! You can relax knowing that you are doing everything a parent can to enhance your child's success in school and life.

A great value! Here's what you get inside this book:

- ✓ Dozens of customized, practical ways to improve your child's school performance
- ✓ Complete step-by-step Confident Choice Tool Kit to help you choose the right school, without wasting hundreds of hours and potentially thousands of dollars
- ✓ Point-by-point discussion to help you match your child and family needs with schools
- ✓ Complete research-based introduction to the seven universal Great School Quality Factors that any parent can learn to recognize. Unbiased with respect to school type
- ✓ Filled with surprising, often touching stories of school choice success
- ✓ School types, teaching methods and educational lingo explained and demystified
- ✓ Customized questions, targeting your needs, to ask when visiting schools
- ✓ Stress-saving tips on getting in to your favorite schools
- ✓ Plainspoken advice on how to interact with school staff to get what your child needs
- ✓ Dozens of ways to get for your child what you can't get at your current school

... and much more!

"All parents should have this book by the time their kids are 3 years old, if not sooner." -**Johnathan Williams**, Co-Founder and Co-Director, *The Accelerated School, Los Angeles, The Time Magazine Elementary School of the Year 2001*

"These tools eased our worries and helped us choose just the right school for our child and family."

-**Gray Dunaway**, *Mortgage Broker and Mother of Two*

"I love this book!...Picky Parent Guide will enable parents to make the best decisions possible for their children."

-**Gaynor McCown**, *Executive Director, The Teaching Commission*

No parent
should go it alone.
Take the experts
with you!

Nationally
recognized school
choice experts
Bryan C. Hassel, Ph.D. and **Emily Ayscue Hassel**
have advised
leaders from the
school house to
the White House.
Parents of two,
here they help
you get what your
child deserves
from school.

www.PickyParent.com

PUBLIC IMPACT



ISBN 0-9744627-7-2
5 1995 >



Price \$19.95