



Andrew Almazán, known as the “Mexican genius,” working with children at the Centro de Atención al Talento (Cedat).

Mexico's youngest psychologist HELPS GIFTED KIDS

Andrew Almazán is working to boost the potential of young geniuses

BY JULIEN SCOTT
The News

Most four year olds don't ask their parents for a cow's heart on which to operate, but Andrew Almazán Anaya, “Mexico's boy genius,” according to a Discovery Channel biopic, was clearly never an average child.

The son of a physician and a

philosopher, his parents recognized early on that he had special abilities and decided to terminate his formal schooling when he was just nine. After three years of home schooling through a distance learning academy for children based in the United States, Almazán enrolled in a Mexico City high school that allowed him to complete the required coursework at his own pace.

He completed the 49 assignments

required by the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP) to receive a high school diploma in two-and-a-half months, and went on to become Mexico's youngest university student at 12 years old.

Now, at the wise old age of 16, Almazán is a licensed psychologist – the nation's youngest – and technical director of the Centro de Atención al Talento (Cedat), a center for gifted children in Mexico City's Colonia Del

Valle, which offers academic, psychological and cognitive support to kids whose needs are not being addressed in traditional schools.

As if that were not enough at an age when most kids are just beginning the college application process, he is also in his last year of medical school, after which he plans to specialize in neuropsychology.

It may seem like a lot of pressure for a teenager, but Almazán not only

loves his work, he's on a mission: to help gifted children receive the care and proper intellectual stimulation they need to maximize their potential and avoid falling into the traps that so many of these youngsters face.

Almazán himself was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) at a young age, a common occurrence among kids with advanced academic potential. What's even more troubling is the vast number of children with special abilities whose gifts simply go undetected, a problem Andrew is working to solve both through his work at the center and his medical and psychological research.

An average of three percent of the population is considered “gifted,” or having an Intelligence Quotient above 130 (although a battery of other tests have been introduced in recent years to deemphasize the oft-maligned IQ test). However, only five percent of those are identified as having heightened intellectual capabilities.

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