

[PDF] Late-talking Children

Thomas Sowell - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: Late-talking Children

Author: Thomas Sowell

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Description:

From As father of a child who was late in talking but precocious in other skills, Sowell had long been interested in such children. It was not, however, until the famous policy analyst wrote about his son (now an adult) in his syndicated column that he became acquainted with many other late-talkers' parents. With them, he created an information exchange; eventually, good social scientist that he is, he sent them a questionnaire to formally collect facts about late-talking, bright children for the purposes of ascertaining common characteristics and possibly honing diagnosis of what for many families is a disquieting set of circumstances, not least because public school authorities are overly prone to label such children *autistic*. Essentially, this book reports the questionnaire's gleanings and makes some tentative conclusions. But in the stories of particular children, including little John Sowell, that precede the reporting, it is engrossing, inspiring, and lovely to read. *Ray Olson*

From Kirkus Reviews A father's first-person account of his young son's difficulties in learning to talk, his surprising discoveries about other late talkers, and some intriguing speculation about the

causes of this problem. Although clearly a bright boy who understood when spoken to and who displayed unusual analytical abilities (as a toddler, he managed to outwit a child-proof lock), Sowell's son John did not speak until he was almost four years old. When Sowell, a Hoover Institute senior fellow (Migrations and Culture, 1996, etc.), wrote about his son in his syndicated newspaper column, dozens of parents of late-talking children wrote to him. A support group of 55 families representing 57 children eventually formed. Sowell follows the story of his son John--now a successful computer scientist-- with numerous anecdotal accounts from these families' letters. Seeing a pattern in their stories, Sowell sent out questionnaires in 1994 and 1996, and the results of the longer 1996 survey are summarized here. He discovered that most of the late talkers were boys, with especially good memories and puzzle-solving skills, that most were slow in their social development and late in toilet training, and that many had close relatives who played musical instruments or were in analytical professions. Sowell, who is more anecdotal than scientific in his approach, is quick to acknowledge that his is a biased sample of late talkers, but he asserts that both professionals and parents should be aware of this pattern of mental abilities and family backgrounds. It may be, he speculates, that some bright children are late in talking precisely because the demands of their analytical abilities, localized in the left half of the brain, are being met at the expense of the speech function. Children like his son, he warns, are frequently misdiagnosed as retarded or autistic and thus risk being placed in special- education classes, from which release may be difficult. Hardly definitive, but should ease the minds of worried parents. -- *Copyright ©1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

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