

SciTech

Relatively brilliant!

12-year-old autistic boy with higher IQ than Einstein has developed his own theory of relativity

Tuesday, March 29, 2011 at 12:48:17 AM

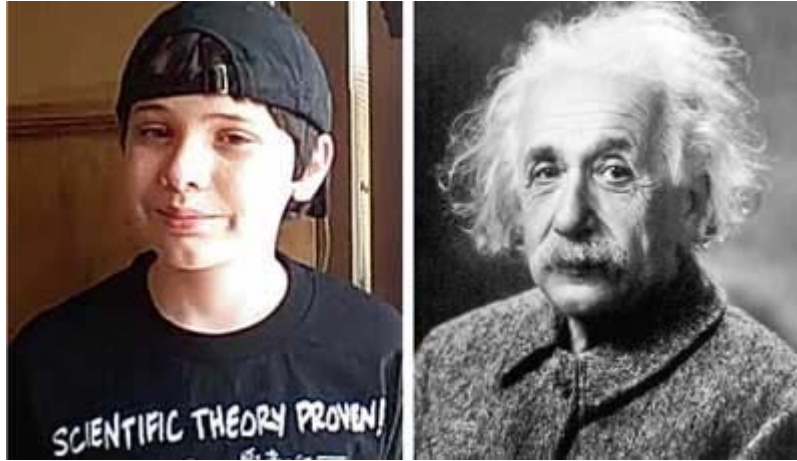
London: A 12-year-old child prodigy has astounded academicians after he was seen to be experimenting with some of the most advanced mathematical concepts.

Jacob Barnett has an IQ of 170, which is higher than Albert Einstein. He is now so far advanced in his Indiana university studies that professors are lining him up for a PHD research role.

The boy wonder taught himself calculus, algebra, geometry and trigonometry in a week and now tutors college classmates. Now Jake has embarked on his most ambitious project yet — his own ‘expanded version of Einstein’s theory of relativity’.

His mother, not sure if her child was talking nonsense or genius, sent a video of his theory to the renowned Institute for Advanced Study near Princeton University. According to the Indiana Star, Institute astrophysics professor Scott Tremaine — himself a world renowned expert — confirmed the authenticity of Jake’s theory.

In an email to the family, Tremaine wrote: “I’m impressed by his interest in physics and the amount that he has learned so far. The theory that he’s working on involves several of the toughest problems in astrophysics and theoretical physics.



Jacob Barnett (left) is said to have an IQ of 170, higher than Albert Einstein (right)

Anyone who solves these will be in line for a Nobel Prize.” But for his mother Kristine Barnett, 36, and the rest of the family, maths remains a tricky subject. Speaking to the Daily Mail, Mrs Barnett said: “I flunked math. I know this did not come from me.”

Jake added: “Whenever I try talking about math with anyone in my family they just stare blankly.”

He was diagnosed with Aspergers syndrome, a mild form of autism, from an early age.

His parents were worried when he didn’t talk until the age of two, suspecting he was educationally abnormal. It was only as he began to grow up that they realised just how special his gift was. He would fill up note pads of paper with drawings of complex geometrical shapes and calculations, before picking up felt tip pens and writing equations on windows.

By three he was solving 5,000-piece puzzles and he studied a state road map, reciting every highway and license plate prefix from memory. By eight he had left high school and was attending Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis advanced astrophysics classes.

His classroom presence is quite unnerving for many 18-plus year old students at his IPIU lectures. Speaking to the Indy Star, Wanda Anderson, a biochemistry major said: “When I first walked in and saw him, I thought, ‘Oh my God, I’m going to school with Doogie Howser.’”

She added: “A lot of people come to him for help when they don't understand a physics problem. People come up to him all the time and say, ‘Hey Jake, can you help me’.

A lot of people think a genius is hard to talk to, but Jake explains things that would still be over their head.” And his Professor John Ross said his performance in lectures had been ‘outstanding’. “When he asks a question, he is always two steps ahead of the lecture.

Everyone in the class gets quiet. Poor kid. . . He sits right in the front row, and they all just look at him. He will come to see me during office hours and ask even more detailed questions. And you can tell he’s been thinking these things through. Kids his age would normally have problems adding fractions, and he is helping out some of his fellow students.”

According to his parents Jake has trouble sleeping at night as he constantly sees numbers in his head. But far from complaining, Jake has turned the sleepless nights to his advantage — debunking the big bang theory. The next step, according to professor Ross, is for Jake to leave class altogether and take up a paid research role.

Barnett will be formulating his very own ‘expanded version of Einstein’s Theory of Relativity’, the celebrated scientist’s hypothesis regarding gravitational phenomena. According to a senior astrophysics professor who has studied his preliminary efforts, “Anyone who solves this will be in line for a Nobel prize.”

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