



Comfort Play & Teach



Supporting Temperament

Temperament is a piece of everyone's personality. It's about how you respond to others and the world around you, and temperament influences how others respond to you. Some children have a temperament that is easy going, while other kids may take time to warm up to others, and some can be difficult. Whichever temperament your child has, it is important to understand how you need to respond to her in order for her to feel safe, loved and help her learn. Your own temperament and how good a "fit" it is with your child will influence your daily interactions. You may need to adjust how you respond to your child given your temperament, and hers. Here are some strategies to help support your child's temperament.

Your Baby/Toddler (Birth to 36 months):

- **Look for visual cues:** Reading your child's cues is a wonderful way to understand your child's temperament. Look for signs, like when your child rubs his eyes, which is a sign that he is tired, or when he is crying, which may mean that he wants to be comforted. Some children may be fine with many activities in a morning while others may find it overwhelming – observe your child so you can tailor the day to respond to his temperament.
- **Observe expected routines:** Being able to predict or anticipate your child's reactions to the things around her will help you respond in a way that reflects her temperament. If you know that your child likes to stick to a feeding schedule and is easily upset when the schedule changes, prepare her meal ahead of time so that her needs are met.
- **Let your child know when change is happening, and why:** Sometimes it's impossible to avoid changes to routines, but you can smooth the transition if you let your child know what changes are being made and why in advance. Always communicate to your child what you are doing, and bring along a toy or item that is familiar and comforting to help your child cope with these changes.

Comfort

Let your baby know of any changes to her routine in advance and let her use a toy or comfort item to help her through the transition.

Play

Bring your child to a park to play with other children to help him learn to adjust to playing with children with all sorts of temperaments.

Teach

Your baby thrives with routine! Tailor your day to fit her needs, this will help keep her content and give her skills for managing her time and her emotions.



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Your Preschooler (36 months to 48 months):

- **Embrace your child's temperament:** Your child can't choose or change her temperament, and there is no such thing as a better or worse temperament; they are all just different. Embrace your child's style, as it is a part of what makes her the very special person that she is. Find and nurture your child's strengths, and use these strengths (for example, if your child loves to sing) to help with more challenging parts of the day to help your child gain tools that will help her learn how to adapt.
- **Support your child's feelings, offer coping tools:** Different children have different reactions, and the intensity of these reactions is different as well. Some children may not respond to certain experiences while others can get easily excited or angry. Whatever your child's reaction is, support his feelings, and give him the tools to cope with his reactions.
- **Encourage socialization at your child's pace:** We know the importance of socializing, but some children need time to warm up to others. Give your child the time she needs to enter social groups or situations. Keep her friend group as consistent as possible, and give her space when in a social environment; once she feels comfortable, she will engage with others and will learn to be confident in how she wants to interact with others.

Comfort

Embrace your child's temperament. Your child is receptive to your feelings towards him, recognize his strengths and he will learn to use them to adapt in difficult situations.

Play

When your child is playing with others, encourage her to take time to warm up at her own pace. Help her feel comfortable and she will socialize with ease.

Teach

Your child may become angry or excited in response to certain experiences. Use these times as opportunities to teach him coping skills. He will soon learn to calm himself with the strategies you give him.