

Why does my child react this way?

TEMPERAMENT:

Understanding temperament allows you to relate to your child in a new way.

Sometimes when your child's temperament doesn't match your own - it spells trouble. Learning to work with your child's temperament makes life easier for everyone.

• **Take a step back from your child's behavior** - Think about your own temperamental traits in comparison to your child's. Are they similar or are they very different? If you enjoy going to parties and meeting new people, you may find it difficult being the parent of a child who clings to your leg every time she meets a new person.

Understanding your child's unique way of reacting to the world helps you see her as the special person she is.

• **The Very Active Child** - This child needs a lot of time for running, jumping and moving. Make sure he gets outside each day to play. Put on a record, move back the furniture and let him dance. Exercise together.

• **The Slow To Try New Things Child** - Some children just need extra time before they will try something new. This may be a new food, a new child care situation, a new shirt, or a new skill. Let your child know it is OK that they don't want to try something new right away. Try to anticipate when something new may happen to your child and ease her into it. Visit a new friend's house with her a few times before leaving her alone. When you do leave her, do it for short periods of time at first.

• **The Child Bothered By Noises, Smells and Textures** - This is the child who falls apart in the crowded store or pulls at his clothes complaining of the scratchiness. When your child gets cranky or shows signs of "overload", recognize it's time to take a break or go home. Consider cutting tags out of his clothes and getting clothes in fabrics that are comfortable for him.

• **The Child Who Always Finds Something Wrong With Everything** - For this child it is important that you not take her complaints personally. Even though she said it was cold out, it doesn't mean she did not enjoy the winter walk you took together.

• **The Child Who Reacts Intensely** - This child's shouts of glee or cries of pain are heard loud and clear. Remind this child that little problems need little reactions and only big problems need the big reactions. Using humor is a great way to change a mood. If this is your child, try to remain calm. You don't need to worry about other people's response to your child's intensity. Your child's intensity is not a result of your parenting, it is simply a part of your wonderful child.

