Understanding Your Child’s Temperament

Characteristics present at birth make up what we often define as temperament. The descriptors cover a wide range of behaviors, from activity level and adaptability to mood and sensitivity. Some refer to it as “personal style.” Your child may be very different from the child next door or even from his brother or sister. Some kids are easy, adaptable, calm, and cheerful; others are fussy, intense, fearful, and slow to warm up to new people and situations. Of course, we’re all a mixture of many traits, and no one exhibits a certain behavior all of the time.

In Becoming the Parent You Want to Be, authors Laura Davis and Janis Keyser point out, “One thing that makes a child’s temperament easier or harder to deal with is the ‘match’ of the child with the rest of the family.” Your child may be emotionally intense, while you may be easygoing or somewhere in-between. The characteristics on both sides influence how you respond to each other. “Understanding that children have diverse temperaments and strengths can also help us put differences between children in perspective,” the authors believe. “Temperament gives us clues as to why children behave differently even though they’re the same age or are members of the same family.”

The question is, how do parents go about supporting individual temperaments?

Observe Differences:
Parents gain valuable insight into their children by simply observing them. Your child may adapt easily when something changes—you’re going to Grandma’s instead of the library, no problem. Or you may have a child who has a meltdown if he gets a turkey sandwich when he was expecting egg salad. Some kids dive headfirst into new situations, while others are more cautious or even fearful. Knowing how your child may react helps tremendously in day-to-day decision making.

Modify the Environment:
Parents can’t change temperament, but they can make a difference when they choose environments that bring out the best behaviors. For example, a fussy baby may scream at the top of her lungs in response to a crowded mall. Parents who understand this about their child will choose quieter settings and even go so far as to change settings if the environment they are in deteriorates. Some preschoolers thrive on activity, ready at a moment’s notice to move on to something new. Others are less energetic, preferring to take their time and transition slowly. Some kids can only fall asleep in their own beds; others can sleep in the car or even outside at the park.

Review Your Parenting Style:
There are many approaches to parenting, and the approach you take can make the difference in the way your child behaves. Understanding temperament provides a foundation for effective guidance. Most parents learn early that what works for one child will definitely not work for another. Some children respond to gentle reminders; others need clearly defined structure and a firm, no-nonsense approach. Parents who understand that temperament is just as unique to their child as eye color can relax and more easily bring out the best in their child!

Source: www.parentpagesnews.com
Foundations for learning math begin early. “One, Two, Buckle My Shoe” is a fun little poem taught to very young children. We might ask preschoolers how old they are and teach them to hold up three or four fingers to represent their age. Older kids will ask parents to listen while they count to 100. But kids are learning important math concepts when they sort their toys, recognize shapes, understand which is the biggest apple, and how to give each member of the family one plate and one glass at lunchtime. It’s about hands-on experiences related to daily life.

**Classifying is a basic math concept. It lays the foundation for understanding size, number, and shape relationships.**

Separate toys into categories: puzzles, blocks, cars and trucks, doll clothes, stuffed animals.

Find opportunities to identify pairs of things. “These two socks match.”

Make it a daily occurrence. Kids can help sort the laundry into whites and colors or match a puzzle piece to a puzzle shape.

**Patterning helps children understand the relationships between things.**

Create a pattern with miniature cars, blocks, pencils, and crayons. See if your child can create the same pattern.

Help kids see patterns around the house: on the carpet, brick walls, wallpaper, or tile floors or on a walk/nature: flower petals, spiderwebs, butterfly wings, or tree bark.

**Sequencing helps children place things in order.**

Plan your day by creating steps to follow. “We need to eat a good breakfast before we go to the zoo.”

Read a book and let your child tell the story back to you.

Follow a cookie recipe and mention each step.

**Counting demonstrates an actual knowledge of numbers.**

Give children a chance to practice. When they are learning to count, provide concrete things for them such as blocks and beads. Ask them to give you three blocks. What happens if you take away one?

Link counting to everyday activities. “How many eggs are left in the carton?” or “How many pizza slices do we need?”

Practice counting backward from 10. 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 … BLAST OFF!

Source: www.parentpages.com

---

**Who Has the Power?**

If your daily life seems to be one small power struggle after another, try turning some of the “must-dos” into a game. With a little creative thinking and a bit of planning, you can have a win-win on your hands instead of a battle.

Consider this scenario: You’re late and you have to get to the doctor, but your child is balking at getting into the car. Instead of “We have to go! Get in the car right now!” you might think of something fun. “I’ll throw you an imaginary rope. You catch it and I’ll pull you into the car.” Or “I’ll count to 10 very slowly. Do you think you can get in and buckled up before I say 10?” If you can think up a fun way to reach your goal, it will save you lots of time in the long run! And it will keep your mood upbeat!

Source: www.parentpages.com

---

**Choco Chip & Oatmeal Chewy Bars**

**Ingredients:**

1/2 c. peanut butter, 2 tbs. water, 2 c. quick cooking rolled oats, 1/4 tsp. course salt, 1/3 c. semi sweet mini choco chips, 1 ripe pureed banana, 1/4 c. honey, 1/3 c. raisins

**Directions:**

Bake at 325˚ for 25 minutes. Cool in freezer 15 minutes.

Line an 8-by-8-inch baking dish with parchment paper. Whisk together peanut butter, banana, honey, water and salt. Stir in oats, raisins and chocolate chips. Pour mixture into baking dish. Mash down firmly to form to pan and smooth top with back of a spoon. To keep fresh, store in airtight container in refrigerator for up to seven days.

**Calories:** 135; **Total fat:** 6g; **Saturated fat:** 2g; **Cholesterol:** 0mg; **Sodium:** 66mg; **Carbohydrates:** 20g; **Fiber:** 2g; **Sugars:** 10g; **Protein:** 3g; **Potassium:** 148mg; **Phosphorus:** 83mg

Source: www.eatright.org
Hello 2017! It may not be here yet, but the New Year is not far away! Here are some updates and highlights on behalf of your PTO.

The Giving Tree Project (teacher wish lists for learning and classroom resources were placed on ornaments scattered throughout 6 campus tree locations) has been a terrific success. Photos of the trees and gifts are included with this newsletter edition. Much work setting up trees, taking down trees, collecting, and delivering gifts to the Center was completed by the following parent/teacher volunteers: Katie Allen, Tanisha Burgess, Emmy Chamberlin, Andrea Gladin, Denae Jones and Mindy Markham. Special thanks to Haley Ahlers for designing the signs used to promote this project. Also, special thanks to Natasha Freeman and Robyn Alexander for ornament preparation and gift sorting. Children will enjoy trying out the new resources this month!

Our spring semester will feature an opportunity to purchase greeting cards, beautify our playgrounds, enjoy a family/staff BBQ, shower our teachers with appreciation, and other opportunities to connect.

Interested in sharing your ideas, or having a hand in the activities we plan? Consider attending the next PTO meeting, scheduled for Thursday, January 12, Noon, CCD Conference Room. My email inbox is always open at afeld@ksu.edu. I look forward to hearing from you!

Andrea Feldkamp
CCD PTO President