



Recognizing and **reflecting** on your own temperament and preferences is an important activity. Perhaps you enjoy always being on the go and thrive with constant stimulation — music, lights, and movement. Now, imagine what it might be like for a child that needs calm, soothing environments!

Celebrating Unique Temperaments

Recognizing each child’s unique temperament will allow you to adapt your approach to meet each child’s needs! Certain strategies might be particularly impactful with certain temperament types. Here are a few common personalities and some strategies to support children in your care:

Flexible and Easy: Initiate communication about emotions. Model appropriate language to help children be more aware and understand their emotions. Remind them that their feelings are recognized and important. Encourage them to verbalize their needs with others. This might be as simple as telling a friend: “When Erika takes your doll, you can tell her “I’m playing with it, but you can have a turn when I’m done.”

Feisty and Active: Be flexible and patient in your interactions. Provide opportunities for children to make choices. Encourage active play and allow for physical movements to expend high energy levels. Give plenty of advanced warning of schedule changes and consider giving them some type of leadership role, such as holding a timer or announcing the time to change. Acknowledge their feelings and point out when they are calm to help them recognize their emotions.

Fearful and Cautious: Set up the environment so things are in the same place. Stick to clear and predictable routines as much as possible. Provide additional preparation and support when changes in environment, situations, or people occur. Use pictures and language to remind children what will happen next. Encourage and support exploration and increasing independence. Support cautious children during a new experience by taking them to the activity, stepping back, remaining available and moving on.

Overall, refrain from judging children’s temperaments as a ‘good’ or ‘bad’ characteristics. Remember each child’s personality contributes to a group/team in your child care program.

