

## The Temperament Decoder: Customize Parenting to Suit Your Child's Personality

- **Step 1: Decode your child's temperament** → notice cues and example behaviors that help you identify if your child is sensitive, spirited, or adaptable.
- **Step 2: Adapt your Parenting Plan based on your child's temperament** → quick ways to work with your child's temperament.

**Sensitive Child:** Sensitive kids need calm, predictability, and soothing energy.

- **Cues:** Easily overwhelmed by noise, crowds, or transitions.
- **Example Behaviors:** Meltdowns at birthday parties, resistance to new clothes, takes criticism very personally.
- **Parenting Plan:** Keep routines predictable, give gentle warnings before transitions, and create calm-down spaces.

### Match Routines to Temperament:

- Keep predictable schedules (meals, bedtimes, transitions).
- Give **advance warnings** for changes (countdowns: "5 more minutes...").
- Build in calm breaks after stimulating activities.

### Adjust Parenting Energy:

- Stay **gentle, calm, and reassuring**.
- Use soft tone, slower pace, and eye contact.
- Show empathy first: *"I know that feels big to you."*

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**Spirited Child:** Spirited kids need structured choices and positive reinforcement.

- **Cues:** High energy, strong-willed, quick to react.
- **Example Behaviors:** They're in constant motion, crave independence, love being the center of attention, use strong verbal and emotional communication, and can go from joyful to furious in seconds.
- **Parenting Plan:** Offer clear choices and firm boundaries, channel energy into positive outlets, and provide praise for their efforts, not just the results of their efforts to reinforce self-worth.

### Match Routines to Temperament:

- Build **choices into routines** ("Do you want to brush teeth before or after pajamas?").
- Keep transitions **short and structured**.
- Allow **physical outlets** (movement breaks before school or homework).

### Adjust Parenting Energy:

- Stay **firm, confident, and consistent**.
  - Match their intensity with **clarity, not volume** (steady tone instead of yelling).
  - Use humor and creativity to redirect energy.
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**Adaptable Child** - Adaptable kids need balance, encouragement, and not to be overlooked.

- **Cues:** Generally easygoing, flexible with changes, quick to bounce back.
- **Example Behaviors:** Goes with the flow, gets along with peers easily, recovers from setbacks without much drama.
- **Parenting Plan:** Give them attention and recognition even if they're not demanding it. They can be overlooked because they're so easygoing.

### Match Routines to Temperament:

- Flexible routines work well, but they'll still appreciate some structure.
- Encourage them to **express preferences** so their voice isn't lost.
- Support them in clearly communicating and advocating for their point of view when in conflict. Help them change the habit of automatically trying to keep the peace by suppressing their opinions and just agreeing with the other person.

### Adjust Parenting Energy:

- Stay **encouraging and attentive** — they may not demand attention, but still need it.
- Offer praise and recognition for cooperation.
- Keep energy warm and engaging so they feel seen.

## Additional Temperament Categories and Tips

### Routines

**The Planner** - Thrives on predictability and checklists.

Strategy: Give charts or step-by-step guides for daily routines.

**The Explorer** - Needs flexibility and choice.

Strategy: Offer two options whenever possible to boost cooperation and the child's sense of autonomy.

**The Visualizer** - Responds to pictures and symbols.

Strategy: Use "Choice Cards" and visual checklists instead of verbal reminders.

**The Mover** - Focuses better with short breaks.

Strategy: Add 2-minute wiggle breaks to routines.

### Discipline & Boundaries

**The Rule Keeper**- Respects clear boundaries.

Strategy: State rules clearly, and provide the reasoning for each.

**The Negotiator** – Desires a voice in setting rules and expectations.

Strategy: When possible, let them choose timing or conditions.

**The Storyteller** - Learns via metaphors.

Strategy: Explain rules with short stories/examples.

**The Visual Learner** – Best absorbs discipline and boundary concepts via visuals.

Strategy: Use sand timers or visual aids for limits. Find books that depict discipline and boundary concepts.

## Screen Time and Tech

**The Scheduler** - Relaxes with set times.

Strategy: Post visible screen schedule.

**The Challenger** – Enjoys the challenge of earning screen time.

Strategy: Use tools such as tokens or checkmarks to mark the child's progress.

**The Creative** – Enjoys using screens for imaginative pursuits.

Strategy: Support them in finding age-appropriate creative programs, such as an animation or drawing app.

**The Immersed** – Focuses on and absorbs screen content deeply.

Strategy: Gently transition them off screen time with 5-minute reminders that screen time is almost over.

Utilize calm and understanding if the child struggles with the transition.