

Tips for Handling Problematic Temperament Traits

After gathering information and rating your child's temperament, did you find any traits that fell at either end of the continuum? Although the whole scale represents a normal temperament range — high and low do not mean “dysfunctional” — some extreme traits can be problematic for kids at home, at school, and in the community. And remember that for kids with learning or behavior difficulties, certain traits can either help or hinder success.

Tips for Managing the Extremes

Here are some tips for helping your child modify the traits that might be problematic for her. If you have other ideas that have worked, please share them on our [Parent to Parent message board](#).

Activity Level

For the child with very **high** energy:

- Heed the signals that indicate it's time for your child to blow off steam and find a way to let her do so.
- Incorporate some active time during the day. Walk to school instead of driving, or stop at the park on the way to go grocery shopping.
- Avoid using confinement as a method of discipline.

For the child with very **low** energy:

- Allow enough time for tasks and activities.
- Use a timer to set a goal for when a chore should be finished.
- Reward your child for sticking with a project and completing it in a timely fashion.

Sensitivity

For the child who shows **high** sensitivity:

- Acknowledge your child's feelings and provide ways for her to make herself more comfortable.
- Layer clothes to allow for adjustments on days that are too warm or too cold.
- Avoid overstimulation, e.g., loud music, strobe lights, noisy groups of people.

For the child who shows **low** sensitivity:

- Help her notice external cues by pointing out sounds in the environment, odors, and changes in the colors of stoplights.
- Explain interpersonal cues, such as facial expressions, body language, personal space.

Regularity

For the child who demonstrates **high** predictability:

- Provide advance warning of changes in routine.

