

# Getting a Picture of Your Child's Temperament

From Mary Sheedy Kurcinak

## 1. Intensity

How strong are your child's emotional reactions? Does he laugh and cry loudly and energetically or softly and mildly?

1	2	3	4	5
<b>MILD REACTION</b>				<b>INTENSE REACTION</b>
"Squeaks" when cries				Never just cries- wails or explodes
It's almost a surprise when he gets upset				A living staircase of emotion – up one minute then down the next
Reactions are low-key, mild				Every reaction is deep and powerful
Smiles when happy				Shouts with glee
Usually works through a problem without getting frustrated				Easily frustrated

## 2. Persistence

If your child is involved in an activity and you tell her to stop, does she stop easily or fight to continue?

1	2	3	4	5
<b>EASILY STOPS</b> Can be redirected to participate in another activity quite easily  Will cry for a few minutes and then stop  Accepts no for an answer				<b>“LOCKS IN”</b>  Sticks to her guns and doesn't let go easily of an idea or activity  Locks in, can cry for hours  Never takes no for an answer

## 3. Sensitivity

How aware is your child of slight noises, emotions, and differences in temperature, taste and texture? Does he react easily to certain foods, tags in clothing, irritating noises, or your stress level?

1	2	3	4	5
<b>USUALLY NOT SENSITIVE</b> Sleeps through noisy routines  Isn't affected by scratchy textiles  Isn't bothered by funny smells  Eats anything				<b>VERY SENSITIVE</b> Has to have quiet to sleep  Has to have a sock seam lined up just so  Complains about lights, noise, and smells, esp. in crowds  A “selective” eater

#### 4. Perceptiveness

Does your child notice people, colors, noises, and objects around her? Does she frequently forget to do what you asked because something else has caught her attention?

1	2	3	4	5
<b>HARDLY EVER NOTICES</b>				<b>VERY PERCEPTIVE</b>
Stays on task				Notices things most people miss
Walks past the rainbow that is reflected in the new oil spill				Spends five minutes watching the light in the new oil spill
Can remember and complete multiple directions easily				Forgets multiple directions

#### 5. Adaptability

How quickly does your child adapt to changes in his schedule or routine? How does he cope with surprises?

1	2	3	4	5
<b>ADAPTS QUICKLY</b>				<b>ADAPTS SLOWLY</b>
Easily stops one activity and starts another				Cries or fusses when one activity ends and another begins
Is flexible with changes in routine				Becomes upset with changes in routine
Is not upset by surprises				May be very upset by surprises

### 6. Regularity

Is your child quite regular about eating times, sleeping times, amount of sleep needed, and other bodily functions?

1	2	3	4	5
<b>REGULAR</b> Falls asleep at the same time almost every day  Is hungry at regular intervals  Eliminates on a regular schedule				<b>IRREGULAR</b> Never falls asleep at the same time  Is hungry at different times Each day or "forgets to eat"  Eliminates on an irregular schedule

### 7. Energy

Is your child always on the move and busy or quiet and still? Does he need to run, jump, and use his whole body in order to feel good?

1	2	3	4	5
<b>QUIET</b> Stays in one place while sleeping  Sits and plays quietly for extended periods of time				<b>VERY ACTIVE</b> When forced to stay in one place seems ready to burst  Always on the move, even when sitting, fidgets

### 8. First Reaction

What is your child's first reaction when she is asked to meet new people, try a new activity or idea, or go someplace new?

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1	2	3	4	5
<b>JUMPS RIGHT IN</b>				<b>REJECTS AT 1<sup>st</sup> OR WATCHES BEFORE JOINING IN</b>
Doesn't hesitate in new situations				Holds back before participating
Seems to learn by doing				Learns by watching
Open to new activities				Is distressed by new activities or things
Usually complies with a new request with little fuss				Immediately says no when asked to do something – esp. something new

### 9. Mood

How much of the time does your child feel happy and content compared with serious, analytical or solemn?

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1	2	3	4	5
<b>USUALLY POSITIVE</b>				<b>MORE SERIOUS &amp; ANALYTICAL</b>
Usually in a good mood				Usually serious
Positive				Sees the flaws, what needs to be fixed