

RAISING YOUR SPIRITED CHILD

Lesson #1 What Makes Kids Spirited?

Introduction

Introduction	<p>Introduce self and UW-Extension.</p> <p>Introduce the Raising Your Spirited Child book and workbook.</p> <p>Have participants introduce themselves and the ages of their children and one thing they want to learn from the workshop series.</p>
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A Different Point of View

<p>Activity: Ask participants to write their answers on notecards.</p> <p>Collect and shuffle cards. Read aloud and record on left side of flipchart.</p> <p>Ask...</p> <p>Change negative labels to positive ones using the participants' responses. Record on the right side of flipchart.</p> <p>Read aloud the positive descriptors. Ask . . .</p>	<p>Write a word or phrase that describes something your child does that makes you crazy.</p> <p>How does this list make you feel? (Possible answers: hopeless, angry, depressed, tired)</p> <p>Examples:</p> <table data-bbox="597 1234 1372 1453"> <tr> <td>mouthy – honest</td> <td>nosy - curious</td> </tr> <tr> <td>demanding – persistent</td> <td>stubborn - assertive</td> </tr> <tr> <td>bossy – future manager</td> <td>wild - energetic</td> </tr> <tr> <td>obstinate – not easily swayed</td> <td>anxious - cautious</td> </tr> <tr> <td>perfectionist – holds high standards</td> <td>picky - selective</td> </tr> <tr> <td>loud – enthusiastic</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>(see pg. 21 of Raising Your Spirited Child for additional examples)</p> <p>How do these words make you feel? (Possible answers: hopeful, energized, skeptical)</p>	mouthy – honest	nosy - curious	demanding – persistent	stubborn - assertive	bossy – future manager	wild - energetic	obstinate – not easily swayed	anxious - cautious	perfectionist – holds high standards	picky - selective	loud – enthusiastic	
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Discuss	<p>Why spirited?</p> <p>Webster defines spirited as: lively, creative, keen, eager, full of energy and courage, and having a strong assertive personality.</p> <p>Spirited feels good, sounds good and communicates the potential of these kids. It focuses on strengths rather than their weaknesses.</p>												

	Positive responses are not excuses for poor behavior. They simply help us develop a positive picture of our child that reminds us of their value and potential.
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What Makes Kids Spirited?

Define temperament.	Temperament is our first and most natural way of reacting to our environment; our preferred style.
Discuss	Research and theories regarding temperament: nature vs. nurture. Children are born with their own individual temperamental tendencies. You don't get to choose your child's temperament nor can you change it, but by adapting your parenting techniques you can help them understand their strengths and help them channel their behavior in an appropriate manner.
Activity	Sign your name with your non-writing hand.
Discuss	Spirited children are often forced to use their non-preferred style because parents and other adults try to control or change their temperament.
Discuss	Identifying your child's temperamental traits helps you to understand how and why he is reacting to his environment. When you understand the reasons behind his responses, you can work with them to teach new behaviors and to help your child understand and like himself.

Temperamental Traits

Define each of the nine temperamental traits.	<u>Intense</u> – they feel every emotion deeply and powerfully; easily excited, frustrated and emotional.
Ask participants to volunteer personal examples of dealing with each of the traits.	<u>Persistent</u> – they are committed to their goal; they “lock in” and are unwilling to give up easily.
Hand out <i>Temperamental Traits</i> rating scales packet (or refer them to pgs. 38-51 in the RYSC Workbook).	<u>Sensitive</u> – they are keenly aware of sights, sounds, tastes, smells, textures, and emotions. They feel what others do not.
Ask participants to rate their child and then themselves on each of the temperamental traits.	<u>Perceptive</u> – they are visually attuned to the world around them. They may not “hear” directions. <u>Slow to Adapt</u> – they hate surprises and find it challenging to shift from one thing to another; transitions or changes are stressful.

<p>Read the characteristics from pgs. 9-11 of RYSC as they complete the rating scale for each temperamental trait. (Optional)</p>	<p><u>Irregular</u> – unpredictable eating, sleeping and eliminating patterns.</p> <p><u>Energetic</u> – they are always on the move; climbing, running, pacing, fidgeting.</p> <p><u>Cautious first reaction</u> – quick withdrawal from anything new is typical.</p> <p><u>Serious disposition</u> – they are analytical and tend to see what needs to be fixed. They are reserved with their smiles.</p>
<p>Discuss</p> <p>Give Examples</p> <p>Ask participants for more examples.</p>	<p>The way we perceive our child’s temperament is often influenced by our own temperament. (Refer them to the rating scales they just completed.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular parent vs. irregular child – mealtimes are a struggle. ▪ Flexible parent vs. slow to adapt child – can’t understand why child needs so much time to make a decision or switch gears.
<p>Ask participants to...</p> <p>Discuss</p> <p>Have participants list...</p>	<p>Select the traits that you realize are the most challenging for you to handle.</p> <p>These are your “trigger traits.” These are the issues that are most likely to lead to power struggles, anger and blow-ups.</p> <p>The top two to three trigger traits for you and your child. This will help you to establish your priorities and focus your efforts in the upcoming weeks.</p>
<p>Discuss (optional)</p>	<p>Introverts vs. Extraverts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extroversion and introversion describe how we get our energy. ▪ Spirited kids need energy to manage their strong temperament. ▪ Identifying you child’s preference helps you to understand where she gets her energy to cope and enables you to teach her to reenergize before she becomes overwhelmed.
<p>Review</p>	<p>We’re all born with our own style of interacting with people and things around us, called our temperament. Understanding our own temperament and that of our child helps us recognize our strengths and enables us to communicate and work together more effectively.</p>