

RAISING GOOD KIDS

PROFESSIONAL COURSE 1 MODULE 1 HANDOUT

Dr Kaylene Henderson, Child Psychiatrist



Temperament

No two children, even those from the same family, are exactly alike. Each child is born with his or her own unique temperament.

According to Drs Alexander Thomas and Stella Chess, personality is divided into two components - **temperament** and **character**.

Temperament is genetically determined and present at birth.
Character develops later and is influenced by how a child is raised.

According to Thomas and Chess, the nine temperament traits are:

1. Activity
2. Regularity
3. Initial Reaction
4. Adaptability
5. Intensity
6. Mood
7. Distractibility
8. Persistence and Attention Span
9. Sensory Threshold

Which of these nine traits can you identify in the children for whom you care?

Which of these nine traits can you identify in yourself?

Do you think that the degree of similarity or difference between your temperament and those of the children in your care influences how well you relate to them?

