

Physical and Brain Development: Temperament

Teaching Tips:

- Many parents have heard that each child has his or her own temperament, but few parents understand what that really means in parenting.
- To introduce this topic, explain the concept of temperament and give examples of various types of temperament
- Many educators find it helpful to begin with an overview of physical and brain development and then transition into the importance and types of temperament.
- In one-on-one interactions, it can be helpful to focus on specific temperament characteristics while in larger groups, it can be more useful to focus on the general characteristics of each temperament style.

Learning Objectives for Parents and Caregivers

After learning about temperament, parents and caregivers will be able to:

- 1) Understand the concept of temperament and the role it plays in a young child's social and emotional development
- 2) Describe how a child's temperament can have an impact on and be impacted by, the family environment
- 3) Recognize their child's temperament characteristics
- 4) Describe the difference between their individual temperament characteristics and their child's temperament characteristics.

Key Messages for Parents and Caregivers

- 1) Temperament is based on individual biology, and strongly influences the way that a person experiences and responds to their environment.
- 2) Temperament is measured by looking at a continuum of characteristics.
- 3) A child's temperament affects both the way a parent feels about him or herself as well as the way he or she interacts with their child.
- 4) Temperament traits are best managed by accepting them rather than confronting them or attempting to change them.
- 5) Supportive adults can help children cope and thrive, by accepting the child's unique temperament.

