

# WORKING WITH *temperament* PARENTS

1

## PARENTS ARE WIPED

These children require more from their parents around the clock. If their child protests loudly and frequently, parents are also a bit shell-shocked from all the crying. They may not be able to hang with hours of crying. Know that this is just true. They may also have a process that's complicated and unsustainable. Know that this is an artifact of how hard they've tried to make things better. **Validate, validate, validate.**

4

## PARENTS MAY HAVE LOW SELF-CONFIDENCE

Parenting a sensitive/intense kiddo is not *at all* like you expect or like the experience of your friends who are parents. It is likely WAY more difficult. Parents likely feel like it's their fault and doubt their ability to make the right choices. **Help them see what they're doing right and give them insight into the role of temperament.** Let them know it's not their fault.

2

## THEY MAY ACTUALLY HAVE TRIED EVERYTHING

You will need to balance the amount of chaos that sleep coaching requires with parents' level of fatigue and shell-shock. You may need to **ONLY** work on bedtime or bedtime and wakeups before they go to bed. Sometimes, a little improvement gives them a boost of confidence they haven't had before.

5

## THERE ARE NO GUARANTEES

There are many variables that may impact sleep with these little livewires. They are more prone to sensory processing sensitivities, reflux, and often just lags in development. Sometimes sleep training/coaching doesn't work within a usual timeline. **It's often impossible to know how it will go.**

3

## HELP PARENTS PUSH THROUGH

Parents may not know how to just stick with a process. They can come into coaching feeling pretty hopeless. Help them push through the first night or two so they can see some improvement.

6

## KEEP PARENTS' BANDWIDTH IN MIND

You will need to balance the amount of work/protest that sleep coaching requires with parents' level of fatigue and shell-shock. You may need to **ONLY** work on bedtime or bedtime and wakeups before they go to bed. Parents may not have the personal resources to do a full coaching plan.

# WORKING WITH *temperament* CHILDREN

1

## DON'T WAIT FOR SLEEPY SIGNALS

If you wait for these non-stop children to be sleepy, you will be waiting a long time. While some children start to look droopy when they're running out of steam, these children rev up. They can become MORE wired and then impossible to put down. Watch the clock and try to get ahead of their Olympic size second wind.

2

## ALMOST RIGID CONSISTENCY

Persistence and perceptiveness combine to test the strength of limits. It's like they mentally poke at our rules—"What about this? What about now?" Any wiggle room opens up a window for negotiation or protest. "Just this once" is not in their vocabulary. Consistent and repetitive patterns are key. Once they can detect the pattern or routine, they will settle in.

3

## KNOW WHAT WORKS AT BEDTIME

Baths, books, etc. may actually be stimulating for alert/sensitive kids. Ask parents whether a bath calms them down. Do books cause them to perk up? Movement/yoga, audio books/visualizations, squeeze massages are good alternatives. Pat OR shush. Hum OR make eye contact.

## SOMETIMES BABY STEPS ARE ACTUALLY HUGE

While it may seem like taking baby steps toward a goal will work, these little ones react to ANY change as if it's the end of the world. Sometimes, it's better to make one BIG change, instead of five changes that end up being big.

4

## THE ROAD MAY NOT BE STRAIGHT

Temperament means the road to better sleep may be two steps forward....you know the rest. The first night may be horrible (It will likely be horrible), but some improvement should happen in the first few nights. After that, things may seem bumpy or may plateau. Just try to keep going. These little guys just seem to take longer for their sleep to fall into a pattern.

5



LITTLE LIVEWIRES

*sleep coaching and support*

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