



Indiana Association for Infant & Toddler Mental Health

It's easy for infants and young children with difficult or spirited temperament styles to command our attention with their boisterous behavior. But what about the slow to warm up or cautious baby? Slow to warm up children are characterized by a tendency to hold back when presented with new events, places, and people. In First Steps, cautious children may need help to become comfortable with early intervention providers and the novel activities they may share. Sensitive and supportive adults will help even the most cautious of babies do well!

First Steps mental health professionals can help!



*Slow to warm or
cautious babies
need our attention
too.*

How to help the cautious infant and toddler:

- Provide encouragement and opportunity to explore, but don't force it.
- Never send the slow to warm up child into a situation on her own: Be available, but not intrusive.
- Use gradual transitions with low-key adult support for new experiences.
- Watch for overstimulation; avoid loud voices and sudden actions.
- Show pictures of the providers to the child in between visits to her enhance comfort level. Talk about what they will do with the provider to create positive expectations.
- Schedule more frequent visits to build familiarity.

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Contact a First Steps mental health provider when children seem excessively withdrawn, have many fears, or have trouble separating from parents.