

Living Well

In Florida

Help Available

Newcomers and visitors to Florida often come unprepared for the challenges of living in a tropical and sub-tropical climate with high population density and many demands on natural resources.

The Florida Extension Service and its team of professional educators can help to provide practical, research-based information to help visitors and newcomers quickly learn about and better adapt to their new environment. To make your stay safer and more enjoyable, visit or call the Extension Service in your area.

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Your Child's Temperament

From birth, children have a natural style of interacting with or reacting to people, places and things that child development professionals and psychologists refer to as temperament traits. These traits are influenced by our environment, but the basic underlying temperament has been shown to persist into our golden years.

In the early 1900's it was believed that children were born as "blank slates", just waiting for parents to impress upon them the manner in which they were to behave. Since the late 1950's, many scientific studies of temperament have continued to show that children's health and development are influenced by temperament. We all know children who are much more challenging to deal with than other children from birth. The understanding that many behavior tendencies are inborn – and not the result of bad parenting- is a very important insight parents can gain from learning how their children react to their environments.

Clinicians use a series of interview, observations, and parental questionnaires to measure nine temperament traits using a scale indicating mild to intense response or reactions in the following areas: Activity, Rhythmicity, Approach/Withdrawal, Adaptability, Intensity, Mood, Persistence/

Attention Span, Distractibility and Sensory Threshold. Once the scales are scored the results are combined to form three basic types of temperaments in kids.

Easy or flexible – usually calm, happy, regular in sleeping and eating habits, adaptable and not easily upset

Difficult, active, or feisty – often fussy, irregular in feeding and sleeping habits, fearful of new people and situations, easily upset by noise and commotion, high strung and intense in their reactions.

Slow to warm up or cautious – relatively inactive and fussy, tend to withdraw or to react negatively to new situations, but their reactions gradually become more positive with continuous exposure to the person or environment.

Parents need to get a clear picture of their own and their child's temperament. Respect their child's uniqueness without comparing them to others. Communicate. Explain decisions and motives. Listen to your child's view point and encourage teamwork on coming up with solutions to problems. Set limits to help your child develop self-control. Respect opinions but remain firm on important limits for behavior. Be a good role model!

Welcome to Florida

Brought to you by your University of Florida Extension Service Family and Consumer Sciences Team



"Solutions for Your Life"



New Tax Refund Available in 2007

Taxpayers are eligible for a new refund in 2007. The federal government is refunding excise taxes collected for long distance phone service over the past three years. The 2006 Form 1040 (series) will include a line for requesting the overpayment amount. Persons who usually don't file a federal income tax return may file Form 1040EZ-T to obtain the refund.

Taxpayers have two ways to file for this refund. First, those who have their phone bills as documentation may file for the exact amount paid in excise tax. Interest will be paid on these refunds. The second way involves a simplified, standard

method that will make filing for this refund easier. No documentation will be required to be submitted or kept to support this request. The standard refund amounts, based on the number of claimed exemptions, are:

- One exemption, \$30.
- Two exemptions, \$40.
- Three exemptions, \$50.
- Four exemptions or more, \$60.

For more information, contact the Internal Revenue Service at 1-800-829-1040.

Gift Card Fees

Gift cards can be convenient to give and welcome to receive. However, all gift cards are not created equal. Many of these cards carry fees and fine print that can cost you more or greatly reduce the gift, especially over time. Check to see if any of the following fees are involved:

- Issue or purchase fee that the giver must pay, which can increase the purchase cost
- Monthly fees deducted from the card
- Transaction fees
- Inactivity fees
- Expiration date. Most cards close out on the expiration date, after which one may lose any money left on the card. Some cards allow for a reactivation of the card with a fee. Rules applying to lost or stolen cards. Some replace a lost or stolen card for free and some charge a fee.

When giving or receiving gift cards, carefully read all the information about the card and its use, check for the expiration date and treat your card like cash. Careful selection of gift cards will add to the value and enjoyment of the gift.

Simply Florida

Searching for the perfect gift for the food lover in your family? Then *Simply Florida: A Taste of Flavors from the Sunshine State* is for you!

Simply Florida is a cookbook developed by Family & Consumer Sciences agents across the state of Florida that includes recipes that use Florida fresh commodities. Each recipe has been tested for taste and accuracy and includes the nutritional analysis for each dish.

Proceeds from the sale of the cookbook will benefit Family & Consumer Sciences programs throughout the state as well as provide opportunities for professional development for your local agents.

The cookbooks are on sale now! For more information, please contact your local Extension office or visit the *Simply Florida* website at <http://www.simplyflorida.org>.

Purchase your copy today!

There's an Extension Office Near You!

Charlotte County—25550 Harbor View Rd, Unit 3, Port Charlotte, FL (941) 764-4340 <http://www.ifas.ufl.edu/charlotte/>

Collier County—14700 Immokalee Rd., Naples, FL (239) 353-4244 <http://collier.ifas.ufl.edu>

Desoto County—2150 NE Roan Ave, Arcadia, FL (863) 993-4846 <http://desoto.ifas.ufl.edu/>

Hardee County—507 Civic Center Dr., Wauchula, FL (863) 773-2164

Hillsborough County—5339 S. CR 579, Seffner, FL (813) 744-5519 http://hillsboroughcounty.org/coop_ext/

Lee County—3406 Palm Beach Blvd, Ft. Myers, FL (239) 461-7500 <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/>

Manatee County—1303 17th St. West, Palmetto, FL (941) 722-4524 <http://manatee.ifas.ufl.edu/>

Pasco County—36702 SR 52, Dade City, FL (352) 521-4288 <http://pasco.ifas.ufl.edu/>

Pinellas County—12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo, FL (727) 582-2100 <http://www.pinellascounty.org/extension>

Polk County—1702 Hwy 17-98 S, Bartow, FL (863) 519-8677 <http://polk.ifas.ufl.edu/>

Sarasota County—6700 Clark Road Twin Lakes Park, Sarasota, FL (941) 861-5000 <http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu>

Extension programs are open to all persons without regard to race, color, age, disability, religion, or national origin.