

BUILD-UP GUIDE:

Words to Fill a Sanguine's Needs

Sanguine children are wired to need approval, acceptance, attention, and affection.

If you have a Sanguine child in your family, in your classroom, or on your team, consider this your action cheat sheet—a list of things you can do to fill those needs and show them how much you value their innate wiring.

BUILD UP A SANGUINE BY...

Listening to and engaging with their stories.

- › Toddler: “That sounds like it must have been so silly!”
- › Tween: “When he said _____, what did you say?”
- › Teen: “That sounds so exciting! Tell me all about it.”

Making (and keeping) eye contact when they're talking.

- › Toddler: “Come sit on my lap and tell me about your day.”
- › Tween: “Let me put this down so I can give you my full attention.”
- › Teen: “Why don't we FaceTime this afternoon so you can tell me how tryouts went?”

Being positive/matching their enthusiasm.

- › Toddler: “Yes! That's a great idea. Let's do it!”
- › Tween: “It sounds like you and your friends had an awesome time!”
- › Teen: “How exciting. That's an incredible opportunity!”

Promoting their creativity.

- › Toddler: “What special picture can we draw for Grandma today?”
- › Tween: “Let's cook something new for dinner. Any ideas?”
- › Teen: “I heard about this photography contest and immediately thought of you.”

Laughing with them.

- › Toddler: “You are the funniest kid I know!”
- › Tween: “When you laugh, it makes me laugh more!”
- › Teen: “I just love your laugh. It's contagious!”

Showing interest in their friends.

- › Toddler: “Who did you play with on the playground today?”
- › Tween: “Would you like to invite them for a sleepover this weekend?”
- › Teen: “What's new with ____? I remember you telling me...”

Approving of them.

- › Toddler: “You're so good at writing your letters.”
- › Tween: “You have the most beautiful singing voice.”
- › Teen: “You stayed true to yourself. I admire that.”

Taking them seriously when needed.

- › Toddler: “Oh, no! You sound angry. Can you tell me why?”
- › Tween: “I'm so sorry that happened. You have every right to feel down.”
- › Teen: “I can see this is a big deal to you. Tell me everything.”

Caution!

Sanguine children are wired to need approval, acceptance, attention, and affection.

Saying or doing things that deprive them of these needs—intentionally or accidentally—won't bring out their best. So, consider this your cheat sheet of words and actions to avoid if you have a Sanguine child in your family, in your classroom, or on your team.

YOU MAY TEAR DOWN A SANGUINE BY...

Shaming them.

- › Toddler: “Shhhhh! You're being too loud.”
- › Tween: “Please stop. People are staring at you.”
- › Teen: “You're too old to be acting like that.”

Keeping them from friends or fun.

- › Toddler: “We don't have time for that today. Put on your shoes and let's go.”
- › Tween: “I think you have enough going on without signing up for that too.”
- › Teen: “You'll have to tell him you can't go. I need you to watch your brother tomorrow.”

Not listening or giving them your full attention.

- › Toddler: “I'm busy right now. Go find something else to do.”
- › Tween: “Hold on. I just got a text message. Let me see who it's from.”
- › Teen: “Can you cut to the chase? I need to get back to my work.”

Requiring them to always be “on.”

- › Toddler: “Cheer up! It wasn't that big of a deal.”
- › Tween: “Show everyone that dance you were doing the other day.”
- › Teen: “What's wrong with you? Why are you being so serious?”

Burdening them with details.

- › Toddler: “Here's what we're going to do today before nap time.”
- › Tween: “Next weekend we have a lot going on. We have to...”
- › Teen: “Read every part of the directions.”

Being too serious.

- › Toddler: “I shouldn't have to sing a song just so you'll brush your teeth.”
- › Tween: “Does everything have to be a game?”
- › Teen: “Please focus so we can get this over with—not everything in life is fun.”

Dwelling on the bad or sad.

- › Toddler: “It was a pretty good day, except for...”
- › Tween: “I think you baked these cookies for too long. Next time, try...”
- › Teen: “Let's review the game film so you can see what went wrong.”

Demanding perfection.

- › Toddler: “This is looking kind of sloppy. Why don't you start over?”
- › Tween: “This room is not clean yet. I still see...”
- › Teen: “Are you sure this is the level of work you want to turn in?”

Gauging Innate Needs

Use this exercise to gauge how *full* or *empty* a child's innate needs are right now.

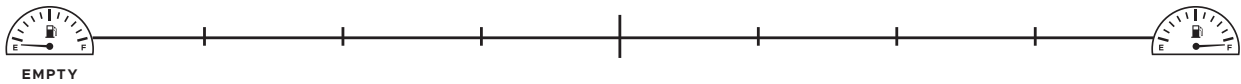
Directions

1. Find and mark the four scales for the child's likely temperament. *(You can ignore the gauges for the other three temperaments.)*
2. When you're finished, consider these questions:
 - a. Did the definitions/statements change the way you think about any of the child's needs? If so, how?
 - b. Did this exercise reveal any of the child's need(s) that you may have been overlooking? What is one way you could start filling that need?

SANGUINE YELLOW

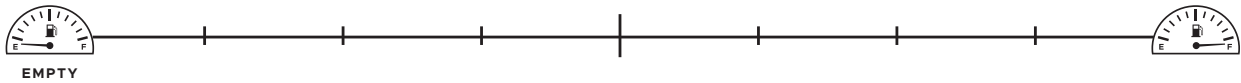
Need: Approval

They feel liked for who they are, flaws and all.



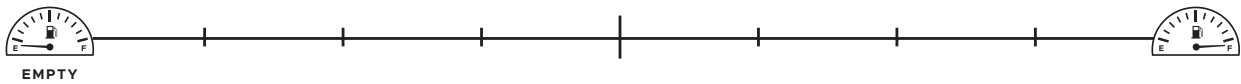
Need: Acceptance

They are often included or invited by others.



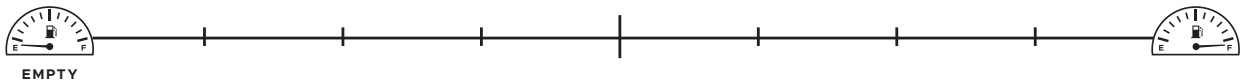
Need: Attention

Others give them focused attention and eye contact when they're talking.



Need: Affection

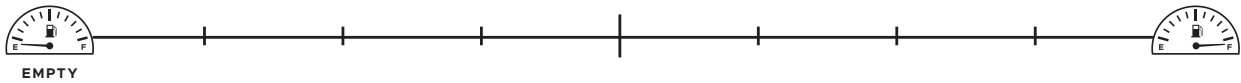
They feel seen and celebrated when they're nearby.



CHOLERIC RED

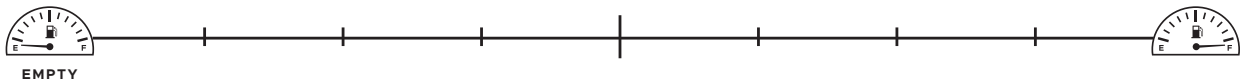
Need: Loyalty

They feel like the people closest to them have their back.



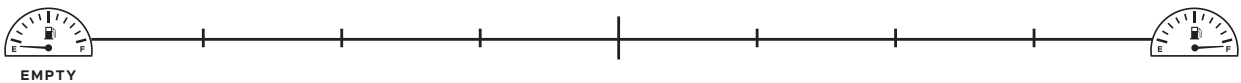
Need: Sense of Control

They are given the freedom to come up with plans, and others typically cooperate.



Need: Appreciation

They are celebrated for their unique contributions (at home, at school, and in friendships).



Need: Credit for Work

The effort they give to tasks is noticed and appreciated.

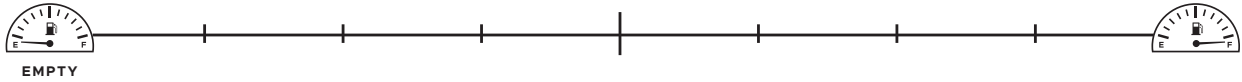


Gauging Innate Needs

MELANCHOLIC BLUE

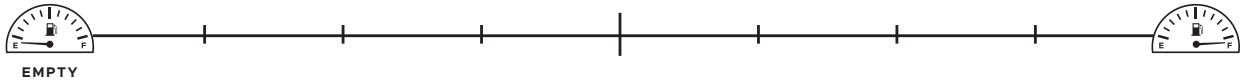
Need: Safety

They feel protected by and able to trust those closest to them.



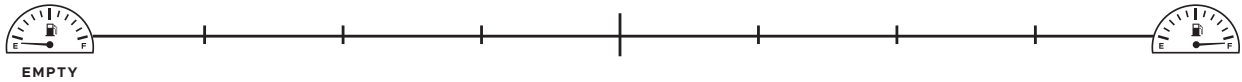
Need: Sensitivity

Others are considerate of their feelings.



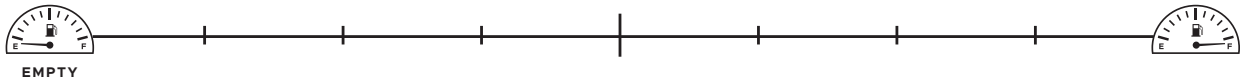
Need: Support

Others notice when they need help and offer it.



Need: Space and Silence

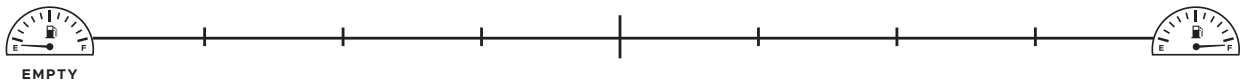
They have time each day that is uninterrupted by noise or people.



PHLEGMATIC GREEN

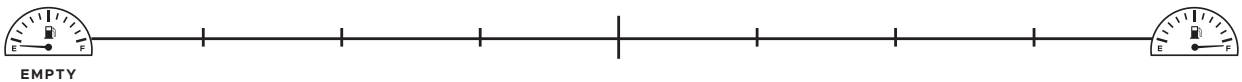
Need: Harmony

They are not engaged in conflict, and everyone around them is getting along.



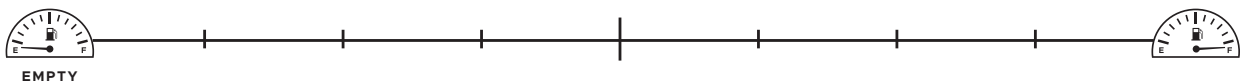
Need: Feeling of Worth

They are celebrated for their unique talents and traits.



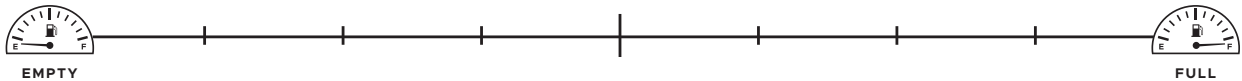
Need: : Lack of Stress

They have time each day to relax and not feel pressured by anyone else.



Need: Respect

Others ask for and value their thoughts and opinions.



SAY THIS, NOT THAT:

Words to Celebrate a Sanguine's Strengths

Words are powerful. The right ones at the right time will land like a confetti cannon over a Sanguine child. The trouble is that the opposite is true too. Certain words and phrases are guaranteed to dull their sparkle.

As a parent, teacher, coach, or other grown-up, every word you say to a child will build them up or tear them down. The choice is yours... after all, *every word you use is a word you choose.*

Let's look at what to say (and what not to say) to a Sanguine child.

SAY THIS

- 1 I love your **energy**! Practice wouldn't be the same without you.
- 2 What a smart question. Thanks for being **curious**.
- 3 That project is so **creative**. I'm impressed!
- 4 Your **spontaneity** makes you so much fun to be around.
- 5 You give the best hugs. I love how **affectionate** you are!
- 6 You're right! We can make it work. You always **see the bright side**.
- 7 I know he hurt your feelings last week. It's inspiring of you to **not hold a grudge**.
- 8 You tell it. Your **stories are always the best**.

- 9 Thanks for coming to lunch with me. You're so **easy to talk to**.
- 10 You are an absolute **joy to be around**.
- 11 You **look amazing** today. That outfit is awesome!
- 12 Want to come with me? It will be an **adventure**!
- 13 People just love being around you. You're **magnetic**.
- 14 I could use some of your **optimism**.
- 15 I saw you **include** everyone in the game at recess. That was really kind.
- 16 It can be hard to admit when you're sad. How brave of you to **show your true emotions**.
- 17 It's always better when we're **together**.
- 18 How **friendly** of you to talk to the cashier!
- 19 You can walk into a room of strangers and come out with a **new friend**. How do you do it?
- 20 Your **cheerfulness** is just what I needed today.

There is no magic in the sample words and phrases I've provided. Look closely and you may notice that they coincide directly with the list of Sanguine strengths. Building up a child with your words is as easy as affirming the strengths they are wired with.

So, if you ever get stuck coming up with the right thing to say, simply tell a child, "I believe that you are so **(insert strength)**."

NOT THAT

Here are the kinds of words to avoid when speaking to a Sanguine child:

1 *Can you stop distracting others and just focus for a minute?*

2 *Please don't interrupt me with questions right now.*

3 *Whoa! You've made a huge mess on the table.*

4 *I'm not in the mood for your antics today.*

5 *Can you please respect my personal space? I'm really not a hugger.*

6 *I think we should give up. This just isn't going well.*

7 *Not everyone needs to be your friend.*

8 *I think you're exaggerating the story a little bit.*

9 *Get to the point, please. I don't have all day.*

10 *You can be a lot to handle sometimes.*

11 *You look awful today. Is something wrong?*

12 *Let's just go eat at the usual place. It will be easier than somewhere new.*

13 *Now you're just showing off.*

14 *That's not how the world works. Trust me—someday you'll see.*

15 *He doesn't want to be around you right now. You hurt his feelings.*

16 *Everything is always so dramatic with you.*

17 *Would it kill you to be alone for a little while?*

18 *Shhhh. Please just stand next to me and be quiet.*

19 *Must you always be the center of attention?*

20 *You need to calm down.*

You don't have to say something mean to tear down a child with your words. Anything that undermines or devalues the strengths they are wired with is likely to have a negative emotional impact.

Be on guard for words that may be twisting their strengths or criticizing (rather than coaching them through) their weaknesses.

SANGUINE STRENGTHS

- 1 Great storyteller
- 2 Full of energy and enthusiasm
- 3 Joyful
- 4 Bright
- 5 Affectionate
- 6 Expressive and animated
- 7 Nonjudgmental, accepting of others
- 8 Sees the bright side
- 9 Lives in the moment, spontaneous
- 10 Likes adventure
- 11 Curious
- 12 Makes friends easily
- 13 Creative, imaginative
- 14 Encouraging
- 15 Shows emotions openly
- 16 Comfortable being the center of attention
- 17 Inclusive, inspires other to join
- 18 Thrives on compliments
- 19 Charming
- 20 Apologizes quickly and doesn't hold grudges

SANGUINE WEAKNESSES

- 1 Chatty
- 2 Rambunctious, wiggly
- 3 Can be overly innocent, naïve
- 4 Loud
- 5 Short attention span, easily distracted
- 6 Doesn't like doing things alone
- 7 Dramatic
- 8 Has big emotions, tantrums
- 9 Interrupts and answers for others
- 10 Overcommits
- 11 Easily excitable, impulsive
- 12 Has restless energy
- 13 Forgetful, scatterbrained
- 14 Makes excuses
- 15 Easily influenced
- 16 Decides by feelings
- 17 Disorganized, creates chaos
- 18 Can be a showoff
- 19 Seems phony, too happy to some
- 20 Exaggerates and elaborates



TIPS FOR MELANCHOLIC GROWN-UPS

With a **Sanguine** Child...

1. *Limit your words.* Details are important to you, but a Sanguine child will tune them (and you) out.
2. *Lean in to their optimism.* They can find the bright side of almost anything. When you find yourself dwelling on bad or sad news, let them cheer you up.
3. *Celebrate your differences.* Their wiring is the opposite of yours. When this causes tension, choose to be grateful for what you can learn from each other.
4. *Give them outlets for their energy.* Your need for space and silence is likely to be overwhelmed by their volume, restlessness, and desire for constant company. Try to proactively solve this problem by teaching them that they can be loud outside or that you like hugs before bedtime.

With a **Choleric** Child...

1. *Don't take it personally.* Their tendency to argue and challenge is not a reflection on you, your intelligence, or your competency.
2. *Give them the space and freedom to make decisions.* Choleric children insist on doing things “their way,” which will sometimes conflict with “the right way” in your opinion. When the stakes are low, let them give it a try.
3. *Provide opportunities for them to have some control.* Look for occasions when you can (safely) let them be in charge. But be forewarned: You may have to keep your perfectionism in check.
4. *Keep communication short and to the point.* Skip the supporting details unless they push you to prove your point. The shorter, the better.

With a **Melancholic** Child...

1. *Don't transfer your fear and worry onto them.* Even though you share the same wiring, you have very different life experiences. Allow them to make up their own mind rather than inheriting your views, fears, and worries.
2. *Use criticism and correction gently.* You know the toll that harsh words can take on a *blue* child who is already so hard on themselves. Speak gently.
3. *Make room for mistakes.* Disconnect your affection from their achievement so it is not implied that they are unworthy or unloved when they make mistakes.
4. *Prepare them; don't scare them.* Teach them how to cope with (rather than be controlled by) anxious thoughts. Leverage their natural problem-solving skills with questions like, “*What’s your Plan B?*” and, “*What could you do differently next time?*”

With a **Phlegmatic** Child...

1. *Be kind in your criticism.* Aim to be direct, yet gentle. Harsh or constant criticism will cause a *green* child to withdraw and give up.
2. *Leave out unnecessary details.* A Phlegmatic child can quickly get overwhelmed by too many details. Say only what’s necessary to get your point across.
3. *Don't nag or lecture.* Phlegmatics do not aim for or expect perfection like you do. Nagging or lecturing will not change this; it will only trigger resentment.
4. *Watch your moods.* To an agreeable *green* child, your tendency toward moodiness can feel controlling as they constantly adjust to your emotional state, and they will start to shut down.



TIPS FOR PHLEGMATIC GROWN-UPS

With a **Sanguine** Child...

1. *State expectations clearly so they know what is required.* If you want something done a certain way, say so. Otherwise, a Sanguine is likely to get creative (or distracted).
2. *Show enthusiasm with your body language.* Even if it feels forced or unnatural to you, try to match their emotion with an extra big smile, an audible laugh, or maybe even jazz hands once in a while.
3. *Verbalize your affection and love.* Don't just think it, say it! Anytime you feel warmly toward a Sanguine child, speak up. They long to hear your words of affirmation.
4. *Try to appreciate and find joy in their energy.* When they're ready for the next adventure and you're ready for a nap, try to be delighted (rather than overwhelmed) by their zest for life.

With a **Choleric** Child...

1. *Try to stay calm.* In the face of a Choleric's power, control, and energy, lean in to your natural ability to stay calm in the midst of chaos.
2. *Advocate for yourself and your ideas.* It won't occur to a Choleric child to ask for your opinion or consider your feelings.
3. *Try not to let their strong will overwhelm you.* Choleric children crave debate, competition, and challenge. So, you may have to work hard to find the harmony and lack of stress you need.
4. *Stay consistent with rules, discipline, and punishment.* Choleric children will push the boundaries in search of safety and structure. Backing down or letting things slide will only make them push harder.

With a **Melancholic** Child...

1. *Avoid becoming “emotional Velcro.”* You are wired to accommodate and adjust to others’ moods, but guard against being dragged up and down too much by a Melancholic’s emotions.
2. *Pay attention to the details.* You may feel overwhelmed or paralyzed by too many details, but a Melancholic child will feel prepared and empowered.
3. *Model patience and contentment.* Your wiring can help a *blue* child learn how to be patient with themselves and content with the world, even when things aren’t perfect.
4. *Speak up when they shut down.* When they isolate or slip into silence, fight your urge to ignore the situation and hope it goes away. It’s your job as the grown-up to dig deep and stay engaged until they are back on track.

With a **Phlegmatic** Child...

1. *Lead the way in uncomfortable conversations.* You are both wired to avoid conflict and confrontation. Even though it doesn’t come naturally, as the grown-up, you’re responsible for speaking up first when there’s an issue to be addressed.
2. *Embrace the extra work.* Supporting a child’s interests will likely mean extra work for you. You may have to give them rides, manage schedules and gear, or even be their coach. Try to rise to the occasion when required.
3. *Create structure... and stick to it.* Establishing routines will help you create the chaos-free environment a *green* child craves without ongoing effort needed from you.
4. *Make sure your feedback is consistent.* You know firsthand how much a *green* child wants to avoid disappointing anyone. Make sure you’re on the same page as their other parent, teacher(s), or coach(es) to avoid giving them conflicting information and putting them in a no-win situation.



TIPS FOR CHOLERIC GROWN-UPS

With a **Sanguine** Child...

1. *Resist the urge to multitask.* A Sanguine child's stories can be wordy. You may be tempted to knock out a task or two while you (half-heartedly) listen, but they deeply crave your undivided attention and eye contact.
2. *Let them make their own decisions.* They'll show off their sparkle if you let them choose things for themselves.
3. *Tone down your volume.* The most effective way to get them to moderate their volume is to moderate yours.
4. *Relax and have fun (at least try to).* Think of this as an item on your to-do list. It may not feel productive at the time, but it will have a huge relational payoff.

With a **Choleric** Child...

1. *Prepare for battle.* It might feel like a daily fight to prove who is the adult. Though you'll be inclined to power up, instead pause. Then show curiosity and interest. It will be more effective.
2. *Try not to pull rank.* You know how it feels when your opinion isn't considered. Seek their input whenever possible. Even when it won't ultimately change your decision, allow them to be part of the discussion.
3. *Redirect toward solutions.* Since you're both skilled debaters, discussions may drag way past the point of being productive. Steer toward resolution to avoid getting stuck in endless arguments.
4. *Give them opportunities to choose and make decisions.* Sure, you could (and let's be honest, would be happy to) make every decision. That makes it an even more meaningful gift when you let a Choleric child decide.

With a **Melancholic** Child...

1. *Go out of your way to encourage them.* A *blue* child wants to please you and will get easily discouraged if they think they're falling short. Though it may not come naturally, compliment and praise them effusively.
2. *Be patient.* You may feel like their slower pace is unproductive, but remember, they are wired for planning, problem-solving, and perfection. While you're aiming for done, they are aiming for excellence.
3. *Don't add fuel to the fire.* Melancholic children are already so hard on themselves. When they don't meet your expectations, remember that they are more upset about it than you are.
4. *See their sensitivity as a strength.* They are attuned to emotion; you are intolerant of emotion. Be careful not to criticize one of their greatest strengths just because you can't relate.

With a **Phlegmatic** Child...

1. *Dial down your intensity and speed.* A Phlegmatic child will never match your sense of urgency. They are wired to move slower. Whenever possible, defer to their pace.
2. *Motivate their way, not yours.* A Phlegmatic child is more motivated by support and encouragement than threats and challenges.
3. *Solicit their opinions and ideas.* In the face of your decisiveness, a Phlegmatic child will not proactively speak up—especially if they disagree with you. Try to pause and ask for their thoughts.
4. *Help them discover their interests.* If you want to get a Phlegmatic child moving, find what interests them. (It's often just one or two things.)



TIPS FOR SANGUINE GROWN-UPS

With a Sanguine Child...

1. *Be an active listener.* When they're telling a story, give them the eye contact and undivided attention you crave. And do your best not to interrupt or add your own commentary.
2. *Share the stage.* Be intentional about creating opportunities for them to outshine you. Let them lead the class discussion or tell the funny story from your last vacation.
3. *Check the facts.* Before getting too carried away by emotion or enthusiasm, help each other slow down and consider: What are the facts of this situation? Is this wise? Is it safe?
4. *Establish systems.* You won't be able to rely on them to remember their rehearsal schedule or where they set down the car keys. So do your best to establish organizational systems to keep you both on track.

With a Choleric Child...

1. *Tone down your enthusiasm.* Choleric children are energetic and adventurous like you, but even they will not want to match your energy level most of the time.
2. *Not everything needs to be fun.* Some of what you would call "fun," they would call "foolish." Choleric children do not want to look stupid or play games they cannot win.
3. *Give facts.* Choleric children are rarely persuaded with emotional arguments like, "It might hurt her feelings if you don't go." Logic is your strongest weapon.
4. *Use fewer words.* Choleric children stop listening the minute they get the gist of what you're saying. If you want them to hear you, get to the point quickly.

With a **Melancholic** Child...

1. *Avoid oversharing or calling attention to them.* A *blue* child does not want to be the topic of your story or punchline of your joke unless they have given you permission.
2. *Focus on facts and details.* Precision and accuracy are important to Melancholics. They do not want to be unprepared or late, so give them the facts and keep an eye on the time.
3. *Make space for their feelings.* Your naturally sunny attitude can make you almost allergic to others' unpleasant emotions, but a *blue* child doesn't want to be cheered up instantly. They crave empathy, not optimism.
4. *Avoid judging a book by its cover.* A Melancholic child may be having a great time even if they aren't smiling or bubbling with enthusiasm. They are wired to be serious or reserved, which means fun looks different on their face than yours.

With a **Phlegmatic** Child...

1. *Be a cheerleader.* You are wired to be an inspiring motivator. Leverage that strength when a Phlegmatic child could use a nudge to speak up or join in.
2. *Avoid poking fun.* Be careful that your desire for humor and fun doesn't come at the expense of a *green* child who already tends to struggle with doubt and self-worth.
3. *Let them recharge.* Your endless need for fun and people can exhaust a Phlegmatic child. Pay attention to nonverbal cues that suggest they've had enough. Or better yet, ask them if they need a break.
4. *Stay on time and on task.* Both *yellows* and *greens* tend to lose track of time and get distracted from goals. As the grown-up, try your best to keep things on track.