

# Types of Children

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Lectures in aid of the Children's Clinic, which is now evacuated from London, exists to help parents and teachers to an understanding of all forms of children's difficulties, and to overcome these difficulties.

Dr Lowenfeld stated that as in plants and animals so in human beings, there are inborn and unchangeable varieties; a relation between inborn type of physical build.

Today the lecturer proposed to deal with variations in direction of a child's stream of interest.

A healthy child is a vital child, full of interests. The direction of this interest is however quite different in two different groups of children. In group 1 children are absorbed in things that happen outside themselves while children of Group 2 attend mainly to thoughts and sensations inside their own minds and in their bodies. The physical types of these children also vary. Tall and thin dark children tend on the whole to belong to the interior kind – broad and stocky, fair children to the outside kind. Of course, there are exceptions. The child whose interests are directed outside himself is the person whom the ordinary parent welcomes. These are active, practical children, and are a joy to the ordinary teacher. They are quick and sensible and show a keen interest in what is going on. The main difficulties children of this kind experience are with abstract lessons, arithmetic, geometry or in relation to social behaviour.

The other type, the inside personality is too often the mother and teacher's despair. These children are opaque; they go to parties and have nothing to say; they attend school but make no comments in school or at home. Their mothers often feel they do not know where they are with them. These are the children who at school are often the great joy of the English teacher. They may light up on a poetical subject or in history. They are difficult to teach because they do not join things and are not interested in the general spirit of the class, and their main difficulty is their detachment from life. These differences are fundamental; one cannot turn a child whose interests are within into a child with outwards turned energy.

The next pair of qualities to be considered are Sensitiveness and Insensitiveness.

The insensitive child is a person who has a relatively short range of feeling; he does not notice difference in atmosphere, will walk into a room where he or she is not welcome and not notice that fact. They will be oblivious of minor changes in the behaviour of friends. They are even tempered and cheerful. The sensitive child is more lightly balanced. He is more liable to be hurt, to become moody and upset. Such a child has a tremendous capacity for feeling and is capable of deep friendships. If the development of this child is not satisfactory he will have headaches, easily fatigued, depressed, sullen etc. The insensitive child, on the other hand, if he becomes unsatisfactory tends to behave in a delinquent manner.

Now, an outward turned child can be sensitive or insensitive; if the former he is a good mixer and would make a good leader. If insensitive, he will tend to direct his attention to mechanical work, wireless or carpentry, housework, knitting etc.

The internal child may also be sensitive or insensitive. If the former he can come to be the finest type of man, or he can be withdrawn so much within himself as to become inaccessible. If the latter, he tends to become an abstract thinker who achieves success in the laboratory or in scientific work, but who is relatively indifferent to his contacts.