



BIRTH ORDER

Why You Are the Way You Are

To Consider:

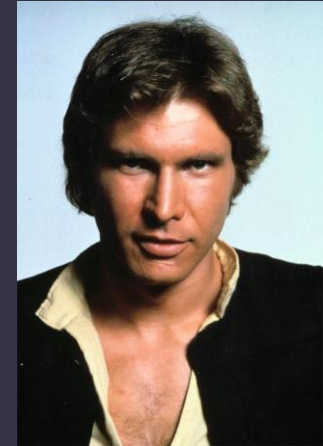


- Not all characteristics fit every person in that order...
- When there is a five to six year gap between children, the next child starts a “new family” ...
- All of us sprout in our own, unique direction and make our own contributions...

- spacing
- mental or emotional differences
- sibling deaths
- adoptions
- birth order of parent
- relationship between parents
- blending of families

Only and First Born

- Reliable
- Conscientious
- Keen sense of right and wrong
- Natural leaders
- Highly motivated to achieve
- Perfectionistic tendency
- Critical



Strength and Weaknesses of First Born and Only Children:

- Take charge, know what to do : may undermine the initiative of those who lean on them too much or may come off as too overbearing or aggressive
- Command respect; others want to follow their unflinching leadership : can run roughshod over others; may be insensitive and tend to be selfish; too focused on the goal and not enough on the feelings of others
- Cooperative, easy to work with, good team player : can be taken advantage of, bullied, bluffed
- Always do things right and leave no stone unturned to do a thorough job : tend to criticize themselves and/or others too much; never satisfied; may procrastinate because they fear they cannot do a “good enough job”

- ambitious, enterprising, energetic, willing to sacrifice to be a success : put themselves or those they work with under too much pressure and stress
- Set goals and reach them; tend to get more done in a day than others; planning the day is a must : may become boxed in, too busy with the to-do list to see the big picture and what needs to be done right now
- Known as straight thinkers; can be counted on not to be compulsive or to go off half-cooked : may believe they're always right and fail to pay attention to the more intuitive opinion of others
- Tend to be voracious readers and accumulators of information and facts; good problem solvers who think things through : may spend too much time gathering facts when there are other things that need to be done; may be so serious they fail to see the humor in situations when humor is desperately needed
- Have everything under control; always on top of things; tend to be on time and on schedule : may worry too much about order, process, and rules and not be flexible when it's needed; may show real impatience with anyone who is "disorganized" or not as meticulous; can be upset by surprise



Middleborns

- Opposite of child above them
- Unconventional
- Walk to the beat of a different drummer
- Competitive
- Loyal
- Big on friendship
- Negotiator
- Diplomatic
- Independent
- Mentally tough



Strengths and Weaknesses of Middle Children

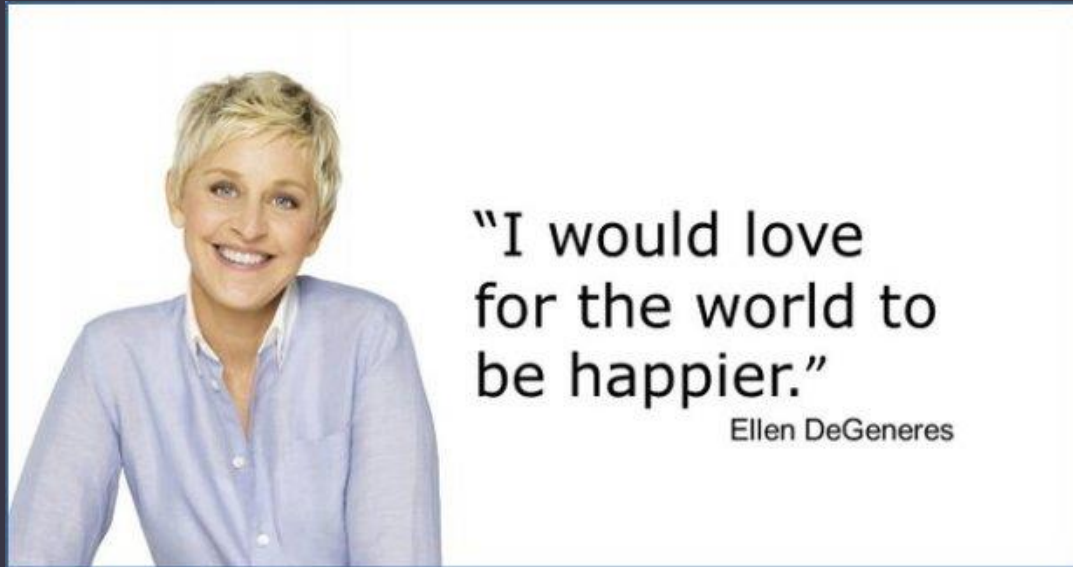
- Learned not to be spoiled : may be rebellious because they do not feel they fit in
- Because life has not always been fair, they are unspoiled and realistic : being treated fairly may have made them suspicious, cynical, and even bitter
- Relationships are very important; they make friends and tend to keep them : friends can be too important and not offending them may cloud judgement on key decisions
- Willing to do things differently, take a risk, strike out on their own : may appear to be bullheaded, stubborn, unwilling to cooperate
- Know how to get along with others; can be skilled at mediating disputes or negotiating disagreements : can be seen as willing to have peace at any price; others may try to take advantage of them

- Peacemakers; willing to work things out; great at seeing issues from both sides : may hate confrontation; often choose not to share their real opinions and feelings
- Can be trusted with sensitive information; know how to keep secrets : may fail to admit it when they need help as it is just too embarrassing



Lastborns

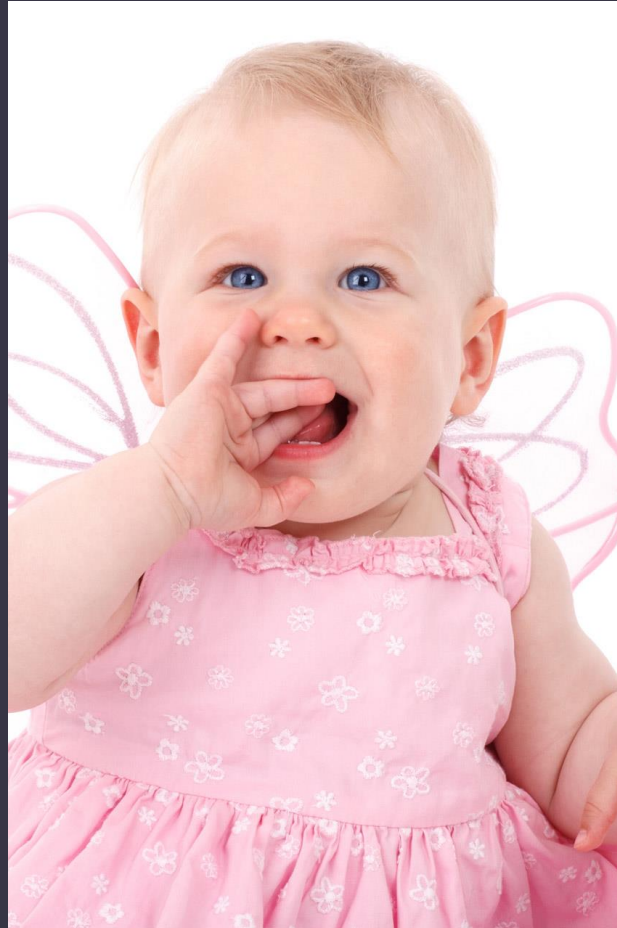
- Social
- Outgoing
- Spontaneous
- Humorous
- People skills
- Can be picked on
- Least likely to be punished
- Love the limelight
- Engaging
- Encouragement goes a long way



Strengths and Weaknesses of Lastborns

- Likeable, fun to be around, easy to talk to : manipulative, even a little flaky; seeming to be too slick and a bit unbelievable
- Read others well and know how to relate and work well one on one or in small groups; social settings and events are their cup of tea : may come across as undisciplined, prone to talk too much and too long, the kind who talks a good game but can't always produce
- Keep on coming with tireless persistence, not taking no for an answer : may push too hard because they see things only their way
- Caring, loveable, wanting to help; like to get strokes and to give them : can be gullible, easily taken advantage of; make decisions too much on feeling and not enough on thought

- Appear relaxed, genuine, and trustworthy – no hidden agenda : may appear to be absent-minded, a little out of focus
- Entertaining and funny, know how to get noticed : may appear self-centered, unwilling to give others credit, having a big ego, temperamental, spoiled, and impatient



No greater influence during your growing up years than your family



All Children Must be Accepted and Loved Equally



Tips for parenting Only Children and First

- When confronting and working through conflict, be aware of your child's ingrained perfectionism.
- Do not be an "improver" on everything your firstborn or only child says or does (let the bed be slightly wrinkled, be okay with the not quite cleaned up room).
- Be aware that the firstborn or only child has a particular need to know exactly what the rules are.
- Recognize the firstborn's place in the family. As the oldest, the firstborn should get some special privileges to go along with extra responsibilities.
- Take two-on-one time – both parents with the oldest child alone.
- Stay away from making your firstborn your instant babysitter.
- As your firstborn grows older, be sure you do not pile on responsibilities.
- When your firstborn is reading to you and has trouble with a word, do not be so quick to jump in with a correction.

Tips for parenting the middle child

- Recognize that your middle child may avoid sharing how he or she really feels about things.
- Take extra care to make your middle child feel special.
- Set up some regular privileges he or she can count on having or doing every day or every week.
- Make a special effort to give your child a new item of clothing rather than a hand me down.
- Listen carefully to your middle child's answers or explanations for what is going on or what he or she thinks of certain situations.
- Be sure the family photo album has its share of pictures and home movies of your middle child.

Tips for parenting the lastborn child

- Be sure your lastborn has his or her fair share of responsibilities around the house.
- Be sure your lastborn does not get away with things in regards to the family rules and regulations.
- While you are making sure you do not coddle your youngest child, do not let him or her get clobbered or lost in the shuffle either.
- Introduce your youngest child to reading very early.
- Whenever necessary, call the baby's bluff.
- Try to get your lastborn's baby book completed before he or she is 21.

Tips for parenting the two child family

- Give your firstborn a later bedtime.
- Make responsibilities and allowances different.
- Avoid comparisons.
- Don't feel compelled to do for one what you did for the other.
- Do things with one child at a time.

Keys to Birth Order

- A child's birth order is important but it is only an influence. It is not the final fact of life, forever set in cement and unchangeable, that determines how that child will turn out.
- The way parents treat their children is as important as their child's birth order, spacing, sex, and physical and mental characteristics.
- Every birth order has inherent strengths and weaknesses. Parents must accept both.
- No birth order is "better" or more desirable than another.
- Birth order information does not give the total psychological picture to anyone.
- Understanding some basic principles of birth order is not a formula for automatically solving problems or changing your personality overnight.



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