

MBTI Types for Children by Karen Smith (Master of Educational Leadership)

ISTJ (Introverted, Sensing Thinking, Judging). ISTJ children are usually detail-oriented, serious, and thoughtful. They pride themselves on having an accurate memory for detail and they aim, above all, to be objective and logical in their decisions. These children enjoy factual data and need time to think and consider the facts before making decisions. They like an orderly life, one that has a routine and structure. In new situations they can seem overly-cautious and inflexible, only sticking to what they know or trust through personal experience. In school, ISTJs tend to get good grades and care about being competent and performing well. They are fairly competitive academically and tend to do well at maths, where they can put their problem-solving skills to the test. They like a structured environment in the classroom and appreciate having time to think things over before responding to questions. Group activities can be frustrating for them if they aren't given enough space and time to analyze problems on their own.

ISFJ (Introverted, Sensing, Feeling, Judging). ISFJ children are detail-oriented, loyal, and empathetic children. They are very concerned with the needs of others and they strive to be compassionate, helpful, and consistent in their lives. They like a predictable, structured life where they know what to expect and what's expected of them. In new situations they can seem inflexible, overly dependent on routine, and anxious and scared by change. They may be so concerned with belonging and acceptance that they work hard to please others without taking time for their own needs and wants. In school, ISFJs tend to perform well and they usually care about getting good grades. They are "work before play" children and will usually want to finish their homework quickly before they even think about playing or having free time. In the classroom, they want a sense of structure and clear, sequential guidelines. They tend to perform well in practical skills and history; areas where they can use their skill for remembering facts and also work with their hands to solve practical problems.

ESTJ (Extroverted, Sensing, Thinking, Judging). ESTJ children are usually outgoing, action-oriented, and decisive children. They have an intense practical nature and strong leadership skills. They are usually hard-working, productive, and reliable. They are often drawn to sports in school. Through sports they can interact with others, embrace their natural competitiveness, and throw themselves into the physical nature of the game. In school, ESTJs are usually very competitive and competent. They care about getting good grades and performing well and they are often outspoken in the classroom. They usually perform well at maths and practical skills; areas where they can problem solve and apply practical solutions to real-world problems. They enjoy a structured environment with a dependable routine and a clear set of rules.

ESFJ (Extroverted, Sensing, Feeling, Judging). ESFJs are expressive, affectionate children who are highly empathetic to the needs and desires of other people. They are usually cuddly and warm, exuding a natural friendliness and gentleness that makes them instantly likeable. They balance their caring, affectionate nature with an eye for detail and a practical mindset. These children are very attuned to the natural world and enjoy tactile play and experiences. In school, ESFJs tend to get good grades and prefer the subjects of maths and music. They are usually good at remembering their facts and as such tend to memorize their times tables, spelling words, and history details with accuracy. They like getting their homework done ahead of schedule and can experience a lot of anxiety if they aren't getting good grades or the subject matter is confusing.

ISTP (Introverted, Sensing, Thinking, Perceptive). ISTP children are extremely independent, analytical, and hands-on. They have a knack for understanding how things work as well as taking things apart and putting them back together. The truth and curiosity guide them, and they will sort out any data that seems less-than-accurate. They are detached adventurers, curiously exploring nature and pursuing freedom as much as possible. In school, they are often gifted at maths and

many also enjoy science. Because they are natural problem solvers, they enjoy finding practical solutions for just about any problem that presents itself in the moment. They prefer a classroom that has a flexible, open-ended, creative style. Apprehensive of structure and rules, they hate having to sit still and repeat facts all day. They want to work with their hands and see the real-world application of their learning.

ISFP (Introverted, Sensing, Feeling, Perceptive). ISFP children are known for being gentle, loving, and quietly passionate children. On the outside they may seem reserved and unassuming, but inside they have a strong set of values and interests, and a thirst for individuality and adventure. These children are usually easy-going and affectionate and have a knack doing kind things for others. They are very affected by conflict and criticism and prefer all their environments to be as harmonious as possible. In school, ISFPs are usually creative and drawn to subjects like art and science; areas where they can use their hands and experiment with things tangibly. They tend to enjoy an unstructured, creative environment and they tend to dislike being called upon in class in front of other children. They don't like being "put on the spot".

ESTP (Extroverted, Sensing, Thinking, Perceptive). ESTPs are charming, adventurous, action-oriented children who are filled with excitement and enthusiasm for the world around them. They are thrill-seekers and risk-takers who aren't afraid of challenges and enjoy competition. They are very in tune with the present moment, noticing everything in rich detail and always being ready to physically respond to changes in the environment. As such, they love to touch, taste, smell, and sense everything around them. They tend to be wiggly, active children who can't stand sitting still and always want to get up and explore, touch, climb, or run around. In school, ESTPs tend to excel in practical skills and maths. They do well in areas where they can work with their hands and learn things through experimentation and trial-and-error. They tend to do well at maths because they usually have good problem-solving and analytical skills.

ESFP (Extroverted, Sensing, Feeling, Perceptive). Young ESFPs are warm, enthusiastic, and quick-witted children who have a great desire to make people smile and laugh. They thrive on social interaction and the thrill of new adventures and sensory experiences. They are very in tune with the world around them and live fully "in the moment", noticing every sight, sound, and detail with startling accuracy. Their awareness of the world around them makes them skilled at multi-tasking and also noticing non-verbal cues in other people. They are usually quick to respond to non-verbal cues and, in turn, have a certain charm and wittiness that works in their favour. In school, ESFPs tend to excel in creative, hands-on fields or practical skills. They are often drawn to activities like drama, art, or anything that allows them to create and build and experiment with tangible tools and creative supplies. They are flexible, adaptable children and tend to dislike a very structured lifestyle or a repetitive routine.

INTJ (Introverted, Intuitive, Thinking, Judging). Young INTJs are visionary, complex children who have a strong focus on the future and understanding the "big picture" of life. They are always looking ahead and can seem almost completely tuned out of the present moment as they search for meaning and symbolic significance in everything around them. INTJ children tend to appear much older than their age would suggest because they ask such thought-provoking, existential questions. They appear intense and serious and are not easily swayed by emotions or play that doesn't challenge them. Drawn to complexity, they will usually challenge themselves to say the most difficult, elaborate words they can think of to fit the situation. They also tend to love books and will enjoy a lot of time by themselves, reading, thinking, and being creative. In school, INTJs tend to perform well in science and maths. They love anything theoretical or abstract and often enjoy school as long as it isn't focused on a lot of repetition of facts. They like a steep learning curve and will become quickly bored if they have to repeat the same process very often.

INFJ (Introverted, Intuitive, Feeling, Judging). Young INFJs are imaginative, whimsical children with a strong sense of empathy and compassion for other people. They are drawn to complexity and understanding “the big picture” of life. They tend to need a lot of alone time to process information, think, and separate from sensory stimulation. INFJs (and INTJs) tend to be easily over-stimulated as children and can get anxious and irritated in busy, loud, or overly-sensory environments. They usually have a “vision” of the future and pick up on implications and possibilities that can seem strange to many other people. Their focus on the abstract, symbolic, and existential can be hard for other people to pin down or make sense of. They will ask questions that seem too complex or even inappropriate for children their age as they try to make sense of life and what everything means and how it’s all tied together. In school, INFJs tend to excel in art, English, and music. They prefer an open-ended, creative environment where they can regularly be exposed to new ideas and challenges. Repetition of facts and details can bore them and they may “tune out” of environments where a focus on repetition is the norm.

ENTJ (Extroverted, Intuitive, Thinking, Judging). Young ENTJs are visionary, goal-oriented, and determined children with an eye for future possibility and a knack for swift, strategic thinking. They approach life with a strong-willed determination to “take life by the horns” and achieve great things. They are usually organized and hard-working. In school, ENTJs tend to perform well in English and science. Statistically, they get above-average grades and are naturally competitive in the classroom. That said, they will quickly tire of an atmosphere that is very repetitive and focuses more on memorization than innovation and new ideas. They enjoy structure, but they like a steep learning curve where thinking outside the box is encouraged and challenges are aplenty.

ENFJ (Extroverted, Intuitive, Feeling, Judging). Young ENFJs are warm, enthusiastic, and empathetic children who are very concerned with the needs, wants, and desires of other people. They are usually highly in tune to the emotional atmosphere around them and have a knack for making people feel at ease and accepted. Communication comes naturally to them and they make excellent “hosts” or “hostesses”, no matter their age. They want to feel camaraderie with others and a sense of intimate “oneness” so they look for rapport, and they will disclose information about themselves to help other children open up to them and connect with them. Sensitive to conflict, they will do just about anything to resolve tense situations as quickly as possible. The only problem with this is sometimes they may forget their own needs and values in an effort to make peace. In school ENFJs tend to excel in art, English, and music. Statistically, they get above-average grades and are very focused on meeting the expectations of their parents and teachers. That said, they dislike a very repetitive routine and will also bristle at teachers who seem very direct and critical. A classroom atmosphere that isn’t harmonious can greatly hamper their ability to think as clearly as they’d like to.

INTP (Introverted, Intuitive, Thinking, Perceptive). Young INTPs are known for their keen sense of logic and fairness. These independent, analytical children are always trying to discern what the truth is based on logical principles. They aren’t afraid to debate or argue anything that seems untruthful or illogical, especially if it affects them in some way (like a rule or tradition they have to follow). Young INTPs are good at thinking outside the box, seeing creative and original ideas, and curiously following their interests in any number of directions. They tend to start a lot of projects, but they also tend to struggle with finishing them. They want freedom, mental challenges, and a constant stream of mind-bending ideas and facts to explore. In school, INTPs tend to get good grades if they care about their classes. They are motivated by an internal set of standards, however, and they usually care far less about good grades and impressing their teachers and parents than they are about doing what seems important to them. That said, they usually excel in maths, art, and science. They are usually very creative and enjoy a steep learning curve. Classes that challenge the INTP mentally, that allow for creative problem solving and even some healthy debate tend to inspire them.

INFP (Introverted, Intuitive, Feeling, Perceptive). Young INFPs are known for being idealistic, imaginative, sincere, and deeply sensitive. These children believe that everything is significant and has meaning and personal impact. While they may appear mysterious and reserved on the outside, they are usually brimming with imagination and passion on the inside. They are very concerned for the people around them and are often drawn to animals and children younger than themselves, with whom they are very nurturing and affectionate. Their imagination guides them, and they'll often be found making up stories or dreaming up possibilities that are unusual and whimsical. They tend to develop language skills early and will use these skills to write down their stories or create highly detailed and elaborate fantasy worlds. In school, INFPs tend to be highly creative and skilled at art, English, or music. They may struggle with completing homework on time, but they genuinely want to learn. For these types, a flexible approach to education is ideal. They prefer unstructured, creative classrooms where thinking outside the box and exploring new theories or creative options is encouraged. Highly-structured "one-size-fits-all" environments bore them, and they get bored if a lot of rote memorization and repetition is encouraged.

ENTP (Extroverted, Intuitive, Thinking, Perceptive). Young ENTPs are known for their enthusiasm, their boundless ideas, and their outside-the-box thinking. Energetic and charismatic, they have a contagious energy and love to ask questions and explore numerous ideas and possibilities out loud. They seem to see everything around them in terms of what it "could be" and thus are very imaginative and inspiring. More focused on the future than the present, they are less concerned with what "is" than potential. They are usually very creative and quick to pick up new and unusual words, they'll use these words to create fascinating stories which they love to share with their playmates or anyone willing to listen. In school, ENTPs view their education as an excellent opportunity to compete with themselves and others. They tend to enjoy science and art; areas where they can think creatively and experiment. If they feel mentally stimulated and challenged they tend to do very well at maths as well; especially when it comes to the more conceptual, abstract methods employed in high-school math, algebra, and geometry. If they find their classroom setting stifling, overly-structured, and repetitive they may show little interest in their studies.

ENFP (Extroverted, Intuitive, Feeling, Perceptive). Young ENFPs are known for being enthusiastic, warm, open-minded children. These types innately see possibilities and opportunities beyond the ordinary and have a creative perspective into connections between people and things and relationships. They are very future-oriented and excited by anything new or novel that could happen someday. In fact, sometimes they enjoy *thinking* about future possibilities more than actually *experiencing* them. Because they're so inherently focused on looking forward, the present moment can be difficult for them to tune into completely. In school, ENFPs are usually drawn to artistic and creative pursuits. Art, music, dance, drama, all these things are great fun to young ENFPs. Anything that allows them to experiment creatively or has an element of humour or fantasy is thrilling to them. They tend to pursue a variety of subjects rather than settle on one specialization. They like classrooms where brainstorming and discussion are the norm. Highly structured or rule-driven environments tend to bother them. Classrooms where repetition and testing are the norm can stifle their natural curiosity and love of learning.