

HypnoBirthing Temperament Survey

For years, there have been anecdotal reports that children born using HypnoBirthing (The Mongan Method) are particularly calm and content babies.

This research sought to test that theory and determine whether there were any discernible differences between children whose parents used HypnoBirthing, and those whose parents did not.

A short online survey was used to compare the personality traits of children born using HypnoBirthing, with children born without HypnoBirthing.

The parents were asked to indicate how strongly their child exhibited certain characteristics and personality traits as a baby, and as an older child.

The results confirmed what many had suspected: Babies who experienced the calm of HypnoBirthing in the womb and during their birth were more likely described as calm, content and happy as both babies and older children. The HypnoBirthed babies were also more likely to be good sleepers, as well as easy and alert babies.

Method

The survey was shared by HypnoBirthing Educators via social media in June and July 2014. In total, 113 parents responded. Of these respondents, 22 had children aged under one year old so did not complete the older children section.

The question about the use of HypnoBirthing was hidden until the end of the survey, and the title of the survey ('Tell us about your child') was intentionally kept vague to hide the purpose of the survey and reduce response bias.

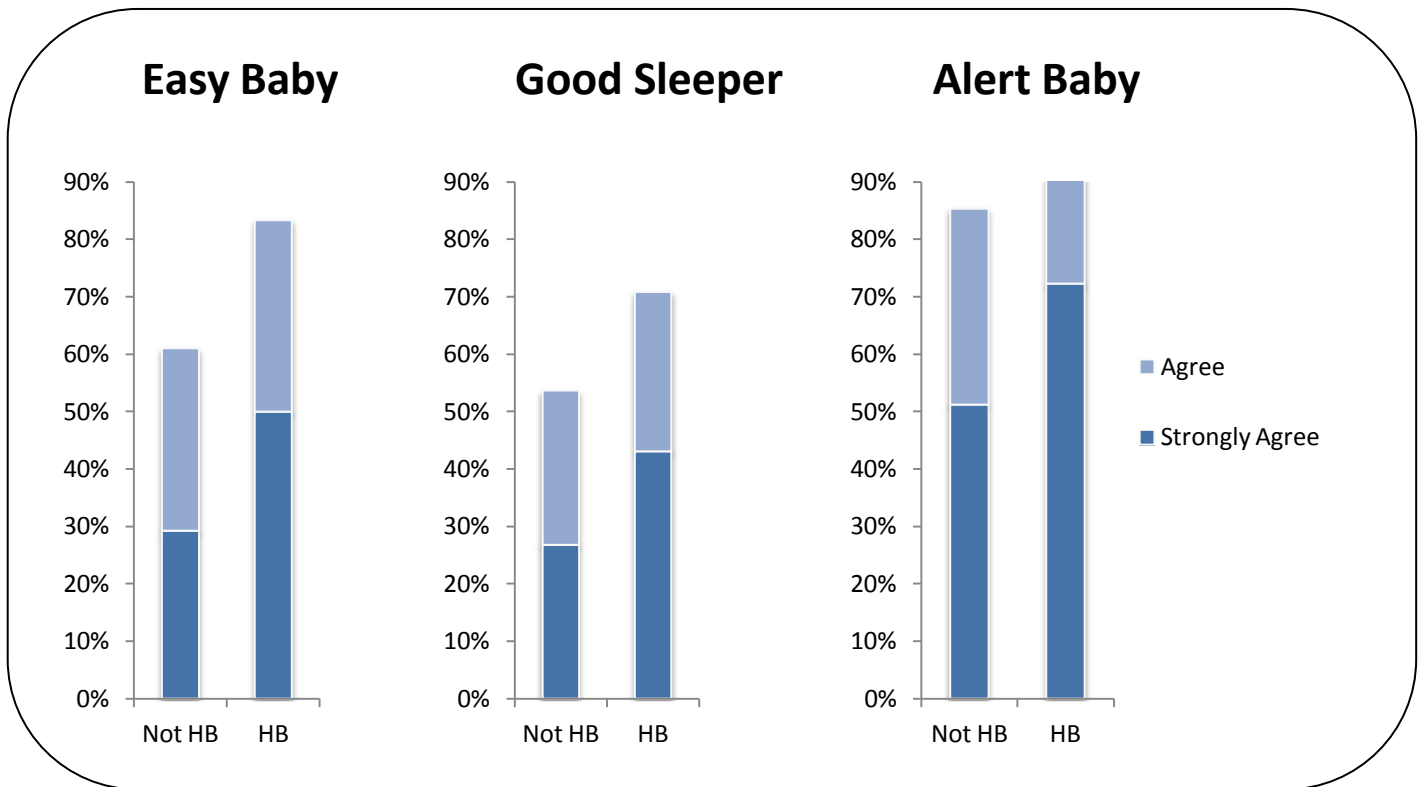
Characteristics

The parents were asked to rate their agreement (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree) with the following descriptions of their child:

- An Easy Baby
- An Alert Baby
- A Good Sleeper

The results were striking; the parents who used HypnoBirthing were more likely to agree that their children were easy and alert babies, and good sleepers than the parents who did not (see Figure 1. below).

Figure 1. Percentage of respondents who ‘Strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ with these descriptions of their baby.



Easy Baby

The HypnoBirthing parents were more likely to strongly agree that their child was an easy baby (50% vs. 29%). In total, 83% of the HypnoBirthing either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, compared with 61% of the families that did not use HypnoBirthing.

Good Sleeper

The HypnoBirthing parents were also more likely to describe their baby as a good sleeper. Almost three-quarters (71%) of the HypnoBirthing parents described their baby as a good sleeper, compared with 54% of the non-HypnoBirthing parents.

Again the biggest difference was between those that strongly agreed that their baby was a good sleeper: 43% of the HB parents compared with 27% of the non-HypnoBirthing parents.

Alert Baby

The majority of both groups described their baby as alert but HypnoBirthing parents were again much more likely to do so and were much more likely to strongly agree with this statement. Ninety-nine percent of the HB parents agreed with the statement, with 72% strongly agreeing.

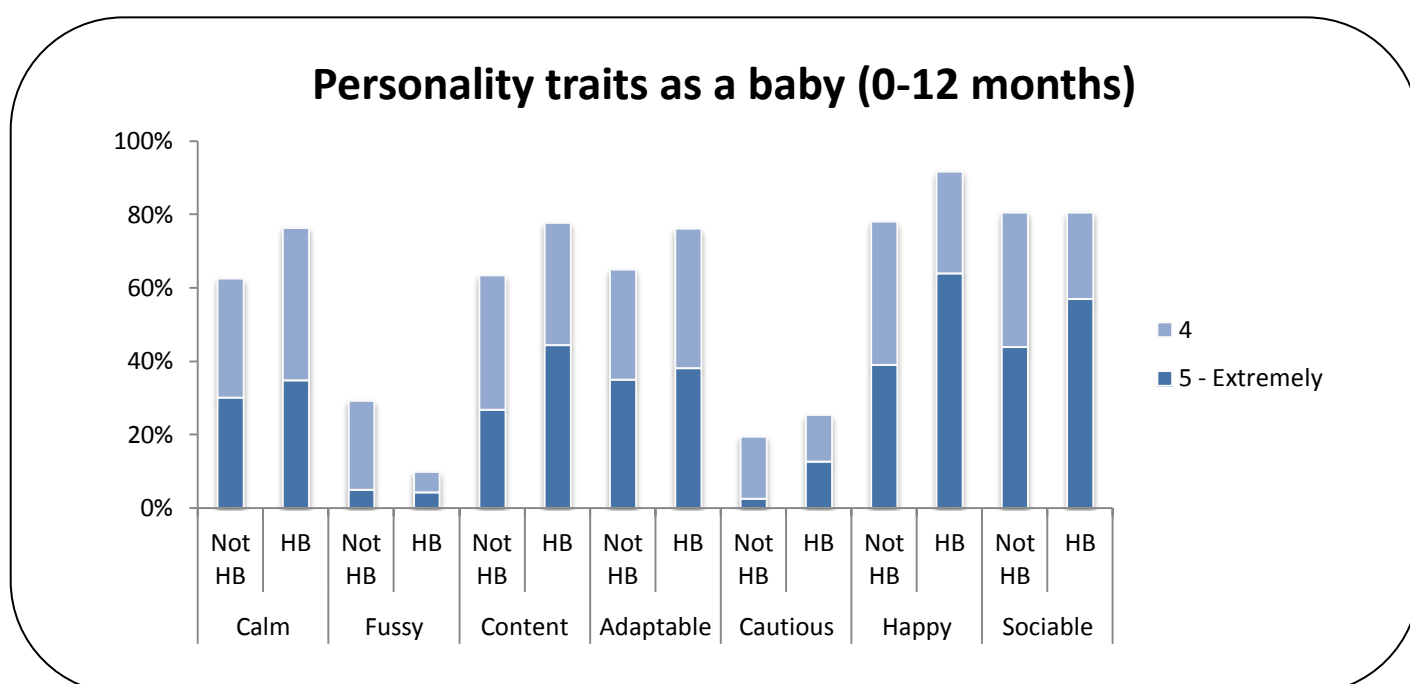
Personality traits

Baby (0-12 months)

The parents were asked to rate the extent to which their child showed specific personality traits, first as a baby (0-12 months), then as an older child (1 year+).

The response scale for this question ranged from '1- Not at all', to '5 – Extremely'. For the purposes of this report, parents who gave ratings of 4 and 5 are described as agreeing that their child displays the trait, 3 as neutral, and 1 and 2 as disagreement.

Figure 2. Percentage of respondents who agreed (rating of 4-5) that their baby showed each of the following traits as a baby (0-12 months old)



The parents who used HypnoBirthing were much more likely to describe their baby as happy. Overall, 92% of the HB parents agreed with this description of their child (a rating of 4 or 5), vs. 78% of the other parents. Almost two-thirds (64%) of the HypnoBirthing parents gave the highest rating, describing their child as 'extremely' happy, compared with 39% of the parents who did not use HypnoBirthing.

The HypnoBirthing babies were also more commonly rated as content (78% vs. 63% overall agreement), calm (76% vs 63%), and adaptable (76% vs. 65%), than the parents who did not use HypnoBirthing. They were also much less likely to describe their baby as fussy (10% vs. 29% overall).

Similar proportions of the parent groups described their child as a sociable baby (81% of HypnoBirthing and 80% of the other parents), but the HypnoBirthing parents were more likely to give the highest rating of 'extremely' sociable (57% vs. 44%). Interestingly, the HypnoBirthing babies were slightly more likely to be described as cautious (25% vs. 20%).

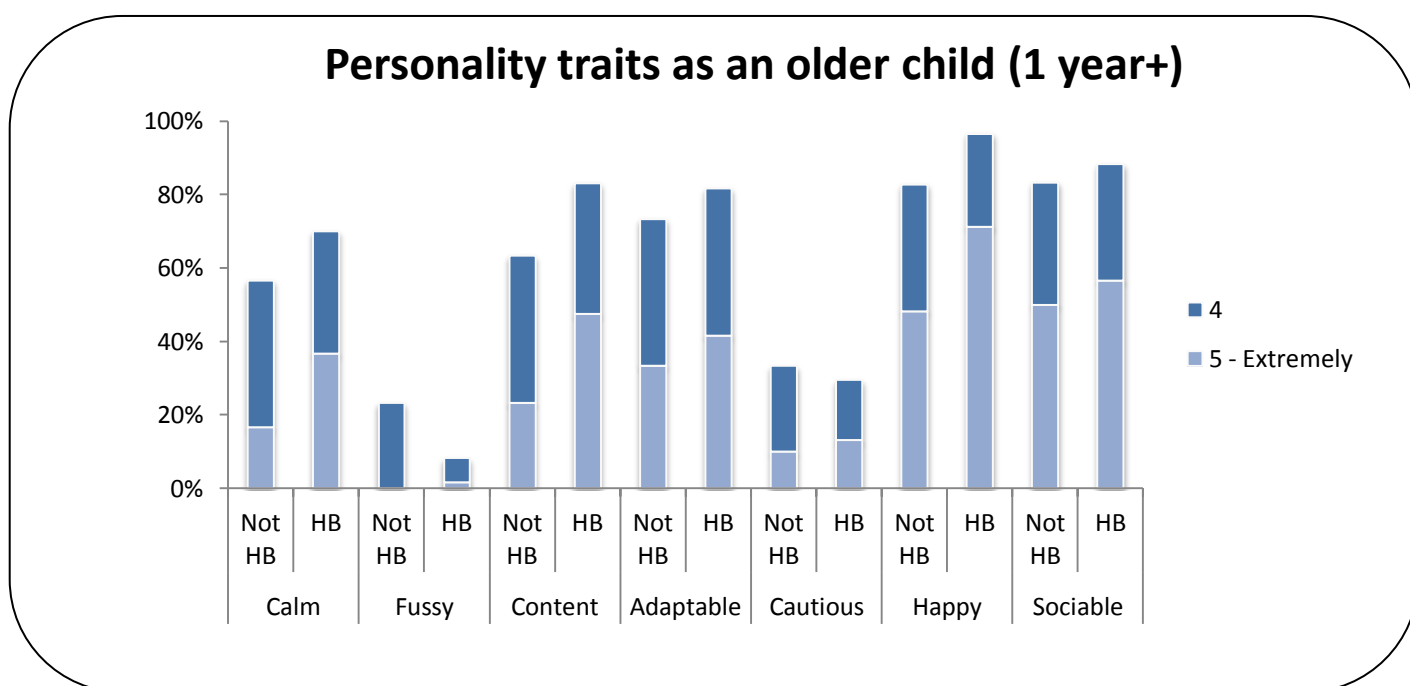
Older child (1 year +)

For the most part, these differences were also evident between the older children. The HypnoBirthing children were more likely to be described as content (83% vs. 63%), happy (97% vs. 83%), and calm (70% vs. 57%).

Once again, some of the biggest differences were in the ‘extreme’ ratings. HypnoBirthing babies were much more likely to be rated as extremely happy (47% vs. 23%), extremely content (47% vs. 23%), and extremely calm (37% vs. 17%).

The older children were also less likely to be described as fussy if their parents used HypnoBirthing (8% vs. 23%).

Figure 3. Percentage of respondents who agreed (rating of 4-5) that their baby/older child showed each of the following traits as an older child (1 year +)



The impact of HypnoBirthing

The final question of the survey was: Do you have any further comments about the temperament of your child and/or the influence you think HypnoBirthing™ has had on the temperament of this child?

The majority of the HypnoBirthing parents who responded to this question did feel that HypnoBirthing had influenced their child. There were numerous accounts of babies that entered the world calm and alert and remained that way.

"I am 100% certain that Grace's acute perception, rapid language development and extremely kind and sociable demeanour are all related to the calm, natural HypnoBirth that she experienced. You could tell she was "with" us from the very moment she was born."

"Megan is a very calm and easy-going little girl, who settles quickly and calmly with some snuggles. I think this calming is directly related to the HypnoBirthing techniques used whilst we were expecting her."

"From the moment my daughter was born, and still at four yrs old, she has been gentle and soft. She was an easy content baby and still is."

"He was a textbook baby. He is very social and secure. He is my first child and it was amazing how alert he was since the moment of birth."

"I believe how a child is brought into the world sets the stage for how their life will be. I agree that how the mother and father respond to the labour and birth also affects the baby."

"I had a 1 hr. 30 min. homebirth with this daughter. It was a picture-perfect, easy birth. She has been a wonderfully calm, peaceful infant and young child."

"He is very low stress, generally reacts calmly to situations and when he does get upset, he calms down quickly."

"My daughter was a very, very calm baby. A good sleeper."

"She was born peaceful and relaxed and has maintained that for the most part. The hardest I have ever seen her cry was when her Brother accidentally slammed her fingers in the bathroom door but she calmed down fairly quickly from that and didn't have any long term stress from it."

As is common with HypnoBirthing babies, many of the parents reported that their child didn't cry when they were born.

"My baby looked content and calm from the moment he was born. He did not cry when he entered the world."

"My child did not cry, simply voiced a few small protests, until he was two days old. Everything about my birth was calm - the room and family he was born into, even the midwife and nurse. Another method would have had me screaming in pain and pushing before he was ready - he crowned for an hour and came into this world with both shoulders even, at once. A first-degree labial tear that has since healed completely was all the "damage" done. Everyone in that room worked together, peacefully. His father was a calm baby and child, too, but the love and confidence our son displays daily bring me back to sweet memories of his birth, constantly."

"When he was born he was put onto my chest and stared straight into my eyes. He never cried, he was so alert yet so calm. I strongly believe that HypnoBirthing had a great deal to do with that!!"

Some parents felt that their children's confidence was promoted through the calm and comfortable birth experience.

"I feel that HypnoBirthing allowed my baby and I to go through birth as a team. It was not an exercise of "pushing to get my baby out," but rather a calm process of slowly meeting each other. This created a relationship where she feels safe, and therefore, she is calm and confident."

"I think that feeling safe and comfortable during birth has made her very adventurous--both in activities and in eating! She is fearless. And of all my kids, she's had the least amount of separation anxiety."

HypnoBirthing was thought to benefit the child even when the birth hadn't gone to plan.

"I planned on having a natural HypnoBirth I read the books did meditation everything however it wasn't to be, I had a C section 2 weeks before I was due. I still used everything I had learnt through HypnoBirthing and I believe that is why I healed so fast and breastfed so easily and have a calm happy beautiful son Maximus."

"My child was born using HypnoBirthing. She was unsettled for the first 6 months but then, almost overnight, her temperament changed. She became much more settled, calm, and a much better sleeper. I can't put this change down to any environmental factors, so I believe it was just her way of settling in and working out what this new world was all about. When I was carrying her, she was always very active and extremely inquisitive and had no fear of anything, this hasn't changed (she is almost 2yo). She has always been very attached to me which I believe is a direct result of HypnoBirthing."

"The first 3 months he cried every day a lot between 19-22h. During the rest of the day and night, he was calm and happy. After those 3 months, he came more to rest and enjoyed everything. Even friends and family - who are also parents themselves- couldn't believe how easy and calm he was. The birthing of our child was a wonderful experience."

"Somewhat surprisingly the baby suffered from colic for many months after birth despite being birthed using HB methods. Bad sleeper probably due to the colic. Now nearly two she is a happy toddler. May have been genetically predisposed to colic - the Dad suffers from bad digestion."

"This is my second baby born naturally using Hypnobirthing. He is such a little treasure - I know I'm biased but right from the start people noticed his good and happy go lucky nature. The only thing about him is he HATES doctors. I'm not sure why this is but I have a feeling it could be to do with the fact he had shoulder dystocia at birth. It wasn't too bad, we had him out using the McRoberts manoeuvre and there was no physical effects to him but I can't help feeling...."

Some of the parents noted other factors they felt had also impacted the nature of their child.

"We also started bed-sharing and baby wearing from the time this baby was born. And didn't have any trouble breastfeeding. I think these things also made a huge impact on how easy this baby has been".

"Birth is just one aspect - how calm and intuitive a mother is at all (before and after birth (for years)) is also important. I have two older children (aged 11 and 6) - not born with HB, but also at home, without interventions. Both have been in close contact with me, have been breastfed as and when and as long as required, co-sleeping etc. They have been as calm and content as our youngest (nearly two years old). ;o)"

"I don't believe the temperament of my son is solely down to hypnotic thing. We've worked hard at creating a suitable environment at home for him to develop all these attributes since birth. However, I am a huge fan of HypnoBirthing and do believe it gives the best start for a child. Perhaps without using it, we would not have continued to promote such behaviours post birth?! 2nd baby due next week so will have to wait and see if similar temperament. :-) :-)"

Thank you

Thank you to all of the wonderful parents who took the time to fill in this survey and tell us about their child. We greatly appreciate your contribution to this research.

Table 1. Level of agreement with the following descriptions of their child as a baby

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	No Answer	Number
Easy Baby	Not HB	29%	32%	10%	12%	15%	2%	41
	HB	50%	33%	6%	7%	4%	0%	72
Good Sleeper	Not HB	27%	27%	17%	10%	17%	2%	41
	HB	43%	28%	13%	10%	6%	1%	72
Alert Baby	Not HB	51%	34%	0%	5%	5%	5%	41
	HB	72%	26%	0%	0%	1%	0%	72

Table 2. Respondents' agreement that their child showed each of the following traits as a baby (0-12 months)

		1 – Not at all	2	3	4	5 - Extremely	Number
Calm	Not HB	5%	15%	18%	33%	30%	41
	HB	3%	10%	11%	42%	35%	72
Fussy	Not HB	15%	41%	15%	24%	5%	41
	HB	41%	35%	14%	6%	4%	72
Content	Not HB	0%	17%	20%	37%	27%	41
	HB	0%	7%	15%	33%	44%	72
Adaptable	Not HB	8%	13%	15%	30%	35%	41
	HB	3%	6%	15%	38%	38%	72
Cautious	Not HB	15%	37%	29%	17%	2%	41
	HB	23%	28%	24%	13%	13%	72
Happy	Not HB	0%	2%	20%	39%	39%	41
	HB	0%	1%	7%	28%	64%	72
Sociable	Not HB	2%	2%	15%	37%	44%	41
	HB	1%	6%	13%	24%	57%	72

Table 3. Respondents' agreement that their child showed each of the following traits as an older child (1 year +)

		1 – Not at all	2	3	4	5 - Extremely	Number
Calm	Not HB	0%	3%	40%	40%	17%	31
	HB	0%	10%	20%	33%	37%	63
Fussy	Not HB	17%	33%	27%	23%	0%	31
	HB	36%	39%	16%	7%	2%	63
Content	Not HB	0%	3%	33%	40%	23%	31
	HB	0%	0%	17%	36%	47%	63
Adaptable	Not HB	3%	3%	20%	40%	33%	31
	HB	0%	0%	18%	40%	42%	63
Cautious	Not HB	20%	20%	27%	23%	10%	31
	HB	21%	23%	26%	16%	13%	63
Happy	Not HB	0%	0%	17%	34%	48%	31
	HB	0%	0%	3%	25%	71%	63
Sociable	Not HB	3%	7%	7%	33%	50%	31
	HB	0%	2%	10%	32%	57%	63