We present ISO data on the star forming interstellar medium in galaxies with a range of star formation intensities and morphologies. The ISO-CAM data reveal a color trend in the mid-infrared indicative of the presence of substantial amounts of 100 K dust in the most active galaxies, but not in quiescent ones. On the other hand the ISO-PHOT-S spectra point to a constant shape of the emission spectrum in the range between 3 and 12 microns.