



Functional Emotional Developmental Capacities: Basic Chart

Use the following chart to help you identify which capacities your child has mastered and which still need work.

Capacity 1: Self-Regulation and Interest in the World	Always	Sometimes	Never	Not under stress
Shows interest in different sensations for 3+ seconds				
Remains calm and focused for 2+ minutes with your help				
Recovers from distress within 20 minutes				
Shows interest in you (i.e. not only in inanimate objects)				
<i>Need to work more on the capacities of this level? Click here</i>				
Capacity 2: Engaging & Relating	Always	Sometimes	Never	Not Under Stress
Responds to your overtures (with a smile, frown, reach, vocalization, or other intentional behavior)				
Responds to your overtures with obvious pleasure				
Responds to your overtures with curiosity and assertive interest (e.g. by studying your face)				
Anticipates an object that was shown then removed (e.g. smiles or babbles to show interest)				
Becomes displeased when you are unresponsive during play				
Protests and grows angry when frustrated				
Recovers from distress with 15 minutes with your help				
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Capacity 3: Purposeful Two-Way Communication	Always	Sometimes	Never	Not Under Stress
Responds to your gestures with intentional gestures (e.g. reaches out in a response to your outstretched arms, returns your vocalizing or look)				
Initiates interactions with you (e.g. reaching for your nose or hair or for a toy, raises arms to be picked up)				

Demonstrate the following emotions:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closeness (e.g. by hugging back when hugged, reaching out to be picked up) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pleasure & Excitement (e.g. by smiling joyfully while putting finger in your point or while taking a toy from your mouth and putting it in own) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assertive curiosity (e.g. by touching and exploring hair) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protest or anger (e.g. by pushing food off the table or screaming when desired toy not bought) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fear (e.g. by turning away, looking scared, or crying when a stranger approaches too quickly) 				
Recovers from distress within 10 minutes by being involved in social interactions				
<i>Need to work more on the capacities of this level? Click Here</i>				
Capacity 4: Complex Communication & Shared Problem Solving	Always	Sometimes	Never	Not Under Stress
Closes 10 or more circles of communication in a row (e.g. takes you by the hand, walks you to the refrigerator, points, vocalizes, responds to your question with more noises and gestures, and continues gestural exchange until you open the door and get what he wants)				
Imitates your behavior in an intentional way (e.g. puts on Daddy's hat, then parades around the house waiting for admiration)				
Closes 10 or more circles using:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> vocalizations or words 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> facial expressions 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reciprocal touching or holding 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> movement in space (e.g. rough-housing) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> large motor activity (e.g. chase games, climbing games) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communication through space (e.g. can close 10 circles with you from across the room) 				

Closes 3 or more circles in a row while feeling the following emotions:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> closeness (e.g. uses facial expressions, gestures, and vocalizations to reach out for a hug, kiss, or cuddle, or uses imitation such as talking on toy phone while you are on the real phone) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> pleasure and excitement (uses looks and vocalizations to invite another person to share excitement over something: shares "jokes" with other children or adults by laughing together at some provocation) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assertive curiosity (explores independently; uses ability to communicate across space to feel close to you while exploring or playing on her own) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> fear (tells you how to be protective, e.g., says "No!" and runs behind you) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> anger (deliberately hits, pinches, yells, bangs, screams, or lies on the floor to demonstrate anger; occasionally uses cold or angry looks instead) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> limit setting (understands and responds to your limits whether expressed through words - "No, stop that!" - or gestures - shaking finger, angry face) 				
Uses imitation to deal with and recover from distress (e.g. bangs on floor and yells after being yelled at)				
<i>Need to work more on the capacities of this level? Click Here</i>				
Capacity 5: Using Symbols & Creating Emotional Ideas	Always	Sometimes	Never	Not Under Stress
Creates pretend dramas with two or more ideas (e.g. trucks crash then pick up rocks, dolls hug then have a tea party). Child does not need to explain relationship between ideas				
Uses words, pictures, gestures to convey two or more ideas at a time (e.g. "No sleep..., play!").Child does not need to explain relationship between ideas				
Communicates wishes, intentions, and feelings using:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> words 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> multiple gestures in a row 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> touch (e.g. lots of hugging or rough-housing) 				

Plays simple motor games with rules (e.g. taking turns throwing ball)				
Uses pretend play or words to communicate the following emotions while expressing two or more ideas:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pleasure and excitement (e.g. makes funny words then laughs) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assertive curiosity (e.g. makes pretend airplane zoom around room, then says it's going to the moon) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fear (e.g. stages drama in which doll is afraid of loud noises and then call for mother) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anger (e.g. has soldiers shoot guns at one another then fall down) 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limit setting (e.g. has dolls follow rules at tea party) 				
Uses pretend play to recover from and deal with distress (e.g. plays out eating the cookie she couldn't really have)				

Need to work more on the capacities of this level? [Click Here](#)

Capacity 6: Logical Thinking and Building Bridges Between Ideas	Always	Sometimes	Never	Not Under Stress
Bridges Ideas (Builds bridges between emotional ideas)				
Elaborates and can reflect on actions				
Aware of time and space				
Child invents things such as a new game				
Can play games with rules				
Reflects on his/her own feelings				
Asks and answers "Wh" questions (who, what , when , where, why, and how)				
Gives opinions and reasons for his/her feelings and actions				
Uses logic and abstract thinking				
Debates, negotiates, and expresses choices				
Holds a sustained sense of self and others				
Expresses a full range of emotional themes such as conflict, loneliness, aggression, frustration, and morality.				

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****Not under Stress:** Children sometimes do not show some of the above abilities when under stress (e.g. hunger, anger, fatigue). In these stress situations it is better to help them to self-regulate (capacity 1) before helping them to move up the developmental ladder (move into the next stages).