

Functional Emotional Developmental Level Rating Chart
(Serena Wieder, PhD)

Child:		Caregiver:			Examiner:		
Percentage Range:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7 point Scale:	0-25%	25-50%	50-75%	75-100%			
Draw line through To highest level (1-6) child has reached The more robust and qualitative, the higher the rating.	Not Reached	Barely even with support – very intermittent (very in and out).	With persistent and/or predictable support has islands of this capacity.	With structure and scaffolding, given high affect, gestural, language, sensorimotor support can expand	Not at age-expected level, immature-fragmented; may be cyclical but comes back for more.	Age-appropriate level but vulnerable to stress and/or with constricted range of affects	Age-appropriate level with full range of affect states.
Functional Capacities							
I. Self-Regulation and Attention Take in sights and sounds and maintain shared attention							
II. Engagement And Relating Woo another or be wooed, stay engaged through emotions							
III. Use Affect to Convey Intent - Two Way Communication For requests, emerging back and forth interactions							
IV. Behavioral Organization Problem Solving Continuous flow of affective interactions with people for shared social problem solving							
V. Creates and Elaborates With Symbols Represents ideas and emotional themes.							
VI. Emotional Thinking Logical – Abstract Builds ideas, elaborates and can reflect on actions, motives, aware of time and space							

*Score of 1-4: Child requires caregiver support; 5- 6: Child attains developmental level independently but constricted; 7: Age appropriate



“Rabbit Hole” Techniques

The “**Rabbit Hole**” is our metaphor for the perseverative, repetitive, restrictive, and stereotypical behaviors characteristically exhibited by children with autism spectrum disorders.

- When children are *in* their “rabbit hole”, it seems like they don’t want to be part of the world
- Perseverative and stereotypical behaviors are not ‘bad’. They are a form of comfort the child that the uses to stay in their Comfort Zone (CZ) - to keep their world familiar and safe
- These behaviors help the child to regulate (self-calm) in a chaotic world; however, they may become habits which keeps the child isolated. These CZ behaviors can become extremely addictive for the child
- ‘Joining’ a child in their CZ allows for engagement (FDL 2) and as engagement increases, the perseverative and repetitive behaviors naturally decrease. This is the goal of the "Rabbit Hole" Techniques!

The 6 Rabbit Hole Techniques:

1. **Being With:** Simply be with (i.e. sit next to or quietly observe) and wait for the child to re-engage.
2. **Narrate:** Label and provide a running commentary. Focus on paying attention to what the child is doing. This means to watch and describe **out loud** what it is that he/she is doing. You may sound just like a sportscaster -- that's good! As an example, let's say he is coloring. You might follow what he's doing by saying, " ... *and now you're coloring the hat red.*" **Don't tell the child what to do.** You should just describe their actions. Also, stop paying attention if he/she starts demonstrating naughty/unwanted behaviors. If for instance, he/she starts whining, **don't say,** " ... *and now you're whining.*" In cases like this, ignore the bad behavior.
3. **Help him do it better:** For example, if the child is lining up cars you would begin to hand him or her additional cars to add to the line of cars or show the child new ways of using the cars.
4. **Imitate/Parallel Play:** Do something similar to what the child is doing (and see if he/she will imitate you). If the child is lining up his or her toy cars, you can begin to line up a set of cars next to them but add a slight variation (e.g., line them up facing in the opposite direction).
5. **Theme and Variation:** Do something different with the same activity. For instance, open and close a door. Sing a song while you open and close the door, hold the door closed until the child complains.
6. **Change the Sensory Mode:** If the child is " in his or own world," you can try to engage their attention with a really fun activity (e.g., bubbles or offer other sensory activities). **Keep in mind the child's primary/preferred sensory modality (i.e. visual, tactile, auditory, etc.)*