

# **Psychological human development**

# biopsychosocial model

- Biological and empirical advances in research
- We need **human experiences** understanding
- Children development – a base for understanding adult functioning

# Multiple Lines of Development

- Many lines - physical, neurological, cognitive, and intellectual. Development of human relationships, coping strategies, and general styles of organizing and differentiating thoughts, wishes, and feelings, and other areas of development.
- Lines exclusion vs. complexity
- A. Freud, E. Erikson, M. Mahler, J. Piaget

# Multiple Determinants of Behaviour

- every discrete behaviour is multiply determined - there are multiple relationships between what we observe and the way people organize their experiential world, there are many causes of a separate affective state or a behaviour and many expressions of an inner experience

# Developmental Structuralist Approach

- **Stanley I. Greenspan (1941-2010)**
- [www.stanleygreenspan.com](http://www.stanleygreenspan.com) (mostly on Floortime and autism)
- <http://www.icdl.com/DIR/6-developmental-milestones> (stages of emotional development)
- **Books:** *The Development of the Ego (1989)*, *Developmentally Based Psychotherapy (1997)*, *The Growth of the Mind and the Endangered Origins of Intelligence (1997)*, *The Evolution of Intelligence (2003)*

# Developmental Structuralist Approach

- considers how a person organizes experience at each stage of development (sensitive to the complexities and useful to clinicians)
- 1. Person's organizational capacity progresses to higher levels as he or she matures (**organizational levels**)
- 2. for each phase of development, in addition to a characteristic organizational level, there are also certain characteristic **types of experience**
- at each phase of development, certain characteristics define the experiential organizational capacity

# Functional Emotional Stages of Development

Level 1. Homeostasis: shared attention and self-regulation (0–3 Months)

Level 2. Attachment: engagement and relating (2–7 Months)

Level 3. Somatopsychological Differentiation: two-way intentional affective signaling and communication (3–10 Months)

Level 4. Complex sense of Self: shared social problem solving (9-18 Months)

Level 5. Representational Capacity: creating symbols and ideas (18-30 Months)

Level 6. Representational Differentiation: building bridges between ideas (30-48 Months)

# Level 1: Shared Attention and Regulation (0–3 Months)

- **Adaptive Patterns – Self-Regulation.** Need to organize his or her experience in an adaptive fashion. Sleep–wake cycles and cycles of hunger and satiety. Result of physiological maturation, caregiver responsiveness, and the infant’s adaptation to environmental demands. caregiver provides sensory stimulation through activities such as play, dressing, bathing etc.

*Affective tolerance* - the ability to maintain an optimal level of internal arousal while remaining engaged in the stimulation. At first – with a help of parents, then the infant can regulate himself. If the parent provides too much or too little stimulation, the infant withdraws.

- **Adaptive Patterns - Attention and Interest in the World.** Affective interest in sights, sound, touch, movement, and other sensory experiences - through repeated interactions with the caregiver. From the beginning of life, emotions play a critical role in our development of cognitive faculties.

*Dual coding* of experience - as a baby’s experiences multiply, sensory impressions become increasingly tied to feelings.



# Level 1: Shared Attention and Regulation (0–3 Months)

- **Sensory Organization** - Biologically based variations in sensory and motor functions influence the ability of an infant to simultaneously self-regulate and take an interest in the world. Each sensory pathway may be *hyperarousable* or *hypoarousable*. Subtle information processing impairments can be present in each pathway. Some infants have difficulties in integration experience across the senses or in integration new sensory information.
- **Affective Organization** - emotional experience of a stimulus will vary from infant to infant and depends of relationships with a caregiver. Impairments in sensory processing and integration, together with maladaptive child–caregiver interactions, may result in the child’s inability to organize experience of entire “affective themes,” such as dependency or aggression.  
Sensorimotor dysfunction can profoundly affect a child’s emotional and relational experience.  
Temperamental influences.  
Emotional grasp of *quantity* and *extent* – precursor of cognitive estimations.

# Level 2: Engagement and Relating (2–7 Months)

- **Adaptive Patterns – Attachment.** Baby use his emotional interest in the world to form a relationship and become engaged in it. Discrimination the pleasures of human relationships from his interests in the inanimate world. Becoming a social being.

**Attachment** (Bowlby, 1969) - the emotional bond between an infant and his primary caregiver. Higher levels of learning and intelligence depend on sustained relationships that build trust and intimacy. The key element that underlies a secure attachment is sensitive and responsive caregiving. Unsecure attachments and psychopathology.

- **Sensory Organization** - babies can adaptively employ all their senses to experience highly pleasurable feelings in their relationships with primary caregivers. Avoiding sensory contact or disturbances in sensory pathways.
- **Affective Organization** - Primary relationships form the context in which the infant can experience a wide range of “affective themes”—comfort, dependency, and joy as well as assertiveness, curiosity, and anger. Limitations in the affective organization.

# Level 3: Two-Way Intentional Affective Signaling and Communication (3–10 Months)

- **Adaptive Patterns – Intentionality**, capacity for **cause-and-effect**, or means-end type communications, back-and-forth emotional signaling with caregivers. Beginning to differentiate between perceptions and actions - leads to his earliest sense of causality and logic. The foundation of “reality testing”. Distortions in the emotional communication process (parents project their own feelings onto their infant or respond to the infant in a mechanical, remote manner) can prevent the infant from learning to appreciate cause-and-effect relationships in the arena of feelings. The baby increasingly experiences her own willfulness and sense of purpose and agency. First steps to the Self feeling - “me” or “not me”.

# Level 3: Two-Way Intentional Affective Signaling and Communication (3–10 Months)

- **Sensory Organization** – orchestrating sensory experience in the service of purposeful nonverbal communication. Compromises in sensory processing. Shift from proximal to distal modes of communication. *Proximal modes* involve direct physical contact, such as holding, rocking, and touching; *distal modes* involve communication that occurs across space through visual stimuli, auditory cuing, and emotional signaling.
- **Affective Organization** – the full range of emotions evident in the attachment phase will also be played out in purposeful, two-way communication. When the caregiver fails to respond to the baby's signal, the baby's affective-thematic inclinations may fail to become organized at this level. Developing a flat affect and a hint of despondency or sadness. Flattening discrete feelings.
- The fundamental deficit here is in reality testing and basic causality (the base of some psychotic disorders).

# Level 4: Long Chains of Coregulated Emotional Signaling and Shared Social Problem Solving (9–18 Months)

- **Adaptive Patterns – Problem Solving, Mood Regulation, and a Sense of Self.** The child can organize a long series of problem-solving interactions. He develops ability to use and respond to social cues, eventually achieving a sense of competence as an autonomous being in relationship with significant others.
- Pattern recognition in several domains – it involves perceiving how the pieces fit together, including his own feelings and desires. He begins copying not just discrete actions but large patterns encompassing several actions. The child may develop a private language as a prelude to learning the family’s language. He develops a more elaborate sense of physical space. The child rapidly learns to plan and sequence actions. He becomes a “scientific thinker”.

# Level 4: Long Chains of Coregulated Emotional Signaling and Shared Social Problem Solving (9–18 Months)

- **Adaptive Patterns – Problem Solving, Mood Regulation, and a Sense of Self.**
- ***Problem Solving.*** A child learns how to predict patterns of adult behavior and act accordingly.
- ***Regulating Mood and Behavior.*** A child learns to modulate and finely regulate his behavior and moods and cope with intense feeling states. Negotiating feelings. Without the modulating influence of an emotional interaction, either the child's feeling may grow more intense or she may give up and become self-absorbed or passive.
- ***Forming the Earliest (Presymbolic) Sense of "Self".*** An early sense of self is forming – ***“functional self”***. Reciprocal signaling with caregivers before an infant can speak. Learning about culture.

The importance of gestural communication for recognizing and modulating feelings and intentions. Developing an internal signaling system.

# Level 4: Long Chains of Coregulated Emotional Signaling and Shared Social Problem Solving (9–18 Months)

- **Sensory Organization** — A baby's organization of behavior into increasingly complex patterns is a task that involves coordinated and orchestrated use of the senses. Balanced reliance on proximal and distal modes of communication. Troubles in using distal modes. The child increases his ability to *modulate* his sensory experience.
- **Affective Organization** — complex behaviour interactions encompass a range of emotions. The child becomes increasingly sophisticated at distinguishing between emotions. Total nature of child's feelings. Nurturing exchanges helps him to learn to regulate and modulate feelings. Distortions in this ability and vulnerability.
- Children begin to develop a more integrated sense of themselves and others. Emotional polarities are united in that whole person. Beginnings of gender differences.
- (Children with autism have a biologically based difficulty in connecting emotion to their emerging capacity to plan and sequence their actions).

# Level 4: Long Chains of Coregulated Emotional Signaling and Shared Social Problem Solving (9–18 Months)

Stage 4 is an important stage that develops over several levels and according to how complex and broad the interactive emotional signaling and problem-solving patterns become. These include:

- **Action Level** – Affective interactions organized into action or behavioral patterns to express a need, but not involving exchange of signals to any significant degree.
- **Fragmented Level** – Islands of intentional, emotional signaling and problem solving.
- **Polarized Level** – Organized patterns of emotional signaling expressing only one or another feeling state, for example, organized aggression and impulsivity; organized clinging; needy, dependent behavior; organized fearful patterns.
- **Integrated Level** – Long chains of interaction involving a variety of feelings: dependency, assertiveness, pleasure. These are integrated into problem-solving patterns such as flirting, seeking closeness, and then getting help to find a needed object. These interactive patterns lead to a presymbolic sense of self, the regulation of mood and behavior, the capacity to separate perception from action, and investing freestanding perceptions or images with emotions to form symbols.



# Level 5: Creating Representations (or Ideas) (18–30 Months)

- **Adaptive Patterns – Creating Symbols and Using Words and Ideas.** A toddler can more easily separate perceptions from actions and hold freestanding images, or representations, in his mind. Object permanence. Stable multisensory, emotionally laden images.
- Speech forming (labels and symbols). Words become meaningful to the degree that they refer to lived emotional experiences. Stages of language development:
  - 1. *Words accompany actions*
  - 2. *Words are used to convey bodily feeling states*
  - 3. *Action words conveying intent are used in place of actions*
  - 4. *Words are used to convey emotions, but the emotions are treated as real rather than signals*
  - 5. *Words are used to signal feelings, as in the second case above, but these are mostly global, polarized feeling states (“I feel awful,” “I feel good.”)*

Capacity to construct symbols occurs in many domains. The child can now use symbols to manipulate ideas in his mind without actually having to carry out actions. Sharing meanings with others and better ability to describe himself (“me” vs. “not me”).

# Level 5: Creating Representations (or Ideas) (18–30 Months)

- **Sensory Organization** – A mental representation, or idea, of an object or person is a multisensory image that integrates all the object’s physical properties as well as levels of meaning abstracted from the person’s experiences with the object. The range of senses and sensorimotor patterns a child employs in relationship to his world is critical.
- **Affective Organization** – A child can label and interpret feelings rather than simply act them out. Pretend play is an reliable indicator of the ability to label and interpret.
- Ability to experience and communicate emotions symbolically → capacity for higher-level emotional and relational experiences → developing the capacity for empathy (between ages 2 and 5).

# Level 5: Creating Representations (or Ideas) (18–30 Months)

Levels of organizing and representing:

- Using words and actions together (ideas are acted out in action, but words are also used to signify the action)
- Using somatic or physical words to convey feeling state (“My muscles are exploding,” “Head is aching”)
- Putting desires or feelings into actions (e.g., hugging, hitting, biting)
- Using action words instead of actions to convey intent (“Hit you!”)
- Conveying feelings as real rather than as signals (“I’m mad,” “Hungry,” or “Need a hug” as compared with “I feel mad,” “I feel hungry,” or “I feel like I need a hug”). In the first instance, the feeling state demands action and is very close to action; in the second, it is more a signal for something going on inside that leads to a consideration of many possible thoughts and/or actions
- Expressing global feeling states (“I feel awful,” “I feel OK,” etc.)
- Expressing polarized feeling states (feelings tend to be characterized as all good or all bad)

# Level 6: Building Bridges Between Ideas: Logical Thinking (30–48 Months)

- **Adaptive Patterns – Emotional Thinking, Logic, and a Sense of “Reality”**. Ability to make logical connections between two ideas or feelings (“Me mad!” -> “I’m mad because you hit me.”). Logical connections (“The wind blew and knocked over my card house”). Time connections (“If I’m good now, I’ll get a reward later”). Space connections (“Mom is not here, but she is close by”). Understanding feelings (“I got a toy so I’m happy”).
- A child is able to differentiate her own feelings, making increasingly subtle distinctions between emotional states. Logical thinking → flowing of *new skills*, including those involved in reading, math, writing, debating, scientific reasoning, and the like. A child can now create new inventions of his own. Logical thinking forms the basis of new social skills, such as following rules and participating in groups.
- A sense of self becomes more complex and sophisticated. Connecting different parts of “Me”.

# Level 6: Building Bridges Between Ideas: Logical Thinking (30–48 Months)

- **Sensory Organization** – categorizing sensory information along many dimensions — past, present, and future; closer and farther away; appealing and distasteful — and thinking about the relationships among her sensory and emotional experiences. Any impairment in sensory processing will likely compromise an ability to make meaning of a sensory experience.
- **Affective Organization** – increasingly wide range of themes, including dependency and closeness, pleasure, excitement, curiosity, aggression, self-control, and the beginnings of empathy and consistent love.
- A child's pretend play and use of language are becoming increasingly complex, showing a growing understanding of causality and logic. Consistency of caregivers' behaviour. Parents have to be able to interpret and name the child's feelings correctly and consistently from day to day. Confusion difficulties. The basis of success in cognitive or academic tasks.

# Level 6: Building Bridges Between Ideas: Logical Thinking (30–48 Months)

Levels of organizing and representing:

- Expressing differentiated feelings (gradually there are increasingly subtle descriptions of feeling states, such as loneliness, sadness, annoyance, anger, delight, and happiness)
- Creating connections between differentiated feeling states (“I feel angry when you are mad at me”)

# Further child development

- **Stage 7 - Multiple-Cause and Triangular Thinking (4-7y).** A child can now give multiple reasons, can think indirectly. Expressing triadic interactions among feeling states (“I feel left out because Sam likes Jane better than me”).
- **Stage 8 - Gray-Area, Emotionally Differentiated Thinking (6-10y).** Expressing shades and gradations among differentiated feeling states (ability to describe degrees of feelings around anger, love, excitement, love, disappointment—“I feel a little annoyed”). Relativistic thinking.
- **Stage 9 - A Growing Sense of Self and an Internal Standard (from 10-12y).** Reflecting on feelings in relationship to an internalized sense of self (“It’s not like me to feel so angry,” or “I shouldn’t feel this jealous”). Personal opinions and internal sense of self (conscience).

# The Stages of Adolescence and Adulthood

Maturing of thinking. Increasing the complexity and level of integration of a sense of self, broadening and further integrating internal standards. Higher reflexivity and pseudoreflexivity.

- **Stage 10 - An Expanded Sense of Self** (early and middle adolescence). New learning experiences, including physical changes, sexuality, romance, and closer, more intimate peer relationships, as well as new hobbies and tastes (“I have such an intense crush on that new boy that I know it’s silly; I don’t even know him”). Adolescence “struggle”. New levels of reflection. An individual can *think about thinking and observe one’s own patterns of thought and interaction*.
- **Stage 11 - Reflecting on a Personal Future** (late adolescence and early adulthood). Emotional investing in one’s personal future and appreciation of social patterns. Using feelings to anticipate and judge (including probabilizing) future possibilities in light of current and past experience (“I don’t think I would be able to really fall in love with him because he likes to flirt with everyone and that has always made me feel neglected and sad”). Consciousness expands to include new perspective on time.



# The Stages of Adolescence and Adulthood

- **Stage 12 - Stabilizing a Separate Sense of the Self** (early adulthood). Separating from the immediacy of one's parents and nuclear family and being able to carry those relationships inside oneself. Beginning of a long process that involves reflective thinking.
- **Stage 13 - Intimacy and Commitment.** New depth in the ability to reflect upon relationships, passionate emotions, and educational or career choices. Shift from relative states of emotional immediacy to increasingly longer-term commitments.
- **Stage 14 - Creating a Family.** For those who choose to create a family of their own that includes raising children, the challenge is the experience of raising children, without losing closeness with one's spouse or partner. Empathizing with one's children without overidentifying or withdrawing.

Growing ability to view events and feelings from another individual's perspective, even when the feelings are intimate, intense, and highly personal.

# The Stages of Adolescence and Adulthood

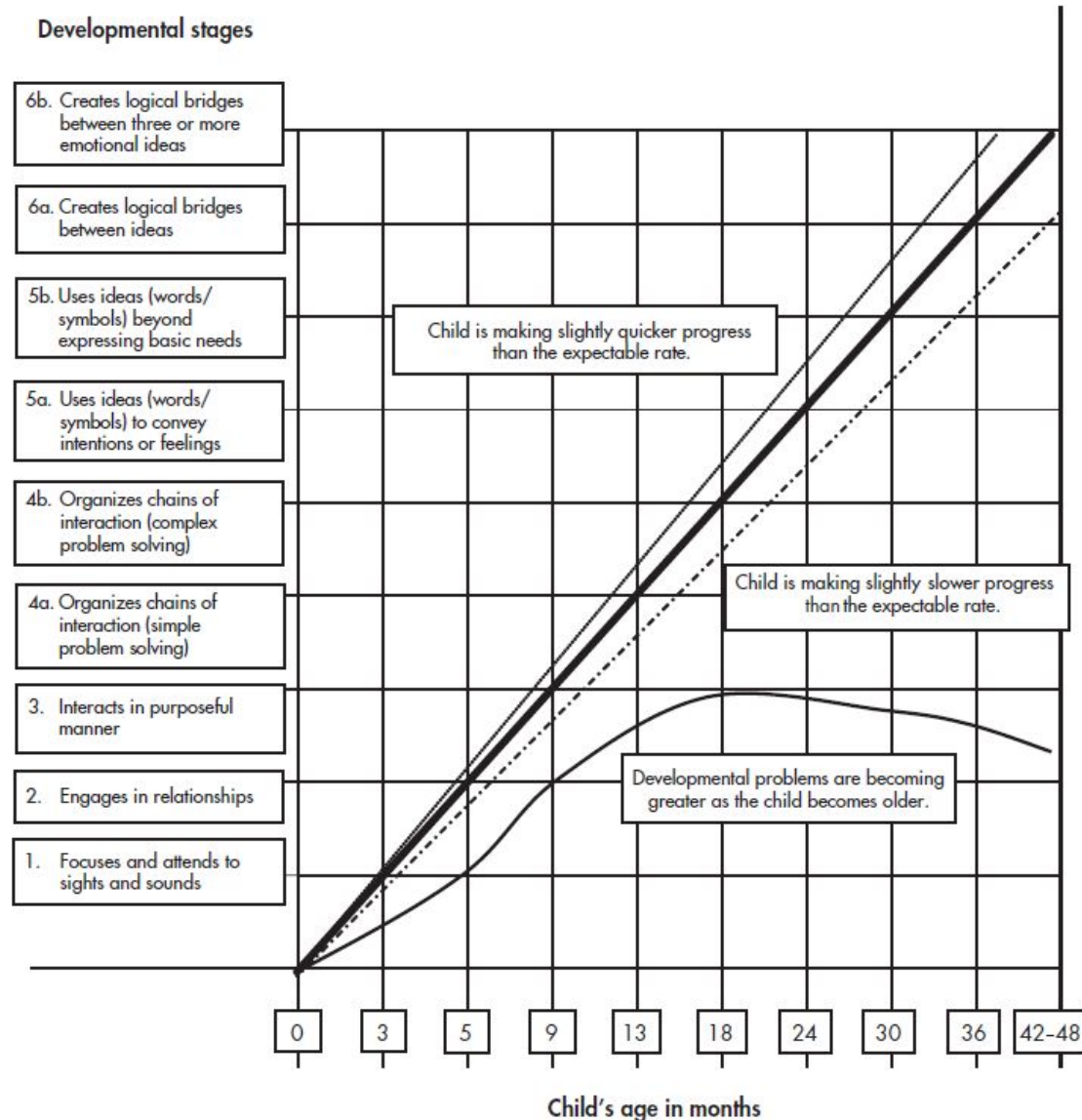
- **Stage 15 - Changing Perspectives on Time, Space, the Cycle of Life, and the Larger World: The Challenges of Middle Age.** New perspectives and the need for an expanded, reflective range. Often – the experience of accompanying one's child and deepening one's relationship with a spouse or partner. Sense of time changes (the future is now finite). Higher level of reflective thinking or depression. Assessing own strategies and patterns. A reappraisal and adaptive resolution. New perspective of one's place in the world.
- **Stage 16 - Wisdom of the Ages.** True reflective thinking of an unparalleled scope or a time of retreat and/or narrowing. Life is much more finite. Goals have been either met or not met. Aging can bring wisdom, an entirely new level of reflective awareness of one's self and the world. Or the possibility of depression and withdrawal.

# Adult level of organizing and representing

Expanding feeling states to include reflections and anticipatory judgment regarding new levels and types of feelings associated with the stages of adulthood, including the following:

- Ability to experience intimacy (serious long-term relationships)
- Ability to function independently from, and yet remain close to and internalize many of the positive features of, one's nuclear family
- Ability to nurture and empathize with one's children without overidentifying with them
- Ability to broaden one's nurturing and empathetic capacities beyond one's family and into the larger community
- Ability to experience and reflect on the new feelings of intimacy, mastery, pride, competition, disappointment, and loss associated with the family, career, and intrapersonal changes of midlife and the aging process

# Social-emotional developmental growth chart



# Levels of thinking and the different degrees of mastery possible at each level

<b>Regulation and interest in the world (first learned at 0–3 months)</b>			
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>
Attention is fleeting (a few seconds here or there) and/or very active or agitated or mostly self-absorbed and/or lethargic or passive.	When very interested or motivated or captivated, can attend and be calm for short periods (e.g., 30–60 seconds).	Focused, organized, and calm except when overstimulated or understimulated (e.g., noisy, active, or very dull setting); challenged to use a vulnerable skill (e.g., a child with weak fine motor skills asked to write rapidly), or ill, anxious, or under stress.	Focused, organized, and calm most of the time, even under stress.
<b>Engagement (first learned at 2–7 months)</b>			
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>
Aloof, withdrawn, and/or indifferent to others.	Superficial and need-oriented, lacking intimacy.	Intimacy and caring are present but disrupted by strong emotions such as anger or separation (e.g., person withdraws or acts out).	Deep, emotionally rich capacity for intimacy, caring, and empathy, even when feelings are strong or under stress.

# Levels of thinking and the different degrees of mastery possible at each level

<b>Purposeful communication (first learned at 3–10 months)</b>			
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>
Mostly aimless, fragmented, unpurposeful behavior and emotional expressions (e.g., no purposeful grins or smiles or reaching out with body posture for warmth or closeness).	Some need-oriented, purposeful islands of behavior and emotional expressions. No cohesive larger social goals.	Often purposeful and organized but not with a full range of emotional expressions (e.g., seeks out others for closeness and warmth with appropriate flirtatious glances, body posture, and the like but becomes chaotic, fragmented or aimless when very angry).	Most of the time purposeful and organized behavior and a wide range of subtle emotions, even when there are strong feelings and stress.
<b>Sense of self (first learned at 9–18 months)</b>			
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>
Distorts the intents of others (e.g., misreads cues and, therefore, feels suspicious, mistreated, unloved, angry)	In selected relationships, can read basic intentions of others (such as acceptance or rejection) but unable to read subtle cues (such as respect or pride or partial anger).	Often accurately reads and responds to a range of emotional signals, except in certain circumstances involving selected emotions, very strong emotions, or stress, or because of a difficulty with processing sensations, such as sights or sounds (e.g., certain signals are confusing).	Reads and responds to most emotional signals flexibly and accurately even when under stress (e.g., comprehends safety vs. danger, approval vs. disapproval, acceptance vs. rejection, respect vs. humiliation, partial anger).

# Levels of thinking and the different degrees of mastery possible at each level

<b>Representational and symbolic elaboration (first learned at 18–48 months)</b>			
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>
Puts wishes and feelings into action or into somatic states (“My tummy hurts”). Unable to use ideas to elaborate wishes and feelings (e.g., hits when mad, hugs or demands physical intimacy when needy, rather than experiencing idea of anger or expressing wish for closeness).	Uses ideas in a concrete way to convey desire for action or to get basic needs met. Does not elaborate idea of feeling in its own right (e.g., “I want to hit but can’t because someone is watching” rather than “I feel mad”).	Often uses ideas to be imaginative and creative and express range of emotions, except when experiencing selected conflicted or difficult emotions or when under stress (e.g., cannot put anger into words or pretend).	Uses ideas to express full range of emotions. Is imaginative and creative most of the time, even under stress.
<b>Representational and symbolic differentiation</b>			
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>
Ideas are experienced in a piecemeal or fragmented manner (e.g., one phrase is followed by another with no logical bridges).	Thinking is polarized; ideas are used in an all-or-nothing manner (e.g., things are all good or all bad; there are no shades of gray).	Thinking is constricted (i.e., tends to focus mostly on certain themes such as anger and competition). Often thinking is logical, but strong emotions, selected emotions, or stress can lead to polarized or fragmented thinking.	Thinking is logical, abstract, and flexible across the full range of age-expected emotions and interactions. Thinking is also relatively reflective at age-expected levels and in relation to age-expected endeavors (e.g., peer, spouse, or family relationship). Thinking supports movement into the next stages in the course of life.

# Levels of thinking and the different degrees of mastery possible at each level

<b>Multicause thinking</b>			
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>
Unable to be logical. Tends to get fragmented or piecemeal where logical bridges between ideas are lost.	Can be logical but only in a concrete manner and is unable to reflect on multiple reasons and indirect influences for age-expected experience.	Can reflect on multiple reasons and feelings and consider indirect influences for some age-expected experiences but not others (e.g., for competition but not for closeness and intimacy). Cannot be reflective in this way when feelings are strong.	Can think about and reflect on multiple reasons for feelings for age-expected experiences. Can look at indirect influences (e.g., “She is upset because she is mad at her parents, not me.”). Age-expected experiences would include experience with parents, siblings, peers, school, and a full range of feelings from dependency to curiosity and anger and loss.
<b>Emotionally differentiated (gray-area) thinking</b>			
<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>
Unable to be logical. Tends to get fragmented or piecemeal or very polarized in thinking.	Can be logical but only in a concrete manner and cannot reflect on multiple reasons and indirect influences for age-expected experience.	Can reflect on multiple reasons and feelings and consider indirect influences for only some age-expected experiences and events and not when feelings are very strong.	Can reflect on varying degrees of different feelings for a range of age-expected experiences or events (e.g., “I feel a little angry but mostly disappointed that Dad forgot his promise”). Age-expected experiences would include experience with parents, siblings, peers, school, and a full range of feelings from dependency to curiosity and anger and loss.



# Levels of thinking and the different degrees of mastery possible at each level

Thinking of a growing, but still unstable, internal standard and sense of self			
1	3	5	7
Unable to reflect on multiple causes or engage in gray-area thinking, is sometimes logical in only a concrete manner, or becomes polarized or fragmented in thinking.	Can be reflective and consider multiple causes and engage in gray-area thinking but is unable to simultaneously reflect on moment-to-moment experiences and an inner standard or sense of self.	Can reflect on feelings or experiences of the moment and, at the same time, compare them with a longer-term view of themselves and their experiences, values, and/or goals or ideals for some age-expected experiences but not others (i.e., with peers but not with parents; with closeness but not with anger). Cannot be reflective in this way when feelings are strong.	Can reflect on feelings or experiences of the moment and, at the same time, compare them with a longer-term view of themselves and their experiences, values, and/or goals or ideals. Can be reflective in this way across the full range of age-expected experiences and in the context of new cognitive capacities (i.e., for probabilistic, future-oriented thinking).

# Helping a Child to Develop

## 1. Homeostasis – Helping a Child to...

- 1) React to sensory experience
- 2) Overcome over-excitability
- 3) Overcome under-arousal
- 4) Use a particular sense

## 2. Attachment – Helping a Child to...

- 5) Form a relationship with you
- 6) Respond to wooing
- 7) Maintain stability
- 8) Use his senses

## 3. Somatic-Psychological Differentiation – Helping a Child to...

- 9) Reciprocate interaction
- 10) Interact in all emotional areas and with all senses
- 11) Integrate activities

# Helping a Child to Develop

## 4. Behavioral Organization and Initiative – Helping a Child to...

- 1) Organize emotions and behavior
- 2) Become organized across the full emotional spectrum
- 3) Have emotional stability
- 4) Understand the functions of objects and people
- 5) Feel close when separated from you
- 6) Adhere to and respect limits
- 7) Develop a unique personality

## 5. Representational Capacity – Helping a Child to...

- 8) Construct ideas
- 9) Encourage a range of emotions
- 10) Use emotional ideas when stressed
- 11) Develop uniqueness
- 12) Use all senses to elaborate ideas

# Helping a Child to Develop

## 6. Consolidation of Representational Differentiation – Helping a Child to...

- 1) Show cause-and-effect interactions
  - through language
  - through pretend play
- 2) Use ideas across the full emotional spectrum
  - introduce avoided emotion
  - structure disorganized emotions
  - integrate emotions
- 3) Understand complex relationships
  - Balance fantasy – reality relations
- 4) Encourage the triangular relationship
- 5) Foster emotional stability
  - Separation, loss
  - Aggression, anger
  - Interest in the body
- 6) Change special behavior patterns

# Four Organizational Levels of Development

1. Regulation, Interest in the World, and Engagement
2. Purposeful Communication and a Complex Sense of Self
3. Representational and Symbolic Elaboration
4. Representational and Symbolic Differentiation

# Margaret Mahler (on behalf of [www.margaretmahler.org](http://www.margaretmahler.org))

Margaret Schonberger Mahler was born in 1897 in a small border district in western Hungary. Schooled in Hungary and Germany, she specialized in pediatrics and gained respect for her work with severely disturbed and psychotic children. In the stimulating academic and intellectual environment of Heidelberg, Mahler broadened her interest in psychology and trained in psychoanalysis, all the while honing her observational skills to better understand early childhood development in normal, severely disturbed, and autistic children.

The turmoil of war-beset-Europe sent Mahler to London and then to New York where she pursued her dedication and work in psychoanalysis and continued her research efforts. She established a therapeutic nursery at the Masters Childrens Center in New York City. The Center later expanded to include a mother-child center for neighborhood families and provided an optimal setting for Mahler and her colleagues to further their research for child development.

Until her death in 1985, Dr. Mahler continued to write, teach, and supervise analysts in training in New York and Philadelphia. Her many publications continue to provide a rich resource for clinicians and researchers.

# Margaret Mahler's Separation-Individuation Theory

1. Autistic Phase (0-1 m)
2. Symbiotic Phase (1-5 m)
3. Separation-Individuation Phase (5-36 m)
  - A. Differentiation Subphase (Hatching) (5-9 m)
  - B. Practicing Subphase (9-15 m)
  - C. Rapprochement Subphase (15-24 m)
  - D. Consolidation and Object Constancy Subphase (24-36 m)

# Development Phases and Major Psychopathology (relative consistency)

## 1. Autistic Phase

- Autistic disorders and autistic states (in psychosis etc.)

## 2. Symbiotic Phase

## 3. (Separation-Individuation)

### A. Differentiation Subphase

- Psychosis

### (Hatching)

### B. Practicing Subphase

- Narcissistic disorders

### C. Rapprochement Subphase

- Borderline disorders

### D. Consolidation and Object Constancy Subphase

- Neurotic conditions



# Levels of affect organization

1. Somatic Regulation
2. Behavioral Regulation
3. Symbolic Regulation

# Levels of personality organization

1. Neurotic (Identity integration)
2. Borderline (Separation-Individuation)
3. Psychotic (Symbiotic)

# Developmental Levels and Adult Psychopathology

## Developmental Structural Levels of Personality Organization

- Homeostasis
- Attachment
- Somatic-Psychological Differentiation
- Behavioral Organization, Initiative and Internalization

## Illustrative Derivative Maladaptive (Psychopathological) Patterns in Adulthood

- Autism and primary defects in basic integrity of the personality (perception, integration, motor, memory, regulation)
- Primary defects in the capacity to form human relationships, internal intrapsychic emotional life, and intrapsychic structure
- Primary ego defects (psychosis) including structural defects in: (1) reality testing and organization of perception and thought; (2) perception and regulation of affect; (3) integration of affect and thought
- Defects in behavioral organization and emerging representational capacities, e.g., certain borderline psychotics; primary substance abuse; psychosomatic conditions; impulse disorders and affect tolerance disorders

# Developmental Levels and Adult Psychopathology

## Developmental Structural Levels of Personality Organization

- Representational Capacity
- Representational Differentiation
- Consolidation of Representational Differentiation
- Capacity for Limited Extended Representational System
- Capacity for Multiple Extended Representational System

## Illustrative Derivative Maladaptive (Psychopathological) Patterns in Adulthood

- Borderline syndromes and secondary ego defects in integration and organization and/or emerging differentiation of self and object representation
- Severe alterations in personality structure
- More moderate versions of the personality constrictions and alterations, for example, character disorders such as moderate obsessional, hysterical and depressive
- Encapsulated disorders including neurotic syndromes
- Phase-specific developmental and/or neurotic conflicts with or without neurotic syndromes (this pattern can also occur during earlier phases)

# A developmental approach to diagnosis

## Diagnostic categories from a developmental approach

- I. Significantly below age-appropriate level of ego functioning (ego defects)
  - A. Basic physical organic integrity of mental apparatus (e.g., perception, integration, motor, memory, regulation, judgment)
  - B. Structural psychological defects
    1. Thought, reality testing, and organization
    2. Perception and regulation of affects
    3. Integration of affect and thought
    4. Defect in integration and organization and/or in differentiation of self and object representations

## Illustrative diagnoses based on symptoms and personality traits (traditional DSM-IV-TR, Axes I and II)

- Mental retardation
- Attention-deficit disorders
- Specific developmental disorders
  
- Pervasive developmental disorders
- Thought disorders (including schizophrenic disorders)
- Mood disorders
  
- Borderline syndromes

# A developmental approach to diagnosis

## Diagnostic categories from a developmental approach

II. Severe constrictions and alterations in age appropriate level of ego structure

A. Limitation of experience of feelings and/or thoughts in major life areas (love, learning, play)

B. Alterations and limitations in pleasure orientation

C. Major externalizations of internal events (e.g., conflicts, feelings, thoughts)

D. Limitations in internalizations necessary for regulation of impulses, affect (mood), and thought

E. Impairments in self-esteem regulation

F. Limited tendencies toward fragmentation of self-object differentiation

## Illustrative diagnoses based on symptoms and personality traits (traditional DSM-IV-TR, Axes I and II)

Behavior disorders

Conduct disorders

Personality disorders

Schizoid disorders

Psychosexual disorders

Paranoid personality disorders (e.g., paranoid type)

Impulse disorders

Personality disorders (narcissistic Characteristics)

Dissociative disorders

# A developmental approach to diagnosis

## Diagnostic categories from a developmental approach

III. Moderate constrictions and alterations in age-appropriate level of ego structure (same as above)

IV. Age-appropriate functioning, but with encapsulated disorders

### A. Neurotic symptom formations

1. Limitations and alterations in experience of areas of thought (hysterical repression); phobic displacements

2. Limitation and alterations in experience of affects and feelings (e.g., obsessional isolation—depressive turning of feelings against self)

## Illustrative diagnoses based on symptoms and personality traits (traditional DSM-IV-TR, Axes I and II)

Anxiety disorders

Phobic disorders

Obsessive-compulsive patterns

# A developmental approach to diagnosis

## Diagnostic categories from a developmental approach

- B. Age-appropriate level of functioning, but with neurotic encapsulated character formation
1. Encapsulated limitation of experience of feelings and thoughts in major life areas (love, work, play)
  2. Encapsulated alterations and limitations in pleasure orientation
  3. Encapsulated major externalizations of internal events (e.g., conflicts, feelings, thoughts)
  4. Encapsulated limitations in internalizations necessary for regulation of impulses, affect (mood), and thought
  5. Encapsulated impairments in self-esteem regulation

## Illustrative diagnoses based on symptoms and personality traits (traditional DSM-IV-TR, Axes I and II)

Mild forms of personality disorders

Mild obsessive-compulsive personality disorders

Mild psychosexual disorders

Mild paranoid trends

Mild impulse disorders

Mild personality disorders (narcissistic characteristics)

# A developmental approach to diagnosis

## Diagnostic categories from a developmental approach

V. Basically age-appropriate, intact, flexible ego structures

A. With phase-specific, developmental conflicts

B. With phase-specific, developmentally expected patterns of adaptation, including adaptive regressions

C. Intact, flexible, developmentally appropriate ego structure

Illustrative diagnoses based on symptoms and personality traits (traditional DSM-IV-TR, Axes I and II)

Adjustment disorders



# Observational Categories for Constructing a Developmental Diagnostic Formulation

## I. The level of basic ego functions

- A. Organic functioning
  1. Physical and neurological development
- B. Psychological functioning
  1. Capacity for relatedness
  2. Capacity for organizing mood
  3. Capacity for affects and anxieties
  4. Capacity for organizing themes
  5. Subjective reaction of interviewer
  6. Developmental level of 1 to 4 in terms of
    - a. Attention and engagement
    - b. Intentional gestural communication
    - c. Representational elaboration (sharing meanings)
    - d. Representational differentiation (categorizing meanings)

# Observational Categories for Constructing a Developmental Diagnostic Formulation

## II. The degree of personality rigidity

- A. Style and range of relatedness
- B. Stereotypical mood
- C. Range of affect
- D. Richness and depth of themes
- E. Subjective reaction of interviewer

## III. The child's concerns and conflicts

- A. Content and style of relatedness
- B. Content of mood
- C. Content and sequence of specific affects
- D. Sequence of themes

# Observing children – first year

---

## Observational categories

## First year

---

### 1. *Physical functioning: neurological, sensory, motor integrative*

Includes characteristic observations pertaining to the physical aspects of the child having to do with mental and psychological functioning, with special focus on the level of integration of the central nervous system (e.g., gross and fine motor coordination, perceptual-motor integration, emerging cognitive capacities).

Normal milestones, including turning toward stimulus, capacity to grab item in midline, sitting up, turning over, standing and eventually beginning to walk, clearer vocalizations, possibly a word or two (e.g., mama, dada), simple causal means-ends relationships with inanimate and animate world. Shows progress toward responding to social cues rather than internal sensations by 4 months. Increasing capacity to focus, comprehend, and concentrate as development progresses, associated with being interested (without hypo- or hyperactivity) in all age-appropriate sensations (e.g., touch, sound, sights, movement) and being able to process increasingly complex information in each sensory modality.

### 2. *Pattern of relationships*

Includes characteristic style of relating or nonrelating (e.g., withdrawn, autistic), patterns of nonrelating, dyadic relating, capacity for group relating and sharing, and egocentric styles of relating.

General need for protection and comfort; multimodal interest in world evolves into highly individualized, pleasurable engagement and interactive (reciprocal) affective relationship with primary caregivers.

### 3. *Overall mood or emotional tone*

Based on direct observation of specific emotions as well as themes or topics the child discusses. Characteristic patterns of this category may not be as clearly defined for each age group as those of the other categories.

Highly variable. Intimately related to internal states (e.g., hunger), and toward second half of first year also related to external social cues (parent can get even a hungry infant to smile). When internally comfortable, sense of interest and pleasure in world and in primary caregivers (e.g., drunken-sailor smile) should prevail.

# Observing children – first year

---

## Observational categories

## First year

---

<p>4. <i>Affects</i> Consideration of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. <i>Range and variety of affect</i>: the number of affects the child manifests: during early developmental phases, range is limited or narrow; later, range is broader. Also includes characteristic types of affects: rage, jealousy, anger, empathy, love.</li><li>b. <i>Depth of affect expression</i>: substantive nature of affects manifested: shallow versus substantive, etc.</li><li>c. <i>Appropriateness of affect</i>, particularly in relation to overall mood and content.</li><li>d. <i>Discriminative capacity of affects</i>: to what degree can the affects be highly discriminative of specific feeling states?</li><li>e. <i>Relation of intensity of affect to stimulation or capacity for regulation of affect</i>.</li></ul>	<p>Variation between indifference and excitement with world becomes more organized and under control of social interaction. Specific initial affects of pleasurable excitement and unpleasurable protest lead to more differentiated gradations of both pleasure and protest and apprehension (e.g., mild, moderate) and include gestures negotiating dependency, pleasure, assertiveness, exploration, anger, fear, and anxiety. Affect system remains highly variable and is easily dominated by context.</p>
<p>5. <i>Anxieties and fears</i> Best observed either directly in child's verbalized fears or indirectly through play. Anxiety in particular can be observed by disruptions in thematic development during either play or conversation. Level of anxiety can be indicated by nature of the disruption and themes that follow it (e.g., anxieties around fear of physical injury; or of more global, undifferentiated types such as fear of loss, world destruction, or fragmentation of one's inner self).</p>	<p>Anxiety is usually global and disorganizing. Underlying concern hypothesized to be related to themes of annihilation, loss of emerging self and world.</p>

# Observing children – first year

---

## Observational categories

### 6. *Thematic expression*

Includes the capacity to express organized, developmentally appropriate, rich themes. How well can the child communicate his or her personality to another, either indirectly through play or directly through verbal communication? Clearly, some children develop such a capacity in time because their basic sense of trust in the world, their security about their own inner controls, and the availability of their fantasy life enable them to communicate a rich feeling and content sense of themselves. Other children, by comparison, will be disorganized in their thematic expression (or very constricted, fragmented, impulsive, etc.). To subdivide thematic expression further, consider it from the following perspectives:

- a. *Organization of thematic expression:* e.g., similar to organized or fragmented thinking.
- b. *Depth and richness of thematic development.*
- c. *Relevance in age-appropriate context:* How typical is content of themes to age-appropriate concerns?
- d. *Thematic sequence:* This can be used in describing children at each age.

---

## First year

Behavior related to internal cues evolves into simple social, purposeful causal behavioral chains (e.g., mother smiles, baby reaches out with hand to elicit a similar response from mother) and simple reciprocal or contingent behavior. Capacity for organized, reciprocal interactions (e.g., mother smiles, and baby smiles) to more complex chains of interaction toward end of first year (e.g., reaching out, holding object, and giving it to mother). Social interactions involve themes of pleasure, exploration, and protest.

# Observing children – second year

---

## Observational categories

## Second year

---

### 1. *Physical functioning: neurological, sensory, motor integrative*

Includes characteristic observations pertaining to the physical aspects of the child having to do with mental and psychological functioning, with special focus on the level of integration of the central nervous system (e.g., gross and fine motor coordination, perceptual-motor integration, emerging cognitive capacities).

Normal milestones, including clumsy to coordinated walking and even running, climbing steps, and so on. Fine motor capacities increasing (e.g., can scribble). Increasing comprehension of complex gestures and simple words and phrases. Growing ability to communicate with gestures and words across space. Vocalizations becoming more distinct, with capacity to name many objects and make needs known in two words; near end of second year into third year, using sentences. Capacity for developing new behaviors from old ones (originality), and emerging capacity for symbolic activity (e.g., using words to describe self and others, play with dolls); variable capacity for concentration and self-regulation.

### 2. *Pattern of relationships*

Includes characteristic style of relating or nonrelating (e.g., withdrawn, autistic), patterns of nonrelating, dyadic relating, capacity for group relating and sharing, and egocentric styles of relating.

Dyadic relationship with primary caregivers evolves into a balance between need fulfillment (basic dependency) and emerging individuality, autonomy, initiative, and capacity for self-organization at the behavioral level (e.g., the toddler who goes to the refrigerator to get what he or she wants). Some negativism may be present. Issues of need and concerns with separation still paramount.

### 3. *Overall mood or emotional tone*

Based on direct observation of specific emotions as well as themes or topics the child discusses. Characteristic patterns of this category may not be as clearly defined for each age group as those of the other categories.

Also variable, but more organized and stable for longer periods. Sense of security, curiosity, and exploration should dominate over moods of emotional hunger, the tendency to cling, negativism, fear, and apprehension. A basic mood is beginning to emerge.

# Observing children – second year

---

## Observational categories

## Second year

---

### 4. *Affects*

#### Consideration of

- a. *Range and variety of affect*: the number of affects the child manifests: during early developmental phases, range is limited or narrow; later, range is broader. Also includes characteristic types of affects: rage, jealousy, anger, empathy, love.
- b. *Depth of affect expression*: substantive nature of affects manifested: shallow versus substantive, etc.
- c. *Appropriateness of affect*, particularly in relation to overall mood and content.
- d. *Discriminative capacity of affects*: to what degree can the affects be highly discriminative of specific feeling states?
- e. *Relation of intensity of affect to stimulation or capacity for regulation of affect*.

Affects become further differentiated. Observed are excited explorations, assertive pleasure, pleasure in discovery. More complex gestural negotiations of dependency, assertiveness, anger, and self-limit-setting. Capacity for organized demonstration of love (e.g., running up and hugging, smiling, and kissing parent—all together) and protest (e.g., turning away, crying, banging, and kicking—all together). Organized negativism (the no's) and clinging demandingness also present. Balance should be in direction of organized expressions of pleasure in discovery, initiative, and love. Comfort with family and apprehension with strangers may be more developed.

### 5. *Anxieties and fears*

Best observed either directly in child's verbalized fears or indirectly through play. Anxiety in particular can be observed by disruptions in thematic development during either play or conversation. Level of anxiety can be indicated by nature of the disruption and themes that follow it (e.g., anxieties around fear of physical injury; or of more global, undifferentiated types such as fear of loss, world destruction, or fragmentation of one's inner self).

Anxiety related to loss of loved caregiver—potentially disorganizing.

# Observing children – second year

---

## Observational categories

## Second year

### 6. *Thematic expression*

Includes the capacity to express organized, developmentally appropriate, rich themes. How well can child communicate his or her personality to another, either indirectly through play or directly through verbal communication? Clearly, some children develop such a capacity in time because their basic sense of trust in the world, their security about their own inner controls, and the availability of their fantasy life enable them to communicate a rich feeling and content sense of themselves. Other children, by comparison, will be disorganized in their thematic expression (or very constricted, fragmented, impulsive, etc.). To subdivide thematic expression further, consider it from the following perspectives:

- a. *Organization of thematic expression*: e.g., similar to organized or fragmented thinking.
- b. *Depth and richness of thematic development*.
- c. *Relevance in age-appropriate context*: How typical is content of themes to age-appropriate concerns?
- d. *Thematic sequence*: This can be used in describing children at each age.

Capacity for organization of behavior into complex causal chains (e.g., taking mother by hand to refrigerator and showing her desired food); initiative and originality at behavioral level as well as increased initiative behavior. At behavioral level, child reflects themes of love, curiosity, exploration and protest, anger, negativism, and jealousy—all in organized modes (e.g., running to father and hugging and kissing him as one organized series; or turning away, throwing down toy, and screaming as another). Toward end of second year, emerging capacities to *integrate* themes that reflect *polarities* of love and anger, passivity and activity, emerging (e.g., in one game—“The doll is bad, gets spanked, and then is hugged.”). Also emerging representational or symbolic capacities in relationships and emotional themes.

---



# Observing children – third year

---

## Observational categories

### 1. *Physical functioning: neurological, sensory, motor integrative*

Includes characteristic observations pertaining to the physical aspects of the child having to do with mental and psychological functioning, with special focus on the level of integration of the central nervous system (e.g., gross and fine motor coordination, perceptual-motor integration, emerging cognitive capacities).

### 2. *Pattern of relationships*

Includes characteristic style of relating or nonrelating (e.g., withdrawn, autistic), patterns of nonrelating, dyadic relating, capacity for group relating and sharing, and egocentric styles of relating.

### 3. *Overall mood or emotional tone*

Based on direct observation of specific emotions as well as themes or topics the child discusses. Characteristic patterns of this category may not be as clearly defined for each age group as those of the other categories.

---

## Third year

Coordinated gross motor activity: running, walking up and down stairs without holding on, etc. Fine motor coordination more differentiated (e.g., can scribble circles, hold feeding utensils). Can comprehend phrases, simple sentences, and complex gestures. Can name many objects, use personal pronouns and sentences to describe events, and make needs known. Symbolic capacity expanded as evidenced in wider fantasy life (e.g., dreams, fears, make-believe stories and people); capacity for concentration and self-regulation still variable but improving.

Relationships, although still dyadic and need-fulfilling, now become organized at a representational or symbolic level (i.e., a sense of self and other in terms of thoughts, memories, etc., is emerging) and permit use of fantasy. Balance between dependency and autonomy may shift for a brief time to the former. Power struggles and negativism may intermittently dominate relationship pattern. Dominant issues continue to be basic dependency, the need for security, and fear of separation. Symbolic interactions in power, control, aggression, and different types of pleasure in relationships emerging. Capacity for more complex interactions because internal imagery can now be used (e.g., language or a doll used to represent needs in a complex game).

Initially may become quite variable (e.g., moody, fussy, and clinging behavior together with secure explorativeness) but then gradually stabilizes into even pattern organized around a basic sense of security and optimism, with capacity for excitement, negativism, passivity, tendency to cling, etc., present but not dominant.

# Observing children – third year

---

## Observational categories

## Third year

### 4. *Affects*

#### Consideration of

- a. *Range and variety of affect*: the number of affects the child manifests: during early developmental phases, range is limited or narrow; later, range is broader. Also includes characteristic types of affects: rage, jealousy, anger, empathy, love.
- b. *Depth of affect expression*: substantive nature of affects manifested: shallow versus substantive, etc.
- c. *Appropriateness of affect*, particularly in relation to overall mood and content.
- d. *Discriminative capacity of affects*: to what degree can the affects be highly discriminative of specific feeling states?
- e. *Relation of intensity of affect to stimulation or capacity for regulation of affect*.

Affects now gradually have more “meaning” (representational or symbolic level). After possible initial instability in affect system (e.g., regressive, clinging anger and dependency), greater organization of affect system possible, with complex affects such as love, unhappiness, jealousy, and envy expressed at both preverbal and emerging verbal level. Affect system still easily influenced by somatic events (e.g., tiredness, hunger). Affects still mostly at egocentric level (“What’s in it for me”).

### 5. *Anxieties and fears*

Best observed either directly in child’s verbalized fears or indirectly through play. Anxiety in particular can be observed by disruptions in thematic development during either play or conversation. Level of anxiety can be indicated by nature of the disruption and themes that follow it (e.g., anxieties around fear of physical injury; or of more global, undifferentiated types such as fear of loss, world destruction, or fragmentation of one’s inner self).

Anxiety related to loss of loved and depended-on person as well as loss of approval and acceptance. Although still potentially disorganizing, anxiety can be better tolerated and may be coped with through alterations in mental imagery (fantasy) (e.g., “Mother will be back; she loves me”).

# Observing children – third year

---

## Observational categories

## Third year

### 6. *Thematic expression*

Includes the capacity to express organized, developmentally appropriate, rich themes. How well can child communicate his or her personality to another, either indirectly through play or directly through verbal communication? Clearly, some children develop such a capacity in time because their basic sense of trust in the world, their security about their own inner controls, and the availability of their fantasy life enable them to communicate a rich feeling and content sense of themselves. Other children, by comparison, will be disorganized in their thematic expression (or very constricted, fragmented, impulsive, etc.). To subdivide thematic expression further, consider it from the following perspectives:

- a. *Organization of thematic expression:* e.g., similar to organized or fragmented thinking.
- b. *Depth and richness of thematic development.*
- c. *Relevance in age-appropriate context:* How typical is content of themes to age-appropriate concerns?
- d. *Thematic sequence:* This can be used in describing children at each age.

Behavior remains organized as in second year, and even more complex chains of interaction are possible. Now symbolic or representational capacity, as evidenced by language and use of personal pronouns (I, you, etc.), and elaboration of fantasy through language and behavior (e.g., play in which child has one doll, mother another doll), emerge. In contrast to *organized* behavior, symbolic communication is initially fragmented (e.g., seemingly disconnected islands of pretend play or verbal communication). There is a gradual elaboration of experience—simple repetitive themes, “Want that,” or pretend play of dolls hugging leads to a broad range of themes concerning power, pleasure, dependency, fear, etc. These themes gradually become more complex (e.g., the dolls hug and then kiss). Themes involve repeating what is seen and heard, exploring inanimate and animate world with new symbolic capacities, and then using symbolic modes for emotional interaction. There is a vacillation between attempts at self-definition—through trying to be in “control,” power struggles, negativism, and joyful and excited development of new behavior and thoughts (discovery at the symbolic level)—and regressive dependent interests (e.g., holding, clinging), which, however, also have the element of “I’m in control.” Improving capacity for self-control and responding to limits and structure at symbolic level. Interest in theme of power (e.g., rocket ships, powerful heroes, pretending to be a monster and being scared of monsters) emerges toward end of third year.

---

# Observing children – fourth year

---

## Observational categories

## Fourth year

---

### 1. *Physical functioning: neurological, sensory, motor integrative*

Includes characteristic observations pertaining to the physical aspects of the child having to do with mental and psychological functioning, with special focus on the level of integration of the central nervous system (e.g., gross and fine motor coordination, perceptual-motor integration, emerging cognitive capacities).

Gross motor coordination continues to improve; child can run, jump, hop, throw a ball accurately, etc. Fine motor coordination improves; child can almost tie shoes, can draw circles, handles utensils very well. Comprehends two or more connected concepts or ideas. Can talk in full sentences, connecting ideas with words such as “but” and “because,” and make needs known. Symbolic capacity expanded (e.g., complex play with dolls), and ability for reality orientation (distinguishing fantasy from reality) increasing; concentration and self-regulation possible with appropriate context and support.

### 2. *Pattern of relationships*

Includes characteristic style of relating or nonrelating (e.g., withdrawn, autistic), patterns of nonrelating, dyadic relating, capacity for group relating and sharing, and egocentric styles of relating.

Relationship patterns becoming more complicated not only in content (language, symbolic modes) but also in form, as dyadic patterns begin to recede and capacities for dealing with triangular and other more complicated patterns emerge (e.g., rivalries, intrigues, secrets, two against one, jealousies, envy). Capacity for peer relationships increasing as well. Greater sense of security; capacity for separation and for carrying sense of the “other” inside relatively well established by end of fourth year. Anger and other strong feelings do not compromise secure capacity for separation. Capacity for intimacy (not simply need-fulfilling) in relationships emerging more fully.

### 3. *Overall mood or emotional tone*

Based on direct observation of specific emotions as well as themes or topics the child discusses. Characteristic patterns of this category may not be as clearly defined for each age group as those of the other categories.

Mood stabilizes further and organizes complex feelings; less extreme reactions to frustration (e.g., having to delay). Basic attitude toward self and world conveyed in organized mood, which optimally reflects security in psychological and bodily self and curious expansive interest with excitement in family, peers, and the world. Insecurity and negativism receding in importance.

# Observing children – fourth year

---

## Observational categories

## Fourth year

---

### 4. *Affects*

#### Consideration of

- a. *Range and variety of affect*: the number of affects the child manifests: during early developmental phases, range is limited or narrow; later, range is broader. Also includes characteristic types of affects: rage, jealousy, anger, empathy, love.
- b. *Depth of affect expression*: substantive nature of affects manifested: shallow versus substantive, etc.
- c. *Appropriateness of affect*, particularly in relation to overall mood and content.
- d. *Discriminative capacity of affects*: to what degree can the affects be highly discriminative of specific feeling states?
- e. *Relation of intensity of affect to stimulation or capacity for regulation of affect*.

Pride and joy in psychological and bodily self further emerge. Increased interest in power; affects of shame and humiliation become dominant. Increased feelings of jealousy and envy; more differentiated sadistic and masochistic trends. Emerging capacity for sharing and concern for others. Empathy and tenderness increasing. Affect system well organized, showing many affect states of the emerging sense of self.

### 5. *Anxieties and fears*

Best observed either directly in child's verbalized fears or indirectly through play. Anxiety in particular can be observed by disruptions in thematic development during either play or conversation. Level of anxiety can be indicated by nature of the disruption and themes that follow it (e.g., anxieties around fear of physical injury; or of more global, undifferentiated types such as fear of loss, world destruction, or fragmentation of one's inner self).

Anxiety over loss of loved person's approval and bodily injury sometimes disruptive but usually not. Multiple fears of being robbed, kidnapped, or hurt or of parents being taken away or hurt not uncommon, but usually understood as either "only a dream" or "not real."

# Observing children – fourth year

---

## Observational categories

## Fourth year

---

### 6. *Thematic expression*

Includes the capacity to express organized, developmentally appropriate, rich themes. How well can child communicate his or her personality to another, either indirectly through play or directly through verbal communication? Clearly, some children develop such a capacity in time because their basic sense of trust in the world, their security about their own inner controls, and the availability of their fantasy life enable them to communicate a rich feeling and content sense of themselves. Other children, by comparison, will be disorganized in their thematic expression (or very constricted, fragmented, impulsive, etc.). To subdivide thematic expression further, consider it from the following perspectives:

- a. *Organization of thematic expression*: e.g., similar to organized or fragmented thinking.
- b. *Depth and richness of thematic development*.
- c. *Relevance in age-appropriate context*: How typical is content of themes to age-appropriate concerns?
- d. *Thematic sequence*: This can be used in describing children at each age.

Thematic organization at behavioral level continues in a richer, more complex fashion. Now, however, complex themes at a symbolic level are also becoming organized compared with fragmentation of third year (e.g., organized verbal elaboration of fantasy now possible in the reporting of a dream: “A monster came in and was going to attack me, but then I punched him in the nose...”; and in symbolic play: building a fort to protect dolls from the various monsters, having a “tea party,” cooking various foods and serving guests). Some vacillation between these organized themes and fragmented ones, but indications of rich, organized inner life present. Content of themes a product of inner fantasy life. Capacity for reality orientation present as well—“that’s just make-believe.” Tendency is to be swept away by fantasy for short periods of time. In *circumscribed areas*, fantasy may dominate reality over long periods—for example, in fears around going to sleep. Themes around both aggression- and pleasure-derived power and interest in and fear of the body dominate, together with curiosity, a sense of discovery, feelings of pride, admiration of self and others, and concerns with shame. Also present are concerns with security, fears of loss of love and separation, and power struggles and issues of control.

---

# Observing children – fifth and sixth years

---

## Observational categories

## Fifth and sixth years

---

### 1. *Physical functioning: neurological, sensory, motor integrative*

Includes characteristic observations pertaining to the physical aspects of the child having to do with mental and psychological functioning, with special focus on the level of integration of the central nervous system (e.g., gross and fine motor coordination, perceptual-motor integration, emerging cognitive capacities).

Gross motor coordination improves, as evidenced by more accurate throwing, rhythmic jumping (rope), and kicking (e.g., football). Fine motor coordination improves; child ties shoes; writes letters; draws circles, squares, and triangles; talks in full, complex sentences; and begins to show capacity to present ideas. Can begin to comprehend, express, and conceptualize simple reciprocal and inverse relationships between multiple ideas and aspects of physical reality (e.g., line up shapes according to length or figure out degrees of intensity of anger or greed). Capacity for self-regulation and concentration improving, but still subject to context and support.

### 2. *Pattern of relationships*

Includes characteristic style of relating or nonrelating (e.g., withdrawn, autistic), patterns of nonrelating, dyadic relating, capacity for group relating and sharing, egocentric styles of relating, etc.

Complex triangular modes dominate family life as relationships take on “soap opera” dimensions of intrigue, rivalry, alliances, etc. Simple, need-fulfilling, two-person relationships pattern less dominant. Capacity to relate comfortably with others—peers, teachers—growing. Growing capacity for separation, internal security; ability to carry a sense of “self” and “other” inside not only well established but also not easily compromised by separations or strong affects.

### 3. *Overall mood or emotional tone*

Based on direct observation of specific emotions as well as themes or topics the child discusses. Characteristic patterns of this category may not be as clearly defined for each age group as those of the other categories.

Stable, organized mood characterized by expressiveness and curiosity. Variations in affect (e.g., fearfulness, inhibition, unwillingness to compromise), but overall organization and stability of mood.

# Observing children – fifth and sixth years

---

## Observational categories

## Fifth and sixth years

---

### 4. *Affects*

#### Consideration of

- a. *Range and variety of affect*: the number of affects the child manifests: during early developmental phases, range is limited or narrow; later, range is broader. Also includes characteristic types of affects: rage, jealousy, anger, empathy, love.
- b. *Depth of affect expression*: substantive nature of affects manifested: shallow versus substantive, etc.
- c. *Appropriateness of affect*, particularly in relation to overall mood and content.
- d. *Discriminative capacity of affects*: to what degree can the affects be highly discriminative of specific feeling states?
- e. *Relation of intensity of affect to stimulation or capacity for regulation of affect*.

Many individual affects in relatively stable pattern: expansiveness, curiosity, pride, gleeful excitement related to discovery of bodily self and family patterns; balanced with coyness, shyness, fearfulness, jealousy, and envy. Shame and humiliation still dominant. Capacity for empathy and love developed, but fragile and easily lost if competitive or jealous strivings are on the upsurge.

### 5. *Anxieties and fears*

Best observed directly in child's verbalized fears or indirectly through play. Anxiety in particular can be observed by disruptions in thematic development during either play or conversation. Level of anxiety can be indicated by nature of the disruption and themes that follow it (e.g., anxieties around fear of physical injury; or of more global, undifferentiated types such as fear of loss, world destruction, or fragmentation of one's inner self).

Anxiety and fears related to bodily injury and loss of respect, love, and emerging self-esteem; self-esteem may vacillate between extremes. Guilt feelings emerging.



# Observing children – fifth and sixth years

---

## Observational categories

## Fifth and sixth years

---

### 6. *Thematic expression*

Includes the capacity to express organized, developmentally appropriate, rich themes. How well can child communicate his or her personality to another, either indirectly through play or directly through verbal communication? Clearly, some children develop such a capacity in time because their basic sense of trust in the world, their security about their own inner controls, and the availability of their fantasy life enable them to communicate a rich feeling and content sense of themselves. Other children, by comparison, will be disorganized in their thematic expression (or very constricted, fragmented, impulsive, etc.). To subdivide thematic expression further, consider it from the following perspectives:

- a. *Organization of thematic expression*: e.g., similar to organized or fragmented thinking.
- b. *Depth and richness of thematic development*.
- c. *Relevance in age-appropriate context*: How typical is content of themes to age-appropriate concerns?
- d. *Thematic sequence*: This can be used in describing children at each age.

Rich, organized, complex, symbolic thematic capacity with occasional fragmentation. Although capable of being swept away by the fantasy, reality orientation well established. “That’s not real,” except at times in certain circumscribed areas around fears, etc. Content of themes represents rich, complex interest in major issues of the world: sex, aggression, power, curiosity, discovery, emerging morality, etc. Polarities of love, pleasure, and aggression should be present and integrated into complex, rich themes (e.g., game where child first takes care of sibling in a loving fashion, later becomes an attacking monster, and then becomes concerned with retaliation). For the first time, triangular patterns in relationships emerge in thematic expression—feeling left out, wishing to leave someone else out, game or fantasy of getting rid of “other” person in triangle, etc. Slight shift from interests in power and one’s own body and how it compares to others’ to real curiosity about others and their bodies and what goes on “behind closed doors.” Fear of bodily injury takes over, although earlier fears of loss of approval and separation are present. Emerging fears of loss of own self-esteem now possible (e.g., “I am bad” or “I’m not good at anything”).

---

# Observing children – seventh and eighth years

---

## Observational categories

## Seventh and eighth years

---

### 1. *Physical functioning; neurological, sensory, motor integrative*

Includes characteristic observations pertaining to the physical aspects of the child having to do with mental and psychological functioning, with special focus on the level of integration of the central nervous system (e.g., gross and fine motor coordination, perceptual-motor integration, emerging cognitive capacities).

Gross motor coordination improves even further; child can now do most activities: running, jumping, hopping, skipping, throwing, etc. Fine motor coordination improves, as evidenced by being able to write more fluently in script, improved drawing, etc. Language used more and more in comprehending and communicating many interrelated ideas and concepts. Language used to present wishes, needs, and fantasies, as well as logical ideas oriented toward making orderly sense of the world. Capacity for logic in terms of inverse and reciprocal relationships established. Capacity for self-regulation, following rules, and concentrating established.

### 2. *Pattern of relationships*

Includes characteristic style of relating or nonrelating (e.g., withdrawn, autistic), patterns of nonrelating, dyadic relating, capacity for group relating and sharing, and egocentric styles of relating.

Interest in relationships outside family groups (e.g., peers) and capacity for organized orderly patterns of relating to others (e.g., games with rules) emerge. Some aspects of earlier patterns still present, however (e.g., power struggles, passive helplessness, family intrigues, rivalries, triangles). Capacity for “buddy” and intimacy with a few “best” friends emerging more fully.

### 3. *Overall mood or emotional tone*

Based on direct observation of specific emotions as well as themes or topics the child discusses. Characteristic patterns of this category may not be as clearly defined for each age group as those of the other categories.

Stable, organized mood characterized by emerging appraisal of self, others, and world, often based on perceptions of peer group, family group, and adults such as teachers and coaches. Expansive curiosity balanced with more sober, orderly approach.

# Observing children – seventh and eighth years

---

## Observational categories

## Seventh and eighth years

---

### 4. *Affects*

#### Consideration of

- a. *Range and variety of affect*: the number of affects the child manifests: during early developmental phases, range is limited or narrow; later, range is broader. Also includes characteristic types of affects: rage, jealousy, anger, empathy, love.
- b. *Depth of affect expression*: substantive nature of affects manifested: shallow versus substantive, etc.
- c. *Appropriateness of affect*, particularly in relation to overall mood and content.
- d. *Discriminative capacity of affects*: to what degree can the affects be highly discriminative of specific feeling states?
- e. *Relation of intensity of affect to stimulation or capacity for regulation of affect*.

Pleasure in approval, over success, and over mastery (self-esteem) emerge and operate in balance with the expansive and competitive affects described above and fear of failure and humiliation. Less variation in specific affects, although numerous affects still possible. Some instability between attempts to keep self in order and on right track (e.g., affects of self-praise, self-esteem) and earlier expansive and rivalrous affects. At times, earlier affects of envy, negativism, and egocentric emotional hunger pervade. Concern for others, empathy, and even worry growing.

### 5. *Anxieties and fears*

Best observed either directly in child's verbalized fears or indirectly through play. Anxiety in particular can be observed by disruptions in thematic development during either play or conversation. Level of anxiety can be indicated by nature of the disruption and themes that follow it (e.g., anxieties around fear of physical injury, or of more global, undifferentiated types such as fear of loss, world destruction, or fragmentation of one's inner self).

Anxiety is occasionally disruptive, usually serves a signal function, and can be dealt with via shift in fantasy or change in meanings (e.g., reaction formations). Fears of humiliation or shame, loss of respect, and disapproval dominate (e.g., "They think I am terrible at soccer," "Everyone hates me"), with earlier fears of loss of love, separation, and bodily injury still present. Guilt feelings present ("I am bad") but often dependent on context.

# Observing children – seventh and eighth years

---

## Observational categories

## Seventh and eighth years

---

### 6. *Thematic expression*

Includes the capacity to express organized, developmentally appropriate, rich themes. How well can child communicate his or her personality to another, either indirectly through play or directly through verbal communication? Clearly, some children develop such a capacity in time because their basic sense of trust in the world, their security about their own inner controls, and the availability of their fantasy life enable them to communicate a rich feeling and content sense of themselves. Other children, by comparison, will be disorganized in their thematic expression (or very constricted, fragmented, impulsive, etc.). To subdivide thematic expression further, consider it from the following perspectives:

- a. *Organization of thematic expression*: e.g., similar to organized or fragmented thinking.
  - b. *Depth and richness of thematic development*.
  - c. *Relevance in age-appropriate context*: How typical is content of themes to age-appropriate concerns?
  - d. *Thematic sequence*: This can be used in describing children at each age.
- 

Relatively rich, organized thematic development with perhaps slightly less richness or breadth than in 5- to 6-year-old period, but more organized with less fragmentation. Less emphasis now on expanding interest in world, triangles, intrigues, the human body, what goes on behind closed doors, and various aggressive themes (e.g., monsters, attacking); more emphasis on containing these interests (e.g., “I’m not interested in what’s going on behind the door; let me look, and I’ll show you I’m not interested”). In sense of polarities, there is a slight shift from pleasurable pursuits toward themes of control, but balance should still be present. Interest in “roles” (what I am—“a football player,” etc.) emerging as more dominant. Activity and assertion should be better modulated (e.g., regulates self and follows instructions). Occasional passive compliance may be present. Sense of morality (what is right and wrong) emerging but still unstable. Concern with rules and structure emerging; relatively greater interest in peers and the group and slightly diminished interest in the family and adults.

# Observing children – ninth and tenth years

Observational categories	Ninth and tenth years
<p>1. <i>Physical functioning: neurological, sensory, motor integrative</i> Includes characteristic observations pertaining to the physical aspects of the child having to do with mental and psychological functioning, with special focus on the level of integration of the central nervous system (e.g., gross and fine motor coordination, perceptual-motor integration, emerging cognitive capacities).</p>	<p>Greater muscle strength enhances gross motor coordination: gradual further improvement in all areas, with the capacity for complex activities (e.g., basketball, football, tennis). New learning more established. Fine motor coordination also improves, with more fluid writing and the capacity to take things apart (e.g., with screwdriver) skillfully. Language now used to comprehend and express complex ideas with relationships among a few elements (e.g., “I did this because he did that, and he did that because she made him”). Able to use logic to understand gradations in feelings or aspects of physical reality and more complex inverse and reciprocal relationships. Tendency for logical exploration to dominate fantasy; greater sense of morality; increased interest in rules and orderliness; increased capacity for self-regulation; and well-established ability to concentrate.</p>
<p>2. <i>Pattern of relationships</i> Includes characteristic style of relating or nonrelating (e.g., withdrawn, autistic), patterns of nonrelating, dyadic relating, capacity for group relating and sharing, and egocentric styles of relating.</p>	<p>Peer relationships continue to grow in importance and complexity. Family relationships and friendships may be organized around role models (e.g., simplified adult stereotypes). Relaxed capacity for integrating and enjoying family, peer, teacher, and other adult relationships. Special relationship with same-sex parent as role model, with only hints of earlier levels (e.g., triangles, power struggles, passive manipulation). Preparation for adolescent styles of relating emerging, with special patterns of relating to same- and opposite-sex peers. Capacity for <i>long-term</i> relationships with family, peers, and friends—including “best friend(s).” Less reactive to day-to-day peer fluctuations toward end of tenth year.</p>

# Observing children – ninth and tenth years

---

## Observational categories

### 3. *Overall mood or emotional tone*

Based on direct observation of specific emotions as well as themes or topics the child discusses. Characteristic patterns of this category may not be as clearly defined for each age group as those of the other categories.

### 4. *Affects*

Consideration of

- a. *Range and variety of affect*: the number of affects the child manifests: during early developmental phases, range is limited or narrow; later, range is broader. Also includes characteristic types of affects: rage, jealousy, anger, empathy, love.
- b. *Depth of affect expression*: substantive nature of affects manifested: shallow versus substantive, etc.
- c. *Appropriateness of affect*, particularly in relation to overall mood and content.
- d. *Discriminative capacity of affects*: to what degree can the affects be highly discriminative of specific feeling states?
- e. *Relation of intensity of affect to stimulation or capacity for regulation of affect*.

---

## Ninth and tenth years

Stability, depth, and organization of mood further developed, as evidenced by capacity to deal with frustration, complex interpersonal relationships, and so forth, with sense of curiosity and *realistic* optimism (which is gradually replacing expansiveness). Overwhelming sadness, negativism, passive helplessness, and withdrawn moods should emerge only intermittently (e.g., in appropriate circumstances of stress).

Well-developed capacity for empathy, love, compassion, and sharing and emerging capacity for sadness and loss in context of concrete rules. Internal self-esteem very important. Feelings of guilt and internalized fears present. Expansive lust, hunger, and jealousy in background. New affects around sexual differences beginning to emerge (e.g., excitement and shyness in relation to sexual themes).

# Observing children – ninth and tenth years

---

## Observational categories

## Ninth and tenth years

---

### 5. *Anxieties and fears*

Best observed either directly in child's verbalized fears or indirectly through play. Anxiety in particular can be observed by disruptions in thematic development during either play or conversation. Level of anxiety can be indicated by nature of the disruption and themes that follow it (e.g., anxieties around fear of physical injury; or of more global, undifferentiated types such as fear of loss, world destruction, or fragmentation of one's inner self).

Anxiety related to internalized conflicts generally not disruptive; may be dysphoric and/or serve a signal function and lead to change in behavior, interpretation of events, or more sophisticated changes in meanings and fantasies (e.g., rationalizations). Fears of loss of self-esteem related to loss of respect, humiliation, and shame are still present. Fear of one's own guilt growing stronger ("I can't do that. It will make me feel bad").

### 6. *Thematic expression*

Includes the capacity to express organized, developmentally appropriate, rich themes. How well can child communicate his or her personality to another, either indirectly through play or directly through verbal communication? Clearly, some children develop such a capacity in time because their basic sense of trust in the world, their security about their own inner controls, and the availability of their fantasy life enable them to communicate a rich feeling and content sense of themselves. Other children, by comparison, will be disorganized in their thematic expression (or very constricted, fragmented, impulsive, etc.). To subdivide thematic expression further, consider it from the following perspectives:

- a. *Organization of thematic expression:* e.g., similar to organized or fragmented thinking.
- b. *Depth and richness of thematic development.*
- c. *Relevance in age-appropriate context:* How typical is content of themes to age-appropriate concerns?
- d. *Thematic sequence:* This can be used in describing children at each age.

Thematic capacity quite well organized (e.g., capable of relating organized story about the robbers who are caught by the policemen in great detail, with elaborations of the robbers' plans and how the policemen fooled them). Stories of football games or parties where adult roles are imitated are also presented in a detailed, organized manner. Little or no fragmentation as more and more interrelated detail can be organized. Some of the emotional richness and complexity of the 5- or 6-year-old phase relinquished for greater interest in themes around control, rules, organization, and higher-level domination-submission themes. The new interest in "roles" and "what I will be" and "how good I am at this or that" or "how bad I am at this or that" and differences between boys and girls emerging. Variable interest in talking both with peers and, somewhat sheepishly, with adults about sex (e.g., dirty jokes with giggling) in anticipation of adolescence. Concerns with self-regard and how others regard one are also prominent. Internal morality relatively well established in concrete "black and white" sense, but still easy to rationalize breaking the rules. In fact, along with greater concern with right and wrong is more sophisticated capacity for rationalizing and getting around the rules. Self-control and capacity to follow instructions should be quite well established, however.

---