

I. Difficulty with Reciprocal Social Interactions

A. Inability and/or a lack of desire to interact with peers. You are concerned with the child’s reciprocal interactions with others and the quality of those interactions. It is very important to observe how the child interacts with same-age peers. This category comprises two separate issues: the ability and the desire to interact.

<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Displays an inability to interact because she does not know how to interact. She wants to interact with others but does not know what to do.
<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Observes or stays on the periphery of a group rather than joining in.
<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Initiates play interaction by taking a toy or starting to engage in an ongoing activity without gaining verbal agreement from the other players, will ignore a negative response from others when asking to join in, will abruptly leave a play interaction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Lacks conversational language for a social purpose, does not know what to say — this could be no conversation, monopolizing the conversation, lack of ability to initiate conversation, obsessive conversation in one area, conversation not on topic or conversation that is not of interest to others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Lacks the ability to understand, attend to, maintain, or repair a conversational flow or exchange — this causes miscommunication and inappropriate responses (unable to use the back-and-forth aspect of communication).
<input type="checkbox"/>	e. Lacks an understanding of game playing — unable to share, unable to follow the rules of turn taking, unable to follow game-playing rules (even those that may appear quite obvious), is rigid in game playing (may want to control the game or those playing and/or create her own set of rules), always needs to be first, unable to make appropriate comments while playing, and has difficulty with winning/losing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	f. Is unable to select activities that are of interest to others (unaware or unconcerned that others do not share the same interest or level of interest, unable to compromise).
<input type="checkbox"/>	g. Compromises interactions by rigidity, inability to shift attention or “go with the flow,” being rule bound, needs to control the play/activity (play may “look” imaginative but is most likely repetitive — e.g., action figures are always used in the same way, songs are played in the same order, Lego pieces are always put together in the same way).
<input type="checkbox"/>	h. Displays narrow play and activity choices (best observed during unstructured play/leisure activities: look for rigidity/patterns/repetitive choices, inability to accept novelty).
<input type="checkbox"/>	i. Engages in unusual behaviors or activities (selects play or activity choices of a younger child, seems unaware of the unwritten social rules among peers, acts like an imaginary character, uses an unusual voice — any behaviors that call attention to the individual or are viewed as unusual by peers).
<input type="checkbox"/>	j. Displays a limited awareness of current fashion, slang, topics, activities, and accessories (does not seem interested in what peers view as popular or the most current craze, unless it happens to match a special interest).
<input type="checkbox"/>	k. Displays a limited awareness of the emotions of others and/or how to respond to them (does not ask for help from others, does not know how to respond when help is given, does not know how to respond to compliments, does not realize the importance of apologizing, does not realize something she says or does can hurt the feelings of another, does not differentiate internal thoughts from external thoughts, does not

	respond to the emotions another is displaying — misses cues).
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Prefers structured over nonstructured activities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Displays a <i>lack of desire</i> to interact.
<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Does not care about her inability to interact with others because she has no interest in doing so. She prefers solitary activities and does not have the need to interact with others, or she is socially indifferent and can take it or leave it with regard to interacting with others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Sits apart from others, avoids situations where involvement with others is expected (playgrounds, birthday parties, being outside in general), and selects activities that are best completed alone (e.g., computer games, Game Boy, books, viewing TV/videos, collecting, keeping lists).
<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Is rule bound/rigid and spends all free time completely consumed by areas of special interest. Her activities are so rule bound, it would be almost impossible for a peer to join in correctly. When asked about preferred friends, the individual is unable to name any or names those who are really not friends (family members, teachers).
B. Lack of appreciation of social cues. The individual, unable to identify or interpret the “messages” others give in conversations or interactions, demonstrates social thinking deficits.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Lacks awareness if someone appears bored, upset, angry, scared, and so forth. Therefore, she does not comment in a socially appropriate manner or respond by modifying the interaction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Lacks awareness of the facial expressions and body language of others, so these conversational cues are missed. He is also unable to use gestures or facial expressions to convey meaning when conversing. You will see fleeting, averted, or a lack of eye contact. He will fail to gain another’s attention before conversing with them. He may stand too far away from or too close to the person he is conversing with. His body posture may appear unusual.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. When questioned regarding what could be learned from another’s facial expression, says, “Nothing.” Faces do not provide him with information. Unable to read these “messages,” he is unable to respond to them.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Has difficulty with feelings of empathy for others. Interactions with others remain on one level, with one message.
<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Ignores an individual’s appearance of sadness, anger, boredom, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Fails to assist someone with an obvious need for help (not holding a door for someone carrying many items or assisting someone who falls or drops their belongings).
<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Talks on and on about a special interest while unaware that the other person is no longer paying attention, talks to someone who is obviously engaged in another activity, talks to someone who isn’t even there.
C. Socially and emotionally inappropriate behaviors. This is a direct result of not understanding the rules of social interactions. If you don’t understand what someone is saying or doing, you will be unable to give the appropriate response	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Laughs at something that is sad, asks questions that are too personal.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Makes rude comments (tells someone they are fat, bald, old, have yellow teeth).
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Engages in self-stimulatory or odd behaviors (rocking, tics, finger posturing, eye blinking, noises — humming/clicking/talking to self).
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Is unaware of unspoken or “hidden” rules — may “tell” on peers, breaking the “code of silence” that exists. He will then be unaware why others are angry with him.

<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Responds with anger when he feels others are not following the rules, will discipline others or reprimand them for their actions (acts like the teacher or parent with peers).
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Touches, hugs, or kisses others without realizing that it is inappropriate.
D. Limited or abnormal use of nonverbal communication. The individual uses gestures, body language, or facial expressions infrequently or atypically when interacting with others.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Averts eye contact, or keeps it fleeting or limited.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Stares intensely at people or objects.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Does not observe personal space (is too close or too far).
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Does not use gestures/body language when communicating.
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Uses gestures/body language, but in an unusual manner.
<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Does not appear to comprehend the gestures/body language of others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Uses facial expressions that do not match the emotion being expressed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Lacks facial expressions when communicating.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9. Does not appear to comprehend the facial expressions of others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	10. Displays abnormal gestures/facial expressions/body posture when communicating. E.g.:
<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Looks to the left or right of the person she is talking to.
<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Does not turn to face the person she is talking to.
<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Confronts another person without changing her face or voice.
<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Stands too close or too far away from another person.
<input type="checkbox"/>	e. Smiles when someone shares sad news.
<input type="checkbox"/>	f. Has tics or facial grimaces.