

D.I.R./FLOORTIME BASICS

"Floortime" is...

1. A **specific technique** where for 20 or more minutes the caregiver gets down on the floor, working with their child at their developmental level, and with the goal of moving them forward.
2. A **general philosophy** which means we take every opportunity when we are with our child to work on their developmental goals. The "Floortime State of Mind"

Developmental

Individual differences

Relationship based

DEVELOPMENT

There are six levels of development that children need to master for relating, engaging and learning:

Level 1: Regulation and Shared Attention

Level 2: Engagement

Level 3: Two Way Purposeful Communication

Level 4: Complex Problem Solving and Sense of Self

Level 5: Representational Capacity

Level 6: Representational Differentiation/ Building Bridges Between Ideas and Emotional Thinking)

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

How a child reacts to sensations, processes information, plans actions, and sequences behaviors and thoughts. We can change our interaction and the environment to support their weaknesses.

A child will likely have a combination of weaknesses in the areas of:

- **Visual/Auditory Processing**
- **Postural Tone**
- **Speech and Language**
- **Motor Planning**
- **Vestibular Processing (movement)**
- **Proprioception Processing (body position in space)**

RELATIONSHIP BASED

DIR/Floortime intervention is all viewed and carried out within the context of relationships, more specifically the relationship between parent and child.

- Intellectual and emotional growth happens within the context of relationships

D.I.R./FLOORTIME BASICS

Questions to guide your interactions:

- What are my child's individual differences?
- What are my child's interests and strengths?
- What is my child communicating through their body?
- What could I do to help my child regulate?
- What activities bring joy to my child and myself?

Did you know?

During therapy you will work on several levels of D.I.R./Floortime at the same time.

LEVEL 1 *Regulation and Shared Attention*

The child's ability to be calm and alert and available for interaction.

- The ability to regulate his or her attention and behavior while being interested in the full range of sensations.
- At this level a child can share attention with another person
- This is where the individual differences are the most impacting

LEVEL 2 *Engagement*

The child must be able to engage in mutually enjoyable interactions with a loved one.

- The child displays depth and range of emotions within engagement
- Stability of engagement is determined by the ability to maintain contact even when under stress
- This is the "falling in love" stage

LEVEL 3 *Intentional Two-Way Purposeful Communication*

A child is able to communicate interactively ("back and forth"). They open and close circles in order to maintain an engagement.

- Affect drives an interaction.
- This is the foundation of pre-linguistic language and comprehension
- Focus on opening and closing circles of communication both verbally and non-verbally.

D.I.R./FLOORTIME BASICS

Questions to guide your interactions:

- Is the environment supporting my child's success?
- How can I use my own facial expressions and affect to engage my child?
- Does my child notice my ideas?
- Am I following my child's ideas and keeping circles of communication flowing on topic?

Did you know?

You can introduce "playful problems" to help your child interact and problem solve.

LEVEL 4 *Behavioral Organization, Problem-Solving, Sense of Self*

The child is able to sustain more complex back and forth interactions, have their own ideas, and do simple problem solving with his or her caregiver.

- Child's maturing motor planning & sequencing contributes to maintaining continuous flow of "circles of communication"
- With this success, the child's sense of self is being strengthened by more complex realizations of one's own ideas and emerging abilities to solve problems

LEVEL 5 *Representational Capacity*

The child begins to play symbolically and express ideas from life experience while maintaining engagement with a play partner.

- The child can communicate and share ideas with others (verbally or non-verbally)
- The child can think about, imitate and represent activities from daily life in their play
- Increased comprehension of concepts (i.e. broken, mine, attribution, etc.)

LEVEL 6 *Building Bridges Between Ideas and Emotional Thinking*

A child is able to make connections between different internal representations or emotional ideas ("I'm sad because my brother ate the last brownie.")

- Bridge ideas logically
- Possess more emotional awareness of themselves and others.
- Explore the *how, what, where, why, when* of a situation.
- Use reasoning to support ideas, increase flexibility, bring down anxiety and support regulation

D.I.R./FLOORTIME WORKSHEET

Level 1— Child is working on:

- Sharing attention with others
- Shifting their eye gaze from a toy back to a person
- Having a "just right" level of regulation that allows them to interact with others
- The ability to calm themselves with support from a trusted person
- Self-soothing and coping skills
- Sensory integration and motor skill development

LEVEL ONE:

Regulation and Shared Attention

My child's strengths in this area:

Action Steps:

Areas that need improvement:

Therapeutic Strategies:

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Level 2—Child is working on:

- Attachment with caregivers
- Attachment with others/peers
- Seeking out a caregiver for a variety of needs: help, comfort, nurture, love, interaction
- Showing emotional interest and connection with others
- Initiating physical closeness with caregiver without being clingy

LEVEL TWO:
*Forming
Relationships,
Attachment &
Engagement*

My child's strengths in this area:

Action Steps:

Areas that need improvement:

Therapeutic Strategies:

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Level 3— Child is working on:

- Opening circles of communication (with gestures, eye contact and/or language)
- Closing circles of communication (with gestures, eye contact and/or language)
- Creating intentional moments of communication

LEVEL THREE

*Two-Way
Purposeful
Communication*

My child's strengths in this area:

Action Steps:

Areas that need improvement:

Therapeutic Strategies:

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Level 4— Child is working on:

- Engaging in complex circles of communication
- Imitating an idea that someone else presents and then incorporating it into play
- Developing problem-solving skills

LEVEL FOUR

*Behavioral
Organization,
Problem-Solving,
Sense of Self*

My child's strengths in this area:

Action Steps:

Areas that need improvement:

Therapeutic Strategies:

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Level 5— Child is working on:

- Playing out symbolic ideas that begin simply and then become more complex and imaginative
- Using pretend play to communicate needs, wishes, intentions, and feelings
- Playing out themes (closeness, dependency, excitement, fear, etc.)
- Using two or more ideas in play

LEVEL FIVE

Representational Capacity

My child's strengths in this area:

Action Steps:

Areas that need improvement:

Therapeutic Strategies:

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Level 6—Child is working on:

- Playing out themes that involve more than two ideas that logically fit together
- Elaborating on symbolic play ideas and themes
- Creating logical connections in play
- Exploring the how, what, where, why, when of a situation.

LEVEL SIX

*Building Bridges
Between Ideas and
Emotional Thinking*

My child's strengths in this area:

Action Steps:

Areas that need improvement:

Therapeutic Strategies: