## BEFORE WORDS

**The Why**
- Responding to a familiar caregiver’s voice, gestures, touch, and facial expressions

**The How**
- Vocalizing or babbling in a back and forth manner

**Coping With Others**
- Showing interest and soothing in response to a familiar caregiver

**Coping On One’s Own**
- Using familiar routines and materials as a source of comfort

## EMERGING LANGUAGE

**The Why**
- Communicating for different purposes including: sharing attention, requesting, and sharing emotion

**The How**
- Using gestures, facial expressions, imitated actions, or vocalizations to gain attention

**Coping With Others**
- Soothing in response to others’ facial expressions, actions, and emotion/energy states

**Coping On One’s Own**
- Using objects familiar to natural routines to soothe during transitions

“Symbols” refers to spoken words, written words, picture symbols, sign language, etc.

This table was developed by Rubin, Weldon, McGiboney, Thomas & Pileggi (2023); Reference: Prizant, Wetherby, Rubin, Laurent & Rydell (2006); Updated September 2023
## DEVELOPING LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

**The Why**

- Communicating to share emotion and describe the emotions of others
- Communicating to share simple stories and past events
- Initiating and maintaining conversation by both commenting and requesting information
- Communicating for many purposes including negotiating, collaborating, and expressing remorse or empathy with others

**The How**

- Using simple sentences, including those with people’s names, verbs and nouns (either speech, pictures or symbols)
- Using a range of sentences, including complex (either speech, pictures or symbols)
- Providing essential background information based upon listener’s perspective
- Understanding and using complex sentences as well as a range of gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice as a means to interpret figurative language (e.g., metaphors), humor and sarcasm

**Coping With Others**

- Requesting soothing items when distressed
- Repairing breakdowns in communication and sharing causes of emotion
- Requesting a break, assistance, and regulating activities to soothe when distressed
- Responding to assistance offered by others to either engage or soothe in new and challenging activities

**Coping On One’s Own**

- Using self-regulatory language or symbols to anticipate transitions between activities
- Using self-regulatory language or symbols to anticipate the steps of extended activities
- Using self-regulatory language by telling stories and enacting social sequences to prepare for future events
- Using language or symbols to problem-solve and self-monitor in current or future events (i.e., executive functioning)

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