DANCE:
Emotional Quality Dimension
DANCE Behavior Considerations

Here are some questions to consider as you review each behavior:

- What do I find easy to understand about this behavior?
- What questions do I have about this behavior?
- What, if any, developmental considerations do I need to be aware of?
- What key pieces of information will help you observe and code this behavior?

You may want to print out this page and refer to these questions as you review each behavior.
Emotional Quality Dimension

Five behaviors:

- Expressed Positive Affect
- Caregiver’s Affect Complements Child’s Affect
- Verbal Quality
- Response to Distress
- Negative Comments About the Child to Others
Expressed Positive Affect

- Coded as a percentage (%)

- Observed when the child and caregiver are engaged in a caregiving activity
## Expressed Positive Affect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>*</th>
<th>Area for Growth (0-24%)</th>
<th>Area for Enhancement (25-74%)</th>
<th>Area of Strength (75-100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| CA | **Expressed Positive Affect**  
   Observable display (facial expression, verbal tone, body language, and gestures) that reflects low to high intensity pleasure. | CG infrequently expresses positive affect. Expressed affect is:  
   - Angry  
   - Sad  
   - Flat  
   - Irritable/Agitated  
   - Bored | At times, CG expresses positive affect. Expressed affect is:  
   - Angry  
   - Sad  
   - Flat  
   - Irritable/Agitated  
   - Bored | CG usually expresses positive affect. |

*Coded for the portion of the home visit when caregiver and child are engaged in a **caregiving activity**.*
Expressed Positive Affect

• Affect is more than facial affect. It involves affect expressed through:
  • Facial expression
  • Tone of voice
  • Body language

• There are no developmental consideration for the behavior Expressed Positive Affect
Expressed Positive Affect

- Looking for pleasure (positive affect) that ranges from low to high intensity

- When the caregiver’s affect is not positive, indicate the affective displeasure state (angry, sad, flat, irritable/agitated, bored, etc.) to guide DANCE STEPS
Expressed Positive Affect

- Determine the portion of the caregiving activity that the caregiver expresses positive affect.
  - Regardless if the caregiver is focused on the child; or
  - If the child is expressing positive affect

- When the caregiver presents with mixed affect, code the predominant affective state
  - When the caregiver simultaneously presents with a flat or unreadable facial affect and is talking with a positive tone, the overall affective state for the caregiver should be coded as positive.
Caregiver’s Affect Complements Child’s Affect:

- Coded as a percentage (%)
- Observed when the child and caregiver are engaged in a caregiving activity
## Caregiver’s Affect Complements Child’s Affect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Area for Growth (0-24%)</th>
<th>Area for Enhancement (25-74%)</th>
<th>Area of Strength (75-100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **CA**   | Caregiver’s Affect Complements Child’s Affect  
The caregiver’s affect facilitates the maintenance of child’s positive to neutral affective state, and as needed, a return to child’s positive to neutral affective state. | CG’s affect infrequently complements child’s affect.                                    | CG’s affect usually complements child’s affect. |

* Coded for the portion of the home visit when the caregiver and child are engaged in a caregiving activity.

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Caregiver’s Affect Complements Child’s Affect
Caregiver’s Affect Complements Child’s Affect

CG Displeasure:
- Empathy
- Behavior regulation

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Caregiver’s Affect Complements Child’s Affect

- This behavior considers both the child’s and caregiver’s affect.
- It measures how the caregiver uses her affect to maintain or return the child to a neutral (e.g. drowsy) or positive affect state.
Caregiver’s Affect Complements Child’s Affect

- Caregiver’s complementary affect includes:
  - Matching the child’s positive affect within or close to the same intensity (maintaining)
  - Displaying low intensity pleasure when the child’s affect is neutral (to maintain or even up-regulate if needed)
  - Supporting the child to move from a state of disregulation (negative affect, high intensity positive affect) to a positive or neutral state
  - Caregiver uses his/her affect (e.g. empathy and lower intensity positive affect) to effectively modulate extremes of child affective states
Caregiver’s Affect Complements Child’s Affect

- It is **not** complementary affect when:
  - Caregiver’s shows negative affect, **unless**
    - Empathy
    - Setting limits, or
    - Regulating the child’s disregulated affect
    - Pretend in response to a game
  - A caregiver is too high or too low in intensity compared to the child’s affect
Caregiver’s Affect Complements Child’s Affect

Developmental considerations for this behavior include:

- Young infants require sensitive, frequent, and prompt responses and support from caregivers.
- Caregivers offer support by modeling positive affect when the child and expressing empathic responses.
- Around 10 months, children begin social referencing and applying meaning to facial expressions. Caregivers may complement child’s affect through facial expressions that permit or inhibit actions.
- With older infants/toddlers, calmly ignoring disregulated behaviors (e.g. tantrums) at times can be complementary.
Caregiver’s Affect Complements Child’s Affect

- Developmental considerations for this behavior include:
  - In the second year of life, children’s emotions are more labile
  - Appropriate affective support of child’s distress from the caregiver may include being empathetic, or in some situations, ignoring the child
**Expressed Positive Affect & Caregiver’s Affect Complements Child’s Affect**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expressed Positive Affect</th>
<th>Caregiver’s Affect Complements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Any caregiver display of pleasure regardless of intensity, situation, child’s affective state | Include caregiver pleasure and displeasure with consideration to:  
  • Child’s affect  
    • Pleasure/displeasure  
    • Intensity  
    • Situation/context |
Verbal Quality

- Coded as a percentage (%)
- Observed when the child and caregiver are engaged in a caregiving activity
## Verbal Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Area for Growth (0-24%)</th>
<th>Area for Enhancement (25-74%)</th>
<th>Area of Strength (75-100%)</th>
<th>Not Observable (N/A)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CA</strong></td>
<td><strong>Verbal Quality</strong>  Caregiver’s verbal communication to child is kind, respectful, cheerful.</td>
<td>Infrequently, CG’s verbal communication to child is kind, respectful, cheerful.  - Angry  - Flat  - Tense  - Annoyed</td>
<td>At times, CG’s verbal communication to child is kind, respectful, cheerful.  - Angry  - Flat  - Tense  - Annoyed</td>
<td>CG’s verbal communication to child is usually kind, respectful, cheerful.  No verbal communication.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* *Coded for the portion of the home visit when the caregiver and child are engaged in a caregiving activity.*

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Verbal Quality

- Verbal Quality involves both the **tone** and **content** of the caregiver’s words and sounds to the child.
- This behavior is based on the quality of the communications to the child.
- Therefore, it measures the **quality** and not the quantity of the caregiver’s communications.
Verbal Quality

- There are no developmental considerations for this behavior.
- If the caregiver never speaks to the child during the caregiving activity, code “NA” (no verbal communication) and do not list a percentage.
  - A zero (0%) means the caregiver’s verbal quality was always unkind, disrespectful, not cheerful.
- When the caregiver’s verbal quality is not kind, cheerful, respectful, indicate the quality (angry, flat, tense, annoyed, etc.) to guide DANCE STEPS.
Response to Distress

- Coded as a percentage (%)

- This item is coded **only** for those periods of interaction where the child exhibits distress.

- The rating is based on **caregiver’s affective responses** during the times the child is experiencing distress. Not based on behavioral response.
Response to Distress

Distress is defined as:

- Crying, screaming, and demonstrated anger regardless of the duration

OR

- Prolonged fussiness that is sustained for at least 15 seconds

A child is considered calm and the distress ends when there are no negative vocalizations or actions for at least 15 seconds
## Response to Distress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Area for Growth (0-24%)</th>
<th>Area for Enhancement (25-74%)</th>
<th>Area of Strength (75-100%)</th>
<th>Not Observable (N/A)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| D | **Response to Distress** Caregiver regulates her affect in response to child’s distress in a complementary manner. | At times CG responds to child’s distress in a complementary manner.  
• Over-response  
• Under-response  
• Inappropriate response | CG usually responds to child’s distress in a complementary manner.  
• Over-response  
• Under-response  
• Inappropriate response | No distress observed. |

* Coded **only** for those periods where the child exhibits distress.
Response to Distress

- Response to Distress is designed to observe specific **affective strategies** the caregiver uses to regulate his/her own emotional responses to the child’s distress.

- You are observing the caregiver’s **affective responses** to the child and not the behavioral ones.
Response to Distress

- If child does not experience distress during the home visit code “NA” (no distress observed) and do not list a percentage
  - A zero (0%) means the child was distressed and the caregiver’s response to the distress was never complementary

- If the child is distressed, record the proportion of time during the distress that the caregiver regulates her affect

- The caregiver is observed as regulating his/her affect even if he/she is unsuccessful in calming the child’s distress
Response to Distress

- When the caregiver’s affect response to the child’s distress is not complementary, indicate if it is an:
  - Over-response (e.g. yelling, using an irritated tone)
  - Under-response (e.g. looks away, says nothing)
  - Inappropriate response (e.g. laughing, tickling)

- This information can be used to guide DANCE STEPS
Response to Distress

- Expectations for child’s ability to self-regulate increase as the child becomes older.
  - Caregiver’s non-response to a toddler behavior that is disruptive may be a complementary response
  - Ignoring distress in younger children (<7 months) is not complementary
Negative Comments
About the Child to Others

- Coded as a frequency (#) with a range of 0, 1, 2, or 3

- Observed for the portion of the home visit that the child is present, but not necessarily interacting with the caregiver.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>*</th>
<th>Area for Growth (3 or more comments)</th>
<th>Area for Enhancement (1-2 comments)</th>
<th>Area of Strength (0 comments)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P Negative Comments About the Child to Others</td>
<td>CG makes 3 or more negative comments about the child to others.</td>
<td>CG makes 1-2 negative comments about the child to others.</td>
<td>CG never makes negative comments about the child to others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Coded for the portion of the home visit that the child is present.*
Negative Comments About the Child to Others

• Negative comments include **OVERT**:
  • **Criticism** (statements that suggest fault)
  • **Accusations** (statements of blame)
  • **Threats** (warnings of probable trouble)
  • **Name-calling** (names said with the purpose to belittle or humiliate)
  • **Unrealistic developmental expectations** (inappropriate beliefs or misattributions about the child’s ability)

• When coding ask yourself which of these category does the comment fit in?
  • If it doesn’t fit in one of the categories it **is not** a negative comment
Negative Comments About the Child to Others

- The comments need to be directed to someone else (not to the child)
- The comments need to be **clearly negative**
- There are no developmental considerations for this behavior.