

Description of The *Communication Matrix*© (Rowland 2006) levels

Behavior	Description
I. Pre-Intentional Behavior	The child's behavior is not under his own control. It is in reaction to things (such as feeling hungry or wet or sleepy). Parents interpret the child's state from his general behaviors, such as body movements, facial expressions and sounds.
II. Intentional Behavior	The child's behavior is now intentional (under the child's control), but she does not understand that "If I do this, Mom or Dad will do that for me"-in other words she does not communicate intentionally yet. Parents continue to interpret the child's needs and desires from her behavior, such as body movements, facial expressions, vocalizations and eye gaze.
III. Unconventional Communication	The child uses pre-symbolic behaviors intentionally to express his needs and desires to other people. They are called "unconventional" because they are not socially acceptable for us to use as we grow older: they include body movements, vocalizations, facial expressions and simple gestures (such as tugging on people).
IV. Conventional Gestures	The child uses pre-symbolic behaviors intentionally to express her needs and desire to other people. "Conventional" gestures include behaviors such as pointing and nodding the head "yes". We continue to use conventional gestures as adults to accompany our language
V. Concrete Symbolic	Symbols physically resemble what they represent in a way that is obvious to the child-they look like, feel like, move like or sound like what they represent. Concrete symbols include picture symbols, objects used as symbols (such as a shoelace to represent "shoe"), certain "iconic" gestures (such as patting a chair to say "sit down") and sounds (such as making a buzzing sound to refer to a bee).
VI. Abstract Symbolic	The child uses abstract symbols such as speech, manual signs, or Braille or printed words. These symbols do not look, feel, or sound like what they represent. They are used one at a time.
VII. Language	The child combines symbols (any sort of symbols) into ordered two- or three symbol combinations ("want juice", "me want juice"), according to grammatical rules. The child understands that the meaning of word combinations may differ depending upon how the symbols are arranged.