The Early Development of Emotional Competence Profile (EDEC-P): Suggested Process

Rangel-Rodríguez, Badia, Blanch, and Wilkinson (2020)

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About the EDEC Profile

What is the EDEC-P?

The Early Development of Emotional Competence Profile (EDEC-P) is a suggested profile where the clinician distills information obtained from the EDEC tool (see Na, Wilkinson and Liang, 2017), and presents an analysis of the challenges perceived, the next steps and possible strategies to achieve goals related to enhance emotional communication in people with complex communication needs (CCN) that could benefit from augmentative and alternative communication (AAC).

Why did we develop the EDEC-P?

Just like with the EDEC tool (Na, Wilkinson, and Liang, 2017), the EDEC-P seeks to raise awareness about the relation of language and emotional competencies, and to ensure that an individual's communicative and psychological intervention must include language to discuss emotions in ways that are consistent with the values and goals of the individual's social-cultural context. The EDEC-P was also developed to be shared with parents or school/clinical professionals to raise awareness and better understand the emotional status of the individual with CCN, as well as to proposed guidelines to foster the child's emotional development and to guide AAC design and intervention.

Who uses the EDEC-P template?

Speech-Language Pathologists, Psychologists, or other professionals (e.g., Occupational Therapists) who work with individuals with CCN, and want to guide clinical decision-making about upcoming emotional and communicative interven-tions.

Languages

The EDEC-P is intended to be used across different languages. Currently, we have English and Spanish versions available. Please contact the author for translation into other languages.
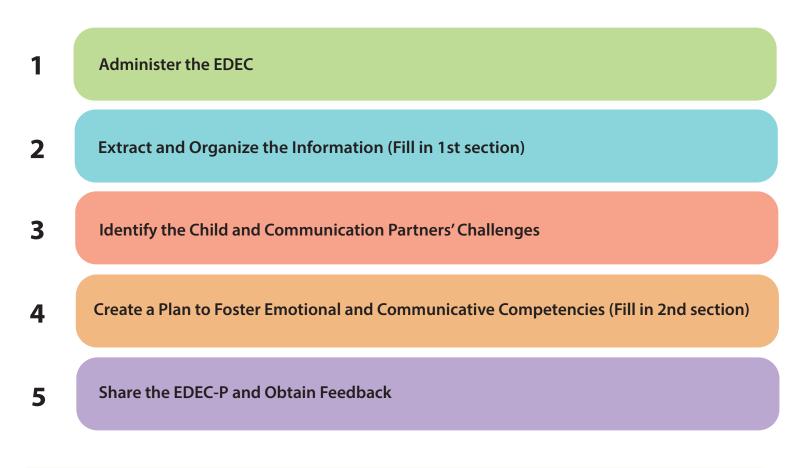
Contents and Organization

Section 1 "About me": includes an image or picture of the child and information about him/her, their strengths, emotions, and communicative skills, as well as information about communication partners' input.

Section 2 "Challenges and Strategies": consists of functional emotional communication goals expected in the short term, challenges and suggested strategies for intervention with the child and the child's communication partners.

Suggested Process for Using the EDEC-P

1   Administer the EDEC

2   Extract and Organize the Information (Fill in 1st section)

3   Identify the Child and Communication Partners' Challenges

4   Create a Plan to Foster Emotional and Communicative Competencies (Fill in 2nd section)

5   Share the EDEC-P and Obtain Feedback

Step 1: Administer the EDEC Tool to the Child's Communication Partners that You Consider.

The person who conducts the interview must become familiar with the EDEC tool and its goals. Being comfortable with the interview purpose, the language, and the suggested questions will help to:
(a) assist the interviewee in case of confusion with any term or query, and
(b) allow the assessor to ask other questions that support him/her to have a better perspective of the current emotional and communicative status of the individual with complex communication needs, and to have a clear vision of their social-context (socio-cultural background and communication partners common responses to child's emotional expressions).

Step 2: Extract and Organize Specific Information from the Collected Data.

It's possible that in the interview, communication partners may give an answer to a question but then later say something that extends the earlier answer or vice-versa (talk about a topic that will be discussed later). Many times the information will be expressed organically over the course of the interview. Hence, to complete the 1st section of the EDEC-P, it is important to re-read the interview, extract, and organize the information collected into specific areas.

1. The Child's Characteristics: Who is the child? – What are their interests/hobbies? What things s/he enjoy? What things s/he doesn't like?

2. The Partners' Communicative Input: How CPs communicate with the child? - What does the child need from their partners to have a better understanding of the world? How do the child's communication partners scaffold communication?

3. The Child's Modes of Communication: What are the methods (linguistic and non-linguistic) used by the child to communicate? What are the methods available?

4. The Child's Emotional World: What are the emotions that the CPs can recognize in the child? What emotions does the child feel/express?

5. The Child's Emotional Expressions: How do CPs notice the child is experiencing an emotion? What expressions are interpreted as a specific emotion? How does the child express emotions (linguistic and non-linguistic modes)? What are the child's emotional expression preferences?

6. The Child's Recognition and Responses to Others' Emotions: Does the child respond to others' emotional expressions? How? Does the child have ways to respond to others' emotional states?

7. The Partners' Emotional Input: How do the child's communication partners respond to the child's emotions? Do they assist the child transiting from an unpleasant emotion to a pleasant one? How? Do they identify what does the child need? How?

Write the specific information in the corresponding area in the 1st page/section of the EDEC-P template. We suggest you write the first part of the profile in the first person; we believe this would have the greatest impact on the reader and may be easier to learn and more family-friendly.

This area shows some child's characteristics (general information, temperament, interests/hobbies, likes/dislikes)

Add image here

My name is: _____

I am: __ years old

About me

I enjoy:

I don't like:

My favorite games:

This data was reported by _____

Ways people communicate with me:

Current ways I use to communicate:

Emotions I express:

Frequently   Sometimes

Current ways I express my emotions:

When others express their emotions:

Current ways people respond when I express an emotion:

This section describes general communication in two levels:
a) The partners' communicative input: How others communicate with the child (in general)?
b) The child's modes of communication: What are the methods used (and available) by the child to communicate?

This section focuses on:
a) The child's emotions (recognized by communication partners),
b) The current ways the child expresses emotions, and
c) The child's recognition and responses to others' emotions.

This area gives information about the partners' emotional input: How do they currently respond to child's emotional expression?

Step 3: Identify the Child and Communication Partners' Challenges.

Identify both the individual with CCN and communication partners' barriers and challenges related to the emotional and communicative area. Is there something that could enhance communication about emotions with the child? Pay special attention to:

Individual with CCN

• Modes of emotional communication.

• Receptive and expressive emotional language: labeling, explaining/understanding emotions (possible causes), and responding to emotions (what does the individual need/can do?).

• Use and availability of linguistic emotional expressions (current emotional vocabulary to express emotions and talk about them).

What are the child's emotional challenges? What would be the child's challenges to achieve the proposed goal? Are the existing means of the child's emotional expression sufficient to serve their needs? Are there some AAC challenges? Behavioral challenges? Motivational challenges? Communication barriers?

Communication Partners

• Emotional recognition of the individual with CCN.

• Responses to emotions.

• Beliefs about talking about emotions with others (and specifically with the individual with CCN).

• Emotions that they feel comfortable/uncomfortable expressing in front of the person.

• Emotional vocabulary and expression (words used, ways of emotional expression that could be acceptable).

• Prompts to promote communication (in general and about emotions) with the person with CCN.

How can the communication partners scaffold the child to express emotions? What are the communication partners' challenges? Do they give opportunities to promote emotional development? Are there some emotions they prefer to avoid? Do they have a specific concern about the child referring to emotions? Is it possible to assist them with it?

Context

• Possible opportunities to talk about emotions.

• Special socio-cultural events that could be of interest to communicate about emotions.

What activities could be enjoyable and pleasant for the child and their communication partners to talk about emotions?

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Step 4: Create a Plan that could Foster Emotional and Communicative Skills/Competencies.

Once you identify the challenges, establish goals and objectives that focus on the promotion of emotional and communicative development and skills. *What are the child's emotional needs? What goals could be beneficial for the child? What does the child need from communication partners to pursue the proposed goal (consider the information collected about the child's communication partners)?*
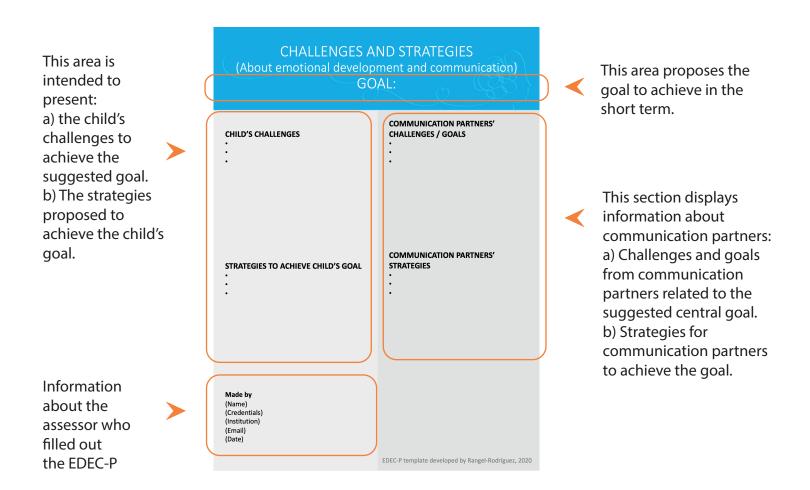
Think of strategies to achieve each goal: *What do those involved need to achieve the goal? Receive a specific instruction? Increase vocabulary? Design AAC boards? Identify where and how to talk about emotions? Offer naturalistic communicative opportunities? Introduce specific prompts?*

Prioritize the goals (according to the child's development) and determine the steps and strategies that need to be taken to achieve them in the short-term. Write them in the corresponding area on the 2nd page/section of the EDEC-P template.

In this step, pay special attention to:

• Interests from the child and CP (the first strategies suggested must be applicable in fun and comfortable situations for both).
• Situations/activities they already do (identify if they could create opportunities to promote emotional conversations in moments they already have in their daily life).

This area is intended to present:
a) the child's challenges to achieve the suggested goal.
b) The strategies proposed to achieve the child's goal.

CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES
(About emotional development and communication)
GOAL:

This area proposes the goal to achieve in the short term.

CHILD'S CHALLENGES
•
•
•

COMMUNICATION PARTNERS'
CHALLENGES / GOALS
•
•
•

STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE CHILD'S GOAL
•
•
•

COMMUNICATION PARTNERS'
STRATEGIES
•
•
•

This section displays information about communication partners:
a) Challenges and goals from communication partners related to the suggested central goal.
b) Strategies for communication partners to achieve the goal.

Information about the assessor who filled out the EDEC-P

Made by
(Name)
(Credentials)
(Institution)
(Email)
(Date)

EDEC-P template developed by Rangel-Rodríguez, 2020

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Share the profile with the adult. Verify if the data presented in the 1st section is correct and if communication partners would like to avoid, add, or change any content. Explain the 2nd page and make sure that the goal, challenges, and strategies suggested are clear, and they agree with them. In case there are doubts, assist the adults and explain, discuss and adjust the plan until the people involved understand and feel comfortable with the plan. Make changes to the profile if needed. Remember that the template proposed can be modified and presented differently according to the feedback and unique needs of the communication partners and the child.

To the extent possible, we consider it important also to share the EDEC-P with the individuals with CCN and ask them if they feel comfortable with the information written in the 1st section. If the answer is not, identify what area they would prefer to avoid, add or change, and make proper modifications until the person with CCN feels comfortable and with a sense that his/her emotional privacy is respected. Additionally, ask who they would like to share the EDEC-P with so that people get to know them better and assist them in having more conversations about emotions. An example of presenting this to individuals with CCN could be:

> *We want to share some things about you with your teachers so they can know you better. These will help them to understand your feelings better and support you effectively if needed.*
>
> *Do you like it? Would you like to share this? With whom? Would you like to add something else? Is there something you prefer to avoid?*

According to the child's ability to understand and express such ideas, the clinician can ask specific questions to determine the child's validation.

Suggested Follow-up

We suggest you to follow-up on the plan proposed in the EDEC-P. It may be necessary to readminister the EDEC interview and remake the EDEC-P to report the current child's emotional and communicative status, identify the impact of the strategies executed, and support the new decision-making process towards the next steps in fostering the development of emotional and communicative skills.