

People-Centered Screening and Assessment

Module 6
HOME Inventory (0-3)
Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment



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Learning Objectives- All

- At the end of this module, home visiting professionals will be able to:
- Understand the context and purpose of conducting the Home Inventory
 - Identify the correct protocol and pitfalls for WI MIECHV grantees
 - Articulate the value of the inventory for families
 - Frame the HOME Inventory and process to families effectively
 - Use the HOME Inventory with greater intention and effectiveness to strengthen home visiting services and individualize supports to families

Learning Objectives- Supervisor

- At the end of the supervisor section of this module, supervisors will be able to:
- Consider tools and strategies to support home visitors in conducting the Home Inventory as an integrated and effective part of home visiting services.

Tip Sheet

HOME Inventory (0-3) Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment

Quick Facts about the Tool

Author(s): Developed by Betty M. Caldwell and Robert H. Bradley in 1978.

Author's Intent: The Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment (HOME) Inventory (Caldwell & Bradley, 1978, 1984, 2003) is designed to measure the quality and quantity of stimulation and support available to a child in the home environment. The focus is on the child's experience with the caregiver and the home environment, rather than on the caregiver or parent and the home environment.

About the Tool: HOME is designed to measure the quality and quantity of stimulation and support available to a child in the home environment. The focus is on the child's experience with the caregiver and the home environment, rather than on the caregiver or parent and the home environment.

Purpose

The HOME Inventory is designed to measure the quality and quantity of stimulation and support available to a child in the home environment. The focus is on the child's experience with the caregiver and the home environment, rather than on the caregiver or parent and the home environment.

Protocol

The HOME Inventory is designed to measure the quality and quantity of stimulation and support available to a child in the home environment. The focus is on the child's experience with the caregiver and the home environment, rather than on the caregiver or parent and the home environment.

Value to Families

- Using the HOME Inventory can help parents understand the quality and quantity of stimulation and support available to their child in the home environment.

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Framing it for Families

- Use Simple Language

Quick Facts about the Authors

Developed by Betty M. Caldwell and Robert H. Bradley in 1978.

- Dr. Caldwell- Professor of Pediatrics in Child Development and Education at University of Arkansas with expertise in early child development, integrating health and school readiness programs for low-income preschoolers, affordable quality daycare, the relationship between early childhood experience and brain development, and the link between children's health and care.
- Dr. Bradley-Professor, School of Social and Family Dynamics and Department of Psychology, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Arizona State University with expertise in parenting, home environment, socioeconomic and cultural influences on family processes and child development, early education, child care, measurement of environments.

Quick Facts about the Authors' Intent

- The Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment (HOME) Inventory (Caldwell, & Bradley, 1978, 1984, 2003) is designed to measure the quality and quantity of stimulation and support available to a child in the home environment.
- The focus is on the child in the environment rather than socio-economic status as an oversimplified indicator of infant and toddler home environments.

Purpose of the Tool

- This tool can provide home visitors insight about where to focus supports to parents, boosting their parental confidence and competence, and creating better outcomes for children.
- This tool does NOT judge parents or classify homes as 'good' or 'bad'.
- "The intent is to understand the child's opportunities and experiences; in essence, to understand what life is like for the particular child in the child's most intimate surroundings."

(T. Denny Sanford School of Social and Family Dynamics)

Quick Facts About the Tool

- HOME for children 0-3 is a 45 item observation and structured interview tool designed to observe:
 - Parental responsivity
 - Acceptance of the child
 - Organization of the environment
 - Learning materials
 - Parental involvement
 - Variety within the home environment
- There are other versions for other ages.
- The tools are proprietary and must be purchased.

Website to find Comprehensive Manual <http://fhdri.clas.asu.edu/home/>

Quick Facts About the Tool- Responsivity Subscale

Responsivity

- Degree to which the caregiver and the environment is responsive in an emotional, physical or communicative sense to the infant.
- Paying attention, talking, and responding to the baby's cues
- INTENT is to identify an environment that the child understands to be trustworthy

Quick Facts About the Tool
Acceptance Subscale

Acceptance

- Avoidance of restrictions and punishment
- INTENT is to identify permission for the child to learn through trial and error

Quick Facts About the Tool
Organization Subscale

Organization

- Caregiver provides structure to the infant's life
- INTENT is to identify positive, predictable structure in a child's environment

Quick Facts About the Tool
Learning Materials Subscale

Learning Materials

- Props that allow the infant to develop competence and for enjoyment and exploration (Using household items as "toys" counts.)
- INTENT is to identify opportunities for the child to learn through play

Quick Facts About the Tool Involvement Subscale

Involvement

- Parent clearly demonstrates or tells you spontaneously how they do things with their child.
- The intent is to identify a “learning facilitator” in the child’s environment.

Quick Facts About the Tool Subscale Variety

Variety

- Something may be missing, like siblings, or a parent.
- The INTENT is to balance and provide complete experience for a child.

Screening Protocol

- For WI DCF Home Visiting programs, this is completed in the home when a child is 6 and 12 months old, and the child is present and awake.
- If a child has an IFSP, or there is a suspected disability, refer to chapters 8-11 in User’s Manual.
- The inventory takes 45 – 90 minutes, and is focused on routine parent and child interactions.
- The best result comes from families acting as naturally as possible – no structured activity or intervention, just conversation and observation.
- The authors anticipate that not all items will be observed within 45-90 minutes.
- As a general guideline, about 1/3 of the items will need to be scored based on open-ended interview questions.
- Scoring is yes (+) or no (-)

Potential Pitfalls with Screening

- This is not a tool to measure parental effectiveness.
- This is not a tool to decide if a home is good or bad.
- Don't score with a (+) or (-) in front of the parent.
- Don't interview/ask all or most of the items.
- Don't analyze the results in a vacuum...consider other completed assessment data.
- Don't administer it when the child is ill or tired.
- Don't administer it if the child and parent have been apart.
- Don't forget to look at the modifications for children with special needs.

Value of the Screening for Families

- Using the HOME can support meaningful conversations with families about their child's experiences in their home.
- Using the HOME can help home visitors better plan for and incorporate family strengthening activities that are specific to the needs of the family.
 - For example, if the availability of learning materials subscale is low, the home visitor and parent can:
 - Make books and toys
 - Discuss and model how to use the books and toys
 - Build the parent's feelings of confidence to create a stimulating environment
- The HOME is a predictor of success for young children. If intentional partnerships between families and home visitors can result in higher HOME scores, that is predictive of school success.

Completing the HOME Inventory (0-3) Can Strengthen Home Visiting Service

- Provides a snapshot of a parent/primary caregiver's and infant's time together
- Helps the home visitor consider ways to partner with a family to improve the home environment as well as child and family outcomes
 - Even more intentional about building on family strengths to bolster areas where greater parental knowledge or capacity would improve the child's environment
 - Requires the home visitor to keep the developmental and environmental needs of the baby front and center in the home visit, as the baby's home environment is considered through the baby's point of view
- Systematically builds insight into the baby's experiences, strengthening home visitor insights about ways to build empathy and bonding between the parent and infant
 - For example, if the mother spontaneously hugs, kisses, or snuggles the child at least once during the visit, this insight about how the mom creates a warm emotional environment may provide a future foundation for conversations about child development.

Framing the HOME Inventory (0-3) for Families

- Families may have prior negative experiences as a parent or from childhood of professionals evaluating their home/family.
- Using a research-based tool with simple yes or no answers moves beyond judgments of the relational and physical environment into a more analytical and developmental analysis.
- Scripts or recommended talking points are not meant to be memorized. Instead, they are a guide for how you develop effective communication with families using this screen.

Be Transparent

"We use the HOME with all families at 6 months and 12 months because routines with children and parents can change a lot during that time. The HOME helps me to think about ways I can be most supportive and helpful to you and your child during home visits."

Be Open

"Today I'd like to make time to better understand what a typical day is like for you and your child. One of the tools that helps me to accomplish this is the HOME. What I'd like to do is just hang out and learn about your family by paying attention and asking some questions. I may be taking some notes just to help me remember things that are specific to your family."

Keep Families in the Driver's Seat

"When I need to ask a question as I'm hanging out and enjoying you two hanging out together, please know that the most important thing is your time with your baby. So, if we need to hold off on the questions while you tend to (baby's name) needs we can circle back later."

Video- Clip 1 Introducing the HOME Inventory 0-3

Video- Reflection

- What were some strengths of how the Perceived Stress Scale was introduced?
- What else might you add to strengthen how the Perceived Stress Scale is offered?

Video- Clip 2 Completing the HOME Inventory 0-3

Video- Reflection

- What skills or strategies were used to follow the protocol and keep the process warm and supportive?
- What skills or strategies do you use to integrate screening for perceived stress as a natural part of a home visit?

Reflective Strategies-Make Screening Meaningful

15-30 Minute Journal Prompts
Understanding Someone Else's Home Can Be Hard-

- What things about the homes I visit are similar to or different from my own childhood home(s)?
- How do I feel about the similarities and differences between my own home(s)?
- How do some of the families I work with see a baby friendly environment?
- How can I partner with families to support the creation of a baby-friendly environment that also works for the whole family?

Reflective Strategies-Make Screening Meaningful

15-30 Minute Journal Prompt For Home Visitors Who Are Also Parents

- Are there some items on the Home Inventory that get you thinking about raising your own children?
- Are you having a positive or negative response to the item?
- What does the item on the inventory have to do with raising happy healthy kids?
- Are there other things that you would consider from your own life and the lives of the families you work with that are also indicators of a happy healthy life?

Reflective Strategies-Make Screening Meaningful

15-30 Minute Journal Prompt to Keep the HOME in Perspective

- What other information might you consider to contextualize or balance the information gathered from the HOME Inventory?
- How can home visitors meet each family who they complete the HOME Inventory with where they're at and provide them support that is meaningful?
- What did the family tell me explicitly that might change how I will provide coaching?
- What positive interactions did I see that I can reinforce?

Supervisor Section

Workplace Environment- Preparing Staff to be Successful

- Anticipate that, like some of the families we serve, staff may also have negative connotations from their own lived experiences about evaluating home environments and encourage reflective exercises.
- Have staff imagine what the answers would have been if the HOME was completed in their home when their child was 0-3.
- Support staff in thinking about how the HOME Inventory may impact case planning and home visits.

Recruiting Home Visitors

- The boundary between observing to find opportunities for family support versus evaluating to find fault can be a fuzzy one for new home visitors.
- Ask questions during the interviewing process that get at skills and experiences in building partnerships.
 - Notice communication styles, attitudes, and beliefs that fall into the "expert trap" rather than the informed and supportive collaborator style.

Orienting Home Visiting Staff

- Administering the HOME may feel like a place of evaluation and judgment for some home visitors and this feeling is uncomfortable. While that is not the intention of the tool, having a checklist of yes or no activities may trigger this discomfort. If we remember that this data is a quality benchmark for the project which measures the effectiveness of home visiting to support families in improving the home environment, home visitors may be more open to understanding that this is a tool to help prioritize ways to improve child experiences in the home life.
- Each home visitor will need to find her/his own style of completing the inventory. Both formal and informal approaches can work so long as they are done with acceptance, non-judgment, comfort, and adherence to the protocol.
- Recognize that administering the HOME Inventory may feel different than using other tools as it requires both observation and interviewing.
 - Build time into orientation to provide ample opportunity to gain competency.
 - Training
 - Reading the HOME Inventory Administration Manual,
 - Role-playing/practicing
 - Observing someone on the team who is comfortable and skillful with the inventory

Support a Reflective Approach

- Discuss feelings and reactions to administering the HOME Inventory.
- Provide prompts to explore with the home visitor what information from the inventory was unclear and what information was useful.
- Ask the home visitor to consider how they will be using the information they gathered to partner with the families to make the home environment and parent/child interactions even stronger.

Administration and Quality

- Monitor completion of the HOME using the Home Visiting Data Collection Table.
- Monitor documentation of screening results in SPHERE at least quarterly for newly enrolled families.
- Analyze data to see if there are any trends in completion rate, documentation of follow-up, and family outcomes.

Using Data to Celebrate and Support Success

Keeping a data dashboard and discussing it during team meetings can support productive conversations with staff.

- Celebrate the team for meeting goals to screen and follow-up with moms within the timelines.
- If staff are saying things like "Everyone is depressed," data can help staff understand how prevalent depression is for parents in the program.
- Looking at the data can also help reframe the belief that "Depression is awful we can't do anything about it," to "Look how many parents have had a supportive conversation about their mental health because we're screening and encouraging follow-up."
- Sometimes in the home visiting field, professionals want to measure success as an issue of how many people who are likely suffering from depression received services. While healthy family outcomes matter, so does the home visitor's role in identifying potential mental health needs.
- By looking at the screening and follow-up data by home visitor, teams may note people who are particularly effective at supporting families in follow-up. This member of the team can be encouraged to share tips and strategies with colleagues.

Resources

- United Nations University website-
Learn more about the HOME and cultural norms.
<http://archive.unu.edu/unupress/unupbooks/uu13se/uu13se06.htm>
- The Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment Revisited-
Learn more about how the HOME works in at risk populations.
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Volume 9, No. 1, 2004, pp. 25–35. Vasiliki Totsika & Kathy Sylva
www.familieschildrechildcare.org/fccc_static_PDFs/Sylva

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