

HOME Inventory Overview For Home Visitors Alabama Department of Children's Affairs



Special Thanks to....

- Pence Revington and the University of Wisconsin-Extension Cooperative Extension Family Living Program for sharing their HOME Inventory powerpoint slides and handouts (see slides and handouts with their logos)
- Bob Bradley – co-author of the HOME Inventory for his support in training and continued collaboration
- Lorraine Coulson in Bob Bradley's office in sending HOME Inventory materials
- Beth Johns for all of her work in putting this training together
- UCP for hosting the training
- The Department of Children's Affairs, Dr. Susan McKim and Amy Floyd, for all of their support in making this possible

What we will cover today

- Introduction to the HOME Inventory
 - Background, key components, administration, scoring, frequently asked questions
- Infant Toddler HOME Inventory
 - Subscales and items
 - Observing and Interviewing
 - Scoring
- Jeopardy Game on material covered
- Practice Scoring
- Early Childhood HOME Inventory
 - Subscales and items
 - Observing and Interviewing
 - Scoring

Introduction to the HOME Inventory

HOME: Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment

Basic Concepts

- Home
 - Data collected in child's home
 - “A home visit provides a richness of detail and complexity of interchange that no interview can fully reveal”
- Observation
 - Scoring for many of the items is based on what is observed during the visit
- Measurement
 - Skilled observation alone is not enough
 - Simplest measurement system (counting) and simplest type of item (binary)
- Environment
 - During early years, home and family most important
 - Still beneficial to get an assessment of the environment in which child and family are embedded through questions and observation

Why was the HOME developed?

- The HOME was developed in an effort to understand how the life experiences of at-risk children affected their well-being.
- Designed to replace the over-reliance on socio-economic status as an indicator of the adequacy or inadequacy of the home environment with a measure of how the home environment provides stimulation for the child's early development.

Purpose of the HOME

- Designed to assess program impact on the quality and quantity of support and stimulation provided to the child in a home environment.
- Captures aspects of family organization, routines, and involvement with extended family.

The HOME as a predictor of success

- Parental Responsiveness Associated with:
 - Early Motor and Social development
 - Math and Reading Comprehension
 - Behavioral Problems
- Predictors of IQ Scores and Language Skills in Early Childhood
 - Organized and stimulating environment
 - Parental encouragement (sensitivity)
 - Parental involvement and affection
 - Parents who talk frequently with their child

What is the History of the HOME?

- Infant-toddler version – mid 60's
- Early Childhood version – late 60's
- Middle Childhood version – mid 80's
- Early Adolescent version – mid 90's
- Children with disabilities version – 80's
- Child Care versions – early to mid 90's

Cultural Sensitivity

- Tested all over the world, including third world countries
- Cultural differences will not be reflected in the HOME

Things to keep in mind

- The HOME is a snapshot in time
- The HOME should be considered in its entirety, not as single items
- Administered as if from the view of the child
- Through the HOME, changes in parent-child interaction are measured over time.

Interviewing Techniques

Open-ended questions

Non-judgmental, flexible and engaging

Avoids the 'halo' effect

The Human Service Interview

- Necessary to obtain some information via an interview to score some of the items
 - Infant/Toddler Version
 - only 1/3 of the items will require interviewing
 - Early Childhood Version
 - Some questioning will be necessary for almost half of the items
- “Visitors” – a friendly person visiting in the homes, talking to parents about their children

Making Arrangements for the Interview

- Child is awake and engaged in a reasonably representative routine for that time of day
- Recognize that the home visitor herself may distort some of the parent-child interactions but assume as time goes by, this will decrease
- Visit should never be made without careful advance arrangements, do not want the parent to be led to feel that an attempt is being made to catch her “off guard”

Making Arrangements for the Interview

- Make sure the parent knows:
 - Who the visitor is and what kind of information is needed
 - The visit will take about an hour
 - Important that the child is present and awake
 - Parent will be giving something of value to the Visitor and the group the Visitor represents

Administration of the HOME

- In the home when both the parent and child are present.

The tool should NOT be administered:

- When the child is ill or over-tired
- When the child and caregiver have been apart

Administration of the HOME

HOME Interview: Role of the Visitor

- Be at ease in the situation
- Put the parent at ease
- Easily adjust subsequent questions to responses of the mother
- Avoid putting parents on the defensive
- Find out how the parent feels and what the parent does with her child
 - Rather than what the parent thinks the Visitor wants her to say

Administration of the HOME

HOME Interview: The Warm-Up

- Spend some time just getting acquainted
- Make everyone feel comfortable
- General tone: should be that of two friendly people who like to talk about children sitting down together and doing exactly that
- Good opportunity to say something nice about the child
 - Also allows you to score #11 on Infant/Toddler Scale- parent responds positively to praise of child offered by Visitor

Administration of the HOME

HOME Interview: General Style

- Careful not to ask questions in a threatening or judgmental manner
 - Rather than ask, *Do you ever read stories to your child?* It is preferable to ask, *Do you ever manage to find time to sit down and read to her?*
 - Can ask follow-up questions, *How often does she like you to do that?*

- *You will remember that we are interested in knowing the kinds of things _____ does when she is at home. A good way to get a picture of what her days are like is to have you think of one particular day--like yesterday--and tell me everything that happened to her as well as you can remember it. Start with the things that happened when she first woke up. It is usually easy to remember the main events once you get started.*

Administration of the HOME

HOME Interview: The Wrap-Up

- Essential that you complete the coding of the Inventory before leaving the house
- Visitor should have placed either a plus or minus mark alongside every item
- Subtotals and total can be transferred to Summary Sheet later

Making Scoring Decisions

Intent of the HOME

- The intent of the HOME is to get an idea of what a child's world is like from his/her perspective.
- It is NOT appraising the care giving abilities of the mother.
- Exceptions can be evaluated by the question, "What is in it for the child?"

Scoring: Format

- Binary (either-or) scores: plus or minus
- Counting/cut-off points
- Yes/No Questions
 - Ease of use
 - Practicality
 - No bargaining

Scoring

- Stick to the content of each item
 - If the item says “Parent takes child to grocery store,” visits to a department store do not count
- All observation items refer to the time of the visit
- Decisions about scoring must be made from the child’s point of view
 - *It matters not the parent’s “heart is in the right place” or that “she is doing a great job under the circumstances.”*
 - *What matters is what gets to the child.*

Miscellaneous Questions and Answers

- What if the Visitor arrives and finds the parent hesitant or possibly hostile?
- What should the Visitor do if the parent begins to get restless during the interview?
- What should the Visitor do if she senses that the mother is trying to report what she *thinks* she should be doing with her child rather than what she actually does?
- What should one do if the person interviewed reveals personal problems?

Miscellaneous Questions and Answers

- Can the HOME be done on two siblings in the same family at once?
- Should the HOME be used with children with a disability?
- If the HOME is administered along with another procedure, which should be given first?

What if the Visitor arrives and finds the parent hesitant or possibly hostile?

- Better circumvented than dealt with at the time
- If the suggestions given for ways of approaching families and making plans for the visit are followed, this kind of reaction should occur infrequently
- Visitors can sometimes make a mistake by “jumping into” the interview immediately upon arriving at the house
- May be necessary to spend time early in the visit establishing rapport or warming up the parent
 - The Visitor might wish to make mundane but friendly comments about the weather, the trip over to visit the parent, her interest in seeing the child, etc.
 - She might wish to ask generally non-threatening questions such as who lives in the house, how long have they lived there, what they do, etc.
 - Make polite “small talk,” even make comments about herself, until the parent is more relaxed and can talk about himself or herself.

What should the Visitor do if the parent begins to get restless during the interview?

- Key to dealing with the problem is prevention.
 - Give parent an indication of how long the procedure will take, this generally should not happen.
 - Style of interview
- Restlessness occurs more often when:
 - The interview seems too much like just a series of questions to which the parent must supply answers.
 - When the Visitor dominates the interchange. **Don't be afraid** to let the conversation wander a bit even into areas not covered by items on the **HOME**. The situation will seem more “real,” and answers are likely to be more candid and complete.
- Let the parents talk about things they are interested in. It is easy to get back eventually to the topic covered in the items.
- **Okay to disrupt the interview for a while: to engage the child, to move physically from where you are sitting, etc.**
- But.....if Visitor thinks parent is restless or in spite of very careful preparation and good management of the interpersonal interaction, it is wise to offer to discontinue the interview and arrange for another appointment.
 - Most likely the mother will suggest that it will be all right to go ahead and complete it while the Visitor is there.

What should the Visitor do if she senses that the mother is trying to report what she *thinks* she should be doing with her child rather than what she actually does?

- Communicate the idea that we have some ideas about conditions that favor the development of children but do not have any hard and fast knowledge.
- Share that the knowledge she supplies will be helpful to us in our attempts to understand the relationship between certain conditions and the development of children.
- Reiterate the intent of the procedure is to **describe** rather than **evaluate, to get information** rather than **express opinions or make suggestions**, the Visitor will not too readily fall into this trap.
- One should not think in terms of the respondent's "passing" or "failing" **HOME** items or the **HOME** as a whole.

What should one do if the person interviewed reveals personal problems?

- Occasionally when you go into a home to conduct an interview for the **HOME** Inventory, you will find a mother who, in her eagerness to talk, is making an implied or direct appeal for help with her own personal problems (marital problems, welfare assistance, etc.).
- The Visitor need not try to block her communication of these problems but does not need to feel that she must handle them if not qualified to do so.
- Also there is the danger that the mother will talk so long about her problems that there will not be, in the allotted time, an opportunity to get all the information necessary to score the **HOME**.
- The Visitor might say something like, *I can understand your being upset (or concerned) about that. When we finish discussing the things that take place in _____'s daily life, we can talk about it more. Perhaps I can make some suggestions of places you can go for further information or help.*

Can the HOME be done on two siblings in the same family at once?

- Yes, but avoid it if you can.
- But, parent likely to describe most events as though they pertain to both children; yet such equality of treatment is not actually the case in most families.
- Difficulties with making two separate trips – parent might get bored with the procedure and give only offhanded answers the second time.
- Any time doubling is done, the Visitor should be especially careful to devise a recording system that will enable accurate recording of the observations and answers pertaining to the different children.

Should the HOME be used with children with a disability?

- No simple answer.
- Several special forms of the HOME designed to be used with families of children with different types of disabilities.
- Some circumstances in which the age-appropriate standard version of the Inventory would be the more appropriate tool.
- The type and severity of a child's disability will markedly affect patterns of environmental support and stimulation needed to facilitate development.

Should the HOME be used with children with a disability?

There is not complete consensus on life goals for children with a disability.

- Some believe that the goals should be the same and thus question that the environment needs to be modified.
- Others believe that goals should be modified in accordance with the child's capabilities.
- The **HOME** only **describes** a child's environment; the usefulness of that description will depend less on the nature of the disability than on one's philosophy about what constitutes a supportive environment. Thus, why change?
- Capabilities, interests, and styles of most children with a disability are more like than unlike children who did not have a disability. Thus, their environmental requirements are similar.

Should the **HOME** be used with children with a disability?

- Recommended that if you have any reason to suspect that the target child has a disability that requires environmental modifications become familiar with the Disability Adaptations (Chapters 8-11) in order to be able to use one if the standard **HOME** appears inappropriate.

If the HOME is administered along with another procedure, which should be given first?

- The decision on this should depend somewhat on the degree of familiarity existing between the Visitor and the family and the purpose of the other procedure.
- Examples:
 - If child always eager to see what the Visitor had brought and to participate in the games and activities
 - If a developmental test is to be administered to the child during the same visit in which the Inventory is administered, it may be a good idea to administer the **HOME** first, thereby giving the infant or young child an opportunity to become accustomed to the face and voice of the stranger who is present in the home.
 - No hard and fast rule

Questions??????

Infant/Toddler HOME Subscales

- I. Responsivity
- II. Acceptance
- III. Organization
- IV. Learning Materials
- V. Involvement
- VI. Variety

Infant/Toddler HOME Record Form

Compare with ETO Score Sheet

Summary Form

IT HOME Subscales

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

IT HOME Subscales

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

IT HOME Subscales

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

IT HOME Subscales

- 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.

IT HOME Subscales

- Involvement
 - parents clearly demonstrate or tell you spontaneously how they do things with their child.
 - INTENT is to identify a “learning facilitator” in the child’s environment.

IT HOME Subscales

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

Infant/Toddler HOME Record Form

Scoring Procedures for Items on Infant/Toddler HOME
Observation (O); Either (E); or Interview (I)

The Infant/Toddler HOME Interview

- Informal Interview
- 4 CORE TOPICS for Conversational Interviewing
- Structured Interview Schedule

Setting it Up

- *“We want to know what a typical day is like in the life of your child.”*
- *“We want to learn more about home visiting to better help you and other families.”*

Structured Interview Style

- Introduces questions in the order of the items
- Some items may be scored out of order by observation
- Beginners may be more comfortable with this style

Informal Interview Style

- General Prompts
- Taking Notes
- Listening Skills

Observation of the Environment

- Taking the Child's Perspective
- Beware the "Halo Effect"

Let's Play Jeopardy!

Practice Scoring

Scoring the HOME

- Add each '+', (or checkmark) in every subscale to get a subtotal.
- Record totals on bottom of Record Form, add to get a grand total score.
- Transfer totals to corresponding categories on the Summary Sheet.

Discussion of Scores

- Consider the Intent of the subscale
- Practice accurate observation
- Use careful, complete interviewing
- “Stage and item” when needed
- READ the MANUAL!

The Early Childhood HOME

Early Childhood HOME Record Form

Compare with ETO Score Sheet
Summary

Early Childhood HOME

- **I. LEARNING MATERIALS** (similar to IT-HOME Learning Materials)
 - availability to the child of toys, books, and games that facilitate learning; contains items which characterize the adults as showing some commitment to their own learning.
- **II. LANGUAGE STIMULATION**
 - describes overt attempts by the parents to encourage language development through conversation, modeling, and direct teaching.
- **III. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**
 - Describes the physical environment as safe, sufficiently roomy, and perceptually appealing. All items are based on observation.
- **IV. RESPONSIVITY** (Similar to IT-HOME Responsivity)
 - Describes the caregiver's emotional and verbal responsivity to the child and gives a general picture of the warmth in the relationship. There is only one interview item in this subscale; all others are based on events that occur during the visit.

Early Childhood HOME

- **V. ACADEMIC STIMULATION** (similar to IT-HOME Learning Materials)
 - Describes direct parental involvement with the child's learning and the encouragement of the acquisition of skills and knowledge considered important by parents and child development professionals during the early childhood years.
- **VI. MODELING**
 - Modeling by the parents of desirable and acceptable behavior, thereby communicating those expectations to the child.
- **VII. VARIETY**
 - Describes a family lifestyle that provides variety and experiential enrichment for the child; Contains a few "alien" items
- **VIII. ACCEPTANCE** (similar to IT-HOME Acceptance)
 - Describes parental ability to accept negative behavior from the child as something to be expected from young children rather than as an act demanding immediate harsh reprisal.

Early Childhood HOME Record Form

Scoring Procedures for Items on Early Childhood
HOME

Observation (O); Either (E); or Interview (I)

Observing and Interviewing

- Observations made by the Visitor concentrated in 3 main areas
 - Parent's communications with the child and with the Visitor
 - Items 17, 27, 28, 29, 42, 50
 - Parental affect toward and interaction with the child
 - Items 18, 30, 31, 32, 53, 54, 55
 - Quality of the physical environment
 - Items 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 51

Observing and Interviewing: The Interview

- Begin with a request of the parent to describe the events of the previous day in the child's life
 - Code as many items as possible
- Provided Interview Script

Scoring

- Essential that the Visitor complete the scoring of the Inventory before leaving the house.
- A good procedure is to ask the parent to fill out any paperwork after the interview is complete. While she does this, the Visitor will have an opportunity to make certain that all the necessary information has been obtained to allow every interview item to be scored.
- As with all versions of the **HOME**, scoring for all items on the **EC-HOME** is binary, plus or minus.

Any Questions?????????

Thank you!!!!

HOME Inventory Overview For Home Visitors Alabama Department of Children's Affairs

