The **Home Visit Rating Scales—Adapted and Extended to Excellence (HOVRS-A+) v2.0**

Lori A. Roggman, Gina A. Cook, Mark S. Innocenti, Vonda K. Jump, Katie Christiansen, & Lisa K. Boyce
Utah State University
Nikki Aikens, Kim Boller, Diane Paulsell, & Kristin Hallgren, Mathematica Policy Research

The **Home Visit Rating Scales—Adapted & Extended** (HOVRS-A+) measure is designed for practitioners and supervisors seeking a **high level of excellence** in home visiting practices in programs aiming to help parents to support the early development of their infants and young children. As an extension of HOVRS-A (Roggman, et al., 2010), which was an adaptation of the original HOVRS (Roggman et al., 2008), HOVRS-A+ has the improved ease of use of HOVRS-A along with the full range of rating scores of the original HOVRS. All HOVRS versions emphasize a developmental parenting support approach that respects each family’s strengths and culture. The HOVRS measures were developed with input from practitioners and supervisors in home visiting programs and rate aspects of home visiting quality supported by the research literature on various home-visiting programs. HOVRS measures have been used to provide feedback to practitioners and supervisors for program improvement.

**The Home Visit Rating Scales:**

**SCALE 1—HOME VISITOR RESPONSIVENESS TO FAMILY**
This scale assesses the extent to which the home visitor is (1) prepared for the home visit, (2) attempts to get needed information from the parent, (3) observes and responds to the parent and child during the home visit, and (4) elicits input on the content and activities of the home visit from the parent. A high rating on this scale suggests that the home visitor is frequently engaging in responsive behaviors during the home visit.

**SCALE 2—HOME VISITOR-FAMILY RELATIONSHIP**
This scale examines the nature of the relationship between the home visitor and the family, as observed during the home visit. It focuses on (1) warmth shown by the home visitor (2) positive interactions of the home visitor with the child and other members of the family, and (3) the home visitor’s respect and understanding of the family as a whole. A high rating on this scale suggests that the home visitor is engaging the family in warm, positive behaviors during the home visit.

**SCALE 3—HOME VISITOR FACILITATION OF PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION**
This scale assesses the effectiveness of the home visitor at facilitating and promoting positive parent-child interactions during the home visit. It reflects how much the home visitor (1) encourages the parent’s leadership when guiding parent-child interactions, (2) involves and responds to both the parent and the child during interactions, and (3) uses materials available in the home for promoting parent-child interactions. A high rating on this scale suggests that the home visitor is frequently engaging in facilitative behaviors during the home visit.

**SCALE 4—HOME VISITOR NON-INTRUSIVENESS/COLLABORATION WITH FAMILY**
This scale focuses on the lack of intrusiveness by the home visitor on parent behavior and parent-child interactions during the visit. It assesses (1) home visitor control and (2) home visitor flexibility and responsiveness. A high rating on this scale suggests that the home visitor rarely engages in intrusive behaviors during the home visit and that he or she uses effective strategies to collaborate with the parent. A high rating on this scale means the home visitor is non-intrusive in a manner that promotes collaboration with the parent as a partner in supporting the child’s development.

**SCALE 5—PARENT-CHILD INTERACTION DURING HOME VISIT**
This scale examines the nature of the parent-child relationship, as observed during the home visit. It assesses (1) parent-child warmth and physical closeness, (2) parent attentiveness to the child, (3) parent responsiveness to the child, and (4) parent-child joint attention. A high rating on this scale suggests that the parent and child are frequently engaging in warm, positive behaviors during the home visit.
SCALE 6—PARENT ENGAGEMENT DURING HOME VISIT
This scale examines the engagement of the parent and the activities of the home visit. It focuses on (1) parent interest, (2) parent involvement and initiative, and (3) the parent’s physical closeness to the home visitor and child. A high rating on this scale suggests that the parent is frequently displaying behaviors that indicate interest and engagement in the home visit activities and discussions.

SCALE 7—CHILD ENGAGEMENT DURING HOME VISIT
This scale focuses on the child’s engagement in the activities of the home visit. It focuses on (1) child involvement and (2) child interest. A high rating on this scale suggests that the child is frequently displaying behaviors that indicate engagement and interest in the home visit.

Psychometric properties:
High HOVRS scores reflect high quality home visits and predictive validity is demonstrated by significant correlations with positive outcomes for parents and children in a sample of families from two Early Head Start programs. The new HOVRS-A+ scales have been used reliably, with inter-rater agreement within one point for all scales across 10 observed home visits and scales showing good internal consistency (see below) based on a sample of 83 home visits from various programs. All HOVRS versions include seven rating scales: four for home visiting practices and three for the family engagement.

HOVRS-A+ scales (7 scales, alpha = .88):
Scales of Home Visit Practices (4 scales, alpha = .84):
• Home Visitor Responsiveness to Family (6 items, alpha = .69)
• Home Visitor Relationship with Family (8 items, alpha = .83)
• Home Visitor Facilitation of Parent–Child Interaction (6 items, alpha = .86)
• Home Visitor Non-Intrusiveness & Collaboration (5 items, alpha = .69)
Scales of Family Engagement (3 scales, alpha = .74):
• Parent–Child Interaction during Home Visit (7 items, alpha = .90)
• Parent Engagement during Home Visit (7 items, alpha = .83)
• Child Engagement during Home Visit (4 items, alpha = .91)

Instructions:
Each HOVRS-A+ scale has a series of items with a set of indicators at different levels of quality for a particular home visit practice. For each set of indicators, check at least one indicator (1, 3, 5, or 7). Check the indicator that comes closest to describing the observation even if not an exact match.

Observing either live or from video, check one indicator in each set. Because the duration of a home visit observation may range from 15 to 90 minutes, it is helpful to check whatever is observed, even at a low level. Then if an indicator of higher quality makes the previous indicator inaccurate, simply cross out the previously checked item. For example, after observing the home visitor “occasionally gets more information by asking open-ended or follow-up questions,” the observer should check that indicator, but if the home visitor continues to get more information in that way, this indicator should be crossed out and the higher quality indicator checked, “frequently gets more information by asking open-ended or follow-up questions.”

Rarely: almost never observed, maybe once or a couple of minor questionable times but no more, and missed opportunities.
Occasionally: observed occasionally, 2-3 times, and also missed opportunities.
Frequently: almost always observed; opportunities are almost never missed.
If child is sleeping for over 75% of the visit, mark N/A ("not applicable") on any item related to parent-child interactions or observations involving the child.

If there are multiple children and not a clear 'target' child, rate the first 4 scales in terms of involving any or all of the children and parent-child interaction and child engagement in terms of the children in general (a sort of mental average).

If video-recording, home visitors may self-record a 30-45 minute “core” of the home visit that includes the primary activities and practices implemented in a typical home visit.

When observing, note that “activities” may include discussions.

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**Scoring:**

At the end of the observation, decide on an overall scale rating, from 1 to 7, using the full range of values: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7, based on the pattern of indicators checked. For example, if most checked indicators are a 5 or “Good,” then the rating would most likely be a 5. If, however, some of the checked indicators are a 5 and some are a 3 or “Adequate,” then the overall rating would most likely be a 4. If some checked indicators are a 7 or “Excellent,” and some are a 5, then the rating would likely be a 6. Items in the 1 column carry more weight (estimate as -1). To make the final scale rating, the observer may use informed judgment about the weight of specific items, considering the situation and individuals involved.

Do not use items marked N/A to decide the overall rating.

Ratings from the first 4 scales may be summed to provide an index of the quality of Home Visiting Practices. Ratings from the last 3 scales may be summed to provide an index of the effectiveness of the visit on Family Engagement.