

**University of Washington Parenting Clinic
Home Observation Procedures
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**RULES FOR HOME OBSERVATIONS (FOR PARENTS)
(for Clinic families)**

(Parents are given this information during their Clinic intake or interview.)

In order to provide the best treatment possible for you and your family and for the purposes of our research, trained staff members will be conducting in-home observations of you and your family. These observations will consist of two visits between 4:00 and 7:00 PM, each lasting no longer than 1 and 1/2 hours.

1. Everyone in the family must be present.
2. No guests should be present during the observations.
3. The family is limited to two adjacent rooms in order to allow the observer to view all family members.
4. The observers' time schedules allow them to wait only 10 minutes for all family members to be present in the two rooms.
5. No telephone calls out; answer incoming calls briefly.
6. No television viewing. No computer games. No reading.
7. No conversation with observers while they are coding.

Please go about the activities you would regularly engage in at this time of day.

If this is your regular dinner hour, proceed as you would if the observers were not there. In general, it is desirable that you ignore the observer while he or she is working. We know it can be uncomfortable to have observers in the home, but we find this information invaluable both to our research and your treatment program.

Observers will call you to confirm appointment ahead of time.

Please call our office if you are unable to keep the appointment.

Thank you.

HOME VISIT PROCEDURES

Initial phone call

The home observer will make the home visit appointment with the family. Identify yourself from the Clinic and explain that you would like to arrange a home visit for the week of _____. Mention the days that are most convenient for you and have them chose (from your list) which day would be the most convenient for them. If it is impossible to find a time that is mutually agreeable, try to schedule it for another week. If it is impossible, talk to a supervisor.

While you are on the phone, ask the parent whether they have had a chance to read over the home visit rules. If they have not, briefly review the rules with them.

If this visit has been chosen to be used as a reliability visit, you must mention that two observers will be arriving at their home. Do not schedule a reliability observation at the very first observation.

Make sure to get directions to their home.

On the day of the visit, phone the family ahead of time to confirm your appointment.

Preparing materials for the Home Visit

You will need to staple 6 coding sheets together for the mother and 6 coding sheets for the father. Write the page number of each page in the upper right hand corner of each page.

On the front of the first coding sheet in each stapled set write the

ID#
MO or FA
Time (T1 or T2)
HV # (1 or 2)
Date

Example: #606 / Mo / HV #1 / T1 / Jan 2, 1999

Also complete the identifying information on page six of each stapled set.

Additional materials to bring to the home visit:

- Extra single coding sheets
- A copy of **RULES FOR HOME OBSERVATIONS FOR PARENTS** to hand to parents if necessary
- Two copies of Coder Impressions Inventories (CII) but keep them in your car

Arriving and Coding the observation.

Plan to arrive on time for the observation.

The primary home observer is responsible for putting the family at ease. Spend a *few* minutes making small talk and making sure all family members understand the rules. Explain that you will try to be as unobtrusive and “invisible” as possible.

Children need to be told that you will be working quietly and will not be able to talk with them until you are through with your work. Let them know you will not forget to tell them when you are finished and able to talk. You do not need to remind them again.

Each 30 minute observation is coded in 5-minute segments, one coding sheet per 5 minutes. Identify the time period, i.e. 6:00 to 6:05, on each page.

If any family member absents him or herself from the observation for an extended length of time (over one minute), for example, to answer the phone or go to the bathroom, stop the clock, and add the time to the five-minute segment. Add a note to the coding sheet explaining the extra time added.

Reliability Observations

If a secondary home observer is present, s/he will need the same paperwork as the primary coder. The primary and secondary coder sit or stand together. Decide who will be the timekeeper (usually the primary coder). At the end of a five minute segment the timekeeper will nod to the other home observer that it is time to stop that segment. Each home observer takes the time to fill out the valences for parent and child on the back side of the coding sheet, and moves on to another five minute segment.

Record the Marital Valence only on the sixth page of the stapled set for the entire 30 minutes of observation. In the case of a single parent, write NA.

It is important the primary and secondary observers keep their communication to a minimum (nonverbal communication is preferable.) In this way the observers can be less distracting to the family.

At times the primary observer will need to decide to stop the clock (while the child goes to the bathroom or during a Time Out, for example). Other decisions may be to move to another seat or location in the room, unobtrusively remind the family of a rule, or tack on extra time due to an absent family member. It is important for the secondary observer to be in sync during these times.

The secondary observer turns in all the same measures as the primary observer EXCEPT a home visit summary. The summary is written and submitted by the primary observer only, though the primary observer may appreciate input from the secondary observer.

Coding tips and considerations

Keep your pencil moving as much as possible so the family is not aware of what you are doing. If the parent sees you moving the pencil only when s/he talks, s/he may stop talking!

Try to look at children, including siblings, without giving them eye contact. Otherwise, they may begin performing for the observer.

Often target children will test the rule about getting work done. If they talk to you, bang your knee, laugh in your face, or stamp on your watch, IGNORE THEM. Do not look at them, smile at them, gasp, laugh, or in any way let them know you are responding to them. This is difficult, but essential.

Home Visit Summaries.

The Home Visit Summary on clinic families should describe brief highlights and impressions of the visit. It is especially helpful to describe some of the following areas (which are listed in no particular order). It is not necessary to include all these categories but do include those that convey the essence and major impressions of the visit with the family.

- summary of activity during visits
- observations of child and parents
- direct quotes, specific examples
- parent and child attachment
- parent and child temperament
- what's going well for the family
- what is not going so well for the family
- any obvious areas in which the parent is focusing his/her efforts
- developmental, social-emotional, or physical concerns
- home stimulation, level of "kid-friendly" environment
- home environment/socio-economic neighborhood
- sibling relationships
- marital valence
- coder affect

Completing the Home Visit

The home visit measures and observation paperwork must be submitted within two weeks of completing the two home visits per family. This holds for the primary and the secondary observer.

To be submitted for clinic families who have two observations at pre and post treatment:

- Coding sheets representing 30 minutes of observation for each parent at each of 2 visits (4 stapled sets for a two-parent family)
- Four Coder Impressions Inventories (CII) - one for each parent at each of 2 visits
- Home Visit summary that summarizes the two home visits (submitted by only the primary coder in the case of a reliability observation)

To be submitted for families in prevention families who only have one observation at pre and post intervention:

- Coding sheets representing 30 minutes of observation for 1 visit
- Two Coder Impression Inventories (CII) –one for each parent

Home Observation Measures

DPICS

DPICS codes

Refer to the Dyadic Parent-Child Interaction Coding System (DPICS) Manual

Collection Procedures

Refer to Home Visit Procedures

Coding Procedures

The coding sheet is a large tally sheet with space to mark a tally for every code encountered during the observation. It includes a space for notes and comments. Valence is coded on the scale on the back.

Each coding page represents a 5 minute segment of the observation, or the full five minute CDI or PDI or CU segment.

Coder's Impression Inventory GUIDELINES

Complete one CII for each parent following each home visit. Each item must be filled in, because a blank will affect the total score. Check your data completely for any missed items before you hand it in.

The following are guidelines to observe when marking a particular item. Those questions which do not have guidelines seem to not require more comment as they cause no confusion for coders.

Questions 2-71 are rated as follows:

- No basis indicates no opportunity to evaluate this item
- Did not occur indicates zero occurrences or you did not observe this behavior
- One example actually means "few" or "one to three" times
- Multiple means "more", which is 4 or more times.

2. The child did not comply with at least one parental request/command.
This item refers to the number of non-complies of a child.
3. The child did not comply, and the parent followed up on the issue with another command/reprimand.
This item refers to parents who do not track compliance by their child, as well as to being an indication of parents issuing commands that offer no opportunity to comply.
4. The parent threatened punishment for a transgression. ("If you do that again, I'll beat the ... out of you.")
Consider threats of punishment only. An appropriate consequence for a child's behavior would be a disciplinary tactic and not punishment. Punishment is distinguished from discipline by its harshness, hurtfulness, and penalizing qualities. This item also requires that the child has been misbehaving (deviant and/or noncompliant) and the parent responds by threatening punishment. Mark 0 if the child had not misbehaved. Mark 1 if the child misbehaved and the parent did not threaten punishment. Mark 2 if the child misbehaved and the parent threatened a few times.
- 5a. The parent threatened punishment for a transgression and followed through.
Mark no basis if there was no threat of punishment.
- 5b. The parent warned child of consequence if misbehavior continued. ("If you can't keep the crayons on the paper, I'll need to take them away.")
This items would cover a parental warning (as in DPICS coding - a command accompanied by a negative consequence that is appropriate for the noncompliant behavior.) Mark no basis if no misbehavior was observed, mark did not occur, if no warning was given to misbehaviors.

6. The parent made unreasonable request(s), (e.g. age-inappropriate, too high standards, impossible to comply with.)
7. The parent showed disapproval or criticized child.
To code this item keep in mind the degree of disapproval or criticism used and your overall impression. Mark 1 if the parent was not critical (which is not necessarily the same as issuing 1 to 2 critical statements, for instance, if they are “no”.) Mark 2 or 3 depending on the severity, few or sometimes, or more times.
8. The parent used guilt induction to get compliance.
Guilt induction is unnecessarily coercive on the part of the parent, with the intention, conscious or not, to encourage guilt in the child if he/she does not comply. Clearly decide if (1) it did not happen at all or (2) a few times.
9. The parent gave rationales (not lecturing, but simple, clear reasons) when appropriate.
Consider tone of voice as well as specific verbal explanations given to child.
10. The parent tried to pleasantly tease or kid or humor the child out of sour mood, conflict, etc.
Mark no basis if child was not in sour mood or in a conflictual interaction.
11. The parent clearly pinpointed the infraction/misbehavior when disciplining.
For this item consider discipline in a broad sense, to include all of the possible ways parents structure, teach, and direct children. It would include any re-directing, limit-setting, ignoring, as well as time-outs, sticker charts, and other forms of contingent reward.
When a parent says, “You are going to time-out for hitting”, that parent clearly is pointing out the misbehavior when disciplining. If a parent randomly disciplines or punishes the child without warning or explanation, code “did not occur” assuming there was a reason for discipline.
12. The parent labeled the misbehavior, but no follow-through or punishment.
If a parent continually reminds a child of the expectations and what the child is doing wrong but without enforcing the rules, this would be labeling the misbehavior without discipline.
13. The child did something clearly prosocial (extra nice, volunteered, did something for family, was cooperative) and the parent gave a positive response.
This item measures the parental response to the child’s prosocial actions, including their cooperation within the family. The examples given are not the only ones to consider. For this item prosocial acts would need to be initiated by the child, and mere compliance and positive affect are not sufficient. If the child was not at all prosocial, mark no basis.

14. The child did something clearly prosocial (extra nice, volunteered, did something for family, was cooperative) and the parent ignored it or paid no attention.
See previous comments on child prosocial acts. If the child was not at all prosocial, mark no basis. This item evaluates the parent's attending (or ignoring) of a child's prosocial acts.
15. Time out, other social isolation.
Mark this if the child goes into time-out, or if a sibling does, or if there is reference made to using the technique. This item measures that it is a technique used in the family.
16. A point program or contingent rewards.
Mark this if you observe a sticker chart or other contingent reward program being used, or reference to one, or see one posted on the wall or refrigerator. This item measures that it is a technique used in the family.
17. Withdrawal of privileges.
Mark this if you observe privileges withdrawn, or threatened to be withdrawn. This item measures that it is a technique used in the family.
18. The parent seemed to provoke the child into arguments.
Consider that the child does not necessarily have to argue with the parent. In order for this item to be coded, the parent should have a generally antagonistic and nit-picking attitude. The child might not necessarily be saying anything in return. Use your coder gut-feeling as a guide.
19. The parent used sarcasm in a denigrating or hurtful way.
Sarcasm should be directed at adults, and is never or seldom appropriate for young children. Carefully evaluate your impression as to it never, sometimes, or more often occurring.
20. The parent actually modeled positive behavior to the child (gave child words to say).
21. Paid attention when child talked or asked questions.
22. Problem-solved with child.
Impressions of problem-solving should be consistent with the DPICS manual definition: problem solving is a statement, question or command that invites the child in an open-ended way to critically think about and solve a problem. (Note the emphasis.) This definition of problem solving includes, but is not limited to, instances of social problem solving. For example, "How do you think he would feel?" is an example of social problem solving. A nonexample would be "Where should this puzzle piece go?" because it is not open-ended.
23. Did not pay attention when child talked.

Code this when the parent appears to be disinterested or oblivious to the child, not merely unable to hear a child.

24. Ignored child's inappropriate behavior.
Mark this when a parent clearly ignores misbehavior, that is uses the technique of ignore by remaining silent, or maintaining a neutral facial expression, or avoiding or breaking eye contact, or making no response to the child except to turn away.
25. Discussed/planned a future activity with child (in which both parent and child might participate.)
29. Child was verbally affectionate to parent.
Consider verbally affectionate to include both specific remarks and a general positive tone of the child toward the parent.
31. Did or said things to clearly indicate anger, irritability or frustration.
Keep in mind that to score a (3) you must be impressed that the occurrences are in excess of four times, and more than a few, which would be (2).
37. Parent shouted at child.
Clearly distinguish between none (1) and a few (2).
45. Parent seems confident of parenting skills.
Code this based on parent's appearance of confidence regardless of parenting skill. This question is not meant to judge competence. (From DPICS meeting decisions 7/1/98).
46. Overly strict, authoritarian, oppressive (discipline style).
The emphasis here is on an overly strict, excessive manner and overbearing interactions with the child that are not developmentally appropriate. Distinguish between (1) fitting not at all and (2) sometimes fitting.
47. Overly permissive, *laissez-faire*, negligent (discipline style).
Mark this if any of these descriptions seems to fit for the parent. All three do not necessarily have to describe the parent's style.
48. Erratic, inconsistent, haphazard (discipline style).
"Inconsistent" or "erratic" behavior does not necessarily have to be negative or greatly inappropriate, just inconsistent, that is variable or changeable. For instance: a parent reacting/responding to a child for a minor behavior, while ignoring more serious ones. Also, parental mood swings without obvious provocation could be an indication of such a discipline style.
54. Uses nagging to get compliance.

Nagging may impress a coder differently depending on the personal experience of being nagged or being a nagger. For our purposes, nagging is repetitive, unnecessary, and disrespectful.

59. Friendly relations between parent and child.

Consider the percentage of time parent and child spend together that is characterized by friendly, congenial interactions. Code (3) when the interactions 75% or more of the time are characterized as such.

69. Parent relates positive comments about the child to the interviewer.

If the parent clearly has no opportunity to address the coder with positive or negative commentary about the child, this would be considered no opportunity. However, at this time, marking “does not fit at all” covers both the parent who doesn’t comment on their child to the observer and when there is no opportunity.

72. Does the family look like they need intervention?

Intervention should be considered to be parent training, child training, counseling for some or all family members, behavior therapy and the like. It is not intended to refer to CPS or similar interventions. Again, this is your impression. The parents may be doing a fine job, but have a difficult child, or maybe the parents could benefit by some specific guidance and training.

76. Cleanliness (of physical environment).

Consider that “extremely clean” is not necessarily a good thing. If it appears that the house is not at all “kid friendly” and has nothing out of place, this would be coded as extremely clean.

Coder Reliability

DPICS Meetings

Weekly reliability meetings for DPICS coders are held on a consistent basis, same day and time each week. Creating and maintaining a high rate of inter-coder reliability is the primary purpose of DPICS meetings. Although the meetings often have many components, reliability is always the group's main focus.

Reliability meetings typically begin with the group facilitator conducting a check-in regarding ongoing work. Coders receive and turn in coding assignments. This is also the time when coders decide who will do reliability coding with them for home observation assignments.

Specific coding questions from recent observations are addressed by the group. It is common for the group to have discussions about particular coding questions and to read various sections from the manual. Meeting time is also used by the group to support fellow coders in debriefing various home coding situations.

The group usually codes a videotape of a parent/child dyad during the meeting. Coding sheets are used and everyone codes a CDI, PDI, or CU segment together all the way through with no stops. Reliability is checked for each segment. Coders often take a second look at parts of the videotape and read from the manual when making group decisions about a specific code. It is important that the group agrees on the coding decision to keep everyone reliable as a group. Sometimes individuals disagree with a code, but they are willing to agree as a group member for reliability purposes. The idea is to keep humor and 'group mind' as priorities!

Meetings also provide an opportunity for coders to check reliability with one another from previous home observations and videotapes.

Calculating Inter-coder Reliability

Inter-coder reliability is calculated by dividing the number of codes two coders are in agreement with by the total number of codes. $(A / A+D)$ The first step is to total each type of code, that is, total the hash marks in each coding category. The coding sheets provide columns for marking the number of codes that a secondary coder is in agreement or disagreement with. These columns are at the far left and right of each coding page. For instance, if the primary coder tallied 12 acknowledge and the secondary coder tallied 10 acknowledge. Place 10 in the A column (agree) and 2 in the D column (disagree). Continue similarly for each code. Total the number of A (agree) and D (disagree) and T (agree plus disagree). Divide A by T to determine percentage of reliability between the two coders. The standard we use for reliability is 70% or greater.

Reliability for each videotape segment (CDI, PDI, CU) is calculated separately. The reliability of each 30 minute home observation segment (each parent) is calculated from the total for the 30 minutes, rather than each 5 minute segment.

Videotaping for Clinic Families

Parent-Child Play Sessions

The target child is videotaped playing with his/her parent(s) with specific toys and with specific instructions given to the parent. The child plays twice - once with each parent, each time with the same toys.

The play segments are as follows:

Warm-up. Parent and child are given toys that are meant to allow the pair to relax and feel comfortable playing together. This segment is included only at Time 1.

CDI - child directed interaction.

PDI - parent directed interaction.

CU - clean up.

Set-Up:

- **Get equipment ready** (adjust cameras, set white, set family number, check "SP")
- **Insert appropriate PLAY videotape and label**
with Family ID # and (Mo) or (Fa)
- **Enter in video log clipboard**
 1. Date
 2. Your initials
 3. ID number
 4. Tape session (SS, P, BF, M, Kids Session #, etc.) and the time (tape color)
 5. Descriptions of family members or comments.
- **Set up room** as follows:
 - SHADES DRAWN UP** and mirror wall usable
 - FOR Time 1 Warm-up:**
 - Place table** in front of mirror, one chair with back to wall and one chair with back to mirror.
 - FOR CDI, PDI, CU**
 - Place the table** on the wall opposite the door. Place one chair with back toward the door wall and one chair with back to mirrored wall. This enables Camera #2 to capture faces of both persons (and makes use of the mirror) if they should sit at the table.
 - Place toys (playhouse and Legos and bristle blocks** in their plastic dishpans) in front of the mirror. This is a signal to parents that toys should be here when "all cleaned up".

Videotaping

WARM-UP PLAY at TIME 1

Shape bear and tic-tac-toe game are given to parent and child at the table. Table is in front of mirror, parent sitting in chair with back to door and child in the chair with back to mirror. Let them know they will have 6 minutes to play and you will bring another set of toys.

In video room

Begin recording as soon as possible by pressing "REC". Pause a second or two, and **start timer** by pressing "Start". Pausing momentarily between beginning recording and starting the timer allows the final videotape to actually start at zero. When the first **6 minutes** have elapsed, press "**Stop**".

Return to parent and child

Remove shape bear and tic-tac-toe and **give** them the second set of warm-up toys: the crayons, puzzles, and books.

In video room

Record for 6 minutes of play. **Stop** taping.

Proceed to CDI, PDI, and CU.

Videotaping

CDI/PDI/CU

INSTRUCTION TO PARENTS for PLAY

Give parents the following instructions. There is a card with these instructions in the boxes of toys and/or on the bulletin board in video room. You will want to instruct the parent, but not the child. You may invite the parent to take the card into the room with them.

For the next 15 minutes you will be playing with these toys.

The first 5 minutes tell your child that he/she can play with whatever she/he wants to play with. Think of it as her/his choice, and you follow along with his/her lead.

After 5 minutes there will be **TWO KNOCKS**...and it will be time for you to choose what you want to play with. Think of it as your choice. Have your child follow along with your lead.

After 5 minutes there will be **THREE KNOCKS** and it is time to clean up and put the toys away. Make sure you have your child clean up.

SUGGEST that if possible parent play with his/her back toward door wall. This allows for the best possible chance that despite children's movements, facial expressions of both can be captured by the cameras. Bid them to "Have fun".

VIDEOTAPING

- **Begin recording** as soon as possible by pressing "REC". Pause a second or two, and **start timer** by pressing "Start". Pausing momentarily between beginning recording and starting the timer allows the final videotape to actually start at zero.
- When the first **5 minutes** have elapsed, **KNOCK TWICE** on the window, and on VCR press "**Stop**", "**Reset**" and "**Start**". This completes CDI and starts PDI.
- When the second **5 minutes** have elapsed, **KNOCK THREE TIMES** on the window, and press on the VCR "**Stop**", "**Reset**" and "**Start**". This completes PDI and signals Clean-up.
- Allow **clean up** to continue **until they are finished** and then **stop** the VCR. This may be a much shorter time than 5 minutes. Be sure to continue filming any praises, statements or touches that establish "all done." Continue taping until they are finished.