

The Early Adolescent (10-14) HOME Inventory

Information for users when preparing reports

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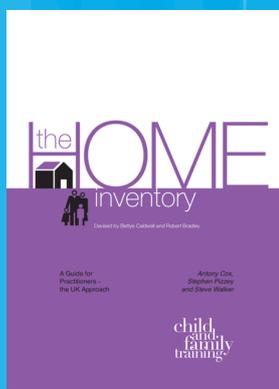
General

The HOME Inventory (Home Observation and Measurement of the Environment) (Caldwell and Bradley, 2003) is based on a substantial body of research regarding factors, which are supportive of positive child development. The HOME Inventory has an extensive research base that has gradually been expanded since the 1960s.

The Early Adolescent (10-14) HOME Inventory

There is one standard Early Adolescent (10-14) HOME Inventory. It includes sub-scales (made up of several items), which assess different aspects of a young person's experience. The sub-scales are:

- *physical environment*: whether the physical environment is safe, sufficiently roomy, and likely to appeal to an adolescent;
- *learning materials*: parental support for learning and development through the provision of objects and time and financial commitments needed to encourage skill development and problem-solving behaviour;
- *modelling*: identifies mature and socially responsible behaviour on the part of the parent which presents a positive role to the adolescent;
- *fostering self-sufficiency*: parental efforts to enable the adolescent to become self-sufficient by providing training that will foster the acquisition of ever more complex and useful skills and by expecting increasingly responsible behaviour from the young person;
- *regulatory activities*: identifies a climate of rules and regulations that are not excessive or punitive but that are conducive to an ordered household;
- *family companionship*: encompasses activities which identify the adolescent as part of an active family - a family that engages in daily routines and social outings as a group;
- *acceptance*: a positive parent-child relationship likely to be mutually rewarding to both parent and young person.



The UK Approach

The information required to complete the Inventory is obtained by use of a semi-structured interview schedule combining interview and observation and a review of the social, emotional and physical home circumstances (Cox, Pizzey and Walker, 2009).

The interview explores the nature and variety of a young person's day-to-day experiences, the quality of their home environment and the parenting capacity of the caregivers.

The interview is structured to cover a specific day; usually the previous day or previous weekday, and items are scored for both answers and observations. The interview contains additional sections on areas such as friends, health, play, homework, family activities, outings, dealing with difficult behaviour and contact with health professionals.

Scoring the HOME Inventory

The scores for the sub-scales are obtained from the completion of a record form that contains a number of items, which are defined by a glossary. The scores are compared to the median score for each sub-scale. The median score is the midway point of the scores in research on normal populations.

A sub-scale scores of two or three points below the median highlights a concern about that aspect of the young person's experience. An overall score of seven points below the median raises a concern about the young person's overall experience of care.

The HOME Inventory does not assess all aspects of a young person's home environment, for example, family functioning. The sub-scales are scored on the basis of a home visit to the main caregiver and the young person of concern. In practice the scores should not be used in isolation but must always be considered in the light of information from other sources.

The HOME Inventory discriminates better between "good enough" care and low-quality care for a young person than between "good enough" and high-quality care. The qualitative information provided by the use of the semi-structured interview helps the practitioner identify whether the young person is receiving high-quality care.

Summary

The HOME Inventory (Caldwell and Bradley, 2003) is well-established and tested and a good predictor of outcomes for young people. *The HOME Inventory: the UK Approach* (Cox et al, 2009) is user friendly, provides a picture of the young person's world from their perspective and is well received by families.

The Early Adolescent Inventory is useful in a range of situations including: initial and later stages of assessment; assessing the level of change following interventions; providing a detailed picture of the care needed by young people in foster and adoptive placements and residential care; and assessing the quality of parenting and support that might be required.

References

- Caldwell, B.M. and Bradley, R.H. (2003) *HOME Inventory: Administration Manual Comprehensive Edition*. Little Rock, AR: University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.
- Cox, A., Pizzey, S. and Walker, S. (2009) *The HOME Inventory: A Guide for Practitioners – The UK Approach*. York: Child and Family Training.

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