



Provider Voice in Home-Based Child Care Networks Scale (PV-HBCCN)

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Introduction

The Provider Voice in Home-Based Child Care Networks Scale (PV-HBCCN) measures providers¹ perceptions of how well they are included as equal decision-makers in services and operations of a home-based child care network (see Box 1). The authentic inclusion of providers in decision-making is theorized as an essential component of HBCCN quality that can promote more effective supports as well as providers' own sense of professionalism and self-efficacy (Bromer et al., 2024; Erikson Institute & Home Grown, 2022). Yet the field lacks measures or assessments that could help HBCCNs understand the success of efforts to include provider voice. The PV-HBCCN is an easy-to-use survey measure that HBCCNs can use to capture provider views about their experience participating in an HBCCN. The PV-HBCCN looks at provider voice from several angles, including:

- Respect and recognition for providers' experiences
- Asking and listening to providers
- Accessible supports for providers

Box 1 | Home-Based Child Care Network (HBCCN)

Definition: An interconnected group of providers and families who come together to enhance supports for home-based child care providers—including quality, access to services, and sustainability—through formal or informal mechanisms

Examples: Associations, child care resources and referral agencies, provider-led groups, shared services alliances, staffed family child care networks

Source: Erikson Institute and Home Grown, 2022

¹ We use the term “provider” to refer to the full continuum of people who provide home-based child care, including family, friend, and neighbor caregivers as well as licensed family child care educators.

The Scale

The PV-HBCCN includes 10 items. The measure is meant to be used by HBCCNs that want to understand the experiences of providers participating in an HBCCN. Providers are asked about their agreement with each statement using a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree (see **Box 2**). Versions of the questionnaire in English, Spanish, and Mandarin can be found [here](#).

Development of the Scale

Six items on the scale were adapted from the Relationship-Based Support for Home-Based Child Care Scale (Bromer et al., 2020), specifically items that aim to assess emotional connection and communication constructs. The remaining four items were developed in collaboration with network staff and providers to capture relevant provider voice constructs from the [Benchmarks and Indicators for HBCC Network Quality](#).

Uses and Limitations of Scale

Scoring

Users can create a summary score by assigning each response a numeric code of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) and averaging the responses to each item. For example, if a provider responds Agree (numeric code is 4) to the first five items and Strongly Agree (numeric code is 5) to the last five items, the summary score for that provider would be 4.5. An excel scoring template [can be found here](#).

The PV-HBCCN does not have thresholds defining “good”, “fair”, or “poor” scores. However, summary scores closer to 5 indicate stronger agreement with the statements and therefore better inclusion of provider voice than lower scores. Alternatively, networks may look at responses to individual items, which can provide useful information about the network’s strengths and weaknesses.

Limitations

There are many promising uses for the PV-HBCCN tool as well as some notable limitations. The tool is easy to administer through a survey and is therefore useful to gauge how providers across a network feel.

Box 2 | PV-HBCCN Scale Items



- The network respects my child care and early education work
- The network recognizes my strengths
- My network believes home-based child care programs can offer high quality care and education
- I feel that my voice is heard
- The network gives me a chance to ask questions
- The network listens to my concerns about the type of support I need
- The network asks me for ideas about how to improve the network
- I feel comfortable sharing my opinion about how the network should be run (including what types of supports should be offered)
- My network changes support to meet my needs
- My network schedules meetings at times home-based child care educators can come

Box 3 | Tips for Using the PV-HBCCN

- The PV-HBCCN should be used by HBCCNs that want to evaluate their inclusion of provider voice in HBCCN operations and services.
- The PV-HBCCN may also be used as part of other initiatives seeking to include HBCC provider voice.
- The PV-HBCCN can be administered as part of an online or paper survey. It can be used alone or in conjunction with other survey questions.
- The PV-HBCCN can be used alongside other forms of data collection, such as listening sessions or focus groups with a subset of providers, to gather more detailed feedback.
- An open-ended question asking for additional comments can be used alongside the PV-HBCCN to capture any aspect of provider voice that may be missing.
- The PV-HBCCN can be completed at a single point in time to capture a snapshot of provider views or at different points to see if provider views change over time.

However, as a survey tool, it may miss some nuances that can only be understood through other forms of information gathering. In addition, there may be some aspects of provider voice that the tool doesn't capture; for example, the tool does not assess the extent to which a network empowers providers to take on leadership roles, authentically includes those leaders in decision-making, or facilitates these opportunities. The tool also does not examine if a network recognizes provider expertise or fosters opportunities for providers to learn from their peers. **Box 3** includes tips for using the PV-HBCCN scale.

Pilot and Preliminary Validation Study

The PV-HBCCN was piloted with HBCC providers from 16 networks across two research projects. A final sample of 107 providers completed the scale as part of larger online surveys.² Exploratory analyses were completed to determine initial validity and reliability (see **Box 4**).

Analyses of pilot data show strong evidence that the PV-HBCCN is valid and reliable. These analyses indicate the following about the PV-HBCCN.

- **Construct Validity: Measures a single underlying construct (i.e., provider voice),** indicated by all items having factor loadings greater than 0.70 in the EFA.

² During the pilot, the term “family child care” was used instead of “home-based child care.”

Box 4 | Exploratory Analyses

- An exploratory factors analysis (EFA) was used to assess **construct validity**.
- Cronbach's alpha was used to assess **internal consistency**.
- Pearson's correlations were used to assess **discriminant and predictive validity**.

- **Internal Consistency:** Has a consistent pattern of responses across the sample and remains reliable for different groups of providers, indicated by a Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.95$ and by Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.80$ for all subgroup analyses.
- **Discriminant and Predictive Validity:** Is predictive of measures that have a theoretical relationship with the inclusion of provider voice, such as positive perceptions of network staff (p 's $< .001$), usefulness of network supports (most p 's $< .01$), and positive relationships with network coordinators (p 's $< .05$), while showing no correlation with other measures (such as general measures of job stress and teaching efficacy).

See the [Technical Appendix](#) for additional detail about these analyses.

The exploratory analyses of the pilot data show that the PV-HBCCN is a promising tool that HBCCNs can use to assess provider voice from the perspectives of providers themselves. However, a larger field test is needed to confirm these preliminary results.

References

Bromer, J., Miguel, J., Zhang, S., Place, A., & Porter, T. (2024). *Promising practices for high-quality home-based child care networks: Supporting providers as equal partners: Brief 1*. The Building Comprehensive Networks Initiative. Home Grown and Erikson Institute. <https://www.erikson.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/HomeGrown-Erikson-PROVIDER-VOICE-BRIEF-final-3.15.24.pdf>

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Home-Based Child Care Research at Erikson Institute's Herr Research Center

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Erikson Institute educates, inspires, and promotes leadership to serve the needs of children and families. As part of that mission, the Herr Research Center develops original scholarship and research that shapes the early childhood field. Since 2008, the Home-Based Child Care (HBCC) Research focus area has conducted rigorous and actionable research to inform early care and education policy and program design and decision-making. Through national, multistate, and local projects and participatory approaches, Erikson's HBCC Research group partners with professionals and communities to highlight promising strategies for supporting equity for the home-based child care workforce and quality for children and families who use home-based child care.

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