

# Technical Manual: Home Visits

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This document acts as a guide for community workers conducting home visits as part of early crime and violence prevention work.

### About the CJCP

The CJCP is a South African research NGO working in the field of violence prevention and safety, in South Africa and the region, with a particular focus on children and youth. The organisation has extensive experience in the field of child protection and safety; child and youth victimization; online child protection, risks and opportunities; and school violence. The organisation works both nationally in South Africa, and regionally, and consults internationally.

Since its establishment in 2005, the CJCP has worked with a number of National and Provincial government departments in South Africa, including the Departments of Basic Education, Communications and Social Development, as well as the Presidency, to formulate evidence-based policy on issues of child safety, both online and offline, and to develop appropriate implementation frameworks and mechanisms for national and provincial policies and strategies. The organisation has also worked with a number of regional governments and international agencies on issues of violence against children, child safety and protection, and specifically child online safety. Specific examples include the current development of a child online safety strategy for UNICEF Namibia, development of a National Schools Safety Framework in 2014/15, and the development of a Children's Empowerment and ICT strategy with the South African Department of Communications. Further, the CJCP is the South African implementation partner of Global Kids Online, an international extension of the EU Kids Online project, in partnership with UNICEF Office of Research at Innocenti, and the London School of Economics and Political Sciences (LSE). The CJCP is also leading a team of experts undertaking a child online protection scoping and mapping study in five countries in the MENA region: Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Egypt and Jordan; is providing technical assistance to UNICEF Namibia and the Namibian University of Technology in exploratory research into child online protection and ICT opportunities in Namibia; and is undertaking a scoping exercise on child online protection in Uganda.

The organisation has extensive experience in conducting both large scale epidemiological studies on violence relating to children, best evidenced through the National Optimus Foundation Study on Child Abuse, Violence and Neglect, a study of 10,000 children and adolescents; as well as smaller scale qualitative and policy-oriented studies, including a comprehensive desktop study on violence against children, undertaken for UNICEF South Africa and the national Department of Social Development, in 2011.

The organisation also designs and delivers intervention and training material for both government and civil society, and regularly presents research on children and online safety at national and international fora. The organisation has undertaken work in South Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Namibia, Kenya, South Sudan and Ethiopia.

## Introduction

This document serves as a guide for the conducting of home visits (HV) within the context of the CJCP early crime and violence prevention service. The development of this guide was funded by the Human Dignity Foundation.

## Guide Outcomes

This guide will enable staff to:

1. Plan for HV
2. Conduct HV in an efficient and effective manner
3. Ensure that HV contribute towards the overall growth and development of families

## Definition and Purpose of Home Visits

HV form part of service delivery to individuals or families, and generally have specific outcomes related to the relevant overarching service, such as improved parenting skills, improved parent and / or child health and welfare outcomes.

HV have a variety of goals that are derived from the overarching service provided to the individuals and / or families, such as:

1. Assessment of the needs and risks of the individual and / or family
2. Monitoring and evaluation of progress against agreed-upon objectives within the home environment
3. Providing support and general encouragement
4. Delivering services such as counselling within the home

## Benefits of HV

HV are an extremely useful intervention that assist with overcoming barriers to service delivery access such as transport costs, transport availability, conflict with work schedules, and the absence of babysitting options. HV also serve to minimise isolation and develop understanding. Additionally, HV provide useful collateral information that can support or negate the initial office-based assessment:

Visiting a client or family in their home is conducive to assessing the genuine communication style, patterns of family interaction and dynamics, as well as abilities and skills, once basic trust has been developed. In an office set-up, such assessment may more often be false, as it is easier for clients to create a façade...<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> (Bender, van Niekerk, Seedat, & Atkins, 2002)

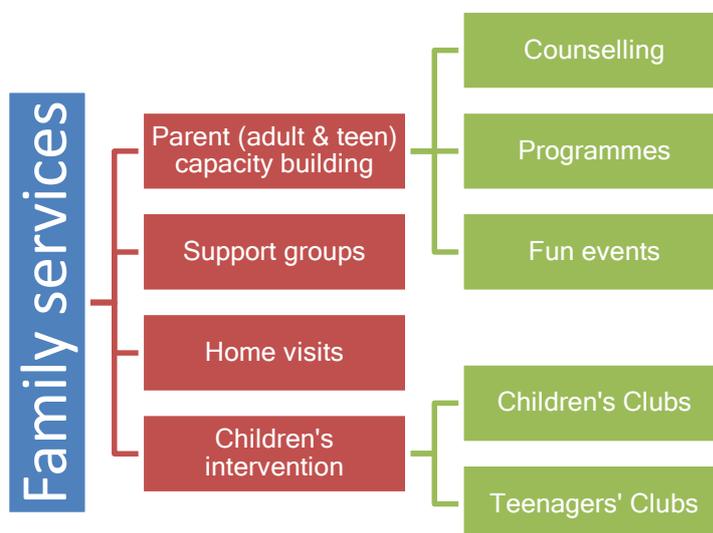
## Models

### Within Early Crime and Violence Prevention Services:

The CJCP early crime and violence prevention service consists of the following components:

- Parenting training workshops with parents and teenage parents
- Weekly parent support group sessions with parents and teenage parents
- Activity training with early-childhood development practitioners
- Support to and assistance with registration for early-childhood development centres
- Weekly children clubs and teenage clubs
- Leadership, peer mediation and mentoring training
- National School Safety Framework (NSSF) training to promote school safety
- Support group for teenage boys
- Support groups for teenage fathers
- Men & fatherhood group
- Sexuality training with teenagers as a preventative measure
- Family days
- Parental enhancement events
- Weekly home visits

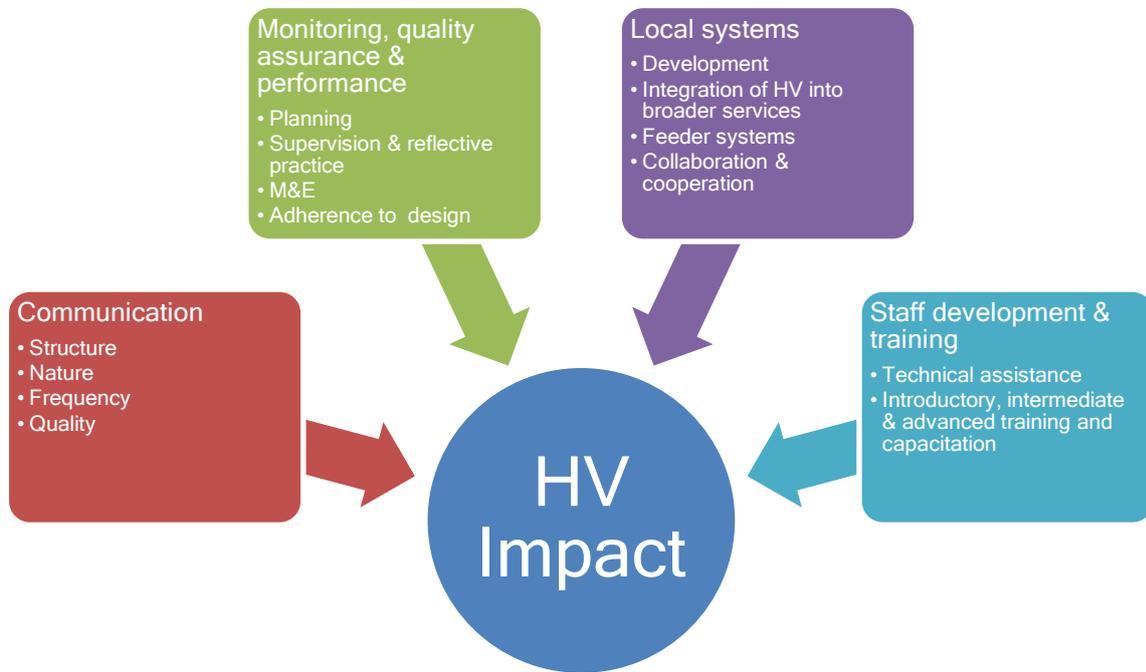
Figure 1: The CJCP Early Crime And Violence Prevention Service <sup>2</sup>



<sup>2</sup> (CJCP, 2009 - 2015)

## Factors that Enhance Home Visit Impact

Figure 2: Factors that Enhance Home Visit Impact



## Home Visit Process Model

Figure 3: Home Visit Process Model Ground



## Principles of Home Visits

The principles of HV within the CJCP early crime and violence prevention service should guide and inform all decisions and actions taken regarding HV. These principles are as follows:

1. The best interests of the child are paramount
2. Parents have the primary responsibility for bringing up their children
3. Parents should be supported and capacitated to become better parents
4. All parents should have access to the same type and quality of service
5. There is no single family pattern or structure that is preferable to others. There is no one right way of parenting
6. Family preservation requires the collaboration and cooperation of multiple role-players and stakeholders, all of whom have a contribution to make
7. In order to respond appropriately to parents, CJCP staff must be aware of their own values, attitudes and beliefs regarding parenting and families, and be sensitive to the possible impact that these may have on their relationships with clients
8. It is essential to the overall success of the HV that strong and positive relationships between the CJCP HV staff and the participating families exist

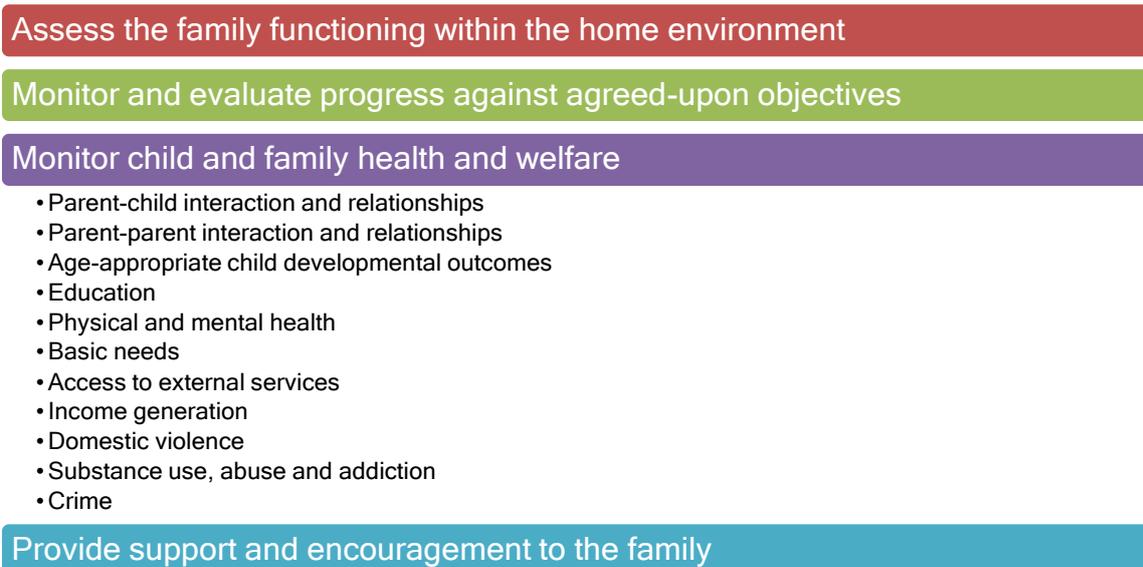
## Goals and Objectives of Home Visits

The goals of the HV within the CJCP early crime and violence prevention service are as follows:

1. Assess the family functioning within the home environment
2. Monitor and evaluate progress against agreed-upon objectives
3. Monitor child and family health and welfare
  - a. Parent-child interaction and relationships
  - b. Parent-parent interaction and relationships
  - c. Age-appropriate child developmental outcomes
  - d. Education
  - e. Physical and mental health
  - f. Basic needs
  - g. Access to external services
  - h. Income generation
  - i. Domestic violence
  - j. Crime
  - k. Substance use, abuse and addiction
4. Provide support and encouragement to the family

It is critically important that the HV goals are directly linked to both the staff and participants' capacities and needs.

Figure 4: Goals of the Home Visit Programme



### Suggested Foci Areas for Home Visit Goals and Outcomes

The table below contains a list of suggested foci areas for HV that may benefit participating families. This table may assist with the process of discussing and agreeing to HV goals and outcomes.

Table 1: Suggested Foci of Home Visit Goals and Outcomes<sup>3</sup>

| Domain                     | Components   |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Nurturing Parenting</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attachment/bonding</li> <li>▪ Appropriate expectation of child</li> <li>▪ Empathy for child</li> <li>▪ Independence</li> <li>▪ Shaken baby prevention</li> <li>▪ Alternatives to physical punishment</li> <li>▪ Negative learned parenting behaviour</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of child development</li> <li>▪ Positive role models for both genders</li> <li>▪ Daily quality time</li> <li>▪ Children’s nutritional needs</li> <li>▪ Coping skills</li> </ul> |
| <b>Healthy Families</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Medical home for parents</li> <li>▪ Medical home for child</li> </ul>   |

<sup>3</sup> (Children’s Trust Fund, 2013)

| Domain                    | Components  |
|---------------------------|---|
|                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dental care</li> <li>▪ Safe home environment</li> <li>▪ Nutrition: healthy eating</li> <li>▪ Mental health &amp; well-being</li> <li>▪ Safe sleep/SIDS</li> <li>▪ Child spacing</li> <li>▪ Physical health &amp; well-being</li> <li>▪ Establishment of daily routines</li> <li>▪ Positive self-care and self-esteem</li> <li>▪ Importance of social connections</li> <li>▪ Substance abuse</li> <li>▪ Domestic violence</li> <li>▪ Building a social network</li> </ul> |
| <b>Parent Life Course</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Education</li> <li>▪ Employment</li> <li>▪ Personal relationships/connections</li> <li>▪ Income and money management</li> <li>▪ Basic needs</li> <li>▪ Relationship with co-parent or partner</li> <li>▪ Use of community resources</li> <li>▪ Transportation</li> <li>▪ Parent satisfaction with quality of life/circumstances</li> <li>▪ Personal goals and planning</li> </ul>  |
| <b>School Readiness</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Aspects of language development</li> <li>▪ Aspects of cognitive development</li> <li>▪ Aspects of motor development</li> <li>▪ Aspects of social-emotional development</li> <li>▪ Child self-help skills</li> <li>▪ Separation from parent</li> <li>▪ Education starts in the home</li> <li>▪ Importance of play-based learning (and the adult role)</li> <li>▪ Stages of play</li> <li>▪ Prepare for school</li> </ul>  |

| Domain | Components   |
|--------|--|
|        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Educational concepts</li> </ul> |

## Traits and Characteristics of Home Visit Staff

It is desirable that CJCP staff conducting HV possess the following traits and characteristics:

1. Respect for others
2. Tolerance of differences and diversity
3. Ability to develop positive and supportive relationships with colleagues, clients and stakeholders
4. Ability to prioritise and advocate for the clients' needs when making decisions
5. Strong case-management skills
6. Strong organisational skills
7. Strong communication skills
8. Ability to work effectively with a diverse team of people from different backgrounds, experiences and skills
9. Ability to engage in ongoing self-reflection, learning and growth

## Conducting Home Visits

### Planning HV Schedules

The frequency and duration of the HV will depend on the needs of the family in question and this will be determined by the case manager, after taking into account available capacity and resources. In general, new families receive more frequent and longer HV than those who have been receiving services for a period of time. However, an 'old' family may suddenly require an increase in the duration and frequency of HV due to a change in family circumstances. Therefore, HV planning must be reviewed on an ongoing basis by the case manager in order to take into consideration the current needs of the family.

### The HV Team

CJCP requires that there be two people on every HV, and that wherever possible, the HV team consists of one male and one female staff member.

### Preparation

CJCP staff should spend at least 30 minutes in preparation for each HV. Generally, this preparation involves the following actions:

1. Review of previous HV notes and reports on file
2. Review the HV goals and objectives originally agreed to

3. Prepare and gather information that will be required in the HV, such as contact details of other organisations
4. Think about your goals for this visit and make a plan

As the HV team consists of two staff members, it is essential that both individuals are equally involved in the planning and preparation.

### Risk Factors Affecting HV

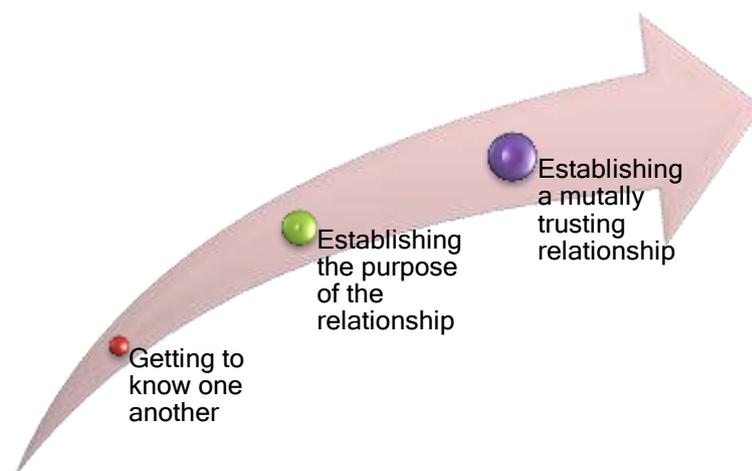
CJCP staff should take careful note of the following risk factors that compromise the effectiveness of HV as part of the early crime and violence prevention service, and take steps to mitigate these, as and when necessary:

1. Decreased objectivity and neutrality
2. Compromised safety of the CJCP staff member conducting the HV
3. Exposure to infectious diseases such as TB
4. Comparatively high costs of HV as an intervention
5. Relying too much on verbal and written information provided by staff to the family when conducting HV
6. Lack of privacy
7. Creating dependency on the HV

### Developing Rapport

The success of the HV depends to a large extent on the quality of the rapport between staff and families. The development of rapport between the staff and the participating families requires that relationships are developed. Relationships typically develop according to the process below.

Figure 5: Model of Relationship Development <sup>4</sup>



<sup>4</sup> (Children's Trust Fund, 2013)

## Tips for Conducting Home Visits

### Remember to:

- Be a good listener
- Have specific goals or objectives for each visit
- Be flexible
- Be prompt for your home visits
- Realise the limitations of your role
- Help parents become more independent
- Keep language appropriate
- Dress appropriately and comfortably
- Be confident
- Remember that small improvements lead to big ones
- Be yourself
- Respect cultural and ethnic values
- Monitor your own behaviour

### Avoid:

- Imposing values
- Bringing visitors without the parent's permission
- Socializing excessively at the beginning of the visit
- Excluding other members of the family from the visit
- Talking about families in public
- Being the centre of attention
- Expecting perfection from the parent
- Asking the parent to do something you wouldn't do

### Safety Tips

- Try to complete home visits early in the day
- Stay alert
- Dress appropriately
- Leave jewellery at home
- Leave purse at office or in the boot of the car
- Carry necessary cash, keys, and driver's license on person
- Remove yourself from dangerous situations

- Travel in pairs
- Survey the neighbourhood
- Identify safe areas (i.e. restaurants, telephones, rest rooms and police stations)
- Trust your instincts
- Consider a neutral meeting location if visit cannot be made safely at home (i.e. library, conference rooms and restaurants)
- Take universal precaution by washing hands before/after visit
- Ask family members to come out to meet you if uncomfortable with area
- Keep car in good repair
- Keep emergency supplies in car, include all-weather gear
- Ask family to secure pets before arrival <sup>5</sup>

Table 2: Narrative of the Home Visit Service Implementation

| #         | Stage               | Narrative  |
|-----------|---------------------|--|
| <b>1.</b> | <b>Introduction</b> |  |
|           | HV Ground rules     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discuss and agree upon ground rules for the HV. An example of a ground rule would be the process to follow when cancelling a HV.</li> </ul>   |
|           | HV goals            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discuss and agree upon the goals for the HV.</li> <li>▪ These goals must have been discussed with the case manager prior to the HV.</li> <li>▪ The goals should be SMART:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Specific</li> <li>○ Measureable</li> <li>○ Attainable</li> <li>○ Relevant</li> <li>○ Time bound</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
|           | HV schedule         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discuss and agree upon the HV schedule regarding days and times.</li> </ul>   |
|           | Develop rapport     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The success of HV depends largely upon the relationship that is developed between the CJCP staff and the family participants.</li> </ul>  |

<sup>5</sup> (Student, Family and Community Support Department, 2011)

| #                                       | Stage              | Narrative   |
|---|--------------------|---|
|   |                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Time must be invested in establishing a mutually respectful relationship before one can expect to achieve other goals.</li> <li>▪ It may take a few sessions before the client is at ease.</li> <li>▪ Wherever possible, include fathers in the HV. Increasing the involvement of fathers is one of the outcomes of the service. The HV must support those outcomes.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>2. Monitoring &amp; evaluation</b>   |                    |   |
|   | External referrals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As and when necessary, refer the family or individual members of the family to any relevant services they may need.</li> <li>▪ To achieve this, HV staff must have access to information about services in the area, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mental health</li> <li>○ Physical health</li> <li>○ Labour/employment</li> <li>○ Education</li> <li>○ Social services (grants, etc.)</li> <li>○ Home affairs</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
|   | Counselling        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As and when necessary, provide counselling to the family or individual members.</li> <li>▪ Ensure the case manager is kept informed about issues that arose from HV that may require a therapeutic intervention.</li> </ul>  |
|   | Advice             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As and when necessary, provide advice to the family or individual members according to their needs.</li> <li>▪ Ensure that a collaborative approach is used, rather than prescriptively telling the family what they should do.</li> </ul>   |
|   | Support            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As and when necessary, provide support to the family or individual members according to their needs.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>3. Documentation &amp; reporting</b> |                    |   |
|   |                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure that all HV are recorded and reported on in such a way that the case manager can follow the progress, as</li> </ul>   |

| #         | Stage              | Narrative  |
|-----------|--------------------|--|
|           |                    | <p>well as any issues that emerge that require additional support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ These records must be accurate, up to date, objective and detailed.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>4.</b> | <b>Follow-up</b>   |  |
|           |                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Follow up with the family or individual members, as and when needed according to the HV plan.</li> <li>▪ Carry through promptly on any promises or agreements made during the visit.</li> <li>▪ Record notes about your visit so you remember what was discussed.</li> <li>▪ Be sensitive to the current needs and concerns of the HV participants, and ensure there is sufficient time spent on focusing on their issues.</li> <li>▪ Avoid focusing only on the planned outcomes of the HV.</li> </ul> |
| <b>5.</b> | <b>Termination</b> |  |
|           |                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When it becomes clear that the family is ready to move away from receiving HV, ensure that proper termination of HV is done.</li> <li>▪ This requires that all parties are well-informed about the termination of HV in advance, and that all family members know how they can access services should they need to in the future.</li> </ul>  |

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