

KIPS Fast Facts

Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale©

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Why Use KIPS?

KIPS Shows How Parents Grow! KIPS provides essential information to guide staff observation, tailor services to individual families, track family progress, enhance supervision and to evaluate program goals. Effective parent-child assessment can guide family intervention and strengthen program outcomes.

Who Uses KIPS?

Healthy Families, Parents As Teachers, Early Head Start, SafeCare, First Steps, Visiting Nurses, Child Abuse Prevention, Mental Health Services, Family Resource Centers, Substance Abuse Treatment, Family Literacy, & Private Practitioners.

Parenting Behaviors Assessed

1. Sensitivity of Responses
2. Supports Emotions
3. Physical Interaction
4. Involvement in Child's Activities
5. Open to Child's Agenda
6. Engagement in Language Experiences
7. Reasonable Expectations
8. Adapts Strategies to Child
9. Limits & Consequences
10. Supportive Directions
11. Encouragement
12. Promotes Exploration & Curiosity



Nurturing Insights • Proving Outcomes
KEYS TO INTERACTIVE PARENTING SCALE

Child Age Range

2 to 71 months

KIPS Administration

Since KIPS, a structured observation tool for parent-child interaction, assesses interaction during play, it is well received by families and children. KIPS assesses a caregiver (e.g. parent, other family member) interacting with a child in a familiar environment (e.g. home or playroom). To ensure reliability, the play session is usually videotaped and scored later. Each of the 12 items is rated on a 1 to 5 scale, with behavior descriptions for the 1, 3 and 5 ratings.

Time to Administer

The observation requires only 15-20 minutes (15 minutes of free play and 5 minutes of clean up, if appropriate). Scoring takes about 10 minutes.

Available Languages

KIPS scoring forms are available in English and Spanish.

Research Evidence

- KIPS was initially developed through a series of steps, including factor analysis, expert and literature reviews, and provider focus groups.
- With support from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, KIPS has been tested with adolescent and adult parents, experiencing risk and non-risk circumstances, those who are educationally, economically, and racial/ethnically diverse and living in rural, urban and suburban communities.
- Field tests show satisfactory inter-rater agreement (92% with family service providers) and internal consistency ($\alpha = .95$). Both professionals and paraprofessionals scored KIPS reliably when assessing families they serve.
- KIPS scores do not differ significantly according to parent or child gender, race/ethnicity, child age group, or child special needs.
- Validity studies show that KIPS correlated significantly with other validated observational tools [NCAST Teaching Scale, HOME Inventory, Parent/Caregiver Involvement Scale, Scales of Child Behavior (adapted from EHS National Study Three Bag Test)], as well as parents' reports of their Knowledge of Child Development, and with Staff Ratings of Caregiver Engagement in home visiting services.
- Longitudinal research and family service program evaluations have shown that parenting outcomes assessed by KIPS increase significantly with intervention. Furthermore, early KIPS scores predicted later quality of parenting and toddler social behavior during play.

KIPS Training, Certification & Ongoing Support

- **KIPS eLearning**[®] - 30 day subscription to low-cost Internet-based interactive training that requires an average of 10 hours. Includes 1 year subscription to KIPS Library.
- or...
- Two-day onsite training workshop for up to 15 participants.

Training includes an orientation to observational assessment and the KIPS tool, followed by practice scoring each of the items using family play videos. Learners then rate progressively more items, receive immediate feedback, and eventually practice rating all 12 items simultaneously. A Certification exam tests scoring competence.

- **KIPS Annual Check-Up** - Online recertification required to ensure reliable scoring.
- **KIPS Library** - The [Video Collection](#) offers an online resource to refresh scoring skills via a searchable collection of family play videos with scoring discussions. The [Resources](#) section offers *Tools* to reflect on assessments and plan services, printed *Handouts*, and videos of *KIPS Advisors* sharing their authentic experiences regarding training, service planning, supervision and using KIPS with families.

For More Information:

Comfort, M., Gordon, P.R. & Naples, D. (2011). KIPS: An Evidence-Based Tool for Assessing Parenting Strengths and Needs in Diverse Families. *Infants & Young Children*, 24(1), 56-74.

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Comfort, M., Gordon, P.R. & Unger, D.G. (2006). Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale: A Window Into Many Facets of Parenting. *Zero to Three Journal*, 26(5), 37-44.

Comfort, M. & Gordon, P.R. (2006). The Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale (KIPS): A Practical Observational Assessment of Parenting Behavior. *NHSA Dialog: A Research-To-Practice Journal for the Early Intervention Field*, 9(1), 22-48.

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