

Rapid Response-Virtual Home Visiting Collaborative (RR-VHV)

Providing Home Visitors and Supervisors in the United States and Beyond with
the Tools and Resources to Carry out Virtual Home Visits



Introduction

In March 2020, home visiting programs in the United States began transitioning to a virtual mode of service delivery as a result of social distancing guidelines triggered by COVID-19. In response to this shift, home visitors began delivering services to young children and their families by phone and interactive videoconferencing, and supervisors were forced to explore alternate ways of supporting home visitors as they carried out their visits remotely. To assist with this transition, leaders in the national home visiting field formed the [Rapid Response-Virtual Home Visiting Collaborative \(RR-VHV\)](#) to create and support the dissemination of free resources to help home visiting personnel adapt to virtual home visits (Traube, 2021).

Overview of RR-VHV

RR-VHV is led by the [Institute for the Advancement of Family Support Professionals](#), [Parents as Teachers National Center](#), and the [National Alliance of Home Visiting Models](#), and provides home visiting professionals with best practice principles and strategies to maintain meaningful connections with children and their families during the pandemic. In March 2020, RR-VHV convened a group of expert stakeholders to rapidly plan, develop, and execute durable content on delivering virtual home visiting services. The stakeholders were



invited to participate by RR-VHV leadership and included a diverse group of providers who were split up into the following teams based on their area of expertise:

- **A Steering Team** that guided the development, input, dissemination, and growth of the project to continually meet the needs of RR-VHV.
- **An Advisory Team** that consisted of home visiting experts who provided feedback on the RR-VHV process.
- **Home Visiting Model Teams** that included representatives from different home visiting models who ensured that RR-VHV content was applicable across the home visiting field.
- **Content Development Teams** that developed content for the webinars and other resources as needed.

In developing content, stakeholder teams worked collaboratively to rapidly create materials that were "model agnostic" and relevant to all home visitors regardless of their context. Stakeholders also ensured that all materials were provided to users free of charge, made available through multiple platforms (e.g., the Institute for the Advancement of Early Support Professionals), and remained available to support the future needs of the field. As of April 2021, these materials included:

- Over [75 Resources](#) that provide home visiting staff with comprehensive and up-to-date information on how to carry out home visits virtually.
- Over [30 Webinar Recordings](#) that address different topics (e.g., program recruitment and enrollment virtually, building staff relationships virtually) related to carrying out home visits remotely.
- Over [5 Model Voice Webinars](#) that focus on the experiences of practitioners that deploy a specific home visitation model (e.g., Nurse Family Partnerships, Parents as Teachers, Healthy Families America).
- [6 E-Learning Training Modules](#) that walk users through different topics (e.g., instructions on how to prepare for virtual services, information on how to engage families in virtual services) related to virtual home visiting service delivery. Each model is accompanied by a learning guide that helps users develop an action plan for implementing the lessons from the module, as well as a resource guide that summarizes key highlights.
 - The training modules also include a [Virtual Home Visiting Supervisor's Toolkit](#) that provides supervisors with information on how to deliver home visiting services virtually. The toolkit is an interactive PDF that includes seven different sections that provide supervisors with guidance on how to strengthen their home visiting program and support home visitors (Institute for the Advancement of Family Support Professionals, 2021).

Enablers and Barriers to Implementation

In April 2021, the collaborative conducted an evaluation to test RR-VHV's implementation strategy and assess its impact on the workforce. The evaluation revealed that over 12,000 home visiting personnel from over twelve models in forty-eight U.S. states and internationally had used the materials developed by the collaborative. Stakeholder teams who participated in the evaluation attributed this success to the fact that RR-VHV materials were inclusive and applicable to all home visitors regardless of their context. Teams also indicated that the open communication and knowledge exchange between stakeholder teams was another factor that helped promote RR-VHV's efforts. Additionally, RR-VHV users who participated in the evaluation indicated that they were extremely satisfied with the topics covered and had been applying the strategies they learned (e.g., active listening, screening techniques) to their work. They also indicated that RR-VHV's materials had helped increase their levels of confidence in delivering virtual home visits, especially in relation to recruitment, screening, and promoting parent-child interactions (Traube, 2021).

Despite these successes, stakeholders who were involved in the development of the collaborative noted that having to quickly develop materials to respond to the virtual needs of home visiting staff was one of the biggest challenges they faced. Stakeholders also indicated that, although RR-VHV was designed to be inclusive to all home visiting models, it was initially difficult to recruit stakeholders from other models to participate in the collaborative. To address this challenge, RR-VHV members used their personal networks to encourage qualified stakeholders from other models to join. Lastly, users who participated in the evaluation indicated that scheduling conflicts sometimes made it challenging for them to attend RR-VHV's webinars. In response to this problem, RR-VHV uploaded webinar recordings online and ensured that its content consisted of asynchronous learning materials that could be accessed remotely at any time (Traube, 2021).

RR-VHV's Impact

Overall, RR-VHV has proven to be an instrumental resource in supporting home visiting personnel in their transition to virtual services. By rapidly developing and curating an extensive list of materials that are applicable to all home visitors and supervisors, RR-VHV is decreasing the likelihood of service delivery interruptions and ensuring that these personnel can continue supporting young children and their families during the pandemic. As home visiting programs slowly start to transition back to an in-person mode of service delivery, RR-VHV could serve as a useful resource for those that are interested in integrating virtual visits into their home visiting programs beyond COVID-19.

References

Institute for the Advancement of Family Support Professionals. (2021). *Virtual Home Visiting: Supervisor's Toolkit*. <https://institutebsp.org/modules/virtual-home-visiting-supervisor-s-toolkit>

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Key Informant Interview with Rapid Response Virtual Home Visiting Official

Traube, D. (2021). *Understanding the Power of Collaboration in Pandemic Response: Process and Outcome Evaluation of the Rapid Response Virtual Home Visiting Collaborative*. Rapid Response Virtual Home Visiting Collaborative. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/56be46a6b6aa60dbb45e41a5/t/60c2393be239794527576791/1623341372607/Rapid+Response+Advisory+and+Evaluation+Report.pdf>