

Coparenting Coding Manual: New Parents Project (version April 2017)

Adapted from Cowan & Cowan (1996) and Bayer (1992). For permission to use: schoppe-sullivan.1@osu.edu

UC = Uncodable

May be due to faces not visible or voices muffled/mumbled (use sparingly)

Co-Parenting Scales

Cooperation: Reflects the degree to which parents help and support one another in teaching and playing with the child. Help and support between parents can be instrumental as well as emotional. For instance, for the pop-up toy, higher scores are warranted if one parent pushes the toy down in a helpful way. That would be an example of instrumental support.

(5) Very High Cooperation: Parents are very frequently cooperative. Cooperation seems effortless. They do not interrupt one another or distract from the other's interventions with the child.

(4) High Cooperation: Each parent builds on the other's efforts to help the child. There are a few instances of minimal interruption or distraction from the other parent's interactions. Cooperation is easy/smooth and frequent.

(3) Moderate Cooperation: Parents generally work well with and support each other, though there are times when helping one another lapses and parents appear less in concert.

(2) Low Cooperation: Parents are usually not supportive or working together; they appear to have separate ways of working with their child. Occasionally, they'll share the same approach.

(1) Very Low Cooperation: No effort is made by parents to support and assist each other. Parents appear to be working with the child independently.

Competition: Parents try to outdo each other's efforts to teach, work, and play with the child. Lower-level competition includes parents using different approaches with the child but this type of competition seems accidental. At lower and moderate levels, couples lack coordination. But, in couples that receive higher ratings, parents appear to be intentionally competing for the child's attention.

(5) Very High Competition: Efforts to outdo one another's teaching/playing take precedence over helping the child learn. Competition is consistent and obvious throughout all parts of the interaction. Parents' main concern is clearly to outdo each other.

(4) High Competition: Parents may be playing with the child, but frequently try to outdo each other to get the attention of the child. There are multiple instances of competition, but it is not seen in all parts of the interaction.

(3) Moderate Competition: There are multiple low-level instances of competition or 1 very strong instance seen.

(2) Low Competition: Occasionally, a comment or behavior will be made by one parent suggesting that they feel they have a more effective parenting strategy, though it comes across as constructive (or accidental) and not challenging. May be 1 instance of trying to mildly out-do each other.

(1) Very Low Competition: No competition visible.

Relative Interaction Time: This scale is designed to measure strictly the amount of relative time the parents spend interacting with the baby during the episode.

(5) Father Dominates Interaction: The father controls almost all interaction with the baby with almost no contributions from the mother.

(4) Mostly Father Interaction: The mother may have some interaction with the baby, but the majority of the interactions are initiated by the father. The father also spends most of the time playing with and interacting with the baby.

(3) Equal Interaction: Interactions with the baby are equally shared by mother and father.

(2) Mostly Mother Interaction: The father may have some interaction with the baby, but the majority of the interactions are initiated by the mother. The mother also spends most of the time playing with and interacting with the baby.

(1) Mother Dominates Interaction: The mother controls almost all interaction with the baby with almost no contributions from the father.

Maternal Gatekeeping Scales

Negative Control: The mother is rated on this scale for her overall negative control, based on both her verbal and nonverbal behavior during the episode as well as the intent of the message given. Negative control can be defined as any attempt/behavior to limit the father's interaction with the baby. ***A mother may demonstrate her expertise in performing a certain task, assert lack of confidence in the father's abilities, or attempt to control all interaction with the child – she appears intent on limiting the father's interactions.***

(5) Very High Negative Control: Very intense negative controlling behaviors are seen. Moreover, no effort is made to disguise this behavior. This may be seen in a comment such as "You're not doing it right, this is how you're supposed to do it!" or the mother taking control (negatively, not in a supportive fashion) of a task that the father is trying to do (2 clear comments; often accompanied by subtle comments/expressions).

(4) High Negative Control: Several moderate intensity gestures or comments might be made throughout the entire episode, or one very dramatic example of negative controlling behavior may be noted. These expressions may also be accompanied by nonverbal or subtle indications of disapproval, such as shaking her head or rolling her eyes (1 clear comment and other subtle comments/expressions).

(3) Moderate Negative Control: Some moderate negative controlling behavior is directly expressed over the course of the episode. The behavior, however, is relatively low in intensity. The mother may assert comments that reveal her better knowledge of parenting by instructing how to perform a task “properly”. The mother may express these controlling thoughts and comments through the baby, such as, “Daddy, don’t call me that” or “Daddy, I don’t like that noise” (1 clear comment).

(2) Low Negative Control: Only mild negative controlling behavior is seen in this episode. The behavior is very subtle and is alluded to in a mild gesture, facial expression, or comment (very mild, questionable behavior).

(1) No Negative Control: No negative controlling behaviors (nothing even subtle) are exhibited over the course of the episode.

Facilitation: On this scale, mothers will be rated for their overall positive support of the fathers’ interactions with the child. Facilitation is defined as a mother’s efforts to support and encourage the father’s participation with the baby. This may be seen in compliments, positive instruction, or helping to make time with the baby more easy and enjoyable for the father.

(5) Very High Facilitation: Very intense facilitation of the mother is demonstrated dramatically throughout the entire episode. The mother’s primary goal seems to be promoting interaction with the father. Several moderately intense behaviors or comments may be seen over the episode. The mother may make comments through the baby such as, “It’s so fun to be with Daddy,” or “Daddy does such a good job of undressing me”.

(4) High Facilitation: Fairly strong facilitation is seen in the episode. Although facilitation is not seen throughout the entire task, the mother’s behaviors or comments seem to be directed towards encouraging the father’s participation with the baby. The mother’s tone must clearly be positive, and not sound the least bit critical or condescending.

(3) Moderate Facilitation: Some moderate facilitation is noted over the episode, even though this behavior tends to be more subtle and low in intensity. This could be one direct comment or a few indirect comments. A score of (3) could include one fairly strong positive comment or multiple low level positive compliments.

(2) Low Facilitation: Some mild facilitation is seen. The mother may come to the father’s aid in playing with the baby. Slight acknowledgements of the father may be made through an indirect comment, but not more than once. Comments such as “Look at Daddy!” may be used. Facilitation is more than likely nonverbal.

(1) No Facilitation: No facilitation is made by the mother over the course of the episode.

Individual Maternal/Paternal Scales

Warmth: One parent demonstrates affection and positive regard for the other; laughing, touching, smiling, saying nice things to each other. Parent attempts to involve the other in the interaction – a connection is felt and can be seen between them. Parent provides emotional support, reassurance, and encouragement for the other in an authentic, not sarcastic, manner.

(5) Very High Warmth: Continual expressions of warmth (i.e. smiling, laughing, touching, gazing into each other's eyes) fill the episode. If coders see any expressions of physical affection (hugs, kisses, holding hands), a "5" should be seriously considered.

(4) High Warmth: One parent clearly demonstrates affection for the other. This warmth may be visible or just a general feeling of connectedness between them. The warmth, however, is not as pervasive as would be seen in a level (5).

(3) Moderate Warmth: Parent displays a reasonable amount of affection for the other. The sense of connectedness is apparent but not striking. The parent interacts lovingly, at times, with the other (smiles, positive comments, etc.), but this behavior or the connection behind it is not apparent throughout the episode.

(2) Low Warmth: Parent is less open and relatively tentative in their display of affection for their partner. There is a very limited sense of connectedness between them.

(1) Very Low Warmth: No warmth visible or felt from partners; seem disconnected from each other.

Coldness: Parent seems distant, closed-off, and lacks affection for the other. There is a sense of the parent keeping a distance between his/her partner. This is visible through curtness (shortness), snubbing (ignoring), hostile responses, or a general lack of response towards the other parent's attempts to engage in interaction.

(5) Very High Coldness: Non-engagement with partner predominates and appears to be intentional. Parent seems disinterested in partner and *disdain* is visible. One parent has no reaction to the other AT ALL. **(Some snubbing must be seen).**

(4) High Coldness: Parent interacts with partner, but in a clearly withdrawn or distant fashion. Parent rejects partner's attempts for closeness (this may be *emotional or physical*). Frequent snubbing is seen. **(Some snubbing must be seen).**

(3) Moderate Coldness: Parent lacks interaction with partner throughout entire episode OR some mild snubbing (verbal or nonverbal) of partner's attempts get close to the other partner (physically or emotionally). There are multiple low level snubbing instances or 1 strong instance shown.

(2) Low Coldness: Some withdrawal is visible. Parent is generally open to his/her partner and to their attempts for warmth without necessarily initiating this contact themselves. There may be 1 instance of low level snubbing OR a slight distance between partners. They do not interact much but are not necessarily hostile.

(1) Very Low Coldness: No coldness visible between parents.

Pleasure: The parent appears to enjoy sharing and collaborating in the parental role and is able to demonstrate that during the interaction. The partner appears to take pleasure in the OTHER PARENT'S relationship with the child. They are able to watch comfortably when the other is interacting individually with the baby. The parent displays playfulness and humor with the other about their respective parenting styles/practices and their relationship with the child.

(5) Very High Pleasure: Such expressions of pleasure and appreciation are very frequent and of high intensity throughout the entire episode. Parent is very attentive and thoroughly enjoys watching partner play with the child. The parent may smile lovingly while the other is playing, showing no negative emotion or disinterest whatsoever.

(4) High Pleasure: Parent expresses/shows their enjoyment and appreciation of how their partner plays with the child and of the relationship between their partner and the child. They can comfortably share involvement with their partner or enjoy watching the dyad together. Intensity of pleasure, however, is not as high as in a level (5).

(3) Moderate Pleasure: Parent seems to enjoy partner's relationship with child and parenting with their partner. However, enjoyment is not present at all times and is generally muted in some way. The parent's enjoyment of the other is partly inferred rather than directly observed.

(2) Low Pleasure: Though parent does not necessarily show negative feelings toward the other, they show enjoyment of the other parent's relationship with the child only on occasion.

(1) No Pleasure: No pleasure is visible between parents. Their response to partner's relationship is either neutral or negative in tone.

Displeasure: The parent expresses dislike of their partner's style of interacting with the child either directly or indirectly (sarcasm). This can be a reaction to the positivity or negativity in their relationship. Parents do not enjoy working together.

(5) Very High Displeasure: Parent is displeased OR threatened by other parent's relationship with the child. Displeasure characterizes the episode. This may be expressed through *comments or gestures throughout the episode* ("He likes playing with you more than me" "Don't hold her like that!" or rolling of the eyes) (at least 2 comments and low level expressions/behaviors).

(4) High Displeasure: One parent actively shows or says they dislike how the other is parenting, or criticizes the other's relationship with the child. Statements are overt and feelings are clearly shown, though not as often as in a level (5) (Multiple comments).

(3) Moderate Displeasure: Predominately sarcastic or subtle comments or tone during interaction suggest a parent's dislike of the other's relationship with the child, OR on only one occasion a partner shows one clear comment indicating displeasure OR multiple low level displeasure indications.

(2) Low Displeasure: Parent is generally unbothered by their partner's relationship with the child; however, they might occasionally jab or otherwise indicate some negative feelings. *Non-verbal* indications of displeasure: laughter, sounds, or faces. If situations are difficult to decipher but appear to possibly be negative in some way score a 2.

(1) Very Low Displeasure: No displeasure is visible.

Perception of Competence: This scale measures each parent's observed/inferred feelings of how competent they are as a parent. It measures their confidence in their abilities to interact with the baby without assistance from the other parent.

(5) Very High Competence: Parent seems to perceive themselves as quite competent with the baby. They perform tasks with a self-assured attitude, and portray themselves as extremely competent throughout the episode. The parent seems to have implicit knowledge of the baby's preferences, which is likely derived from a history of time spent with the baby. Interactions and tasks are performed fluidly, not awkwardly, and they do not make any negative attributions about their own competence with the baby.

(4) High Competence: The parent seems to perceive themselves as handling the task well and is in control of the situation with the baby; they are clearly more confident than not. Although some slight doubt about their own abilities could be introduced, it is rather mild in intensity, and does not detract from their perception of their confidence. Nonverbal or subtle doubt; faces, laughter, etc. General sense of hesitance about certain aspect of parenting skill.

(3) Moderate Competence: The parent portrays themselves as fairly confident and secure in their interactions with the baby, but may also question their ability to respond to the baby's needs. The tone is not that the parent perceives themselves as unable to handle the baby; but rather, the parent questions a particular aspect of their level of ability with the baby. This may be seen in a comment they make about a particular action they took with the baby, questioning their decision. One comment is made such as, "You're not making this very easy for me!" (to the baby). The parent seems uncomfortable at times, but still completes tasks.

(2) Low Competence: The parent portrays themselves as not being very competent with the baby during the episode, although some slight confidence about how to handle the baby might be indicated. One parent may not involve themselves much with the baby, or they may make several self-deprecating comments during the episode ("I made her upset"), but confidence is not completely lacking. More than one self-deprecating comment is made by the parent.

(1) Very Low Competence: Parent seems to strongly question his/her competence level. S/he makes several negative comments about his/her abilities throughout the entire episode and perceives the self as being rather inadequate in handling the baby. No positive attributions toward their own interactions with the baby are made. May defer to other parent for tasks they doubt their skill in.