



# FAMILIES: THE VITAL LINK



FALL 2003

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## HIPYPY Advocacy

### Working Together Makes Every Job Easier

What have you done to ensure the viability of your HIPYPY program? Have you ever had to fight for a cause that was near and dear to your heart? Have you ever had the opportunity to speak up for an issue when you were the only one who believed in the cause? Are you afraid or too shy to speak up for parents and children in your community or your state? Even if you have never championed a cause in the past, you may begin today by following these easy steps:

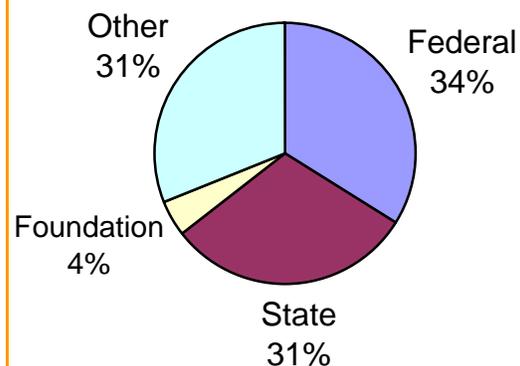
- 1) Take time to examine the issues that may affect you personally, or those that may affect the children and families you may or may not know
- 2) Get to know the "decision makers," politicians on the local or national level
- 3) Learn how to find out the status of legislation. You may call or look up your politicians on the internet
- 4) Communicate the best way that is easiest for you. You may write, call, fax, e-mail, and/or visit.

- 5) Write a thank you letter to all you have contacted. Reiterate your main arguments on the issues and include any additional information that might have been requested during the meeting.

The thought of being an advocate need not be frightening. The state office is here to support your efforts and together we can help make advocacy fun and rewarding. Successful advocacy can make the difference between program sustainability and denying HIPYPY services to parents and children in the state of Florida. Make the effort to become an advocate today!



### Types of Funding for Florida HIPYPY Programs: Program Year 2002-03.



Total = Approximately \$3 Million

In 2002-03 there were 15 HIPYPY programs in 17 counties serving over 1,700 children from more than 1,500 families.

### Miami-Dade County HIPYPY Sets An Example for Advocacy

The Miami-Dade County HIPYPY program has been serving families for approximately 20 years (est. 1984). Title I funding is used to serve over 300 children with 2 coordinators and 21 home visitors. Over the past several years, this program has conducted an annual HIPYPY Awareness Day to highlight their program to Legislators, funders, and the general public. Other Florida HIPYPY programs are following their example (see stories inside).

# ▲ ● ■ ★ HIPPY Brightens Futures

## HIPPY PLUS PROGRAMS



### Center for Family Services hosts HIPPY Awareness Day

The Center for Family Services (CFS), which operates the largest HIPPY program in Florida, promotes the physical, emotional and social well being of families, children, and adults, and assists them in developing their own capacities to sustain satisfying lives. HIPPY is one of several programs offered by the CFS in West Palm Beach. There are five coordinators supervising HIPPY in five locations throughout Palm Beach County. DeMarchia Gibson, HIPPY Director, is responsible for managing operations in these five locations. The program serves over 525 children from approximately 500 families.

In an effort to strengthen the public's awareness of the HIPPY program, CFS hosted a "HIPPY Awareness Day" on September 20, 2003, at South Grade Elementary School in Lake Worth. The HIPPY Director formed a committee comprising of HIPPY Coordinators, HIPPY home visitors, members of National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), CFS Board Members and "Friends of HIPPY." The committee agreed on the theme: "Parents are the Heart of HIPPY."

Representatives from the State HIPPY office, community leaders, providers, and families from Palm Beach County came together to enjoy a day of fun, entertainment and learning. A formal one-hour program was held at the beginning of the day to provide information to newcomers about the history of HIPPY and its operations in Palm Beach County and to recognize numerous individuals for their support. Parents gave personal accounts of their involvement in HIPPY, and how HIPPY has made a difference in their lives. Special recognition was given to House Representative Nan Rich for her dedication and support of HIPPY throughout the years.

After the formal program, families were able to visit booths and gather information from more than twenty-five (25) providers in the county. More than 200 people in attendance enjoyed music, games, and delicious food donated and prepared by Shriners. A truly great day was enjoyed by all, thanks to the hard work of the volunteers from various fraternities, sororities, spouses of coordinators, family members of home visitors, NCJW members, and friends. The day was also used for recruiting new families into the five HIPPY sites in Palm Beach County.



### FPSR Rescues Arcadia HIPPY (DeSoto County) After Funding Loss

The Summer 2001 issue of this newsletter "Families: The Vital Link" describes the process used by YMCA Children, Youth, and Family Services (now Sarasota Family YMCA) to obtain state funding for the Arcadia HIPPY program in DeSoto County. (For the complete story, go to the Florida HIPPY website <http://floridahippy.fmhi.usf.edu> and click on "Staff Resources.") The story shared the following steps taken by the YMCA:

- Funding for HIPPY was placed on the agenda of the strategic planning retreat of the Board of Directors of YMCA in 2000.
- Recommendations and a budget request were presented at the DeSoto County Legislature Delegation meeting.
- Follow-up meetings and correspondence continued throughout 2000-2001 Legislative Session, resulting in a coalition of support and HIPPY DeSoto being awarded \$100,000 in funding.
- In 2002-03, the DeSoto County HIPPY program was awarded \$150,000 by the Florida Legislature.

However, in 2003-04, the FL Legislature faced the daunting task of making severe budget cuts, and this program

#### FUNDERS AND PARTNERS

# In The Sunshine State

lost all of its funding.

An article appeared in the local newspaper "The DeSoto Sun" announcing the loss of funding and subsequent closure of the program.

Parents in the program organized a campaign of telephone calls and visits to their legislature representatives. Staff of the YMCA met with the officials of the Florida Partnership for School Readiness to discuss funding opportunities. And, Board Members of FPSR listened.

At a Board Meeting of FPSR in Orlando on September 18, 2003, one of the HIPPY parents in the program shared her HIPPY success story with Board members. The parent, Diana, told Board members that she had completed three years of HIPPY with her third child, and he is able to read better than his older siblings and is doing well in school.

The Board of FPSR voted to fund HIPPY from FPSR's budget. Parents and staff of this program are extremely grateful to FPSR on their decision to support the continuation of HIPPY in DeSoto County.

## HIPPY is on the Right Track



## Home Involvement Tips

Parents often ask what they can do to help their children at home. Here are some suggestions on how they can support their children's learning:

- Let your child know how much you love and value him/her.
- Provide opportunities for your child to see you reading, both for enjoyment and for information.
- Read to your child every day. Children love to hear their favorite stories over and over again.
- Encourage your child to ask questions. Answer them in language your child can understand.
- Talk with your child about daily activities, trips, and special events that happen in your child's life.
- Display your child's school work in a prominent place.
- Take your child as many places as possible — shopping, to the zoo, the airport, local parks, etc.
- Provide learning materials for your child, such as balls, ropes, paints, scissors, paper, crayons, and pencils.
- Encourage your child to wash, dress, and take care of his/her personal needs.
- Supervise closely what your child watches on television. Violent and/or sexually explicit films (including the daily "soap operas") are inappropriate for your children.
- Limit the time your child watches television to one hour each day.
- Provide rules that are fair, reasonable, and easy for your child to understand.

Source: <http://.denver.k12.co.us/departments/Kindergarten/homeinvolvement.html>

## WELCOME ABOARD

We extend a warm welcome to the following new HIPPY family members:

### Bradenton HIPPY Program

at Resource Center for Kids (formerly Project Child Care) with

**Toni Bloise**, HIPPY Coordinator

### North Lauderdale HIPPY Program

at Family Central, Inc., with

**Trish Wurl**, HIPPY Coordinator

### Orlando HIPPY Program

at Community Coordinated Care for Children, Inc. with

**Dedra Walthour**, HIPPY Coordinator

**Maleka Mobley**, HIPPY Supervisor

### West Palm Beach HIPPY Program

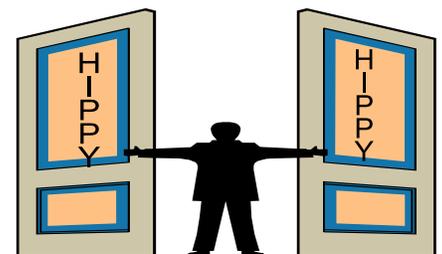
at Center for Family Services with

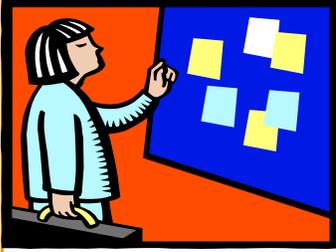
**Cylenthia Mann**, HIPPY Coordinator

### Winter Haven HIPPY Program

at Early Childhood Resources with

**Dorene Walter**, HIPPY Coordinator





## Home Visitors Corner

*(This section can include success stories of home visitors, or any issues that may relate to home visitors. Therefore, if you would like to submit a story or relevant issue, please feel free to forward it to the HIPPY T&TA Center.)*

## Parents are Advocates...

Dear HIPPY Staff,

It gives me great pleasure in writing to say thank you.

As a mother and grandmother participating as a parent in the HIPPY program, every year I see more mothers coming into the program, making it very important for the parents to fight together to keep the HIPPY program alive. When my daughter came to me seven years ago and told me about getting my grandson into the HIPPY program we did not know what we were getting ourselves into, but I can tell you from the years we have been a part of HIPPY that becoming part of the program was the best move we ever made for our children. Everyone needs this program to give them a head start, and I am pleased to say that however they developed the name HIPPY, they made the right choice.

Thank you again for having my children and me as a part of your HIPPY program. I would also like to say that I am here for the program even after my children graduate from the program, for each of the officers and specialists are number one in my family.

Yours Truly,  
Mrs. Moray Kneipp  
Parent in the HIPPY Program

## Florida HIPPY Coordinators Receive Guidance in Advocacy

At the recent coordinators' meeting held at the Community Coordinated Care for Children (4C) Training Center in Orlando, Florida HIPPY coordinators were encouraged to:

- Host a HIPPY Information Day or a HIPPY Awareness Day to share information about their program
- Invite Legislators/funders/school officials/local coalitions to attend a HIPPY staff training with role play and go on a home visit
- Bring staff and parents to join the

Florida State HIPPY Advisory Committee in March, 2004, to meet with Legislators in Tallahassee

Coordinators were informed about the direction of Universal Pre-K and the need to prepare staff for higher qualifications. They were also encouraged to think about staff development for their home visitors. One possible option presented at this meeting was a Family Development Credential (FDC) offered by the Redlands Christian Migrant Association (RCMA).

## \*\*\*CONTACT US\*\*\*

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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To Learn More About the



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**FLORIDA**

HIPPY Training &  
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visit our website at:

<http://floridahippy.fmhi.usf.edu>