



FAMILIES: THE VITAL LINK



WINTER 2004

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HIPPY Training

Florida HIPPY Regional Trainings

Why HIPPY Paraprofessional Training?

By Mary Lindsey, Ph.D., HIPPY State Director

The president and Florida voters have mandated that children are our most important resources and programs must develop and maintain high standards with qualified staff. It is for these reasons and many others that the Florida State HIPPY Office has taken a proactive stance to assist HIPPY Coordinators and HIPPY paraprofessionals (home visitors) in receiving appropriate information and opportunities for staff development and trainings.

The constitutional amendment, Article IX, Section 1 of the Florida Constitution is amended to add that every four year old in Florida shall be provided by the state a high quality pre-kindergarten learning opportunity in the form of an early childhood development and education program which shall be voluntary, high quality, free, and delivered to professionally accepted standards.

These high quality programs shall be implemented no later than the beginning of the 2005 school

year. In order to establish high quality programs, systematic and structured ongoing staff development for all providers must have access to the same staff training in key areas such as curriculum delivery and serving children identified with special needs and disabilities.

Congress has specified in the No Child Left Behind Act that Title I "paras" must have at least two years of college (or associate's degree) or pass a "rigorous" state or local assessment of their skills. Paraprofessionals make up half the Title I workforce in our nation's schools and education experts have long been concerned that they don't have the educational credentials to provide instructional support. It is in light of these initiatives that steps are being taken to increase paraprofessional training.



Florida HIPPY Staff will receive continuing education units (CEU's) for attending the following trainings:

Central Regional Training

Friday, January 30, 2004
Early Childhood Resources
Mr. Kim Townsel,
Townsel Consulting Group
Workshops:

- ◆ Communication with Parents in the Community
- ◆ Teamwork & Affirming Diversity

South Regional Training

Friday, February 20, 2004
Family Central
Dr. Sally Goldberg,
Parenting Specialist
Workshops:

- ◆ Building Self-Esteem
- ◆ Constructive Parenting

North Regional Training

Friday, March 19, 2004
Bradford County School District
Angelina Mirabella,
Florida Children's Forum
Workshops:

- ◆ Parents as Partners: Building Strong Relationships
- ◆ How to Throw a Parent Eat & Meet (and other crafty ways to educate parents)

▲ ● ■ ★ HIPPY Brightens Futures

HIPPY PLUS PROGRAMS



HIPPY Model Design Encourages Trainings

By Dabaram Rampersad,
Assistant State Director

The HIPPY model by design, requires programs to conduct group meetings, usually every other week or minimally once a month. These group meetings generally include some form of training and discussion for all parents and staff. Additionally, during weekly staff meetings, inservice trainings are conducted for HIPPY Home Visiting Staff on the HIPPY curriculum and early childhood education (using Home Visitors' Guide). This early childhood education is passed on to parents during role play at home visits and via the "Skill Boxes" pages of the HIPPY Activity Packets.

HIPPY programs also educate HIPPY Staff on various aspects of early childhood care and education as required by their agency's guidelines. Oftentimes funding sources for HIPPY programs facilitate trainings for staff and parents. For example, a few years ago AmeriCorps funding provided education awards for HIPPY Staff at programs in **Arcadia, Sarasota, and Tampa**. Even Start collaboration and/

or funding in **Jacksonville, Ocala, Sarasota, and Starke** provide training for parents in areas of adult education, parenting education and early childhood education. There are numerous success stories of HIPPY parents and staff benefiting from these HIPPY Trainings. Some examples are shared in this newsletter under "HIPPY Stars Shine In Florida."



HIPPY Stars Shine In Florida:

Update on Lisa's Story (Willisa Mithcell)

A couple years ago this Florida HIPPY newsletter and the HIPPY USA national newsletter featured stories on Willisa Mitchell (Lisa) and the impact that the Sarasota HIPPY program has had on her life. Lisa bravely shared that as far back as 1992, she was "deep in the gutter... doing drugs... lost custody of two children... was an alcoholic and didn't care about life."

Lisa became involved with HIPPY after meeting Jone Williams (now HIPPY Director, Sarasota Family YMCA) who inspired her to "clean up her life and regain custody of the two children." Jone helped build Lisa's self-confidence and showed Lisa how to teach her children using the HIPPY curriculum. Lisa be-

came a HIPPY paraprofessional (now Home Visitor) and inspired other parents to go back to school (three of whom have obtained their GED). Using information provided by agency's trainings and with Jone's support and guidance, Lisa was able to become a proud first-time home-owner through **Habitat for Humanity**.

Since Lisa was part of an AmeriCorps project with HIPPY at Sarasota Family YMCA, she earned an AmeriCorps Education Award and was able to go back to school to pursue a CDA. Jone says, "We are very proud of Lisa's accomplishments. Lisa is a true inspiration to her HIPPY families. They see how hard she (Lisa) works to make a better life for herself and her five girls. Lisa gets 100% participation from her families and the families attend every function. Lisa has learned to stand on her feet and stand up for herself and her children."

Lisa recently had to deal with the tragic loss of her mother due to cancer. Lisa felt she was able to keep going because of the strength and support she got from HIPPY staff and HIPPY parents she serves. Through the flexibility of HIPPY, she was able to stay by her mother's side until the end. "When my mother passed, HIPPY staff and families were there for me."

Lisa is proud to announce, "HIPPY works! I am continuing to prove that HIPPY works! My children are also continuing to prove that HIPPY works and I can't wait to show you how HIPPY will change the lives of my grandchildren. So look for me in a few years with my grandchildren at HIPPY graduation."

In The Sunshine State

Sarasota HIPPY Program Helps Parent with Education

Hi my name is Brenda Soto, I have participated in the HIPPY program previously with my daughter, Leslie (who is now 6 years old) and now with my 3 year old daughter Alexis. Leslie is doing well in school. I am attending the GED program through Even Start. My daughter Alexis can come with me to school since they provide daycare. I told my HIPPY home visitor I wanted to earn my GED and they told me about the Even Start Program. HIPPY has been a Godsend to my family and me. I am progressing well in the GED program and I will be taking the test next month. I am excited. When I pass the GED test, I want to go on to Manatee Community College. I think I want to try nursing. I thank the HIPPY staff for encouraging me to get my GED. I thank them for their support.

HIPPY HOT TOPICS

HIPPY program staff generally determine HIPPY Group Meeting Topics and Trainings from parent surveys of needs and from current trends in the community. The following list provides examples of trainings offered at one Florida program which may help to generate ideas for other programs:

Ocala HIPPY (Marion County Public Schools)

- ◆ **Character Development: Your Attitude and You**
This presentation demonstrated how positive thinking leads to positive results.

- ◆ **Improving Your Communication Skills**
Staff and parents enhanced their ability to express their feelings and ideas accurately—with specific tips on communicating more clearly in school, at work, and at home.
- ◆ **Setting Goals to Reach Your Potential**
Help participants realize that they can take control of their lives—and offer advice on using their abilities to achieve personal and career goals.
- ◆ **Understanding Diversity and Ourselves**
The message is simple: We are all unique individuals deserving of respect. Participants were able to examine their attitudes and learn how prejudices were formed and how to recognize their own special qualities which leads them to an appreciation of others.
- ◆ **Teamwork**
Participants learned ways they can work as a team through collaboration, delegating responsibilities and building on existing skills.

HIPPY is on the Right Track



Home Visiting Helps Reduce Child Abuse

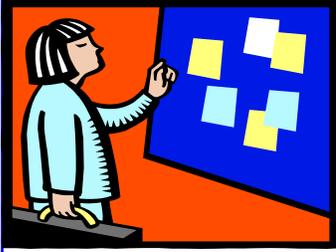
According to a published release from the *Guide to Community Preventive Services*, a systematic review of published studies, conducted on be-

half of the Task Force on Community Preventive Services by a team of experts, found that early childhood home visitation programs are effective in reducing child maltreatment among high-risk families. According to findings from the systematic review:

- ◆ Early childhood home visitation can prevent child maltreatment in high-risk families. In studies reviewed, home visiting resulted in a 40% reduction in child maltreatment episodes.
- ◆ Longer duration programs produce larger effects; programs of less than 2 years duration did not appear to be effective.
- ◆ Professional home visitors may be more effective than trained paraprofessionals, but longer-duration programs with trained paraprofessionals can also be effective.
- ◆ All programs reviewed were directed at families considered to be at high risk of child maltreatment, (e.g., single or young mothers, low-income households, families with low birth weight infants).
- ◆ The published evidence is insufficient to determine whether home visiting affects other violence by visited children or parents (including violence such as violence against partners and violent crime). These are areas that might benefit from further research.

Source: www.thecommunityguide.org





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.)

HIPPY Parent Is Grateful to Jacksonville HIPPY Staff

January 2004

Dear HIPPY Staff,

I would like to say that HIPPY is a wonderful program. It gives parents a way to help our children succeed in school. This is my second year doing HIPPY and I have nothing but good things to say about it. And I am definitely looking forward to next year. My child has learned so many things while being a part of this program. The meetings are enlightening and give the parents a chance to meet and speak with other parents with the same concerns. We have a great time. I especially like the fact that they provide childcare while we are in our meetings. The children are well cared for and given a snack. I could not participate if this was not a part of the program. I would like to thank the person(s) that started such a wonderful program. And Thanks to the great home visitors that provide the service.

Sincere Thanks,
Raenell Woods

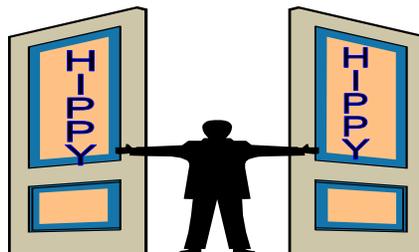
WELCOME ABOARD

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

[Winter Haven HIPPY Program](#)
at Early Childhood Resources with
Amanda Epps, HIPPY Supervisor

[Palm Beach County HIPPY Program](#)
at Center for Family Services with
Jongelene Adams, HIPPY Coordinator,
Boca/Delray site

[Palatka HIPPY Program](#)
at Child Care Resources with
Brenda Felder, HIPPY Supervisor
Amanda Watt, HIPPY Coordinator



CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION

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To Learn More About the



HIPPYUSA
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FLORIDA

HIPPY Training &
Technical Assistance Center
visit our website at:

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

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