



# FAMILIES: THE VITAL LINK



Fall 2004

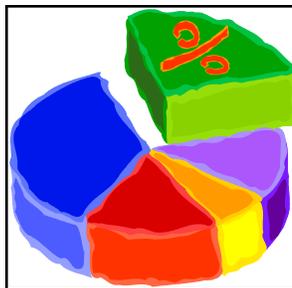
Fall 2004

## The Florida HIPPY Research Agenda

### RESEARCH: The Measure of Our Success

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

This edition of our newsletter will continue to highlight efforts to demonstrate the impact that HIPPY has had on children and families participating in local programs. Research findings show that the involvement of parents and or caregivers play a vital role in the healthy development of children, especially as it relates to children entering school ready to learn. HIPPY has a very strong parent involvement component which gives parents the tools, skills, and training they need to become the primary educators of their children. Through participation in the HIPPY program the parent is provided with a set of carefully developed materials, curriculum and books designed to strengthen their children's cognitive skills, early literacy skills, social and emotional development.



In order to determine if parents thought that HIPPY was contributing to the development of pre-academic school readiness skills, a second parent survey was developed and disseminated statewide to ascertain parent's perceptions as to whether HIPPY had helped them in the education and development of early readiness skills for their pre-school children. The information gained from this survey will be helpful to the field and funders as we seek to expand and enhance HIPPY programs throughout the state of Florida.



**Over half of the Florida HIPPY parents in the Parent Study II reported annual household incomes at or below the poverty threshold**

## Florida Partnership For School Readiness Awards An Additional \$150,000 to Florida HIPPY Programs

By: Brenda Brinson

On October 28, 2004 the Florida Partnership For School Readiness granted the Florida State HIPPY Office's request for additional funding.



The additional funds will be used to expand and enhance program services to children enrolled in HIPPY throughout the state of Florida. Local programs are expected to seek additional funds in their communities in order to become fully functioning programs with a full time coordinator serving a minimum of 60 children.



# HIPPY Brightens Futures

## HIPPY Research Results

### The Florida HIPPY Parent Study II

By Marsha Black, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

In January, 2004, in partnership with the Florida HIPPY Training and Technical Assistance Center, the University of South Florida HIPPY research team launched the second Florida HIPPY parent study. The purpose of the study was to determine the degree that HIPPY contributes to the development of children's pre-academic skills and parent involvement in different types of literacy activities in the home and community. Responses of the HIPPY families were compared with those of parents in the National Household Education Survey (NHES) 1999, National Center for Education Statistics.



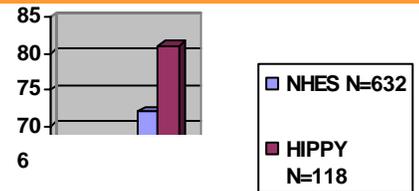
of the children were of Hispanic heritage, and approximately 34% were Anglo or White. English was the primary language in 73% of the homes, and Spanish was the primary language for over 24%. Just over half (57%) of families reported at least two adults providing childcare. Fifty-seven percent of families reported having an annual household income of less than \$25,000.

#### Parent Involvement with Literacy Activities

HIPPY programs serve families from a variety of racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, family types, parent-education levels, income strata, and language backgrounds. A great deal of research has demonstrated that families who have multiple socio-demographic risk factors have fewer opportunities to participate in educational and community activities. These risk factors include the mother has less than a high school education; the family is below the official poverty line; the mother speaks a language other than English as her primary language; and only one parent is present in the home. Over half

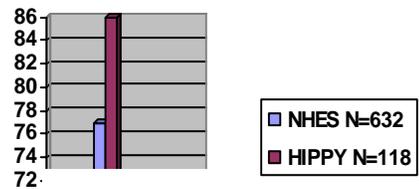
of the Florida HIPPY parents in this study reported annual household incomes at or below the poverty threshold compared to only 28% in the national study. The level of parent involvement in literacy activities for HIPPY families and families in the national study, both having annual household incomes less than \$25,000 are presented below:

#### HIPPY Parents Read To Their Children



More than 80% of HIPPY families are reading to their children three or more times a week compared to 72% of parents in the national study.

#### HIPPY Parents Tell Children Stories



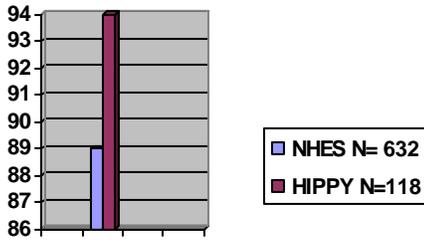
Nine percent (9%) more HIPPY parents have told their child a story in the past week (86% vs. 77%)



# In The Sunshine State



## Taught Letters, Words, or Numbers



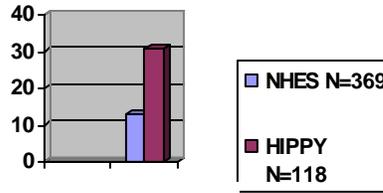
Ninety-four percent (94%) of HIPPY families are teaching their children letters, words and numbers compared to 89% for parents in the national sample.

Future research is needed to determine the magnitude of the effect of parent involvement in early literacy activities. However, most early childhood professionals would agree that home reading activities and language experiences of preschool children contribute in important ways to early literacy and language development. The home environment also plays an important role in the development of early word reading skills. The child's abilities and behaviors interact with and are affected by the people and experiences in the home environment.

## Children's Development of Pre-Literacy Skills

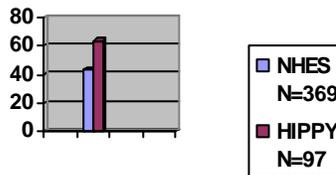
Unfortunately, children raised in poverty often enter school with limited exposure to books and underdeveloped literacy and language skills. Children living in low-income homes have significantly lower vocabularies compared with children in middle- and high-income homes. The current skills of HIPPY children and children in the national sample, as reported by their parents who were 3, 4, and 5 and were not enrolled in kindergarten are compared in the next column. Children in both samples were living in families

## HIPPY Children Recognize All Letters of the Alphabet



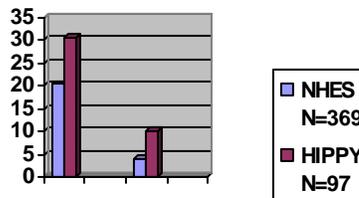
More than twice the number of HIPPY Children can recognize all the letters of the alphabet (31% vs. 13%)

## HIPPY Children Can Write Their First Name



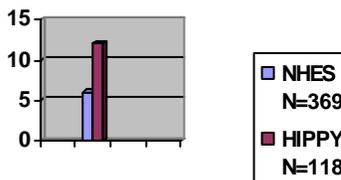
Twenty Percent (20%) more HIPPY Children are able to write their first name, even if some of the letters are backwards (64% vs. 43%)

## HIPPY Children Read Storybooks On Their Own



Though older children are more likely than younger children to actually read, 10% of HIPPY children are reading a book on their own before they enter kindergarten.

## HIPPY Children Count Up To 50



Twice as many HIPPY children can count up to 50 (12% vs. 6%)

whose annual household incomes were less than \$25,000.

Research suggests that home activities such as reading and story telling stimulate children's imagination, help them increase their vocabulary, introduce them to components of stories (such as character, plot, action, and sequence), and provide them with information about the world around them (National Education Goals Panel, 1997). Children's letter-name knowledge when they enter kindergarten is a powerful predictor of subsequent reading competence because it is the foundation of skilled word recognition. (Roberts, 2003). However, recent research in early literacy indicates that young children are unlikely to learn letter names through storybook reading alone. Children need direct instruction in alphabet-letter names. The HIPPY curriculum is an explicit, well-designed instruction model of sufficient duration and intensity to prepare children for mastery of letter-sound relationships and the more general understanding that letters in written words stand for sounds in spoken words (the alphabetic principle), both essential for skilled word recognition.



## HIPPY Is On The Right Track

By Dabaram Rampersad, Assistant State Director



The following excerpts from the Summer 2004 Issue of the Florida Children's Forum Magazine *Florida's Child* highlights research findings on early childhood care and education and demonstrates that the HIPPY program is on the right track:

- "An organization of Florida law-enforcement officials and crime victims released a new report showing that a high quality pre-kindergarten education is proven to cut crime. The report, called *High Quality Pre-Kindergarten: The Key to Crime Prevention and School Success in Florida* was released by Fight Crime: Invest in Kids. The report highlights a number of studies showing that a **high-quality pre-kindergarten and early education experience prevents crime.**"
- "Results of the 35-year study revealed that **children enrolled in a quality early learning program were less likely to become school dropouts, dependent on welfare, arrested for criminal activity or delinquency later in life.** In fact, children who did not have a quality learning experience were five times more likely to become chronic lawbreakers as adults...To view the full report and for more information please visit [www.fightcrime.org](http://www.fightcrime.org)."
- "The National Economic Development and Law Center (NEDLC) released a new report entitled *The Economic Impact of the Child Care and Early Education Industry in Massachusetts*...**Quality programs, particularly for low-income children, decrease the likelihood of costly negative outcomes, such as special education enrollment, juvenile delinquency, adult incarceration and welfare participation**...To download the Massachusetts report, go to [www.nedlc.org](http://www.nedlc.org) or [www.doe.mass.edu](http://www.doe.mass.edu)."
- "The Florida Children's Forum and MGT of America, Inc. released the *Economic Impact of Child Care in Florida* report in October of 2003. The report found similar findings to the Massachusetts report...To download the Florida report, go to [www.flchild.org](http://www.flchild.org)."

## WELCOME ABOARD



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

**Palatka HIPPY Program**  
Child Care Resources

**Venus McRae**  
HIPPY Coordinator

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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#### FUNDERS AND PARTNERS

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