



FAMILIES: THE VITAL LINK



Winter 2006

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Research + Advocacy + Resource Development = Sustainability

A Better, Brighter Future for HIPPY

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



“Happy New Year and thank you for all that you do for children and families in Florida.” I am extremely pleased to extend best wishes for a tremendous HIPPY experience. I call it an experience because that is what HIPPY means to me. It stands for an opportunity to experience the true meaning of empowerment as it relates to helping children and families reach their true potential. We are excited about our goal this year to assist all Florida HIPPY programs in diversifying and expanding their funding streams so that they will be able to sustain their programs in this era of shrinking dollars.

We have focused this edition on how research, advocacy, and fundraising all work together to insure program sustainability. It is important to understand that sustainability is much more than fundraising, it requires evidence of quality programming, appropriate and targeted advocacy, and research that demonstrates the effectiveness of HIPPY. It also means the ability and opportunity to articulate these findings to legislators, funders, corporations, and all other stakeholders.



Throughout this year, we will assist you in finding and cultivating new family literacy early childhood collaborative partnerships in your local communities. We will evaluate and provide feedback to you as you submit your funding plans for the upcoming year. It is our expectation that all Florida

programs will strive to reach stellar status as soon as possible. I know that you are overwhelmed, but I appeal to each of you to participate in our first state longitudinal research project. Advocacy is a big job and we all have an important role to play, therefore, we encourage you to invite legislators, potential funders, and supporters to visit your local program so that they can understand how important HIPPY is to their communities. I look forward to our Florida representatives telling our HIPPY stories in Tallahassee and Washington during our state advisory committee meeting and National HIPPY conference. Remember, HIPPY brightens Futures in the Sunshine State.



Florida HIPPY Longitudinal Study

By: Marsha Black, Ph.D., Researcher

Determining the long-term school outcomes of HIPPY on children's school performance in kindergarten, first, second, and third grade

An underlying assumption of the HIPPY logic model is that sustained effects on children's academic outcomes are linked to the strong family involvement component of HIPPY that produces improvement in parenting knowledge, attitudes, teaching skills, and behaviors. Recent research findings have provided support to this premise. Results from the first year of the HIPPY AmeriCorps evaluation demonstrated that English-speaking and Spanish-speaking parents reported that after participating in one year of the HIPPY program, they increased their knowledge of early childhood development, improved the quality of their parent-child interactions, became more proficient in their teaching skills, and engaged more frequently in supportive

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HIPPY Brightens Futures

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parenting behaviors. Parents whose primary language is other than English or Spanish showed the greatest gains in these areas. Parents also reported changes in the frequency with which they engaged in home and community educational activities and other behaviors that have been shown to be strongly correlated with children's school readiness and success (Black & Powell, 2005). In addition, in the 2005 Success Stories Booklet, HIPPY parents discussed how HIPPY enhanced their child's early childhood experiences by encouraging their child's curiosity, self-initiated learning, and independence.



The next step in Florida HIPPY research is to demonstrate the sustainability of HIPPY's influence on children's academic performance. The Florida HIPPY Longitudinal Study will follow children through the third grade and will address an extensive set of outcomes including kindergarten readiness, grades in reading and mathematics, third grade FCAT scores, grade promotion status, school attendance, and disciplinary history. Though collecting data from several samples of HIPPY children at different points in time is necessary for determining the impact of HIPPY on children's school performance, longitudinal designs can present challenges for both the researchers and program staff.

Local program knowledge is critical in the planning and implementation of all Florida HIPPY research, and especially when developing a longitudinal research project. The research staff at the University of South Florida has been actively working toward developing a trusting relationship with the Florida HIPPY coordinators. We appreciated the invitation from the Florida HIPPY State Office to participate in the coordinators' meeting in Orlando. During this meeting we were able to solicit input from the coordinators regarding proposed study procedures and find out what would work best for their programs. As of December 15th, we have support letters from Alachua Public School District, Dixie County School District, Duval County Public School District, Marion County School District, and Putnam County School District. HIPPY coordinators in other school districts are continuing to meet with their school superintendents, and we expect that by the end of January, we will have statewide participation in this

study. We certainly appreciate the interest and enthusiasm of all the Florida HIPPY coordinators in the longitudinal study. We are looking forward to working with you in 2006.

Black, M. & Powell, D. (2005). *Year One HIPPY AmeriCorps Evaluation: HIPPY Parental Involvement in Literacy Activities and Children's Receptive Vocabulary Development*. Tampa, Florida: University of South Florida.

A HIPPY Celebration

By: Rachel Gutierrez, Account Executive
MediaReach Public Relations

Families Celebrate The Center for Family Services of Palm Beach County's HIPPY Program at Annual Community Festival

West Palm Beach, FL- October 5, 2005 - The Center for Family Services of Palm Beach County, Inc. (CFS) held their Annual HIPPY (**Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters**) event, "Celebrating Families and Communities," recently at Gaines Park in West Palm Beach.

Dr. Mary Lindsey, Florida State HIPPY Director, congratulated The Center for Family Services for earning *Stellar Award Status* in three of their sites in Palm Beach County. DeMarchia Gibson, The Center for Family Services' HIPPY Director, presented awards to dedicated HIPPY parents and staff.



David Claud, Dorla Leslie, Dr. Mary Lindsey, and James S. Jackson

Over 200 guests enjoyed family entertainment, free food and fun children's activities while learning about the HIPPY program at the annual event, hosted by Gaines Park and the Pleasant City Multi-Cultural Center. James S. Jackson, Executive Director of Positive Habitat Aspiring Teens, Inc. (PHAT) spoke at the event. Free children's

In The Sunshine State



books, a bounce house, a motorized train, music and food entertained families for hours.



The Barajas Family

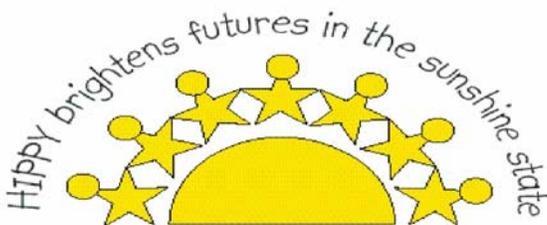
The HIPPY program is a developmentally appropriate, early childhood program that helps parents teach their three, four, and five-year-old children through reading and play, the skills that can make them better equipped to learn. Parents in HIPPY programs are trained by home visitors, who are themselves parents, and who provide free

supplies, cognitive-based activity packets and books. The program builds on the basic bond between parent and child and the premise that “you are your child’s first teacher.”

HIPPY is an international program that started in Israel in 1969 and has since spread to many other countries. HIPPY came to the United States in 1984. Florida has the second largest HIPPY program in the nation. CFS operates the largest HIPPY program in Florida, with home visitors instructing parents in ten communities throughout Palm Beach County.

For further information on the HIPPY program, please contact DeMarchia Gibson at (561) 616-1225.

HIPPY is just one of the many programs offered by the Center for Family Services of Palm Beach County, Inc., a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to promote the emotional well-being of families and children regardless of their ability to pay. The agency provides a full spectrum of services to homeless families, individuals recovering from an addiction, abused children, victims of domestic violence and families at risk, as well as individual, couples and families counseling. For information on The Center for Family Services’ programs, please call (561) 616-1222.



Spotlight on HIPPY Families

Submitted By: Brenda Brinson, Coordinator
Tampa HIPPY Program

KEEPING FAMILIES CONNECTED A Creative Approach To Parent Involvement

The Tampa HIPPY Program and the Florida Department of Corrections Even Start Program piloted an innovative program in July 2005 to foster positive educational interactions between incarcerated parents and their children. The project serves families in Hillsborough and Pinellas counties who have an incarcerated parent in Brevard, Lowell or Marion prisons. A HIPPY case manager/home visitor makes weekly home visits to families of incarcerated inmates, coordinates monthly visits and video conferences with children and their incarcerated parents.

The case manager/home visitor, Aundre’ West works with both the incarcerated parent (who is enrolled in the Even Start program) and the caregivers. The caregivers administer the curriculum and the incarcerated parents read story books and review HIPPY activities with their children during video conferences and family visits.

Mr. West reports that these experiences have been very positive for both the children and the inmates. Oftentimes, before participating in this program, the incarcerated parents had little or no interaction with their children or other family members.

Kids are excited and happy because of the time they now spend with their incarcerated parents. Inmates report that they learn while they help their children learn by using the HIPPY storybooks to help improve their own reading skills. Prison personnel notice positive changes in the behavior of the inmates and have become huge supporters of this collaboration.

HIPPY and the DOC are committed to keeping families together under the most difficult circumstances by providing educational, social and emotional activities and programs.



Please share with us, your program and families success stories so that they may appear in future editions.

FUNDERS AND PARTNERS

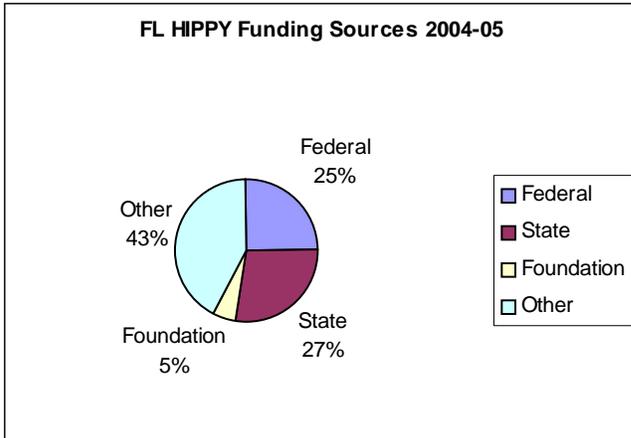
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Funding for Florida HIPPY Programs

By: Dabaram Rampersad, Assistant State Director

Agencies are continuously seeking funds to sustain their HIPPY programs to continue or expand services. As shown in the diagram below, the major sources of funding for Florida HIPPY programs for 2004-05 were as follows:

- 5% Foundation (includes Corporations and others)
- 25% Federal (includes AmeriCorps, Even Start, Goals 2000, Head Start, HUD, Title I)
- 27% State (includes State AmeriCorps, State Even Start, DOE, FPSR DHHS, Universities, etc.)
- 43% Other (includes Churches, Individuals, Volunteer Organizations and others)



To ensure program sustainability and growth, HIPPY programs may want to tap into other possible sources of funding such as local Early Learning Coalitions, local Children’s Services Boards or Councils, Head Start and Even Start programs. All Florida programs are encouraged to seek alternate sources of funding as a way to ensure program sustainability.

At the Florida HIPPY Coordinators’ Meeting held in Orlando in November, 2005, coordinators learned how important it is to have multiple funding sources. Coordinators shared some of their **unusual sources of support** (financial or otherwise) which included but not limited to the following:

- **National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW)** local chapters such as in Jacksonville (Duval County), Sarasota (Sarasota County) and West Palm Beach (Palm Beach County)
- **Local County Government** such as in Sarasota and Manatee counties
- **Local City Government** such as in Broward County HIPPY from City of Lauderhill
- **Junior League** such as in Gainesville
- **Publix Grocery Stores** for gift certificates
- **Barnes & Nobles Bookstores**



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