The beginning of this fiscal year is filled with anticipation and anxiety regarding the status of HIPPY. Although our budgets have been reduced or in some instances slashed completely, we are excited about the opportunity to continue to serve children and families in Florida. Our anxiety stems from the task of finding the necessary resources to support the state office and local programs that provide quality services to our communities. In order to meet the fiscal challenges at the state office and maximize our resources, we are reviewing our capacity and exploring additional funding sources.

Our focus will remain on Capacity Building, Networking and Advocacy, and Engaging in Research Activities that will guide our strategic plan for Florida HIPPY. In order to assist local programs in increasing their capacity, we will explore diverse in-house and community-based education, training opportunities and technical assistance methods that are more advanced and effective. These services/trainings will include, but not limited to, computer workshops, online trainings, webinars, teleconferences, videotaping of critical components, and guest speakers that will provide information and support to coordinators, home visitors, and parents.

Although we have some challenges ahead, working together we will find ways to make HIPPY in Florida stronger and more productive. I want to thank all of you for your outstanding work and love for the children and families that we have been entrusted to serve. We encourage local programs to review their program goals and seek support from their advisory committee members, partners, and the Florida HIPPY State Office. We look forward to a banner year for HIPPY in Florida.
HIPPY Makes a Difference in Tampa

Brenda Brinson, Tampa HIPPY Coordinator

If parents say “HIPPY Works” then HIPPY works!! Graduates from the 2009 Tampa HIPPY program were recently interviewed about their HIPPY experience.

Maria Alvarez shared that HIPPY helped her become an enthusiastic reader and improved her comprehension skills. She said that although her daughter, Kimberly Vasquez, was diagnosed with ADD, she was able to use HIPPY to help her learn and she attributes her success in kindergarten to HIPPY.

Nijma Hasan reported that “HIPPY helped my entire family. Instead of watching TV, all of my children wanted to do HIPPY homework. HIPPY really kept my family busy by learning and having fun.” Nijma’s daughter, Haneen Hasan, who completed three years of HIPPY, is currently reading above grade level and will be tested in Fall 2010 for the gifted program.

HIPPY grandparent, Jo Norton, continues to sing HIPPY praises as she proudly reported that her grandson, Michael Speights, made the honor roll and received a Certificate of Citizenship this past school year.

All of the parents felt that HIPPY was a great benefit to their families and they credit HIPPY for their children’s success in school. These former HIPPY parents were very active in the program, are actively involved in school activities, and continue to help their children learn and grow the HIPPY way!
Telling the HIPPY Story: **Strength in Numbers**

Marsha Black, Ph. D., USF HIPPY Researcher

HIPPY coordinators engage in a variety of advocacy activities to “tell the HIPPY Story.” The key to strong advocacy is selecting information that has the most impact on your audience and highlights the strengths of the HIPPY program:

- **School Readiness**
- **Parenting Practices**
- **Low Cost per Child**
- **40 Years of Research**
- **Replication internationally and nationally**
- **Weekly training and supervision of home visitors**
- **Clear, consistent model and curriculum**
- **Regular monitoring of model fidelity**

HIPPY research in Florida has been ongoing for more than two decades. It includes experimental and quasi-experimental studies and an extensive array of program evaluations. The following points are suggestions for you to consider in selecting research findings for your advocacy materials. This information is part of a report by Klein, Weiss, and Gomby (2006) Summary of Selected Research Findings:

- **HIPPY is a cost-savings program**
  Focusing just on benefits to children, HIPPY returns $1.80 to society for every $1 invested. That means a return of $1,476 per child for the typical HIPPY program (in 2003 dollars).

- **HIPPY helps children develop school readiness skills**
  After participating in HIPPY for a year, more children were performing at or above their age level on standardized vocabulary tests, which are related to success in school.

- **HIPPY children are successful in school**
  In Arkansas, where HIPPY is offered state wide, children who participated in HIPPY for at least one year outscored their peers on reading, math, and language arts achievement tests, had higher classroom grades, were less likely than their peers to have been suspended, and had better classroom behavior ratings from their teachers through the 6th grade.

  In Colorado HIPPY children had higher grades in reading, math, and social studies than their classmates.

- **HIPPY parents are involved in home literacy and community educational activities**
  Parents report that they read to their children more, tell them stories, and teach them letters, words, and numbers more than parents report in the National Household Education Survey, the largest survey of parents in the United States.

  Parents report being involved in their children’s education, working with their children at home on HIPPY materials, reading books together, and also connecting with their children’s schools.

- **Home visitors develop improved job skills that will prepare them for future employment**
  In a survey of Florida HIPPY paraprofessionals, approximately 48% report that they have either enrolled in school to earn a certificate, diploma, taken classes for professional development, or are working. Forty-two percent have participated in other job training programs.

Research has consistently demonstrated that HIPPY benefits children, parents, and home visitors. It is up to us to continue creating awareness and support for this very effective program.

**Endnotes**


HiPPY Mission Statement

HiPPY programs empower parents as primary educators of their children in the home and foster parent involvement in school and community life to maximize the chances of successful early school experiences.

Happy HIPPY Moments

Dear HIPPY Family,

I have an encouraging story to share with you that speaks to the purpose of why we commit to being home visitors. This past week, I visited with one of my dedicated clients. We had just wrapped up the role-play and we were setting our appointment for the next visit when 4 year-old Illyanna ran over to me to give me an assignment. She said that she had some “homework” for me. I jokingly told her that “teachers aren’t supposed to assign homework over the weekend,” since it was a Friday afternoon. Well, that didn’t get me out of it, so I gladly accepted my assignment. Illyanna had written the letter “Cc,” both uppercase and lowercase across the page in red and blue. My homework was to copy what she had written and practice writing the letter “Cc” beneath hers. I told her I would do my best. She added, “Don’t forget to bring it back next time so I can check it.” Needless to say, I left the house smiling and chuckling to myself about my new role as the student and my 4 year-old teacher. I was sure to follow through and complete my assigned task and I even earned a sticker! Hooray!

This is just one example of all the happy HIPPY moments I know you experience along with me. I know that not all of our kids who play pretend school or give out homework assignments to their home visitors will grow up to be teachers, but they will grow up to value education and pass that love on to others. I have included a picture of Miss Illyanna for you to enjoy. She is just one of the many joyful faces I look forward to seeing each week.

Best Regards,

Maisy Barnette
St. Petersburg HIPPY Home Visitor

How Can I Help?

Make a Donation Today!

Checks payable to: USF Foundation (Memo Line: Acct # 530004 HIPPY Services Fund)
Please send all donations to: Florida HIPPY Foundation Account, 13301 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., MHC 2113A, Tampa, FL 33612

The USF Foundation is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization.