We are all energized from our participation in the National HIPPY Conference held in Little Rock, Arkansas during the week of April 11-14, 2010. The theme HIPPY: The Bridge to Change for Children, Families, and Communities so aptly expresses our sentiments as we return back to our various places of employment. We left the conference committed to finding additional ways to build that bridge to change for children, families, and communities. One might ask, how can we build the bridge to change with unbelievable budget cuts, declining housing markets, and uncertain times with the economy? We understand that there is no single solution for this question, but we have implemented a proactive plan that includes, Capacity Building, Networking and Advocacy, and Engaging in Research Activities that will direct the future of the Florida State HIPPY office as we seek to build the bridge to supporting families and children.

Capacity Building
The state office and local programs have been involved in implementing a strategic plan that will sustain and provide guidance for HIPPY in the future. These efforts have been very successful in assisting local programs in finding additional resources in their local communities that sustained them through these budget cuts. Some programs established relationships with other early childhood home visiting programs in their local communities to stretch dollars and serve more children and families.

Networking and Advocacy
We also know that Networking and Advocacy will increase the pool of resources that will allow us to build bridges that deliver high quality program services to families and children. Through our collaboration with The Florida Network...

Director's Note continued on back cover.
HIPPY parents respond to AmeriCorps call to Serve! The average value of volunteer service in the state of Florida in 2007 was $17.78 per hour. Based on that rate, Florida HIPPY parents have given $66,373 in volunteer time to their local communities and that amount is still increasing!

AmeriCorps is a national initiative to get more Americans to volunteer. AmeriCorps members who are home visitors with HIPPY had a unique challenge to promote volunteerism among HIPPY parents as a requirement to earn an AmeriCorps education award.

As of March 31, 2010, More than 240 HIPPY parents volunteered in their local communities. They gave freely of their time to volunteer at their local schools, libraries, churches, community centers and during community events and festivals. In addition to their regular work and family routines, they devote 2-3 hours each week to working on HIPPY activities with their children and collectively volunteered over 3,733 hours of service in support of AmeriCorps.

Some HIPPY parents dedicated a significant amount of time to volunteer service. Charlene Fields from the Roosevelt Service Center site in West Palm Beach led the charge for service and volunteers 35 hours a week at a local Goodwill store. She has logged 540 hours of service to date. Linda Napier from the Starke site volunteers as a hotline counselor and has logged 72 hours of service. Linda Fields from the Gainesville site has logged 66 hours as a volunteer activities coordinator for the Children’s ministry at her church.

More than one-half of HIPPY parents are using their love for education to volunteer as classroom aides, storytellers at local libraries and reading warriors at community child care centers. They are making a significant impact not only in the lives of their HIPPY children but in their communities through volunteer service. The Florida HIPPY state office salutes HIPPY parents for their volunteer activities in support of the HIPPY AmeriCorps project.

Charlene Fields, HIPPY Parent Volunteer at Roosevelt Service Center, West Palm Beach
The HIPPY Longitudinal Study began in 2005 to demonstrate the sustainability of HIPPY’s influence on children’s academic performance. The current enrollment is 752 children for five cohorts of children beginning with Cohort #1 (children who entered kindergarten in September 2004). This study has been expanded to include five additional cohorts of children beginning with Cohort #6 (children who entered kindergarten in 2009) and Cohort #7 (children who will enter kindergarten in September 2010). We will collect academic data on these children from kindergarten through the sixth grade. The first wave of data for Cohorts #1-5 was received from the Florida Department of Education during Fall 2009. Some of the initial findings were:

**HIPPY children are proficient in alphabet recognition skills.** HIPPY children scored higher on the DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency Test than other children in Florida who were also on free/reduced lunch.

**HIPPY children are proficient in sound recognition skills.** HIPPY children scored higher on the DIBELS Initial Sound Fluency Test than other children in Florida who were also on free/reduced lunch.

**HIPPY children performed very well on the FCAT reading test.** More than half of the HIPPY children have reached grade three or higher on FCAT Reading compared to other children in Florida who were also on free/reduced lunch.

**More HIPPY children are performing above grade level on the FCAT Math test.** A larger percentage of HIPPY children have reached level 3 or higher on FCAT math when compared to other grade three children who are also on free/reduced lunch in Florida.

The request for the second wave of data will be made in August 2010 to the Department of Education. We will be getting reading and math FCAT scores for children who entered kindergarten in September 2006 and school readiness scores for children who entered kindergarten in September 2009.
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.

On Top of the Hill—Capitol Hill
Written by Harriett Ludwig, from the words of Caden Lee Mobley-Kelly, former HiPPY Child

On Monday, March 8, 2010, I, along with my mother, aunt, grandmother and a host of other HiPPY supporters visited the hill—that is the state capitol in Tallahassee, Florida.

Hi, my name is Caden Lee Mobley-Kelly. I am a seven year old first grader at Z.L. Sung Seventh-Day-Adventist School. I am a former HiPPY participant. I graduated from the HiPPY program in May of 2008. Although I graduated I am still very active with the program. I consider myself to be the HiPPY poster child because I love it so much.

As a result of my involvement with HiPPY I have a profound desire to read. I have learned that reading books allows me to journey around the world, it takes me anywhere in the world that I may want to travel. I can learn about anything I want to. For instance, I love whales and books have allowed me to know everything about them. Being a HiPPY child has given me the foundation that I need to carry me through my educational career.

Because the HiPPY program has given me so much in my short life time, when it came time to tell my HiPPY story to a group of supporters on March 8th, I was gung-ho for the opportunity. As a result of my involvement on HiPPY Advocacy Day, I was blessed with the opportunity to meet Senator Nan Rich who has been a long-time supporter of HiPPY in the United States. I was even more excited when I received a personal package from Senator Rich a few days later. It was a letter expressing how impressed she was with our visit and that I can read at a 5th grade level. She also sent one of the original HiPPY storybooks that she has kept for many years. That was a true honor for me. I am truly happy that I have been fortunate to have been part of the HiPPY program and that I got a chance to tell people about the program during my visit to capitol hill.

Director’s Note
continued from front cover

Engaging in Research Activities
The results of Florida HiPPY Evaluation have shown the value parents, home visitors, and programs place on HiPPY. We are now engaged in a longitudinal study that is designed to show the impact of HiPPY on school readiness and achievement. (See Research on page 3).

It is for these reasons and many more we remain hopeful and committed to the mission that it is our responsibility to think outside of the box and build bridges for HiPPY Children, Communities and Families.

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.