

SURVEY ANALYSIS

of

HIPPY USA RESEARCH AND EVALUATION NEEDS SURVEY

**BUILDING PROGRAM
EVALUATION CAPACITY**

HIPPY USA Conference
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Submitted to:

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The HIPPY USA Research and Evaluation Needs Survey was distributed to the participants in two workshops entitled “Building Program Evaluation Capacity” offered at the national HIPPY USA conference in San Francisco on April 16, 2002. The HIPPY USA Research and Evaluation Survey consisted of 8 questions designed to gather information on current research and evaluation needs as well as any evaluations that may have been conducted during the past five years. Information was also gathered on the instruments used to collect information from home visitors, families, and children.

Respondents

As indicated in Table 1, 51 respondents representing 17¹ states completed the survey.

Table 1

Number of Respondents by State

State	No. of Respondents
Alabama	2
Arizona	1
Arkansas	8
California	1
Canada	1
Colorado	2
Hawaii	4
Illinois	1
Louisiana	1
Maryland	9
Michigan	2
Nevada	4
New York	2
Ohio	1
Oregon	2
Texas	6
Washington DC	1
	48
3 missing site info	3
Total completed surveys	51

¹ According to the HIPPY USA website, there are 161 programs in 27 states, DC and Guam in 2001-2002.

Research and Evaluation Needs

The survey analysis consisted of calculating the frequency of “yes” and “no” responses for each question. (see Table 2)

Table 2

Evaluation and Research Interests by Question

Question	Yes %	No %
Do you have a need for HIPPY program evaluation information at your site?	95.7 (n=45)	4.3 (n=2)
Does your funding agency(s) require HIPPY program evaluation information?	81.6 (n=40)	18.4 (n=9)
Have any program evaluations been conducted with your HIPPY site in the past five years?	61.2 (n=30)	38.8 (n=19)
Has your program worked with an outside evaluator or researcher?	41.7 (n=20)	58.3 (n=28)
Are developmental screenings or assessments done with your HIPPY children?	75.5 (n=37)	24.5 (n=12)
Does your site maintain a computerized data base of information on HIPPY children and families?	70.0 (n=35)	30.0 (n=15)
Research activities you are most interested in:		
Pre- and Post-testing for children	64.7 (n=33)	35.3 (n=18)
Longitudinal information on children’s academic success	78.4 (n=40)	21.6 (n=11)
Child developmental screening and assessments	49.0 (n=25)	51.0 (n=26)
Positive changes in parents who have participated in HIPPY	80.4 (n=41)	19.6 (n=10)
Parent involvement in the school	80.4 (n=41)	19.6 (n=10)
Children’s readiness for school	80.4 (n=41)	19.6 (n=10)
Strategies that successfully engage families in HIPPY	58.8 (n=30)	41.1 (n=21)
Site Profiles	19.6 (n=10)	80.4 (n=41)
Other evaluation and research interests	3.9 (n=2)	96.1 (n=49)
Evaluation surveys and instruments	72.6 (n=37)	27.4 (n=14)

Evaluation Surveys or Instruments

Sixty-one percent (n=30) of the respondents indicated they had been involved in program evaluations at their sites during the past five years. Seventy-two percent (n=37) provided information regarding the type of evaluations that were conducted and the instruments that were used to collect information from home visitors, families and children. It was not possible to calculate response frequencies for this question since several surveys were missing the MIS number. An identifier was necessary in order to avoid duplicating information from a site. However, the information provided does suggest some tentative conclusions. First, HIPPY coordinators have a wide range of experiences with program evaluation. Some coordinators have been involved in Americorps, statewide, and local evaluations, while others have conducted some form of assessment at their site such as a health assessment, developmental screening, and group meeting assessment. Parent and kindergarten teacher surveys were the most widely-used instruments for data collection with majority of these assessment instruments being developed by program staff. Parent testimonials and other anecdotal information were also frequently used as HIPPY success stories. Several programs collected data from nationally-available norm-referenced tests (see Table 3).

Table 3

Standardized Instruments Used in HIPPY Evaluations

Instrument	State
Ages and Stages Questionnaire	Nevada
Adult Adolescent Parenting Inventory	Nevada
Brigance	Arkansas, Louisiana
Dial-R Readiness Test	Colorado, Louisiana
Pre-and Post Test from Early Prevention For School Failure Curriculum	Nevada
ESI ¹	Colorado
English as a Second Language Test	New York
Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test	Nevada
PAT	New York
Preschool Language Scale-3	Nevada
Test of Adult Basic Education	New York
Galileo Assessment	Ohio
Denver II	Ohio

¹ This test is included to provide as complete a description as possible of the all the instruments used in HIPPY evaluations. As this test could not be located in the Mental Measurements Yearbook, it may not be a published instrument, but rather developed by the site.

Two programs used assessment instruments that were mandated by their State Department of Education: the Kindergarten Readiness Test for Alabama and the Maryland Model for School Readiness Screening.

Program evaluations have utilized both child-level and parent-level data. For child-level data, Pre- and Post-tests, developmental screenings and longitudinal studies of children's academic performance were most frequently listed, while for parent-data, assessments have measured the level of parent involvement in school and parent satisfaction with the HIPPY program.

Discussion

HIPPY coordinators have a predominant interest in evaluation and research activities due, in part, to the fact that continuing program funding is often tied to a results-oriented approach in which funding agencies themselves are accountable for how funds are being spent. Although program evaluation may be relatively new to some HIPPY coordinators, a significant majority of HIPPY sites have conducted some type of program evaluation during the past five years. These evaluation findings could become a national research data base that would be helpful to HIPPY coordinators in demonstrating that HIPPY program goals and objectives are being met. The survey results also suggest that a predominant number of HIPPY programs engage in evaluation activities through two mechanisms: (1) Utilizing external funding resources such as the services of outside evaluators selected by the funding agency; or (2) Participating in evaluation activities that are mandated and conducted by the school system since "accountability" is the theme of school system operations. Lastly, HIPPY coordinators are interested in evaluation designs that provide information for one point in time such as school readiness and parent involvement, as well as evaluation designs that measure change across time, such as academic performance of HIPPY children.

Interactive Activity During Workshop - What HIPPY Coordinators Want to Know

Workshop Activity

Prior to the group workshop activity, a brief overview of evaluation was presented that focused on the different types of evaluations that are needed at different stages of program development, how to formulate potential evaluation questions, and criteria that would be useful in selecting an evaluation focus. For the workshop activity, participants were divided into three groups of approximately 10 individuals in each group. The groups were asked to formulate three evaluation questions that they would like to answer. For each evaluation question, participants were asked to identify interested stakeholders, how the evaluation results would be used, whether the information was new to the program, whether the information would be important to the majority of stakeholders, and if resources are currently available to conduct the proposed evaluation. After three evaluation questions were identified, the groups were to select one question as the focus of their evaluation and identify what data was currently being collected and what additional data might be needed to answer the question. At the conclusion of these activities, the three groups shared their decisions with the entire group of participants.

Summary

The participants in both workshops were interested in receiving a summary of the group presentations. The following is a summary of the thoughts and reactions of the group participants.

Evaluation Questions and Focus

The six groups of workshop participants were able to generate many potential evaluation questions that would be of interest to all stakeholders and audiences. Although a few evaluation questions focused on determining whether the program activities were being implemented as planned, the majority of the evaluation questions focused on determining the impact of the HIPPY program on children and their parents. As shown below, the evaluation questions generated by the participants indicated that several different groups of stakeholders and their needs for information are represented. In addition, respondents were able to apply criteria such as relevance and available resources to select one evaluation question that would become the focus of the program evaluation.

Group #1

- “Does HIPPY work?”
- “Are HIPPY students better prepared for kindergarten?”
- “Are the HIPPY gains sustained?”
- “What is the impact of HIPPY on the entire family, i.e. parents and siblings?”
- “Do HIPPY parents get involved in regular school and stay involved?”
- “How much are the parents involved in the HIPPY program?”
- “Does HIPPY help parents develop as child advocates and leaders?”

Evaluation focus:

“I need to know if HIPPY children are better prepared for kindergarten because I need to decide if I have the data to persuade stakeholders to support HIPPY.”

Group #2

- What are the HIPPY child’s gains during participation in the program?
- How are paraprofessionals performing during home visits?
- What is the drop out rate of high school HIPPY children compared to non-Hippy children?

Evaluation focus:

“I need to know how the paraprofessionals are performing during home visits because I need to decide: (1) If they need more training and how to develop that training; (2) If parents are receiving adequate curriculum instruction and (3) If program guidelines are followed.”

Group #3

- “What impact has HIPPY had on school readiness?”
- “What impact has HIPPY had on parent involvement in schools?”

“What are the long-term effects of HIPPY on children’s continued education?”

Evaluation Focus:

“I need to know what the long term effects HIPPY has on children’s continued education because I need to decide the impact of early intervention in children’s academic success.”

Group #4

“Does the program make a difference in reading skills in the third grade?”

“Are there significant gains between pre/post test in a program year?”

Evaluation Focus:

“I need to know if children are making significant gains in the program year because I need to decide if we are meeting the needs of the community and the program funders”

Group #5

“How does parent involvement in HIPPY affect educational involvement?”

“Does HIPPY involvement change the way parents interact with all their children?”

Evaluation Focus:

“I need to know whether there is a relationship between parental involvement in HIPPY and educational involvement in the schools, such as increased attendance at parent conferences, increased trips to the library, and increased parent volunteer activities?”

Group #6

“Are HIPPY children prepared to succeed in school?”

“Does the HIPPY curriculum meet HIPPY childrens’ needs?”

“Is HIPPY promoting parental involvement in their child’s education?”

Evaluation Focus:

“Are HIPPY children prepared to succeed in school?”

Participants identified a wide variety of uses for evaluation results including program expansion, sustainability, and improvement, monitoring the quality of the program activities and generating reports for stakeholders. Overall, participants understood that the usefulness of an evaluation is related to the degree that the evaluation question represents the perspectives of the most important stakeholders. Participants identified many different types of stakeholders that would be interested in their evaluation results including stakeholders who were involved in the day-to-day program operations, as well as stakeholders who have indirect program involvement such as legislators and state educational leaders. Examples of identified stakeholders included funding sources (lead agency), legislators, HIPPY USA, local school district personnel - teachers, state educational leaders - state superintendents, community and civic organizations, Title I Agencies - DHA (Housing Authority), DHA Health Department, program staff, parents, children, and the general public.

