

About Florida HIPPY

The Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is a home based, parent involvement program designed to help parents provide educational enrichment for their three, four, and five-year-old children.

The Florida HIPPY Training and Technical Assistance (T&TA) Center, based at the University of South Florida (USF), works in collaboration with HIPPY USA's National Office in New York to provide training, technical support, and guidance to all of the HIPPY programs in the state of Florida.

The Florida HIPPY T&TA Center, in conjunction with USF, HIPPY USA, and Florida HIPPY sites, began this research initiative to evaluate the efficacy of the HIPPY model, measure and describe changes in program participants, and provide evidence-based support for HIPPY programs.

Data from selected Florida HIPPY programs have been collected and analyzed. The purpose of these research briefs is to share knowledge on topics of interest with HIPPY stakeholders. Findings from this research may be used to develop "best practices" in service delivery, for program improvement and enhancement, to describe program functioning and impact to stakeholders, and to support program sustainability.

This project is supported by funds appropriated by the Florida State Legislature via the Florida Partnership for School Readiness (now Office of Early Learning) at the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) in collaboration with the University of South Florida.



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Florida HIPPY Research Brief #7

Training & Technical Assistance Center for
 Florida's Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters

HIPPY Families Participate in Educational Activities in the Community

Introduction

Goal One of the National Education Goals stresses the importance of family-child engagement in literacy activities to children's development, especially for children with multiple risk factors such as living with fewer than two parents and living in a family with an income below the poverty level. This goal suggests that for all children to start school ready to learn, parents need to devote time to helping their children learn. Parental involvement with their children in community educational activities encourages children's imagination and curiosity and fosters the love of learning in their children.

HIPPY (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters) is a home visiting program for caregivers of young children designed to increase school readiness and to foster parent involvement in their children's education and in community life. HIPPY's systematic program of role playing during home visits and group meetings is designed to engage parents in learning activities with their children and to view themselves as active agents in their children's education and schooling.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the level of involvement of HIPPY parents in community educational activities with their children compared to a national sample of parents with young children.

Method

A telephone survey asked parents participating in HIPPY programs in Florida to indicate whether they had engaged in a number of different home literacy

Research Question

In what ways do HIPPY parents participate in educational activities with their children outside the home?

activities during the past week and in certain community educational activities with their children during the past month. The questions on the Florida HIPPY Parent Survey II on parent involvement in educational activities and children's pre-academic skills were drawn from the Parent Interview of the 1999 National Household Education Survey. The NHES was selected as the comparison study because participants in this survey were parents of young children; it measured the same content areas that were of interest in this study and used the same methodology developed for the Florida HIPPY Parent Survey II.

Participants

Children were randomly selected by program proportionally according to the number enrolled in each curriculum year during 2003-04. Three hundred children or approximately 20% of the total number of HIPPY children in Florida were randomly selected for recruitment. Telephone interviews were completed by USF staff with 210 parents or 70% of the target sample.

Though participants in both studies were parents of preschool children, there were differences between the NHES and HIPPY samples in ethnicity, primary language and annual income. Compared with NHES parents, HIPPY parents had a substantially lower annual household income, a larger percentage of minority children, and more than twice the percentage of single-parent households than was found in the national sample.

**This Research Brief was prepared by
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Special Thanks to:

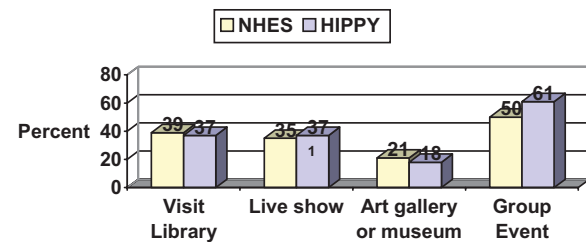
- **Dr. Mary Lindsey, Florida State HIPPY Director, and Dabaram Rampersad, Assistant Director, Florida HIPPY Training and Technical Assistance Center** who contributed their knowledge and expertise of the HIPPY program to the development of the research proposal, methodology, and staff training modules used in this study.
- **The Florida HIPPY program coordinators** who enthusiastically participated in the study by providing program data and supervision of the parent recruitment process.
- **The HIPPY home visitors** who generously contributed their time in conducting parent recruitment, verifying parent telephone numbers and securing replacement parents for this study.
- **The HIPPY parents** who provided information about their child's current skills and their participation in educational and community activities.

Findings

Overall NHES and HIPPY Samples

As shown in Figure 1, HIPPY and NHES parents reported they participated in community educational activities with their children. The findings for the overall samples of the two groups are remarkably similar with the only notable difference being that a larger percentage of HIPPY families participated in an event sponsored by a community, ethnic, or religious group.

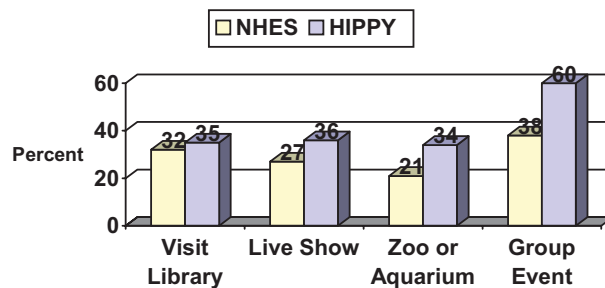
Figure 1. Community Educational Activities During the Past Month - Overall Samples



Families with incomes below \$25,000

As shown in Figure 2, HIPPY parents with annual household incomes below \$25,000 participated more in educational activities outside the home than low income families in the national sample. The most notable difference between the HIPPY and NHES low income families is that a much larger percentage of HIPPY parents attended an event with their children sponsored by a community, ethnic, or religious group.

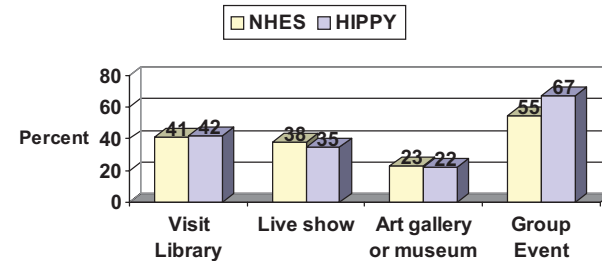
Figure 2. Community Educational Activities During Past Month Families with Incomes Below \$25,000



Families with Incomes above \$25,000

There were only slight differences in the percentages of NHES and HIPPY parents who reported visiting the library with their children, taking their children to a play, concert, or other live show or visiting an art gallery, museum, or historical site with their children (see Figure 3). HIPPY families earning more than \$25,000 annually were more likely than NHES families in the same income category to have attended an event sponsored by a community, ethnic, or religious group.

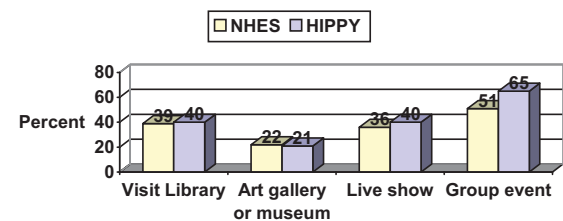
Figure 3. Community Educational Activities During Past Month Families with Incomes Above \$25,000



English-Speaking Parents

As shown in Figure 4, there was little difference between the English-speaking parents in the national sample and those in HIPPY with regard to visiting the library or an art gallery, museum, or historical site during the past month. It is noteworthy that less than half of the parents in both studies had participated in these activities with their child. English-speaking NHES parents and English-speaking HIPPY parents were much more likely to have attended a group or community event with their children.

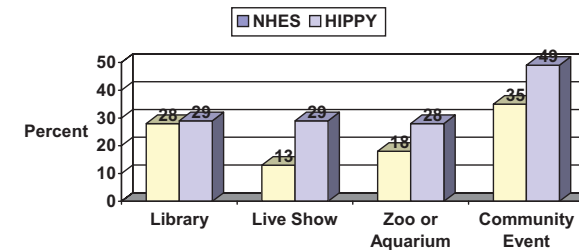
Figure 4. Community Educational Activities During Past Month English-Speaking Families



Spanish-Speaking Parents

Compared to Spanish-speaking NHES parents, a larger percentage of Spanish-speaking HIPPY parents have taken their child to a play, concert, or other live show visited a zoo or aquarium, and attended an event sponsored by a community, ethnic, or religious group (see Figure 5). Spanish-speaking HIPPY and NHES parents reported similar rates of visiting an art gallery, museum, or historical sites and visiting the library with their child. It is notable that both groups of Spanish-speaking parents reported low rates of library usage compared to other community educational activities.

Figure 5. Community Educational Activities During the Past Month - Spanish-Speaking Parents



Programmatic Implications

- HIPPY families reported low rates of library usage compared to other community educational activities. HIPPY parents were much more likely to have taken their child to a zoo, aquarium or an event sponsored by a community, ethnic, or religious group than visit the library with their child. HIPPY programs may want to explore reasons some parents are not taking their children to the library and help parents identify ways to overcome barriers to library use.
- HIPPY programs may also want to consider developing HIPPY summer programs that offer parents opportunities to participate in learning activities with their children such as accompanying their children on field trips, developing a summer reading list, and disseminating tips on how to use the library.