FLORIDA
HIPPIYCORPS INITIATIVE
EVALUATION
1996-1997

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Prepared by:
Zena H. Rudo, M.S.W., Ph.D.
Department of Child and Family Studies
Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute
University of South Florida
Tampa, Florida
FLORIDA
HIPPYCORPS INITIATIVE
EVALUATION
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This report presents the findings of an evaluation of Florida's Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) for the 1996-97 program year. The HIPPYCorps Initiative is a joint project of AmeriCorps and HIPPY, supported by AmeriCorps funds. This evaluation is required by AmeriCorps as part of a grant for the 1996-97 program year.

BACKGROUND

HIPPY Program
The Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is a home-based, three-year early childhood educational program for at-risk children age 3-5 years and their parents. HIPPY serves children and their families who are at risk for poor academic achievement and literacy problems. HIPPY stands apart from many other educational enrichment programs for preschool children as it has a broader focus that includes the children's parents, services within the child's familiar home context, as well as group networking and education.

HIPPY is a free program that trains parents to be their children's first teachers. Its goals are:

- empower parents as their children's primary educators
- provide school readiness skills for children
- bring literacy into the home
- establish consistency in teaching children at home
- improve communication skills between parent and child
- encourage enrollment of parents in continuing education programs
  (Baker & Piotrowski, 1993).

The program provides 30 weeks of activities, during the school year, for groups of three, four, and five year old children. In bi-weekly home visits, para-professionals role play activities with parents. The parent and child later do these activities together. On alternate weeks, parents attend group meetings to share concerns and hear presentations on varied topics.

HIPPY originated in 1969 at the National Council of Jewish Women Research Institute for Innovation in Education at Hebrew University, Israel. The program has since been implemented in seven other countries. The first U.S. programs were established in 1984. As of 1996, HIPPY has served over 15,000 families in 28 states and Washington, D.C. (Baker & Piotrowski, 1996). In 1995, AmeriCorps, an organization that promotes volunteerism and educational opportunities, joined forces with HIPPY USA to enhance HIPPY programs in Florida and New York. This joint effort is referred to as the HIPPYCorps Initiative.
The Florida HIPPY Corps Initiative
During 1996-97, Florida had seven HIPPYCorps programs operating in 29 sites in five counties: Dade, Broward, Hillsborough, Palm Beach and Sarasota. These include:

- 18 school-based sites in greater Miami (Dade).
- 5 sites in greater Fort Lauderdale (Broward).
- 1 site in Tampa (Hillsborou gh).
- 1 site in Sarasota (Sarasota).
- 4 sites in the West Palm Beach and Belle Glade (Palm Beach).

A total of 53 HIPPYCorps members worked at the Florida sites in 1996-97, with an average of two members per site. Located in schools and community-based centers within the neighborhood, the sites served a total of 751 families during the 1996-97 year. Families in the program were predominantly African-American and Latino.

Evaluation Goals
An evaluation of the HIPPYCorps Initiative was performed during the 1995-96 program year in order to assess whether the program had met its objectives. Two objectives were identified to reassess in the 1996-97 HIPPYCorps Initiative evaluation. The two objectives evaluated were:

- Preparing children for school
  Standard: 75% of children entering kindergarten will be adapted to the classroom.

- Developing home-school partnerships
  Standard: 75% of parents will feel more confident engaging in school-related activities.

Evaluation Sample

Geographic Sites
Children currently attending kindergarten at ten elementary schools in Hillsborough, Sarasota, and Broward Counties were selected for this evaluation. Five HIPPYCorps sites were represented in these three counties. The Hillsborough, Sarasota, and Broward sites were chosen based on their demographic characteristics (urban vs. rural, geographic location, and ethnic mix) which reflect the breadth of the Florida HIPPY programs. The same three locations were the basis for the sample selected for the 1995-96 HIPPYCorps Initiative evaluation.

The following elementary schools participated: Cleveland, Potter, and Seminole Elementary in Hillsborough County; Bay Haven, Fruitville, Tuttle, and Venice Elementary in Sarasota County; and Martin L. King, Oriole, and Sunland Park Elementary in Broward County.

Group Comparison
The evaluation sample consisted of two groups of children in kindergarten, demographically similar, from each of the sites. The two groups included: 1) children who had been involved with the HIPPY 4 program, and 2) children who had never been involved with HIPPY. Each of
the HIPPY children were matched with a non-HIPPY child on five variables: school, age, gender, race/ethnicity, and income level (using participation in the free lunch program as the indicator). HIPPY children were identified by the HIPPY program staff at each site. Staff from each of the non-HIPPY children’s schools identified the comparison group.

Data was obtained from the following sample:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>HIPPY children</th>
<th>Non-HIPPY children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broward County</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillsborough County</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarasota County</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sample Demographics**

Thirty-eight parents (26 HIPPY and 12 non-HIPPY parents) and 15 teachers (responding on 40 students – 23 HIPPY and 17 non-HIPPY) completed the evaluation surveys. Families surveyed were predominantly low-income. In all three counties, the majority of children were African-American (84% in Broward, 61% in Hillsborough, and 73% in Sarasota). In Hillsborough and Sarasota Counties, 22% and 27% of the children, respectively, were identified as Hispanic. In Broward and Hillsborough Counties, a smaller percentage were characterized as multi-ethnic (11% and 17%, respectively). Five percent of the children in Broward County were identified as Caucasian (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1.**

Children’s Ethnicity by Site
Of the total 48 children in the sample, 21 were male (44%) and 27 were female (56%). Specifically, in Broward County there were 6 male (32%) and 13 female (68%) children; in Hillsborough County there were 11 males (61%) and 7 females (39%); and in Sarasota County, there were 4 male (36%) and 7 female (64%) children (see Figure 2).

Figure 2.
Child’s Gender by Site

Thirty-six of the 48 children were attending kindergarten in public schools, one was in a private school, and one was in a special education/magnet school. No data was available on the remaining ten children. Further, the majority of children attended their particular school because they were assigned to that school.

All of the children’s kindergarten teachers were female. They did, however, vary in their ethnicity, years of experience, and educational levels. Of the 15 teachers, ten were Caucasian, four were African-American, and one was Hispanic. In relation to their years of experience as a teacher, two had 3 - 4 years of experience; three had 5-9 years; three had 10 - 14 years; one had 15 - 19 years; four had 20 - 29 years; and two had 30 or more years experience (see Table 1). Fourteen of the 15 teacher’s educational levels were as follows: six reported having a bachelor’s degree; seven had master’s degrees; and one identified themselves as a specialist (see Table 1).
Table 1.
Demographics on Children’s Kindergarten Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity/race</th>
<th>Broward County (n = 8)</th>
<th>Hillsborough County (n = 4)</th>
<th>Sarasota County (n = 3)</th>
<th>Total (N = 15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>4 (50%)</td>
<td>3 (75%)</td>
<td>3 (100%)</td>
<td>10 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>3 (38%)</td>
<td>1 (25%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4 (27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1 (12%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of experience</th>
<th>Broward County (n = 8)</th>
<th>Hillsborough County (n = 4)</th>
<th>Sarasota County (n = 3)</th>
<th>Total (N = 15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 – 4 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (25%)</td>
<td>1 (33.3%)</td>
<td>2 (13.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – 9 years</td>
<td>1 (13%)</td>
<td>1 (25%)</td>
<td>1 (33.3%)</td>
<td>3 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 – 14 years</td>
<td>3 (38%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4 (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 – 19 years</td>
<td>1 (13%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 – 29 years</td>
<td>2 (23%)</td>
<td>1 (25%)</td>
<td>1 (33.3%)</td>
<td>4 (27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 or more years</td>
<td>1 (13%)</td>
<td>* (missing data on 1 teacher) (n=7)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (13.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational level</th>
<th>Broward County (n = 8)</th>
<th>Hillsborough County (n = 4)</th>
<th>Sarasota County (n = 3)</th>
<th>Total (N = 14)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>1 (13%)</td>
<td>3 (100%)</td>
<td>2 (67%)</td>
<td>6 (43%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>6 (74%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (33%)</td>
<td>7 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (specialist)</td>
<td>1 (13%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluation Methodology

In order to assess the two objectives, surveys of the HIPPY and non-HIPPY children’s parents and teachers were administered. Participation in the evaluation was voluntary and written consent from each child’s parent was required (see Appendix A).

The survey instruments used in this evaluation were used in the 1995-96 Florida HIPPYCorps Initiative evaluation and have been used in earlier evaluations of HIPPY as noted in studies by Baker and Piotrowski (Baker & Piotrowski, 1993 and 1996). To measure the children’s classroom adaptation, each child’s kindergarten teacher was asked to complete the Teacher Survey, an adapted version of the Child Classroom Adaptation Index (CCAI) developed by the NCJW Center for the Child (see Appendix B). In order to measure the parents’ confidence level in engaging in school-related activities, each child’s parent was asked to complete the Parent Interview, a revised version of a survey developed by the Center for Young Children and Families (see Appendices C, D, and E).

Interviews with parents and teachers were conducted in both individual and group settings. HIPPY Center staff were trained by the evaluator to administer the Parent Interview and answer questions regarding the Teacher Survey. For parents who were unable to attend a group meeting, HIPPY Center staff conducted face-to-face or telephone interviews. Each school principal was
briefed on the evaluation and provided with Teacher Surveys. Teachers completed the survey individually or in a group setting, as deemed most feasible by the school staff.

**Findings**

Evaluation findings for each of the two objectives are presented as follows: 1) a brief description of the significance of the objective to the HIPPYCorps Initiative and the children and their families served, 2) the targeted result of activities performed toward meeting the objective, 3) an analysis of the responses used to measures goal attainment, and 4) a summary of the findings.

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**Objective: Preparing Children for School**

**Standard:** 75% of children entering kindergarten will be adapted to the classroom

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**Significance of Objective**

Providing children with learning activities at home should enhance their ability to perform these same tasks in the classroom as well as strengthen their ability to more easily learn other skills. Structured learning activities in the home may provide the preparation needed to bring children to a similar level with peers who have the advantage of a more educationally stimulating home environment. At the same time, the children’s parent should be better able to assist their child in preparing for the activities the child will encounter in the classroom. It then follows that the HIPPY curriculum should prepare the pre-school children for school.

**Result**

The target result of preparing children for entering school is adaptability to the classroom, that is, starting school ready to learn.

**Analysis of Survey Responses**

**HIPPY children**

In regard to whether the children are prepared for school, 23 of the 26 HIPPY parents (88%) in all three counties responded yes to the question on the Parent Interview, “Do you think the HIPPY program has helped your child be more ready for school?” One HIPPY parent in Hillsborough County and one in Broward County responded they did not believe the HIPPY program helped; while one in Hillsborough County did not provide any response to this question.

Additionally, the kindergarten teacher’s responses to the HIPPY children’s preparation for school were also positive. Teacher responses, on a scale from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent), were provided on the following 12 questions regarding the children’s adaptability to school.

1. **Child’s enjoyment of books and reading:** Child is familiar with how to read a book (i.e., how to hold a book, turn the pages, etc.), picks up books to read to him/herself; appears attentive when teacher reads to class; spontaneously mentions name of specific books; asks for specific books.
2. **Child's listening and paying attention:** Child is attentive to teacher and other adults and children; pays attention/listens during group discussion or stories.

3. **Child's following directions:** Child is able to carry out the teacher's directions well; listens carefully when the teacher is giving instructions to the class.

4. **Child's task orientation:** Child exhibits patience and persists with tasks; has moderate concentration and is not easily distracted; can pace him/herself in working on learning tasks.

5. **Child's self-direction in learning:** Child knows how to approach academic tasks; is generally self-directed in approaching tasks; can work independently.

6. **Child's seeking and using assistance:** Child knows when to seek assistance; uses appropriate means to gain attention; make use of help.

7. **Child's curiosity:** Child is interested in testing his/her skills on new tasks and problems; asks questions about subjects being covered in school.

8. **Child's initiative:** Child is an active learner; seeks out new learning materials and situations; designs his/her own learning activities and projects.

9. **Child's general enjoyment of school work:** Child enjoys the activities and routines of school; child enjoys learning new things; child has said things that indicate he/she likes school.

10. **How motivated do you think this child was to learn this year?**

11. **How well do you think this child is doing in school this year?**

12. **How well do you think this child is going to do in school by the end of the academic year?**

Generally, the teachers in all three counties felt that the HIPPY children’s adaptability to school was above average with a mean score of 3.43 on their responses to the twelve questions (see Table 2). Teacher responses in Hillsborough County were the highest with a mean score of 3.97; Broward County teachers’ responses had a mean score of 3.27; and Sarasota County teachers’ responses had a mean score of 3.05.

On average among all of the sites, the HIPPY children’s general enjoyment of school work was ranked well above average by the teachers with a mean score of 3.84. Closely ranked at the well above average rating was the children’s enjoyment of books and reading, their listening and paying attention, and their following directions with mean scores of 3.71, 3.78, and 3.70 respectively. The only question that did not receive an above average rating, on average among all sites, was “How well do you think this child is doing in school this year?” This question had a mean score of 2.52 combining the individual ratings for all of the sites (see Table 2).
Table 2.
Teacher Responses On HIPPY Children’s Adaptability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Broward County (n = 10)</th>
<th>Hillsborough County (n = 9)</th>
<th>Sarasota County (n = 4)</th>
<th>Total for all HIPPY responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rating Range</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Rating Range</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 1</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>4.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 2</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 3</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>4-5 (n = 8)</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 4</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>4.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 5</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 6</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>3.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 7</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 8</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>3-5 (n = 8)</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 9</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 10</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>4-5 (n = 8)</td>
<td>4.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 11</td>
<td>3-5 (n = 9)</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>1-3 (n = 8)</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 12</td>
<td>1-3 (n = 7)</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>3.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL      | 3.27          | 3.97          | 3.05          | 3.43          |

Non-HIPPY children
In comparison, the kindergarten teachers provided responses to the same 12 questions on similar non-HIPPY children in their classroom. The teacher’s responses in regard to the non-HIPPY children’s adaptability to school were also positive; however, their general responses were lower than for the HIPPY children. On average among all of the sites, the teachers felt that the non-HIPPY children’s adaptability to school was slightly above average with a mean score of 3.09 (see Table 3).

On average among all of the sites, the non-HIPPY children’s enjoyment of books and reading received the highest ratings with a mean score of 3.71 (the same as for the HIPPY children). However, the average ratings among the sites for the children’s general enjoyment of schoolwork, although also ranked above average, was lower than for the HIPPY children (mean scores of 3.50 compared to 3.84, respectively). The responses to the other questions were rated, on average, at least above average, with the exception of the questions about how well the child is doing in school this year, the child’s curiosity, and the child’s initiative with mean scores of 1.71, 2.95, and 2.78, respectively (see Table 3).
Table 3.
Teacher Responses On non-HIPPY Children’s Adaptability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Broward County (n = 8)</th>
<th>Hillsborough County (n = 5)</th>
<th>Sarasota County (n = 4)</th>
<th>Total for all HIPPY responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rating Range</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Rating Range</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 1</td>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>2-5 (n = 4)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td># 2</td>
<td>2-4</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>2-5 (n = 4)</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 3</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>2-5 (n = 4)</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 4</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>2-5 (n = 4)</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 5</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>2-5 (n = 4)</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 6</td>
<td>2-4 (n = 7)</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 7</td>
<td>1-4 (n = 7)</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 8</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 9</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 10</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 11</td>
<td>1-2 (n = 3)</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># 12</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>3.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of the Findings
The greatest difference found among the teachers’ responses for the HIPPY children compared to the non-HIPPY children was in Hillsborough County (mean of 3.97 for HIPPY compared to 3.08 for non-HIPPY), indicating that the Hillsborough County teachers believe that the HIPPY children are generally more prepared for school. Sarasota County teachers also responded that the HIPPY children were more prepared for school than the non-HIPPY children, however, the difference was not as great (mean of 3.05 for HIPPY compared to 2.88 for non-HIPPY). The trend was opposite for Broward County. The teachers in Broward County responded that the non-HIPPY children were slightly more prepared, in general, than the HIPPY children (mean score of 3.31 for non-HIPPY compared to 3.27 for HIPPY). The differences on the teachers’ responses regarding the HIPPY children versus the non-HIPPY children’s adaptability to school were not statistically significant however, i.e., neither group was significantly more adaptable to school.

The analysis of the parents’ and teachers’ responses regarding the HIPPY children’s adaptability to the classroom upon entering kindergarten clearly indicates that the standard that 75% of the children will be adapted was met.
Objective: Developing Home-School Partnerships
Standard: 75% of parents will feel more confident engaging in school-related activities

Significance of Objective
When children’s parents and other family members support the child’s education and take an active role in collaborating with the school, the child tends to succeed to a much greater extent in school. At the same time, if the child’s overall home environment is supportive of learning, i.e. provides learning activities and materials needed to enhance knowledge, it is more likely that the child will succeed in school. Parents who show an interest in their child’s educational, emotional, and behavioral development often seek a partnership with the school, including participating in school activities, talking to teachers and other school staff about their child’s academic performance and behavior, and expressing concerns about their child’s education. In addition, parents who show an interest in their child’s schoolwork and who incorporate reading books in their home convey the importance they believe education plays in their children’s life.

Result
The target result of developing and strengthening partnerships between families and schools is increased interaction between parents and school staff.

Analysis of Survey Responses

In regard to whether home-school partnerships are developed between the children’s parents and their school, the 26 HIPPY children’s parents were asked to respond to the following questions:

1. Before participating in HIPPY, did you:
   (a) Know which schools, daycare centers, nurseries, etc. were in your neighborhood/area?
   (b) Know where you wanted your child to go to school?
   (c) Talk to teachers, principals, secretaries, staff about school or your child’s education?
   (d) Talk to other parents about your child’s education?
      If yes, how often? About what? Why/why not?
   (e) Participate in school activities (such as PTA meetings, concerts, plays, field trips, bake sales, coaching sports, etc.)?

2. Now that your child is in HIPPY, do you:
   (a) Know which schools, daycare centers, nurseries, etc. are in your neighborhood or area?
   (b) Talk to teachers, principals, secretaries, staff about school or your child’s education?
   (c) Talk to other parents about your child’s education?
   (d) Talk to HIPPY staff about your child’s education (other than during HIPPY lessons)?
   (e) Participate in school activities (such as PTA meetings, concerts, plays, field trips, bake sales, coaching sports, etc.)?
Twenty-one of the 26 HIPPY parents (81%) in Broward, Hillsborough, and Sarasota Counties responded yes to the question on the Parent Interview, “Do you know which schools, daycare centers, nurseries, etc. were in your neighborhood or area before HIPPY?” In comparison, responses to a similar question about their knowledge of schools in the area, but after HIPPY involvement, resulted in 24 of the 26 parents (92%) responding yes with two parents who did not respond at all to this particular question. In regard to the question prior to HIPPY involvement, 6 of the 6 HIPPY parents in Broward County (100%) responded yes, while two of these parents did not provide a response as to whether they knew which schools were in their neighborhood or area after their HIPPY involvement. In Hillsborough County, 8 of the 13 HIPPY parents in Hillsborough County (62%) responded positively about their knowledge of schools in the area prior to HIPPY involvement, 5 responded no. This response changed to 13 of the 13 parents (100%) responding yes after their HIPPY involvement. In Sarasota County, 7 of the 7 HIPPY parents (100%) responded yes about knowing schools, daycare centers, nurseries, etc. both prior to and after HIPPY involvement (see Table 4).

In regard to the question, “Do you know where you wanted your child to go to school prior to your HIPPY involvement?” 18 of the 26 HIPPY parents (69%) in all sites responded yes, 5 (19%) responded no, and 2 (12%) did not provide any response to the question. Five of the 6 HIPPY parents in Broward County (83%), 8 of the 13 in Hillsborough County (62%), and 5 of the 7 in Sarasota County (71%) responded yes. One HIPPY parent in Broward County, four in Hillsborough County, and 1 in Sarasota County responded they did not know where they wanted their child to go to school prior to their involvement in HIPPY. Two parents, one in Hillsborough County and one in Sarasota County did not respond to this question (see Table 4).

Thirteen of the 26 HIPPY parents (53%) in Broward, Hillsborough, and Sarasota Counties responded yes to the question on the Parent Interview, “Do you talk to teachers, principals, secretaries, staff about school or your child’s education before your HIPPY involvement?” In comparison, responses to the same question but after HIPPY involvement resulted in 20 of the 26 parents (77%) responding yes. In regard to this particular question prior to HIPPY involvement, 2 of the 6 HIPPY parents (33%) in Broward County, 7 of the 13 (54%) in Hillsborough County, and 4 of the 7 (57%) in Sarasota County responded positively. HIPPY parents who responded that they did not talk to school staff prior to their HIPPY involvement included: 3 of the 6 (50%) in Broward County, 6 of the 13 (46%) in Hillsborough County, and 3 of the 7 (43%) in Sarasota County. One HIPPY parent in Broward County did not provide a response to this particular question. The HIPPY parents’ responses changed to 5 of the 6 (83%) in Broward County, 10 of the 13 (77%) in Hillsborough County, and 7 of the 7 (100%) in Sarasota County responding yes after HIPPY involvement (see Table 4).

Ten of the 26 HIPPY parents (38%) in all sites responded yes to the question on the Parent Interview, “Do you talk to other parents about your child’s education prior to your HIPPY involvement?” In comparison, responses to the same question but after the parents were involved with HIPPY resulted in 16 of the 26 parents (62%) responded yes. In regard to this particular question prior to HIPPY involvement, 3 of the 6 HIPPY parents (50%) in Broward County, 6 of the 13 (46%) in Hillsborough County, and 1 of the 7 (14%) in Sarasota County responded positively. Sixteen parents responded that they did not talk with other parents prior to their involvement in HIPPY; 3 in Broward County, 7 in Hillsborough County, and 6 in Sarasota
County. Overall, the parents’ responses changed when asked this question in relation to after their HIPPY involvement. In Broward County the yes responses did not change; however, there were only 2 no responses and one parent did not provide any response. In Hillsborough County, 9 of the 13 parents (69%) responding yes after HIPPY involvement and in Sarasota County, 4 of the 7 HIPPY parents (57%) did (see Table 4).

Thirteen of 26 HIPPY parents (50%) in Broward, Hillsborough, and Sarasota Counties responded yes to the question on the Parent Interview, “Do you participate in school activities (such as PTA meetings, concerts, plays, field trips, bake sales, coaching sports, etc.) before your HIPPY involvement?” In comparison, responses to the same question but after HIPPY involvement resulted in 18 of 26 parents (69%) responding yes. In relation to this particular question prior to HIPPY involvement, 4 of the 6 HIPPY parents (67%) in Broward County, 6 of the 13 (46%) in Hillsborough County, and 3 of the 7 (43%) in Sarasota County responded positively. All other parents responded no to this question. The parents’ yes responses did not change in Broward County; however, one parent that previously answered no did not provide any response to the participating in school activities after HIPPY involvement. The parents’ responses did change to 9 of 13 parents (69%) responding yes after HIPPY involvement in Hillsborough County, and 5 of the 6 (83%) in Sarasota County. One parent in Sarasota County, and the one parent in Hillsborough County, did not respond to this question regarding their participation after HIPPY involvement (see Table 4).

Nineteen parents of 25 answered yes to the question, “Do you talk to HIPPY staff about your child’s education (other than during HIPPY lessons)?” One parent did not respond. Four of the 6 parents in Broward County (67%), 10 of the 13 parents in Hillsborough County (77%), and 5 of the 7 parents in Sarasota County (71%) responded yes that they have talked to HIPPY staff about their child’s education, other than during HIPPY lessons (see Table 4).

Table 4.
Parent Involvement Before and After Participation in the HIPPY Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey question</th>
<th>Broward County (n = 6)</th>
<th>Hillsborough Co. (n = 13)</th>
<th>Sarasota County (n = 7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-HIPPY</td>
<td>Post-HIPPY</td>
<td>Pre-HIPPY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know schools in area</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Know where wanted child to go to school | 5 | 1 | * | 8 | 4 | * | 5 | 1 *
| Talk to school staff             | 2 | 3 | * | 5 | 7 | 6 | 10 | 3 |
|                                  | 4 | 2 | * | 6 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 1 |
| Participate in school activities | 4 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 3 | 4 |
|                                  | 5 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |

* indicates that there were missing responses for this question.
In general after HIPPY involvement, parents felt more comfortable contacting others, including school staff and other parents, in relation to their children's education. In Hillsborough, the parents had a greater knowledge of the schools in the area, whereas in Broward County the responses did not indicate an increased knowledge. In Sarasota County there was no change in the parents' knowledge, as all of the parents were aware of school in the area prior to and after their HIPPY involvement. Overall, the parents reported increasing their participation in school activities after their involvement in HIPPY. The exception was in Broward County in which there was no change in the number of parents who indicated they participated before and after their HIPPY involvement. It was evident that parents also felt comfortable talking with HIPPY staff regarding their children's education.

Teacher's responses to the parents engaging in school related activities were varied. Teachers rated how often parents participated in school activities on a scale from 1 (never) to 3 (3 or more times) in the following areas:

1. conference with teacher
2. conference with principal
3. informal talk with teacher/principal
4. classroom "open house" or programs
5. observe classroom activities
6. volunteer for special activities, projects or trips
7. attend a program event (e.g. picnic or fair)

On average, 10 teacher responses in Broward County, 9 in Hillsborough County, and 4 in Sarasota County were obtained regarding HIPPY parent participation in relation to school activities.

It was reported that 23 HIPPY parents attended an average of more than 1 – 2 conferences with the teachers among all of the sites (mean score of responses was 2.04). In Broward County, it was reported that one parent never had a conference with the teacher, 7 had 1-2 conferences, and 2 had three or more conferences with the teacher. In Hillsborough County, the teachers responded that one parent never had a conference with the teacher, 5 had 1-2 conferences, and 3 parents had 3 or more conferences. In Sarasota County, one teacher responded she never met with the parent, while the other three parents met with the teacher 1-2 times.

Of the 23 teachers, only 19 responded regarding parent participation at conferences with the principal. On average, it was reported that parents attended the conferences with the principal less than 1-2 times (mean score of responses was 1.37). In Broward County, 8 teacher responses were obtained, 7 of which responded that the parent never met with the principal, while the one other parent was reported to have met with the principal 1-2 times. In Hillsborough County, 4 of the 7 teacher responses stated the parent never had a conference with the principal, 1 parents did conference with the principal 1-2 times, and 2 parents did 3 or more times. Two teachers did not
respond to this question in Hillsborough County. In Sarasota County, 3 of the 4 teacher responses reported that the principal had never had a conference with the parents, while one parent met with the principal 1-2 times.

Twenty-two of the 23 teachers rated parent participation at informal talks with them or the principal, on average, as occurring 1-2 times (mean score of responses was 2.00). In Broward County, it was reported that 3 parents never had informal talks with the school staff, 3 parents met for informal talks 1-2 times, and 3 parents had informal talks more than 3 times. In Hillsborough County, 3 teachers reported that the parents never talked informally with them or the principal, 2 parents did 1-2 times, and 4 parents did 3 or more times. In Sarasota County, 2 teachers responded they or the principal never informally talked with the parent, one parent had informal talks 1-2 times, and the one other parent talked informally with the teacher or principal three or more times.

Of the 19 teacher responses regarding parent participation at classroom "open house" or programs, on average parents attended these meetings less than 1-2 times (mean score of responses was 1.84). In Broward County, it was reported that one parent never attended an open house or classroom program, 6 parents attended 1-2 open houses or programs, and one other parent attended 3 or more times. In Hillsborough County, one teacher reported that the parent never attended an open house or classroom program, 3 parents did 1-2 times, and 2 parents did 3 or more times. In Sarasota County, two teachers responded the parent never attended an open house or classroom program while the other two parents attended 1-2 times.

Of the 20 teacher responses regarding parent participation observing classroom activities, on average parents observed in the classroom less than 1-2 times (mean score of responses was 1.40). In Broward County, it was reported that 7 parents never observed classroom activities, while 2 parents did 1-2 times. In Hillsborough County, four teachers reported that the parent never observed in the classroom and 3 parents did 1-2 times. In Sarasota County, two teachers responded the parent never observed in the classroom, one parent observed 1-2 times, and the one other parent observed in the classroom three or more times.

Of the 20 teacher responses regarding parent participation volunteering for special activities, on average parents volunteered less than 1-2 times (mean score of responses was 1.40). In Broward County, it was reported that 7 parents never volunteered for special activities, while two parents volunteered 1-2 times. In Hillsborough County, the teachers responded that four parents never volunteered for special activities and 3 parents did 1-2 times. In Sarasota County, it was reported that two parents never volunteered for special activities, one volunteered 1-2 times, and the one other parent volunteered 3 or more times.

Of the 20 teachers who responded regarding parent participation attending program events, on average parents attended less than 1-2 times (mean score of responses was 1.45). In Broward County, it was reported that 7 parents never attended program events, while two parents attended 1-2 times. In Hillsborough County, three teachers reported that the parent never attended program events and 4 parents did 1-2 times. In Sarasota County, two teachers responded the parent never attended program events, one parent attended 1-2 times, and the one other parent attended 3 or more times.
In general, the majority of HIPPY parents have been involved in some school related activities. Conferences and informal talks with the teacher are more common than conversations with the principal and visits in the classroom. HIPPY parents have attended open houses or classroom activities and program events, as indicated by the teacher responses.

**Non-HIPPY children**

Seventeen teacher responses on non-HIPPY children were also obtained on the seven questions pertaining to parent participation.

In regard to parent conferences with teachers for the non-HIPPY parents, all 17 responses were obtained with an average of these conferences occurring at least 1-2 times (mean score of responses was 2.18). Six parents in Broward County were reported to have 1-2 conferences with the teacher, while 2 parents had three or more. In Hillsborough County, it was reported that one parent never met with the teacher, 2 had 1-2 times, and 2 met with the teacher three or more times. In Sarasota County, one teacher responded that a parent never met with her, while 2 parents met with the teacher 1-2 times, and one other parent met 3 or more times.

Fourteen of the 17 teacher responses were obtained regarding parent conferences with the principal indicating that parents met less than 1-2 times (mean score of responses was 1.57). Four parents were reported to have never met with the principal in Broward County, while 2 met with the principal 1-2 times. In Hillsborough County, it was responded that 2 parents never met with the principal and 2 met with the principal three or more times. In Sarasota County, teachers reported that 3 parents never met with the principal, while one parent did 3 or more times.

All 17 teacher responses were obtained regarding parent informal talks with the teacher or principal, on average meeting at least 1-2 times (mean score of responses was 2.06). In Broward County, 7 of the 8 parents were reported to have had informal talks 1-2 times, while the one other parent talked informally with the teacher or principal 3 or more times. In Hillsborough County, it was reported that 2 parents never informally talked with school staff, yet the 3 other parents had informal talks three or more times. In Sarasota County, teachers responded that 2 parents never talked with school staff informally, one parent did 1-2 times, and one other parent did 3 or more times.

Sixteen of the 17 teacher responses were obtained regarding parent attendance at open houses or classroom activities, with a general response of attendance less than 1-2 times (mean score of responses was 1.75). Four parents in Broward County were reported to have never attended an open house/classroom activities, while 4 parents did 1-2 times. In Hillsborough County, it was reported that one parent never attended open house/classroom activities, 2 parents did 1-2 times, and 2 parents did three or more times. In Sarasota County, one teacher responded that one parent never attended open house/classroom activities, while 3 parents attended 1-2 times.

Sixteen of the 17 teacher responses were obtained regarding parent observation in the classroom, on average observing less than 1-2 times (mean score of responses was 1.75). In Broward County, it was reported that 3 parents never observed in the classroom, 2 did 1-2 times, and 2 parents did three or more times. Two parents in Hillsborough County were reported to never
observe in the classroom, while 1 parent did 1-2 times, and 2 parents did three or more times. In Sarasota County, teachers responded that 3 parents never observed in the classroom and one other parent did 1-2 times.

In regard to parents volunteering for special activities, 16 of 17 teacher responses were obtained with an average of parents volunteering less than 1-2 times (mean score of responses was 1.63). In Broward County, it was reported that 4 parents never volunteered, while 3 volunteered 1-2 times. Two parents in Hillsborough County were reported to have never volunteered, one volunteered 1-2 times, and 2 volunteered three or more times. In Sarasota County, it was reported that 3 parents never volunteered, while one other parent volunteered three or more times.

Sixteen of the 17 teacher responses were obtained regarding parent participation in program events, on average attending less than 1-2 times (mean score of responses was 1.50). Five of the parents in Broward County never participated in program events, while 2 participated 1-2 times. In Hillsborough County, it was reported that 2 parents never participated in program events, 1 participated 1-2 times, and 2 parents participated three or more times. In Sarasota County, three parents were reported to have never participated in program events, while one other parent participated 1-2 times.

In general, the non-HIPPY parents were rated higher than the HIPPY parents in all areas of parent participation except attending open houses or classroom activities (see Table 5).

**Table 5.**
**Mean Score of Teacher Responses on Participation for HIPPY and non-HIPPY Parents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>HIPPY Parents</th>
<th>Non-HIPPY Parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher conference</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal conference</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal talks with teacher or principal</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open house or classroom activity</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observe in the classroom</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer for special events</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend program events</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary of the Findings**
Overall, the HIPPY parents felt more confident engaging in school-related activities after their involvement with HIPPY than prior to their participation in the program. They also were
reported by teachers to participate, on average, 1-2 times with school-related activities regarding their child. Although non-HIPPY parents were reported to have generally had more contacts with the school staff in activities related to their child, the difference was not statistically significant, i.e., the two groups participated about the same amount in school-related activities.

The analysis of the development of home-school partnerships between parents and school personnel indicates that the standard that 75% of the parents feel more confident engaging in school-related activities was met, but only barely.

**Conclusion**

The results of this evaluation indicate that the HIPPYCorps Initiative prepared children and their parents for positive learning experiences. The HIPPY program provided children and parents with structured activities that enabled them to both adapt more readily to the child’s transition into kindergarten and to promote establishing relationships between the family and the school.

The HIPPY children’s classroom adaptability was rated by both parents and teachers as above average. HIPPY provided the children with the educational and social tools that enhanced their learning in the classroom. Many of the parents commented that the HIPPY program was the reason for their child’s ability to perform better than average in their school activities, particularly in reading. HIPPY parents also noted that they have seen differences in their child’s behavior, which was also noted in some of the teacher’s comments. The significant amount of books the families reported overall that they kept in the house indicated that the HIPPY parents understand the importance of this material in the development of their child.

Although HIPPY parents surveyed were generally not more active than non-HIPPY parents in their child’s schooling, the parents and teachers indicated that the HIPPY parents were developing partnerships with the school. Parents expressed that they felt comfortable talking with the school staff and bringing up concerns that may arise about their child. Almost every parent responded that they would be more active with their child’s school if they had more time and their schedules matched that of the school activities.

According to the results of the parent and teacher surveys, the two objectives regarding the child’s preparation for school and the home-school partnerships were met. It should be noted that these findings are based on a small sample and cannot be generalized to the entire HIPPY population of families in Florida. However, the results of this evaluation for the 1996-97 program year and the results of the 1995-96 program year evaluation in which the same two objectives were met, clearly indicate that the HIPPY program is worthwhile and provides children and their families with needed resources and important learning experiences.
Bibliography
