



HIPPYUSA®

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters

Frequently Asked Questions



Q: How many children need to be enrolled the first year and each subsequent year?

A: A model program enrolls 60 the first year and 60 new children each year. By year three, a program that will deliver all three age (3, 4 and 5) curriculums could have up to 180 children. The minimum allowable annual enrollment is 45 children. In that case, a program with Ages 3, 4 and 5 year olds enrolled would have at least 135 children in year three and thereafter. These guidelines have been established because studies have shown that smaller programs have decreased viability; the per child cost is excessive, and, in general, they are not as effective.

Q: How many years can a home visitor stay with a HIPPY program?

A: It is strongly recommended that home visitors are employed in that capacity no longer than three years. The model calls for a home visitor to enter the program with a child the same age as the cohort being served. The employment of new home visitors every year helps to ensure a fresh and energized perspective; eliminate staff “burn-out”; and fosters the economic development of the community.

Q: Do programs ever make changes to the model to adapt to the local environment?

A: The HIPPY model can be quite flexible in cases where certain adaptations are deemed necessary due to local conditions. However, there are core elements that are essential to effective programming that must be included. HIPPY USA has developed an *Adaptations* document that reflects the most common changes that are implemented and that still allow for efficacious service delivery. The document provides guidelines for reporting and implementing. Other options should be explored with the assigned national trainer.

Q: Is there a need to role play each week? Is there a need to role play all the activities?

A: Yes. Role play has a dual purpose. It is the method of instruction, but it is also the only way to really check for full comprehension. It is essential to make sure that the home visitors fully comprehend the lessons before they work with the parents; and it is essential to confirm that the parents fully understand how to make the lesson meaningful for their child. And, the only way to be sure of these aspects is by completely role playing all the activities in the weekly packet.

Q: Do programs have to start with Age 3?

A: It is recommended that programs implement Age 3, although it is possible to start with the Age 4. Beginning implementation with Age 3 is desirable for several reasons, including the

importance of a rich educational environment for children as early as possible; a longer length of time to prepare children for success in school and in life; the younger the age of the child, the easier it is to engage parents in educational activities involving their child; and the increased potential for developing good habits (both children and parents).

Q: Do programs have to provide the Age 5 curriculum?

A: Programs are required to offer the Age 5 curriculum to all parents. Participation in the Age 5 curriculum subtly suggests and guides parents to the conclusion that they are, and still should be, actively involved in their children's education. Enrollment in the Age 5 curriculum increases the likelihood of greater and longer-term gains for the children. Children must have completed Age 4 in order to receive the Age 5 curriculum.

Q: Are the storybooks ever collected back from the families and re-used with other children?

A: No. The storybooks become the property of the children. The parents are requested to read and re-read the books to the HIPPY child as many times as the child desires. For some families, HIPPY introduces literacy into the home. In the event a family drops out before the end of the school year, the storybooks already distributed may be that child's only path to reading for pleasure.

Q: What roles can a volunteer organization play?

A: Volunteer organizations, such as the National Council of Jewish Women, Junior League and Kiwanis, support HIPPY programs in a variety of ways, depending on local needs and interests. Volunteers often become involved with HIPPY during the initial stages of implementation, frequently serving as catalysts. In existing programs, volunteers often assist with field trips, groups meetings and graduation ceremonies. Volunteers can also help make invaluable program connections: they serve on advisory committees and assist with advocacy, fund raising and public relations.

Q: What does HIPPY cost?

A: Costs are approximately \$1,400 - \$1,800 per child, per year. However, the program is free to all who wish to enroll. This is based on an average program where 60 new children are added per year, with a full time coordinator and one part time home visitor for each 10 – 15 children. The budget includes staff salaries (the largest and most variable component); curriculum and materials; fees to HIPPY USA; and other direct costs.



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