

Kailua-Kona HIPPY Program Findings from the 2004-05 AmeriCorps Evaluation

Researchers at the University of South Florida (USF) conducted a multi-site evaluation for the first year of the HIPPY AmeriCorps Initiative to document the influence of the HIPPY program on the development of children's receptive vocabulary skills and parents' skills and involvement in their children's learning.

Children's Receptive Vocabulary Development

Sixteen children from the Kailua-Kona HIPPY program received a developmental screening during Fall 2004 and Spring 2005 to determine their progress in acquiring reading-related skills. All 16 children were served by an AmeriCorps home visitor, and were enrolled in the HIPPY 4 curriculum.

- None of the children had very weak reading-related skills at either the first or second screening.
- More than half of the children were assessed as having very strong skills at the first screening, and this percentage increased to over three-fourths at the second screening.

HIPPY Parental Involvement in Their Children's Learning

A retrospective parent survey was administered to 16 first-time HIPPY parents who were being served by a HIPPY AmeriCorps home visitor.

- Parents reported increases in their level of involvement with their children after completing an average of 25 weeks of the HIPPY program.
- After participating in the HIPPY program, parents reported they were more involved with helping their children prepare for school by frequently reading to them, teaching them letters, words, and numbers, and participating with them doing arts and crafts and playing board games.
- After participating in the HIPPY program, parents reported they increased their knowledge of early childhood development, improved the quality of their parent-child interactions, became more proficient in their teaching skills, and engaged more frequently in supportive parenting behaviors.