



The Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) :History



HIPPY International

The first experimental Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) program was set up by a team headed by Professor Avima Lombard of the Institute for Innovation at the School of Education of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Initiated in 1969 as a research project, it was designed to examine the feasibility and effectiveness of home-based education intervention involving mothers and their preschool children from educationally disadvantaged sectors of the society. HIPPY is founded on the theory that home instruction could effectively improve learning patterns, a theory based on the belief in the power of home socialization patterns and parents as primary educators.

The project passed from its research phase into an operational phase on a country-wide scale in 1975 when the Israel Ministry of Education and Culture, impressed with the results of the pilot project, sponsored HIPPY within the frame work of the national education welfare program, aimed at localities with high proportions of educationally disadvantaged children. Over the past year, HIPPY programs in Israel have served close to 4,000 children.

HIPPY currently operates in the United States, Germany, Austria, South Africa, Canada, El Salvador, Italy, Australia and New Zealand, with some variation to suit local conditions, but with sufficient common bonds to facilitate strong networking links and sharing of materials, evaluation and experience.

In New Zealand and Australia the name has since been amended to Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters as it was felt that it more appropriately reflects the interactive nature of the program.

International conferences are held each year and are attended by representatives from each nation's program. The conference is hosted by a different country every year, more recently by Canada in 2007, Florida, USA in 2008 and negotiations are underway to hold the conference in Australia in 2009.

HIPPY in Australia

The Brotherhood of St Laurence holds the licence with HIPPY international to run the program in Australia. In turn the Brotherhood of St Laurence contracts with other not-for-profit organisations based in different communities to run their own HIPPY projects, with HIPPY Australia providing program materials, training, organisational support, networking and, where possible, funding support.

The first HIPPY project in Australia began in 1998 within the City of Yarra, auspiced by the Brotherhood of St Laurence. Twenty families were enrolled, with three home Tutors employed to work with families in their homes. Growing slowly but steadily, HIPPY currently operates in three states around Australia helping over 400 families per year.

During the 2007 Australian Federal Election campaign the Labor party pledged \$32.5 million to roll out HIPPY into up to 50 sites nationally over the next five years, including funding for existing sites. With their victory in November 2007, HIPPY now has a solid basis for expansion.

Additional sources of funding from the corporate sector, Philanthropic bodies, and other state governments is contributing to the development of the program and will continue to be sought as demand from communities continues to outgrow available funding.