

TUTOR EDITION!

What is a HIPPY home tutor?

A HIPPY home tutor conducts home visits to parents and runs parent groups to deliver the HIPPY materials. In most cases tutors are recruited from parents who are already participating in the program with their own child.

Tutors are chosen from the local community because they understand what it is to be part of that community.

Tutors are employed by the partner agencies delivering HIPPY in each community. They are provided with HIPPY Australia tutor training as they commence employment, which is followed by weekly training on the HIPPY materials with the site Coordinator.

Home tutors are able to relate to the participating families, and therefore families are likely to be more comfortable

with them coming into their homes.

Home tutors are often from the same peer group and/or culture as the families they work with.

Tutors become role models for the parents, and are positive

images in the community. Parents look at the tutors and think, 'If they can do this, so can I'.

The role of the home tutor is integral to a successful program.

In this newsletter we aim to acknowledge the wonderful work done by HIPPY home tutors.



Tutors role-play the activities during tutor training at HIPPY Fitzroy

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Home tutors encourage and support parents

Tutors play an important role in delivering the HIPPY activities to parents, however their role and value does not end there.

HIPPY home tutors encourage and support parents to create a rich learning environment for their children.

Tutors role play the HIPPY activities with parents and discuss ways to support their child's learning. HIPPY home tutors are a resource for parents.

HIPPY Australia would like to acknowledge the coordinators and tutors who have contributed to this edition of the HIPPY newsletter. Thank you for sharing your stories with us!

Tutors talk with parents about their HIPPY experience, and give them an opportunity to express their feelings concerns and their successes as a teacher.

When tutors give parents labeled praise they give them the encouragement they need to continue. HIPPY home tutors are a support.

Tutors prepare for each visit and try to arrive on time to show the parent that they value the parents role and

their own. Tutors model how to set up regular routines with their children. HIPPY home tutors are role models.

Tutors complete administration tasks, seek guidance from the site coordinator, support their fellow tutors and take an active role as part of the group HIPPY home tutors are team members. HIPPY Australia appreciates the hard work done by tutors in each community. Their role is important. It is empowering. It is valuable and it is valued.





Rockingham rocks!

Nicola McKenzie conducted the three day training sessions for the home tutors and we all visited each WA HIPPY site. This provided insight to the different communities for the home tutors.

At HIPPY Rockingham the home tutors have settled into their role with confidence and vitality. They are forming a strong sense of team work. Communication is open and sharing ideas during weekly tutor training is the norm. Role plays are fun!

Families have welcomed the tutors to their homes and are enthusiastic about the activities. There was some slight hesitation about role-play at first for some parents, but now they are more relaxed with the process.



'The HIPPY home tutor training with Nicola and all our HIPPY WA crew was great, I feel I have learnt so much in these early weeks. The HIPPY Program has really opened my eyes and ignited a passion for learning (and teaching) both as a mother and as a trainer.

The activities in the weekly session are engaging and manageable and clearly explained. I am finding that these topics are very easily extended to everyday situations when lots of learning is taking place through simple observations and discussions. The best bit is my child is unaware that she is being taught because she is enjoying herself so much.'

Jo Bennett, HIPPY Rockingham Home Tutor

Tutor Training is provided for all new home tutors before the commencement of home visits each year.

Initial training is designed to be a fun learning experience and includes training on the history of HIPPY, the HIPPY model, roles and duties of tutors, code of ethics, curriculum, role-play, generalisation, home visits and parent groups.

The Coordinator and home tutors then meet together each week for weekly ongoing tutor training.

During weekly meetings they role-play the weeks activities, discuss the aim of activities, the skills required by parent and child, difficulties which may be encountered, issues and problems that arise during the week, brainstorm solutions and plan parent groups.

In addition to HIPPY activity training, they also have enrichment sessions on particular topics relating to child development and supporting adult learners.

Sheffield finds the common thread

Lou arrived in Sheffield as planned for home tutor training on Thursday 2nd and Friday 3rd July. Tutors found this an immensely enjoyable event and all experienced a steep learning curve surrounded by a great deal of laughter.

The common thread of comment between the Co-ordinator and two home tutors after the event was that we wished all learning could be surrounded by so much play. The role-play element seems to stimulate humour in even the dourest moments.

Catering was taken care of by the Highlander Restaurant, Scottish Scone Shop on Main Street, Sheffield. Their scones for morning tea and hot soup for lunch were just delightful. Valda, the Co-ordinator, filled up a basket with fruit to keep energy up in the comfortable learning space.



Kelley (on the left) and Lara (on the right), HIPPY Sheffield Home Tutors



Role play is a little bit like acting. When two people do a role play exercise they are each taking on a particular role. This means that each person is able to feel and experience the exercise from a different perspective.

In HIPPY, role play is the method of instruction used by coordinators when training home tutors and by home tutors when working with parents.



When home tutors role play HIPPY activities with their coordinator they take turns to take on the role of parent or child. And when home tutors role play HIPPY activities with parents they take turns to take on the role of parent or child.

Through role play coordinators, tutors and parents have many opportunities to give and receive positive feedback when they practice the 3 Cs:

Confirm Complete Correct

HIPPY Windale home tutors give us their thoughts on role-play

"I believe that role play is a vital part of the HIPPY program. It is a great way for parents to appreciate their child's development and the many different ways that our kids can learn. Role play builds confidence and helps us understand the structure of each activity. Doing role play keeps us alert for any errors and allows us the opportunity to plan for or tweak the program, so our HIPPY kids get the most out of it.

At first the idea of role play was confronting. I thought if I am reluctant to do this, how will I help other Mums feel comfortable doing role play? Looking back I realize that I shouldn't have worried as our HIPPY Mums have been great. Role play really gets you thinking in a different way and often some interesting conversations come about. Role play can be fun and should make parents feel empowered."

Julie, HIPPY Windale Home Tutor

"I find if I let the parents role-play the lead and I act as the child, we have a laugh - answering incorrectly makes the process more relaxed. My HIPPY child, Thomas is 'testing' me in peculiar places now about shapes and counting. We were going up a ramp at the local shopping centre recently and there were hundreds of non-slip circles on the ramp. Thomas stopped in the middle of the ramp to say "Mum, what shapes are they Mum?" When I got it correct he told me "good" and then began to get me to count the circles with him – meanwhile there were several people with trolleys waiting to get passed. Thankfully they were very understanding."

Donna, HIPPY Windale Home Tutor



Home Visits are one of the essential features of HIPPY. The delivery of HIPPY materials is carried out through alternating parent groups (group delivery) and home visits (individual delivery) fortnightly by the home tutors.

Across Australian HIPPY programs home visits happen in all sorts of different locations, including homes in rural, city, suburban and remote communities.

Home visits provide many benefits because:

- The potential for input from parents in their own home is tremendous.
- It is possible to adjust the pace of learning to each parent's level of ability. E.g. parents with English as a second language, or with reading difficulties.
- It is possible to identify and deal with specific problems as they arise.
- Parents can be encouraged, through support and guidance, to keep going in a new and somewhat demanding undertaking.
- Parents often find it easier to stay at home than go out for appointments. Although it is always the aim of the tutor to have the parent attend the parent groups, they are able to continue with the program until this is able to happen.



HIPPY
Home visits



Jane Russell is a home tutor at HIPPY Colac. Below is a case study she completed on home visiting.

GOALS: 1) The mother's goals are around improving this child's behaviour, school readiness and daily organisation.
2) As Tutor my goal was to support and guide her in these areas when delivering the HIPPY program.

1) Engaging the Family

Initially the mother expressed doubt that her child's behaviour could improve and was inclined to believe "he can't help it" because she believed that he had Aspergers Syndrome. He had not been assessed for this, however there was a family history of Autism. The child's behaviour was preventing the mother from being able to hear, listen and role play the activities during home visits. I felt I had to earn her trust in my ability to address her concerns which happened slowly with each small positive change and once trust was gained the mother was very keen and willing.

The functioning of the household was extremely disorganised so fitting HIPPY into daily life seemed impossible for the mother. HIPPY activities, shapes and other materials were always getting lost. We spent the first 20 minutes of visits finding it all before we could start which was reducing the quality of the visits. The mother's strength was her ability to implement the strategies offered to manage all her concerns and being able to feedback effectively the strengths and weaknesses of those strategies and make adjustments.

The child is very energetic with a great imagination and was quick to realise that good attention from mum was nicer than negative attention. The child's willingness to spend positive time with his mum, adapting to the changes, and his enthusiasm and energy when channelled positively, was a real strength for both mother and child participating in HIPPY successfully. After the initial hurdles and adapting of her attitude towards her child's ability, the mother and child enjoyed the program as they created a positive relationship together.

2) How the program went

Although initially reluctant, through role playing my response to the child's behaviour she quickly adapted the same method which reduced her stress over his behaviour. Rather than battle over every noise and distraction, the mother ignored most of the behaviour she didn't like and continued with the activity, giving terrific specific praise when he participated in a positive manner. The focus was around no attention for negative behaviour, only for positive behaviour. Some of his behaviour was normal, age appropriate behaviour and the mother was willing and able to recognise this and reassess her expectations of good behaviour which was really beneficial for their parent/child relationship.

The three C's (confirm, complete, correct) theory was very effective in managing the child's behaviour. The mother implemented this theory into their everyday life with great success.

In regard to the concerns around organisation the mother had expressed, we looked at what could be achieved at night after children were asleep to make the mother's mornings less chaotic and reduce her stress. We developed a written plan and a morning routine to do each school day and looked at areas where the children could be independent in areas that were age appropriate.

3) Outcomes

Being involved in HIPPY has made many positive changes for the parent/child relationship and the entire family unit. It is apparent now that the child doesn't have Aspergers Syndrome as his behaviour normalised through the shift in the mother's focus on his behaviour and how she responds to it. The mother has instilled a sense of worth and pride in the child by doing the activities in such a positive manner. It is a real credit to her. The behaviour management and effective organisation of the household ties into the child's school readiness as without the mother implementing these positive changes the HIPPY activities would have been very difficult to achieve.

Encouraging the child to become more independent in the mornings is also an effective tool for school readiness. The child is much calmer and will happily be nearby doing something without interrupting or seeking out his mum's attention. The mother decided to keep the morning and night routine going on the weekend as it helped her remember on a school night and she found herself more relaxed on the weekend. This showed great self awareness and initiative, and an increase in her confidence.

The child seems to take pride in showing me things he has done through the week and uses appropriate manners when I arrive and leave. The mother feels confident that HIPPY has helped him with school readiness, not only from a curriculum perspective but also his social and emotional growth which he gained through doing HIPPY. It has enabled him to relate to his teacher and peers positively.

I have really enjoyed working with this family, watching the positive changes take place as the mother became more confident and seeing the child respond and make such a delightful transformation in his behaviour as the parent/child relationship formed, grew and strengthened.





Elizabeth Grove's first parent group

On the 18th June 2009 HIPPY Elizabeth Grove commenced the group element of the program. Initially we had 10 parents attend the program on the day, out of a possible 25 that expressed they would be able to attend fortnightly group sessions. We had 3 Burundian families attend this session, with one of the home tutors playing an important role in translating for the coordinator. The program had 15 children access the crèche on the day with two volunteers running the crèche.

The group session was held at Saint Mary Magdalene's Primary school in Elizabeth Grove. Overall the group was a success with parents appearing to be relaxed and enjoying the day. The Coordinator was extremely happy with how the families interacted with each other and were able to participate in the role plays without feeling self-conscious.



Parents at a parent group at HIPPY Fitzroy, Victoria learn how to make play dough

Parent groups and community events

In addition to parent groups some of our sites also organise for HIPPY families to attend community events.

In Burnie, Tasmania 'Kids n Fun n Music n Literacy' with Mary Brake was held in conjunction with Simultaneous Story time. The HIPPY Burnie coordinator and tutors organised a community bus to transport some families to the event.

Coordinator Laura Strofheldt said 'We had masks and a game to give away and the book "Pete the Sheep" was raffled after reading. We then went into town for a sausage sizzle and the Mary Brake show.'



Parent groups are an important part of HIPPY. They offer the chance for parents to come together to role play HIPPY in a group setting and provide opportunities for parents to meet and get to know other parents in their local community.

This also allows parents to meet with the coordinator on a regular basis and talk with them about the program.

Parent groups are a time when parents can participate in enrichment activities that will support them in their role as their child's parent and teacher. Coming together for these groups mean a time when HIPPY children and their younger siblings can play and learn together.

After a parent group tutors discuss and reflect on the meeting with the Coordinator and look at any adaptations that might be made for the next one.



Parents doing an enrichment activity during a parent group at HIPPY Smithton, Tasmania.



www.hippyaustralia.org.au

Address:
The mezzanine floor
145 Smith Street,
Fitzroy, Victoria 3065
phone: (03) 9445 2406
email:
hippyaustralia@bsl.org.au

About HIPPY Australia

The Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) is a home-based parenting and early childhood enrichment program targeting families with young children. It supports parents who may not feel confident to prepare their children for a successful early school experience.

HIPPY builds upon parental strengths and empowers parents to take an active role in their children's education, development and overall well-being. For some parents, it also offers a supported pathway to employment and local community leadership.

HIPPY helps to develop stronger and more confident families, with an increased capacity to make the most of opportunities provided by mainstream education.

HIPPY Australia would like to thank all of its funding bodies and individuals for their support. We couldn't do it without you.



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Eseta's Story (Home tutor from HIPPY Claymore)

Those of you who know me as a HIPPY Tutor may describe me as happy and glowing, but I would like to share with you something that happened to me on the 23rd September 2008.

My family woke up like any other day. Later I left my baby at home with my parents while I went to my older son's school assembly and shopping. While shopping I received a call from my sister, she said she was going the hospital with my baby. I started thinking "is my baby alright? What could have happened to him because he was happy in the morning when I fed him and put him down for a sleep". I had no idea why he would need to go to the hospital. I wished that I was with him and wished that my car could fly to the hospital.

When I arrived at the hospital the nurse stopped me at the entrance and asked me to sit down I said "no, no I just want to see my baby". A counsellor who was already waiting for me came over and told me "I'm really sorry but your baby didn't make it, we have tried to revive him, he's gone". I went into shock and just stared at the wall and couldn't speak to anyone for half an hour. The counselor then asked me if I wanted to see my baby. I went in and lifted him up and knew he was gone, I was thinking if there was anything I could do to revive him so he could have another breath for me. I just looked at him and he looked like he was smiling back at me.

My family came in to hold the baby and my dad sat me down and said "it must be the time that God wanted the baby with him, there is nothing we can do about it". My mother told me later that she had found the baby not breathing in his cot, they rang the ambulance and tried everything but could not revive him.

Since then I had been devastated by the loss of my baby and I would visit his grave everyday. I didn't want to go outside the house socialising with people. I would just stay inside the house or inside my son's room. Sometimes I would walk into his room and say something as if he was still there. I started to suffer high blood pressure and my doctor suggested I cut down my visiting time with the baby as I never had any problems with blood pressure before he died.

A few months later I found a flyer at my son's school talking about HIPPY and I thought I would give it a go and ring up, but when I got home I changed my mind. A month after that on the way back from my son's school I saw a lot of cars parked in the Neighbourhood Centre, I thought "oh I better go and see what is going on there" I walked in and saw a lot of parents and children. I sat down and then Julie, the Coordinator walked towards me to introduce herself and tell me about the program. I said I might be interested in being a tutor and she gave me an application form. I went home and filled

the application in straight away and then typed up a covering letter and dropped it in to her office the next day. Julie rang me to come in for an interview. At the interview she said "we will ring you on Monday" but she rang me straight away that afternoon to tell me I had the job!

Since becoming a HIPPY Home Tutor, it has saved my life, it makes me feel like I am doing something important helping other families, not just sitting down and thinking about my baby. The job keeps my mind busy and is making me very happy visiting families and helping them. It is what I needed because I will never forget my baby or stop hurting but I have to make sure I am okay for my other children. Working for HIPPY has helped me do this.

Coordinator's comments: *For the first few weeks Eseta would constantly say "thank you Julie", "thank you for giving me this opportunity Julie" every time I saw her. I didn't know what having this position meant to Eseta. We simply chose who we thought would be good in the position.*

Eseta is the most sweet, caring and organised Tutor HIPPY could ask for and I would like to say, 'No, Thank You Eseta!'

Eseta wanted to tell her story so other mothers in her position would know there is a light at the end of the tunnel and if she can do it they can do it too.

