Challenging Disadvantage: The Social Outcomes of an Early Educational Intervention Within the Family

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CHALLENGING DISADVANTAGE: THE SOCIAL OUTCOMES OF AN EARLY EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION WITHIN THE FAMILY

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STUDENT DECLARATION

"I, Jennifer Green, declare that the thesis entitled "Challenging disadvantage: The social outcomes of an early educational intervention within the family" is no more than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, figures, appendices and references. This thesis contains no material which has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work."

Jennifer Green, January 2008

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Abstract

Recent decades have seen increasing empirical investigation of the value of early educational intervention in challenging the inhibiting developmental effects of socio-economic and educational disadvantage. A range of interventions involving small children and their families have been the focus of such research. The present research was based upon an evaluation of the implementation by Glastonbury Child and Family Services, a major family support agency in the regional centre of Geelong in Victoria, of the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters program, now known in New Zealand and Australia as the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY). When the two-year version of HIPPY was introduced to Australia in 1998, with newly arrived immigrant in inner Melbourne, it was formally evaluated to be successful with that population. Soon after, in 1999, it was offered for the first time to Australian-born, transgenerationally disadvantaged families of anglo-celtic origin, in Geelong. This study has focused on the third implementation in Geelong, once the program had been settled in with this new community. Two main lines of inquiry were pursued. The first concerned whether the program operated as planned within this particular context and the second was the examination of program outcomes. The focus on program outcomes went beyond the expected cognitive or learning readiness gains for children to explore the socio-emotional developmental domain of learning readiness. Socio-emotional benefits to parents and Home Tutors were also explored. Complementary qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used with program participants at three points in time, once during the first year of the program, once during its second year, and once during the year after its conclusion. Each stage of data collection involved indepth interviews with family participants and all staff of the program. Formal psychological assessments of aspects of the developmental status of children were conducted at each stage. A strong attempt was made to find a matched control or comparison group, but logistical and methodological problems made this very difficult, such that the comparison group secured was somewhat less disadvantaged than the HIPPY group. Nevertheless, the study found that the HIPPY children kept pace in terms of learning readiness, and demonstrated over time significantly greater gains in socio-emotional development than the

comparison group. Parents and staff were also found to benefit socio-emotionally from their participation in the Program. The indepth qualitative interview data revealed changes to the quality of the parent-child relationship, as a function of the early intervention, with parents reporting feeling closer to the child and an enhanced security of attachment from the child to the parent within day-to-day interactions. The study found that HIPPY was directed in general accordance with the standard model of delivery, but with several areas of adaptation in response to the needs of the particular population of families. The child's enthusiasm for the program and the willingness of HIPPY staff to maintain a flexible approach to implementation were found to be the most facilitative factors contributing to the Program's success. The information produced was rich and allowed for the exploration of how participation in the program may have led to the outcomes found. This line of inquiry raised the idea that improvements in the quality of the parent-child relationship may have mediated the positive socio-emotional outcomes found. The findings also suggested the value of involving the interaction of the parent and the child in the intervention designed to challenge disadvantage by changing developmental trajectories.

Prologue

The principal focus of the research reported and discussed in this thesis is the socio-emotional developmental outcomes and the process of implementation of the early childhood educational intervention known as the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY).

The following summary outlines the progress of the thesis in terms of the sequencing of the chapters presented by the thesis.

The thesis begins, in Chapter 1, with commentary upon theoretical underpinnings of the field of early childhood intervention, drawing on the works of Piaget (1952), Vygotsky (1962), Bowlby (1973) and Bronfenbrenner (1979). Chapter 2 focuses on the practices of early childhood educational interventions as approaches to enhancing developmental outcomes with disadvantaged groups. It includes a critical review of outcome evaluation research in the field. Chapter 3 introduces and describes HIPPY in detail, covering its origins, international development, and the shape of the standard program model. It goes on to provide a review of the program evaluation literature.

The overall context of the present study, the research questions, aims and hypotheses formulated are then outlined by Chapter 4, which concludes by discussing the study design. Chapter 5 describes the research method that was planned, including the sample selection, the research instruments, the data collection procedures and the analysis of the data.

Chapter 6 is the first of four chapters presenting the findings of the study. It begins with the conduct of the research in terms of the reliability and validity of the data. It then focuses on the nature of the program implementation in terms of adherence to the standard model and factors that facilitated delivery and those that were experienced as difficulties, drawing upon the research interviews with parents and HIPPY staff, and upon the researcher's observation of group meetings.

The outcomes findings of the study are presented in Chapters 7, 8 and 9. Chapter 7 concerns both the cognitive/educational and the socio-emotional outcomes for children, derived from three sources of data, namely parent interviews, researcher assessments and teacher assessments of children in HIPPY, contrasted with those of a non-HIPPY group. Chapter 8 concerns socio-emotional outcomes for participating parents and Home Tutors, and Chapter 9 presents outcome findings concerning the parent-child relationship.

Strengths and limitations of the study are considered in Chapter 10, which proceeds to discuss the findings of Chapters 6,7,8 and 9 in relation to the aims and research questions of the study. The discussion relates the findings to those of previous research and proposes interpretation of aspects of the data. It further includes a discussion of proposed links between the major program outcomes found and certain dimensions of the program's process of implementation, that are then considered in light of developmental theory. The final Chapter 11 examines the research findings in terms of implications for future implementations of HIPPY, for early educational interventions more generally and for future research in this field.

CHAPTER 1
CHALLENGING DISADVANTAGE THROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTIONS: THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

In Australia, while the greater part of the population is considered to be better off than in the past as a result of continued economic growth, a significant number of children are being left behind, in locations within society where disadvantage continues to become more entrenched (Vinson, 2004). A link between early experiences of poverty, disadvantage and compromised development is one of the most solidly established findings within the international study of child development (Campbell & Ramey, 1994; Duncan, Brooks-Gunn, & Klebanov, 1994; McLyod, 1998). Equally enduring is the assumption underpinning the field that early childhood is the most crucial period in human development in terms of providing the blueprint for future well being (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). While the developmental trajectory from early childhood to adulthood is not considered linear, children of poor families face significantly reduced chances for later life success both economically and socially (Elder & Caspi, 1988). Children's early experiences of socio-economic well being matter both in terms of their proximal well being and their future well being. Furthermore, the fact that groups of children within society are growing up in poverty is a matter of concern for the entire society, given the likelihood of their socio-economic futures. The disparity between the socio-economic achievement levels of various groups in Australian society as a source of discontent and friction continues to grow (Vinson, 2004). Consequently much time and money has been devoted by legislators and concerned professionals to finding a means of closing the gap between successful and unsuccessful socio-economic groups (Lombard, 1994).

One of the most explored variables in the body of knowledge that has been accumulating in the search for solutions is educational achievement. The developmental pathway from early academic achievement to later success in socio-economic spheres, and vice versa, has been repeatedly suggested by empirical evidence (Elman & O'Rand, 2004). For this reason, much effort has been focused

on improving the level of school achievement among young disadvantaged children through the development and provision of a range of early educational intervention programs. The Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY), the focus of the empirical research work contributing to the present thesis, is one of several programs aimed at addressing educational disadvantage in early childhood.

This first chapter provides a background to the conceptualization of what are broadly referred to as compensatory or preventative models of early childhood educational interventions. It begins with a review of the main theoretical perspectives that underlie the rationale and aim of such programs. This reveals that despite differences between intervention programs, their primary aim is essentially the same, namely to place disadvantaged children on a normative developmental trajectory so that they continue to show optimal development after the intervention ends. The review that follows selects, from the vast body of literature that has been generated concerning the contexts that may foster optimal child development, those theoretical and empirical contributions that appear to have most influenced the evolving concept of early childhood interventions. This then provides the context in which compensatory interventions can be most fruitfully examined in terms of how they have been conceptualized and operationalized, as well as evaluated for their effectiveness.

1.1 Theoretical perspectives on early educational interventions

The concept of early childhood intervention has roots extending back to the earliest years of the history of Western industrialization, and originates from a number of diverse fields, including early childhood education, maternal and child health services, special education, and child development theory and research. The decade of the 1960s marked the beginning of a new era in early childhood interventions, when the convergence of several critical socio-political issues served to frame the agenda for early childhood services. As noted by Shonkoff and Miesels (1990), this period was characterized by much public and government support for investing in human services for the achievement of ambitious social goals such as a commitment to wage war on the sources and consequences of poverty. As a result,

a variety of intervention programs for economically disadvantaged children were initiated, many of which still exist today. In the decades that followed, the variety of fields from which early intervention was established have converged, while its theoretical foundation has continued to expand and mature through lessons learnt.

Early childhood interventions should reflect the best attempts to translate ever-growing knowledge about the processes of human development into programs that promote optimal environments into which children can grow. Such interventions remain extremely varied in their methods and approaches, but the underlying logic of most contemporary early interventions is shared, namely that a child's development can be enhanced by improving the early environment and experiences. In turn, the child can then enter formal education with an increased likelihood of success that should improve their chances of later success (Le Mare, 2003).

It is possible to discern in this line of thinking three main assumptions concerning the nature of human development as pointed out by Karoly, Kilburn, and Cannon (2005). The first is that the first few years of life are a particularly sensitive period in the process of development, both in terms of malleability and vulnerability. During the period from birth to five years, children progress through various developmental milestones that have implications for physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development. Subsequent development builds upon these early capacities, so they provide an important foundation for future success in school and beyond. The second assumption recognizes that, as human development is the result of the complex interplay between both genetic endowments (nature) and environmental conditions (nurture), a variety of environmental factors can either provide critical support or compromise healthy child development during the early years. A third assumption is that early childhood interventions may provide a protective influence to compensate for the various risk factors that potentially compromise healthy child development before the school years commence.

Woven in with these assumptions is the influence of a number of theories of child and human development on the conceptualization and operationalization of early childhood interventions generally. Most evident are those theoretical perspectives

that consider the impact of contexts on the developing child. These notably include Piaget's cognitive developmental theory, which emphasizes the interaction between the child's stage of development and experience of the environment, as well as the theoretical perspectives of Vygotsky, Bowlby and most notably Bronfenbrenner, who placed the social relational or interpersonal contexts of the child at the centre of understanding. The main aspects of these theories are outlined below, highlighting their relevance to the provision of early childhood educational interventions.

1.2 Piaget's cognitive developmental theory

The earliest theories of child development, such as those linked to the traditions of behaviorism and social learning theory, emphasized children as passive learners who acquire new knowledge of their world through conditioning or modeling. Piaget's (1967) cognitive developmental perspective revolutionalized the field with its view of children as active constructors of knowledge, who develop cognitively in predictable stages as they manipulate and explore their world (Berk, 1994). There are two main parts to Piaget's theory. The first relates to the process of how knowledge is acquired, while the second relates to the particular order in which different ways of thinking develop, through stages of cognitive development.

According to Piaget, "intelligence is adaptation" (1950, p 7). From the moment of birth, infants begin to adapt to their environment. Humans are naturally predisposed to acquiring and processing information in order to make sense of and survive in the world. Just as the body has physical structures that enable it to adapt to the environment, so the mind builds psychological structures or schemata, organized ways of discovering order and meaning in experiences that permit adjustment to the external world. Cognitive adaptation involves the development and changes in schemata, through two complementary processes of assimilation and accommodation. In assimilation, children interpret their worlds in terms of their current schemata. However, when an object or event cannot be understood or effected by existing schemata, the schemata must be altered; thus, accommodation of the schemata occurs so that this new information can be assimilated into the adjusted mental structure. When children can cope with most new events through

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the balanced processes of assimilation and accommodation, they are in a state of what Piaget named equilibrium. Maturational change and new experiences propel children into a state of disequilibrium or cognitive discomfort, whereby previous understandings do not fit with most new events or allow adequate understanding of the world. The process of restoring equilibrium is called equilibration and this is considered to propel children along the developmental stages, facilitating their move to ever more complex levels of thought. A final equilibrium is achieved with adult cognitive processing (Piaget, 1950; 1967; Thomas, 1999).

While Piaget considered each child's own construction of reality as unique, he also proposed that all children develop through the same sequences of stages before achieving mature rational thought (Berk, 1994; Piaget, 1950; 1967). According to Piaget, the structure of children's thinking is distinctive, the same for all children at each stage, and different from that of other children and adults at other stages. Each stage is characterized by particular intellectual strategies and thinking skills which are evident from children's behavior, language and their application of problem solving skills. Transition through stages is gradual, with each stage laying the groundwork for the succeeding one. Overlapping between stages occurs at transition points, and at any one time children can show characteristics from the proceeding stage or the next stage. During the first stage, (between 0-2 years), referred to as the sensorimotor stage, children obtain and use knowledge primarily through an integrated combination of motor actions and sensory exploration of their surroundings. Thought processes are sees as characterized by perception of objects slowly developing as permanent representations. The transition from the first stage to the next occurs when the child has developed object permanence, the understanding that external objects continue to exist even when out of sight. This second stage, referred to as the preoperational stage (between 2-7 years), is characterized by the development of language and conceptual thought, although the ability to logically organize and engage in logical thinking is not completely developed. During the third stage, referred to as the concrete operational stage (between 7-11 years), children's thinking becomes more logical, flexible and organized in its application to concrete information in the environment. The transition to the final stage, referred to as the formal operational stage (from 11 years

onwards) is characterized by thinking becoming more independent of concrete reality and developing into an abstract mode. Piaget's theory clearly assumes a notion of learning readiness that precedes the progression from one stage to the next.

Piaget's cognitive developmental perspective has probably stimulated more research on child behaviour and experience than any other single theory (Berk, 1994). It has also been extensively challenged. Major criticisms of his theory point to a vagueness of his ideas about how cognitive change occurs, inaccuracies in his account of the timetable of development, and evidence that children's cognition is not necessarily as stage-like as he proposed (Siegler, 1991). Nevertheless, Piaget's theory has not only made a substantial contribution to the field of child development, but has also had a major impact on the provision of education over the past four decades, particularly at the preschool and early elementary school levels (Berk, 1994). Although Piaget's theory was not originally conceived as an educational theory, it has been used to generate educational philosophies and programs that emphasize discovery learning and direct contact with the environment. A Piagetian classroom contains richly equipped activity areas designed to stimulate children to revise or adapt their cognitive structures. Also, Piaget's belief that appropriate learning experiences build on children's current level of thinking would serve as a foundation for many teaching philosophies. Teachers strive to be sensitive to children's learning readiness, and to not impose new skills on children until they are interested or ready. Furthermore, they expect individual differences in the rates that children move through the sequences or stages of development.

That Piaget's theory has influenced the development of educational intervention programs is most evident in one of the fundamental aims of most such programs, that of enriching the child's immediate environment (either in a centre or home setting), through the provision of activities, materials and experiences not otherwise available. From a Piagetian perspective, through the processes of assimilating and accommodating new information about their environment, the child's cognitive development is enhanced. Piaget's influence is further evident in the emphasis placed on the developmental appropriateness of the curriculum of early intervention

programs to the stage of the target children (Bredekamp, 1993). In line with Piaget's theory that emphasizes sensitivity to children's learning readiness, early intervention programs are often said to be based on an understanding of what children are capable of learning at various points in their development, to ensure that the activities and experiences that make up the curriculum are both relevant and achievable for the developmental level of the child.

However, like other aspects of Piaget's cognitive developmental perspective, educational applications of Piaget's theory have also been criticized. The most persuasive criticism is of the stress Piaget placed on children's learning occurring through their acting on their material environment, and the corresponding lack of emphasis placed on the social aspects of children's learning. According to Piaget's theory, children's cognitive development occurs largely as a result of their independent individual efforts to make sense of their world. He did not regard direct teaching by adults as important for cognitive development (Berk, 1994; Wood, 1988). As the involvement of parents in promoting children's learning is the hallmark of many early intervention programs, it is on this point that the relevance of Piaget's theory to the conceptualization and practice of early educational intervention is lessened, and the influences of other theorists, such as Vygotsky (1978), become more evident.

1.3 Vygostsky's sociocultural theory

Like Piaget, Vygotsky believed that children are active seekers of knowledge, but he did not view them as solitary agents. Rather, Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective (1978) places the child's social world at the centre of learning and offers the proposition that children's cognitive development occurs within social interactions. According to Vygotsky, children come to master activities and think in ways that have meaning in their cultures largely through their participation in joint activities with more mature members of society. The child experiences the world in a collaborative manner, with almost all problem solving being social and language-based. The child begins to internalize ideas and concepts learnt in the social context by using 'self talk' as a tool. The process of internalization changes the child's mental structures

as new ideas interact with existing mental structures, so producing new and usually more sophisticated processes and functions. Continual internalization is stimulated by the changing conditions of human existence which present new experiences and challenges. For example, a maturational change that produces opportunities for new experiences is the development of physical mobility. Similarly, social changes such as starting school, as well as cultural changes such as increased technology, provide further opportunities for new experiences and challenges.

Vygotsky (1978) rejected the tenet proposed by Piaget that the level of a child's cognitive development places limits on what the child can learn. Rather, Vygotsky's theory emphasized that children's cognitive development and other psychological processes can be extended through the transmission of knowledge acquired through interaction with more knowledgeable others, such as parents, teachers and peers. Vygotsky represented this potential of a child to do and learn beyond their independent capability as the zone of proximal development. He differentiated this from the child's zone of actual development, being the level at which the child will operate when working alone. The zone of proximal development involves those abilities that have not yet matured, but which can be used with the assistance of a more capable other. The term scaffolding has been adopted to describe the collaborative relationship between the child and the more advanced others who act as guides to the child's learning (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Wood, 1998).

Vygotsky's theory, like Piaget's, has not gone unchallenged. One of the major criticisms has been that he elevated the role of language to the highest importance in mediating the development of higher cognitive processes. Yet it has been argued that children may learn more in some situations and in some cultures from direct observation and practice rather than from verbal dialogue that scaffold their efforts (Berk, 1994). Nevertheless, Vygotsky's theory of development, like Piaget's, has had a significant impact on the provision of early education and beyond. Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective has been influential in the development of educational philosophies and programs that emphasize the importance of social context and collaboration to enhance children's development. A Piagetian and Vygotskian classroom would clearly have things in common such as opportunities for active

participation and acceptance of individual differences. However, a Vygotskian classroom promotes assisted, as well as self-initiated discovery, through teacher instruction and peer collaboration. In particular, teachers tailor their efforts to guide children's learning to each child's zone of proximal development. Likewise, Vgotsky's concepts have influenced the conceptualization and operationalization of a variety of educational interventions in childhood and beyond (Berk, 1994; Wood, 1998).

While both Piaget's and Vygotsky's perspectives have clearly influenced the field of early childhood education in terms of understanding how children learn and construct knowledge, their theories have little to say about other aspects of development, in particular children's social and emotional development. However, it is widely accepted in the early childhood field that it is the interrelatedness of all dimensions of children's development, including their physical, cognitive, social and emotional development that determines the overall progress of a child's development. Of particular relevance here is the acknowledgement amongst early childhood professionals of the important contributions of social and emotional development to children's school or learning readiness (Wesley & Buysse, 2003). Given that the fundamental aim of early educational interventions is to promote children's learning or school readiness so that they enter formal education with an increased likelihood of success, attention is now given to those theoretical perspectives that consider the interrelatedness of development and the contributions that other dimensions of development have on children's learning.

1.4   Bowlby's attachment theory

One of the most powerful streams of thought to emerge from the vast body of theory generated concerning the contexts that may foster cognitively and socially mature children is that the context of a child's early relational influences have longstanding consequences for all aspects of the child's psychological development. It was Freud who first suggested that the child's earliest relationship, within the infant-mother dyad, provided a foundation for all later relationships (Mitchell & Black, 1995). However, it was the later work by Bowlby (1969/1982, 1973), in collaboration with

Ainsworth (1973), that drew on this psychoanalytic heritage and further enlisted theories from evolutionary biology, developmental psychology and control systems theory, to articulate and expand this idea into 'attachment theory'.

Attachment has been defined as the strong emotional bond that develops between infant and caregiver on the basis of intimate physical closeness, providing the infant with emotional security to explore the world independently. While the quality of the attachment between the caregiver and infant is expected to exert its greatest influence on a child's later adaptation primarily in the area of social and emotional development, it is also considered by many to provide the foundation in which the effectiveness of a children's capacity to engage in exploratory or learning behavior is grounded (Weinfield, Scroufe, Egeland, & Carlson, 1999).

Bowlby's (1969/1982, 1973) theory is based upon the premise that the human baby is endowed with a set of inbuilt patterns of behaviors that increase the likelihood of infant-caregiver proximity, which in turn increases the likelihood of protection and survival advantage in an evolutionary sense. The behaviours of smiling, vocalizing, following and crying have the predictable outcome of increasing proximity of the child to the so-called attachment figure. Where smiling and vocalizing are signals of the child's interest in interaction, serving to bring the caregiver to the child, behaviors such as crying are aversive and likewise bring the caregiver to the child to terminate the behavior. Once proximity is achieved, other behaviors facilitating exploration of the environment become possible. Over time, and with a history of sensitive and responsive care, the child develops an overall experience of interacting with the caregiver that is predictable and secure. Based on their experience of their attachment relationships, children gradually construct internal representations of themselves and others, 'working models' of attachment behavior under various conditions, and of their predictable outcomes in terms of proximity of the attachment figure. Similar to Piaget's theoretical formulations of schemata, Bowlby portrayed working models as largely unconscious interpretive filters through which social relationships and other experiences are construed and self-understanding is constructed (Berk, 1993; Collins, 1999; Thomspson;1999).

According to Bowlby (1969/1982, 1973), a child who develops a warm and continuous attachment with a caregiver is then able to use this working model of the relationship with the attachment figure as a secure base for tolerating and handling anxiety across time and distance. From this secure base of attachment, a child feels confident to actively explore and thus learn from his or her environment. In contrast, infants who consistently experience insensitive and unresponsive care from the attachment figure are unable to develop an internal working model of a secure attachment figure, and are more likely to experience difficulty tolerating anxiety at times of stress. Insecure attachment can be seen to limit a child's ability to effectively explore the unknown and thus learn from the environment. Attachment theory provides a broader and different perspective from those offered by the theories of Piaget and Vygotsky, concerning how children learn. Bowlby's theory proposes that in order for a child to be able to learn effectively from their environment, a child's earliest social and emotional needs must first be secured through the relationship with the caregiver. From this perspective, the quality of the responsiveness from the caregiver to the child is considered an essential foundation and interrelated dimension of the child's overall development, including the child's cognitive development.

Following Bowlby's original theoretical formulations, research on some of the consequences of early attachment has yielded conclusions concerning the importance of security of attachment for psychological growth (Thompson, 1999). Generally, findings have tended to support Bowlby's proposition that early attachment influences the child's later adaptation in the context of beliefs about the self and relationships. In their synthesis of attachment findings, Weinfield, Scroufe, Egeland and Carlson (1999), reported that children with secure attachment histories had a greater sense of self efficacy, were socially more competent, and showed greater resilience to stress than children with a non-secure attachment history. In addition, the proposition that security of attachment underlies a child's capacity to effectively independently explore and learn from the environment has gained support from a number of studies reported in a review of the literature by Grossman, Grossman and Zimmerman (1999). Further isolated studies have also indicated the relationship between the quality of attachment in infancy to the children's

performance on a range of cognitive tasks at 20 months (Ahmad & Worobey, 1984; Main, 1983) and at four years of age (Ijzendoom & Vilet-Visser, 1988).

Findings concerning the strength of the relationship between infant security and later overall personality functioning remain modest (Thompson,1999; Weinfield et al, 1999). This is understandable when working models of attachment are considered within a developmental context. According to Thompson, they are continuously revised throughout development, and their impact on a child's psychosocial functioning at any particular age depends on the security of the representations as they are being mediated at that time. The most obvious manner in which the prediction of the sequelae of infant attachment may be mediated is through the subsequent and ongoing quality of the parent-child relationship. If this interpersonal orientation is greatly modified there may be little predictive relation between early attachment and later psychosocial functioning. In other words, outcomes of attachment security may be affected by the emergent features of the parent-child relationship, and how these are negotiated beyond infancy, from a focus on warmth and harmony to a focus on issues of personal agency and conflict resolution. To borrow from Vygotsky's theory, as children seek to comprehend the extent of personal agency and efficacy, and rely more upon an internalized model of a secure base, the actual parent may become less critical as a secure base and become more of a mentor in shared experience (Thompson, 1999).

The relevance and contribution of attachment theory to the practice of early intervention most obviously lies in its explanatory power concerning the developing child within the context of the parent-child relationship. According to Ainsworth (1990), attachment theory assumes both continuity of adaptive qualities and opportunities for change. Children's working models of attachment are malleable, and hence the quality of the attachment relationship can be strengthened, particularly in the early years. This proposition has clearly influenced the provision of early intervention programs, where increasingly the parent-child relationship has become an important focus of the intervention (Barnard & Kelly, 1990). Numerous program models have been conceptualized and operationalized with the foremost aim to enhance the quality of the parent-child relationship. The underlying logic of

such interventions, that enhancing the quality of parent-child attachment relationship enhances developmental outcomes for children, is clearly in line with Bowlby's prediction of the sequelae of the quality of the parent-child attachment relationship.

However, beyond recognition that this relationship occurs within a developmental context, and therefore may be variously influenced, Bowlby's theory has little to say about the nature of possible contextual influences beyond the parent-child relationship, or how these may affect the developing attachment. It is the work of Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1986) in his ecological systems theory that throws the most light on the range of influences that may condition the quality of attachment and subsequent psychosocial functioning of the child.

1.5   Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory

Like Bowlby, and especially Vygotsky, Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1986) emphasized a child's relational experiences as the most significant factors influencing learning and development. His ecological theory of human development draws attention to the fact that forces external to the child's relationships often affect the functioning of those relationships and indeed all aspects of the development of the child. The central argument underlying this perspective is that the major influences on human development can be understood as operating through multiple layers in the surrounding environment, conceptualized as four interlocking structural systems. Each layer of the environment is considered to have a powerful impact on children's development, from the 'micro system' of the everyday life experiences of the child, to the 'macro system' of culture and society.

The parent-child relationship occurs within the 'micro system', and the development of this relationship is in turn affected by connections with the larger systems. The relationship between the parent and child is considered reciprocal and bi-directional, with the parent affecting children's responses, and the child's characteristics influencing the parent's behavior. The relationship is further enhanced or undermined by the 'meso system' at schools or day care centers where the child's relationship with teachers or carers comes into play. Support for families offered by

the 'exo system', such as in family-centered work practices and parents social networks, and in societal values reflected in government policies related to family life that operate within the 'macro system', further serve to foster or undermine the parent-child relationship. The relationship is further influenced by the cumulative effects and timing of life events that occur as each individual within the relationship develops.

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory thus facilitates understanding, from a 'bottom-up' perspective, of the various influences that serve to shape the child's immediate everyday experiences, including parent-child relationships, and simultaneously a 'top down' perspective on macro level system processes that in turn can affect all other levels of a child's environment and development. Bronfenbrenner's theory also provides a useful framework for understanding the effects of social disadvantage, as an external influence, on child development. Within this framework it can be seen how poverty or social disadvantage, which is in part perpetuated by macro level processes such as government policies related to the distribution of resources and delivery of education, in turn affects all other levels of the child's environment. For example, families that are disadvantaged (involving a macro system connection) may be socially isolated and lacking social support (an exo system connection), have limited involvement in education (a meso system connection), and experience greater marital conflict (a micro system connection), which is considered, in turn, to impact on negatively on child development.

Bronfenbrenner's holistic theory implies that interventions at any level of the environment can enhance development of any particular child. Of the theoretical perspectives reviewed so far, it is Bronfenbrenner's model that has most influenced the conceptualization of intervention policies and practices generally (Epps & Jackson, 2000; Kagan, 1993). Of notable importance has been the attention his theory draws to the need for intervention efforts to be designed to address the multiple sources of influence on the child and his or her family (Vincent, Salisbury, Strain, McCormick, & Tessier,1990).

CHAPTER 2
EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTIONS ADDRESSING DISADVANTAGE: PRACTICE AND EVALUATION

The rapid growth of the field of early childhood intervention, particularly over the past two decades, reflects worldwide trends of increased utilization of non-parental childcare services and rising enrolments in preschool educational programs (Boocock, 1995). The growing demand for these services has been fuelled by the increasing participation of women in the work force and the corresponding dwindling of extended family support, as well as by the growing awareness of the developmental importance of the early years of life, and in particular the recognition of the significance to children's education of the period between ages three and five. Whilst increased interest in the value of early care and education intervention is an international phenomenon, the provision of these services both within and among countries is not evenly distributed. Essentially, the availability and quality of preschool programs is considered to be much higher in industrialized countries such as Australia than in developing nations, and within most countries, access to preschool services is generally higher in urban centers than rural areas. According to Boocock, the distribution of services in Australia is also influenced by the level of government involvement, ranging from full funding and direct sponsorship of programs to a regulatory role of privately funded programs, as well as by whether the services are made available to all children (universal programs) or only to those children considered socially or educationally disadvantaged (compensatory programs).

This chapter begins with an overview of the literature concerning the practice of compensatory educational intervention in early childhood, and progresses to a critical review of the outcome and process evaluation research reported in respect of such programs.

2.1 The practice of early childhood educational intervention with disadvantaged groups

Compensatory or preventative educational intervention has been conceptualized within the context of universal services, where a distinction is made between those labeled as childcare services and those labeled as preschool services. Childcare services can be full or part day programs, either centre-based or family home-based, which may be available between infancy and five years in Australia, and which may or may not be perceived as having specific educational input. Universal pre-school programs generally refer to part-day, centre-based programs with a clear educational focus, generally made available to children above the age of three years. In Australia, children typically attend pre-school at four years of age and begin formal schooling at five years of age. Formal school is universal, free and compulsory, while childcare and pre-school programs, though universally available, are not compulsory and entail a fee.

2.1.1 Compensatory or preventative early intervention programs

In contrast to universal services, compensatory or preventative intervention involves programs targeted to groups of children considered to be at risk of educational disadvantage, in particular children from low socio-economic communities. As discussed in Section 1.1 above, the rationale underlying such services has been informed by a number of well established assumptions that have emerged from the vast body of knowledge that has been accumulating within this field. The earliest years of life are recognized as a particularly sensitive period in the process of development with a number of factors considered critical to laying the foundation for healthy physical, emotional, social and cognitive functioning in childhood and beyond (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). A sizable fraction of children experience deficiencies during their earliest years in terms of emotional support, intellectual stimulation or access to resources that can impede their development (Karoly et al., 2005). Disadvantages in early childhood are considered to have implications for how prepared children are when they enter school (Westheimer, 2003). Children from the

lowest socio-economic backgrounds begin school at a considerable disadvantage compared with children from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. These early differences have been found to expand as children progress through school. In other words, because disadvantaged children do not progress at the same rate as their more advantaged peers, the achievement gap tends to widen over time (Campbell & Ramey, 1994; Ramey & Ramey, 1998; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; Considine & Zappala, 2002). Early childhood compensatory interventions are designed to provide a protective influence, to take account of the various risk factors that potentially compromise healthy development in the years before school entry. Such interventions aim to place disadvantaged children on a normative developmental trajectory so that they continue to show optimal development after the intervention ends (Le Mare, 2003). A widespread hope for early intervention is to impede the buildup of cumulative disparity between the most advantaged and disadvantaged groups of children within society (Ceci & Papierno, 2005; Karoly et al., 2005).

An examination of the literature concerning the practice of compensatory or preventative intervention programs reveals that there is no single uniform approach for intervening early in the lives of disadvantaged children to compensate for the factors that may compromise healthy child development. Such interventions are characterized by marked heterogeneity of service formats, varying on a number of dimensions including the range of services offered (such as health and nutritional services), staffing configurations (ranging from professional educators and nurses to community workers with limited formal education and training), and the intensity of the intervention (such as the frequency and duration of the program, as well as the starting and ending age of participating children).

A further major source of diversity among program types most readily identified in the early intervention literature is the context within which services are delivered. Early intervention programs are most commonly differentiated by whether they are predominantly centre-based or home-based models. In practice, many of these incorporate both centre and home visiting components. To a large extent, these differences in context also reflect differences between programs in terms of who is targeted for the intervention. Generally speaking, centre-based programs represent

child-focused interventions, home-based programs are family-focused interventions and programs that combine both these components represent an amalgam of these two philosophies (Karoly et al., 2005; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Following is a description of the main features of each program type, and of a selection of the better documented programs that have emerged, predominantly from within the United States, are then highlighted.

2.1.1.1 Centre-based programs

The main model of early educational intervention program world-wide is the centre-based pre-school (Barnett, 1995). These programs usually aim to enhance both the educational and social outcomes for disadvantaged children, by providing rather intensive (usually half day) educational programs to children. The program curriculum is typically developed and delivered by professionals to children prior to entry to formal education and generally over a period of one year (Epps & Jackson, 2000). Some centre-based models also target parent and family needs as part of the intervention, and incorporate a range of services for parents and families which may include addressing parents' life and work related skills as well as understanding of children's educational and social needs. Generally referred to as 'two generational' models, these programs were designed to recognize the multigenerational, multidimensional aspects of child poverty (St. Pierre, Layzer, & Barnes, 1995). Through the provision of early education to children and parenting education, this two generational approach seeks to solve the problems of parents and children in two contiguous generations (Duch, 2005).

Centre-based programs vary in their size or the range of their reach, namely whether they are large scale public funded programs or smaller scale programs. Many interventions have been initiated in a single location, based on local circumstances and local funding available, while others have begun as national demonstration projects and then continued on a large scale (Karoly, Kilburn, & Cannon, 2005).

2.1.1.1.1   Large scale centre-based programs

Project Head Start is one of the most well known and widely disseminated federally funded public program in the United States, aimed at delivering interventions to young children of disadvantaged communities (Berk, 1994). Initiated by the United States federal government during the 1960s, it was established as part of a campaign to reduce the impact of poverty on child development. Its introduction was a massive undertaking set in rapid motion by politicians, against the recommendations of social scientists who favoured a smaller scale, tightly designed research and evaluation project. Initially the program was of eight weeks duration in the summer and during its first year of operation (1965), over 500, 000 children took part. At the end of that year, an additional one year program was provided for some children (Kellaghan, 1979). Since then, Head Start has grown into a dominant compensatory intervention program in the United States, with programs operating in all 50 states and serving over 900,000 children at a cost of $7 billion a year (Barnett & Ackerman, 2006; Karoly et al., 2005).

There is no single Head Start program format and service components differ between sites. However, a typical Head Start pre-school, operating either part or full day, provides children with a year or two of pre-school education before they enter school along with nutritional and health services. In addition, parent education and involvement is a central part of the Head Start philosophy and practice (Karoly et al., 2005). Agencies providing Head Start programs must meet requirements and standards set out in United States federal law stipulating that the organization must have the capacity to plan, conduct, administer and evaluate the program. Further, Head Start legislative mandates require comprehensive participation of parents in all aspects of the program including program governance (Duch, 2004). At the local program level, parents are provided the opportunity to serve on policy councils and contribute to program planning. They also work directly with children and receive services directed at their own social, emotional, and vocational needs (Berk, 1994).

The Chicago CPC program (Child-Parent Centres) is another large scale public program that has been providing centre-based pre-school education to disadvantaged

children in high poverty Chicago neighborhoods since 1967 (Reynolds, 1994). The centres operate during the school year through the Chicago public school system and are located in public elementary schools. The pre-school provides a structured part day program for children ages three and four that emphasize an individualized approach to social and cognitive development. The centres also require parent participation. Related program services continue after kindergarten entry and through grades one, two or three.

2.1.1.1.2   Smaller scale centre-based programs

Numerous smaller scale centre-based compensatory programs have been established at single sites and have been documented and researched. Often referred to as demonstration model programs, these are regarded as higher in quality than the larger scale public preschool programs. According to Barnett (1995), this is due to several features of most of these programs, including relatively low child-staff ratios, the small target group of children, and the involvement of child development experts in the design of services aimed at meeting the cognitive and social needs of children. Many of these programs also feature a strong research emphasis, with the aim of evaluation being built into such programs at their conception (Kellaghan, 1977). Two such programs, the Carolina Abecedarian Project and the Perry Preschool Project, both of which no longer operate, have received substantial attention in the literature.

The Carolina Abecedarian Project was a single site program developed at the University of North Carolina that operated between 1972 and 1985. The program was intended to provide early systematic education to children who were identified as being at risk of cognitive deficits. Although families did receive some social work services, the primary emphasis was on directly affecting the children, rather than the parents (Wasik & Karweit, 1994). One of the most outstanding features of this particular intervention was its duration. Beginning in infancy, children were provided an unusually protracted period of continuous educational intervention until age eight (Campbell & Ramey, 1994). There were two components to the project, namely a

pre-school program that served children from 6 weeks old to kindergarten, and a school program that began at kindergarten and ended at the completion of second grade.

The Perry Preschool Project was also a single site compensatory intervention program designed to promote children's intellectual, social and emotional learning and development. The program was conducted from 1962-1967 in Michigan and targeted three and four year old African-American children who were living in poverty and had low IQ scores. The intervention took place during the academic year, sessions were half-day on five days per week, and children generally attended the program for two years. The development of the program was based on the developmental theories of Piaget and emphasized learning through active, child-initiated experiences rather than through directed teaching. (Karoly et al., 2005; Karweit, 1994).

Like some other centre-based programs, both the Abecedarian and the Perry Preschool programs incorporated home visiting in the services provided. In the Abecedarian program, resource teachers responsible for the development of individualized activities to supplement the basic school curriculum visited each child's home, approximately bi-weekly, to instruct and encourage parents to work with the child on the materials every day after school (Wasik & Karweit, 1994). In the Perry Preschool Project, teachers visited the home for 90 minutes weekly (Karweit, 1994). These programs are classed as child-focused programs, in that they attempt to address the problems of disadvantage by intervening directly with children to improve their cognitive and social competence, and to prepare them to enter school on equal terms with more fortunate children. Home-based interventions, on the other hand, adopt a different strategy to address the same aim.

2.1.1.2   Home-based programs

Home-based programs typically primarily involve parent services. They target primary caregivers, and seek to affect children indirectly by helping parents to develop the

knowledge and responsive parenting behaviours necessary to provide an enriched environment to support children's learning. The home visiting approach to early childhood intervention has an extended history. Home visiting programs have been initiated to achieve a variety of goals, but at the core is an emphasis on supporting parent-child interactions, increasing parents' knowledge of developmental stages and healthy environments for their children, and supporting family access to community resources. The age of children involved in such programs varies from somewhere during the first year of life and five years of age. The frequency of visits may range from weekly to monthly. Home-based programs are considered to be a cost efficient service delivery approach because they do not require building costs for special facilities or transportation of children and families to facilities. Disadvantages of this model for the child and family are that it limits opportunities for children to interact with peers (as in centre-based programs), and does not allow for families to meet informally or formally with other families (Epps & Jackson, 2000). However, some home-based interventions incorporate centre-based components into their programs, aiming to promote informal networks with other parents.

One well documented example is the Parent as Teachers (PAT) program, a universal-access family focused parent education program that emphasizes parenting behaviour as the vehicle for positive effects on children (Wagner, Spiker & Linn, 2002; Karoly et al., 2005). PAT serves families with children from birth to age six and has more than 2,600 local programs in the United States and six other countries, including Australia. While PAT was designed for voluntary participation by all types of families, based on the tenet that all parents serve to be supported in their role as their child's first teachers, many program sites serve a high proportion of disadvantaged families. The PAT program targets parents of young children, in regular, individual, home-based and group based instructions about good general parenting practices and principles of child development. Both the home visits and group meetings occur somewhere between weekly and monthly. During the home visits, certified educators provide parents with information about children's development, model and involve parents in developmentally appropriate activities, and respond to parent's questions and concerns. Group meetings take place within a local community setting, and provide a forum to discuss child development and build informal networks with other parents.

Another example of a predominantly home-based early childhood educational intervention that incorporates centre-based parent group meetings is the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY), originally developed in Israel in the 1960s and which now operates in eight countries throughout the world (http.//www.hippy.org.il/html/map.html). The core elements of the program are fortnightly home visits by paraprofessional Home Tutors, alternating with fortnightly parent group meetings led by Home Tutors or the HIPPY Coordinators. Like most other compensatory interventions, HIPPY aims to enhance the educational and social outcomes for disadvantaged children (Lombard, 1994; Westheimer, 2003). Also, like most home-based interventions the development of the program was grounded in the recognition that parents and the home environment play significant roles in young children's development and learning. Specifically, HIPPY was developed to prepare children for school by enhancing the home learning environment, the quality of parent-child interaction and parents' abilities to help their children learn. The parent receives training each week on how to deliver the child set 15 minute program lessons, one for each school day in the week ahead. In turn, the child thus receives the educational intervention directly from the parent.

2.2   The evaluation of educational intervention in early childhood

Systematic investigation of early intervention efficacy is considered a complex yet essential process for improving and expanding service delivery for young children and their families. Over the past four decades, an extensive research literature has been developing, mostly within the United States, concerning the efficacy of both universal childcare and preschool programs and compensatory educational intervention programs. In respect to the vast of body of literature concerning the provision of compensatory interventions, two main lines of inquiry can be identified. Most dominant is the body of evidence concerning the actual outcomes of interventions, in particular short-term or immediate effects, and to a lesser extent the longer term effects of intervention. The second body of literature, considerably smaller, is focused on the nature of the outcomes in relation to the varying characteristics of interventions.

2.2.1 Outcome evaluation

Both historically and presently, research into the effects of compensatory educational interventions has understandably largely focused on outcomes for children and in particular the effects on cognitive development. Research has been driven by two main questions. The first asks whether the child is doing better as a result of the intervention, while the second asks if any benefits persist. This is considered appropriate, given that concern for the child's development, and in particular readiness for school, constitutes the rationale for these. Numerous studies have examined the immediate and short term outcomes, that is within a year or two after children exit a program. Findings regarding immediate effects have been summarized in both quantitative meta-analyses and traditional literature reviews conducted over the past two decades (Barnett, 1998; Barnett & Ackerman, 2006; Karoly, Kilburn, & Cannon, 2005; White & Gasco, 1985). The authors of these reviews report a consistent pattern of evidence indicating that early educational interventions for disadvantaged children can produce immediate positive effects on cognitive development as measured by standard intelligence tests. Average effects on socio-emotional outcomes were also found to be positive, although more modest. Similar analyses and reviews have been conducted on a smaller number of studies examining the longer term effects of educational interventions (Barnett, 1999; Farran, 1990; Haskins, 1989; Karoly et al., 2005). The authors of these meta-analytic studies report a pattern of evidence that the initial gains of early intervention reduce over time, in that any gain in IQ is negligible several years after the intervention.

Taken together, these two patterns of evidence suggest, that while compensatory interventions have benefited disadvantaged children in the short term, they have been less effective in a longer term sense. However, as argued by Shonkoff & Phillips, (2000), attempting to draw clear conclusions regarding the effectiveness of early interventions based on comparisons across studies is problematic, due largely to the variability between programs on a number of important dimensions. These include the age of children, the nature of the program components, the intensity and duration of the service, the nature of the staff and their training, and methodological issues

regarding comparison or control conditions. With such limitations in mind, efforts have been directed increasingly towards attempts to discern patterns of impact based on the varying dimensions of intervention programs. The literature reviewing outcome evaluation of early childhood educational interventions for disadvantaged children has generally not encompassed the relatively recent research conducted in respect of HIPPY. This latter work is discussed and criticized in Chapter 3 below.

2.2.2 Outcomes and variations among interventions

While the types of short term effects produced by early educational intervention are consistent, the magnitude of effects has been found to differ among program types. The most notable is reported between large scale centre-based public programs, in particular Head Start, and smaller scale demonstration model programs. Typically, small scale model programs have been found to produce stronger effects than large scale public programs (Barnett, 1998; Driessen, 2004). Generally these differences have been considered consistent with the relative strength of standards regarding teacher qualifications and smaller class size and child teacher ratios that are characteristic of these model programs. However, while the general pattern reported above is for the effects of both large and small scale interventions to fade over time, some of smaller scale programs have been found to produce significant gains in both cognitive and social development that have persisted into children's school years and beyond.

Two such programs are the Carolina Abecadarian project described in Section 2.1.1.1.2 above, and the Milwaukee Project (Campbell & Ramey, 1994; Wasik & Karweit, 1994), which provided a similarly intensive educational service to children from infancy up to 8 years (average in both programs of 5 years). The long term effects of the Abecedarian program were investigated by follow up studies of 92 of the 112 children at ages 8, 12 and 15 years and at age 21. Findings revealed that children who had received the intervention (n=48) performed better on a number of cognitive measures, than children who had not received the intervention (n=44), and that these cognitive gains had persisted into adulthood (Karoly et al., 2005). Similarly, the Milwaukee project which followed a smaller group of children during primary and

secondary school found that the children who had received the intervention (n= 17) outperformed control group children (n=18) on a measure of intelligence during grade 4 and grade 8.

Perhaps the most influential study of the long term effects of early educational intervention has been the study of the Perry Preschool Project (Cervantes, 1993; Karweit, 1994), also described above in Section 2.1.1.1.2. While findings concerning the short term cognitive benefits to children were noteworthy, being considerably higher than for most other interventions (on average 11 points higher than controls in IQ scores), it has been the decades of follow up studies that have generated the most interest. The progress of the children who were randomly assigned to receive the program (n=58) has been compared to another group of children who did not receive the intervention (n=65). Data were collected annually from ages 3 through 11 and again at ages, 14, 15, 19, 27, and 40 (http://www.highscope.org/Research/Perry Project/perrymain.htm). While gains in IQ scores did not persist, evidence of lasting benefits in other aspects of educational attainment and social development has emerged. At age 40, program participants, as compared to non-participants, had higher high school graduation rates (84% vs. 32%), higher subsequent employment (76% vs. 62%), higher annual earnings, and lower criminal arrest rates (36% vs. 55%).

In seeking to explain how these particular interventions produced such longer term effects, several distinguishing features of the programs have been highlighted. In particular, the duration and timing of both the Abecedarian and Milwaukee programs have received much attention (Barnett, 2006; Ramey & Campbell, 1998). In both programs, children were provided with intensive preschool educational input, consisting of full day sessions beginning in the first year of life for up to five years. This was followed by a minimal intervention as the children continued through school (up to age 8). In most other interventions, including the Perry Preschool Project, the intervention was shorter term, with children receiving half day sessions for one to two years at most, commencing at age 3. Given the sustained cognitive gains demonstrated in studies of the Abecedarian and Milwaukee programs, it appears that both the timing and duration of educational interventions can be effective. Specifically, educational interventions that begin in the earliest years of life, and continue

intensively through the preschool years, appear more likely to produce cognitive gains that are sustained, compared with programs that begin later and are of a shorter duration (Ramey & Campbell, 1998).

A striking common feature of the Abecedarian, Milwaukee and Perry programs was that they all included a parent education home visiting component, as described above in Section 2.1.1.1.2. This aimed to provide parents with social support, enhance employment skills and improve knowledge about child development and parenting practices. It may be that the effects on parents of this added component led to positive changes in parents' lifestyles or practices, which in turn enhanced the long term outcomes for children. Specifically, while educational interventions may improve children's cognitive development in the immediate term, these benefits may be more lasting when parents are also targeted for intervention. Reviews of home-based interventions support this interpretation in part.

The effectiveness of home-based programs has been examined to a much lesser extent than centre-based programs. The general conclusion from a number of systematic reviews (Barnett, 1995; Barnett & Ackerman, 2006; Farran, 2000; Gomby, Culross, & Behrman, 1999), is that home visiting programs targeting parents alone have small effects on both parenting and children's cognitive development. There are also even more problems from a methodological perspective associated with such evaluations, given the very great range of variation among such programs (Driessen, 2004; Gomby, 1999). Home-based interventions in which parents learn new ways to enhance the children's development are less effective than approaches directly targeting children's intellectual and social experiences. In other words, evidence suggests that single focus interventions involving parenting alone are not sufficient to improve children's outcomes. For example, two randomized trials on the home-based parenting program Parents As Teachers (described above in Section 2.1.1.2) found small, inconsistent effects on parenting knowledge, attitudes, behavior, and no effects whatsoever on child development (Wagner & Clayton, 1999).

In short, home-based programs that aim to enhance child development directly, and simultaneously address parenting skills, may prove to be the most successful.

2.3   Summary of evaluation research

Several conclusions emerge from the above review of evaluation research on compensatory educational interventions. The first concerns what appears to produce effective results. Specifically, interventions that begin earlier in a child's life, are intensive, and continue for longer may have more lasting benefits in terms of cognitive development, than those that begin later, are less intensive and of a shorter duration. Secondly, interventions that offer both a parent and child component maybe most successful in promoting long term development for children than those that focus solely on the child or solely on the parent.

The second conclusion concerns what appears less well known. Evaluation efforts have been largely focused on outcomes, in particular cognitive outcomes for children. In comparison, little attention has been given to both the social and emotional developmental outcomes for children and to outcomes for parents. Further, the literature lacks adequate process evaluations that may enable greater understanding of the intricacies of varying programs and variations between the participants or the interactions between them. Greater evaluation efforts focused on examining how specific program features may be associated with child and family outcomes appear warranted. Essentially this would require the reframing of the question that clearly drives most evaluation research, "Does this intervention work?" to one with a wider focus, "How does this intervention work?"

The next chapter outlines the place of the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) within the context of early educational programs for disadvantaged children, and how the conclusions of associated evaluation research are placed in the overall field of such research, as reviewed above.

CHAPTER 3

THE HOME INSTRUCTION PROGRAM FOR PRESCHOOL
YOUNGSTERS (HIPPY): EVALUATION RESEARCH

The Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is a home-based early educational intervention program that is currently implemented in eight countries around the world. HIPPY was introduced to Australia by the Brotherhood of St Laurence in 1998 and currently four programs are operating within Australia, in the States of Victoria, New South Wales, and Tasmania. Its introduction into the Victorian regional city of Geelong, the processes related to its implementation and its immediate outcomes were the focus of the research reported in this thesis. .

This chapter begins by outlining the purpose and origins of the program including its development internationally. It then describes the standard model of program implementation and goes on to review the evaluation research reported concerning HIPPY. This leads to a critique of the material reviewed, identifying areas demanding attention, which has steered the direction of the present research.

3.1   Purpose and framework

HIPPY was designed in the 1960s in Israel, to assist preschool aged children who have parents with limited formal education, and often low incomes, to succeed at school. This was to be achieved by fostering the children's cognitive ability and confidence in themselves as learners (Lombard, 1994). The design of HIPPY was based on evidence that indicated that children from these families often began school educationally disadvantaged, and on research that suggested links between early intervention programs and children's mastery at school. HIPPY's primary focus is to facilitate the learning readiness of children from disadvantaged communities so that they begin their formal schooling with the skills and confidence to engage and succeed in the education system. HIPPY aims to achieve this by enhancing the

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home learning environment by providing a parent with particular skills, resources and confidence to act as the small child's teacher.

The HIPPY program operates within a framework that includes a Program Coordinator who is primarily responsible for the recruitment and training of paraprofessionals, named Home Tutors, who deliver the program's lessons to parents in home visits and within group meetings. In turn, parents teach the child the lessons within the home. The intention is that the child will learn specific learning readiness skills with the parent engaged as teacher of the child, and the learning environment within the home will be enriched.

3.2   Origins of HIPPY and international development

In Israel in the 1960s the issue of educational disadvantage was prominent. The preceding decade had been characterized by waves of mass immigration, and the observed disparity between the skills and abilities needed to succeed in education and the skills and abilities of certain groups of immigrant children resulted in a number compensatory educational mechanisms being initiated by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Efforts to facilitate the way into the formal school system for the disadvantaged child did not prove as helpful as hoped. Although educators recognized that the two major influences on children are their family and the school, these efforts were concentrated only within the education system itself. In 1968, the National Council of Jewish Women (U.S.A) had established the Research Institute for Innovation in Education of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Lombard, 1994). HIPPY was conceived within the Research Institute by Lombard and colleagues, out of recognition that bridging the educational gap for disadvantaged children might be better directed to bringing changes into the homes of these young children that would prepare them to deal with the demands of school. Lombard and her colleagues focused on two major areas, namely the enrichment of the child and, strengthening the mother's belief in her capacity as an educator in the family setting. To be effective, it was considered that the process would need to be intensive, with frequent activity for the children, and to extend over at least two years. The program that evolved

became a nationally administered and publicly funded program within Israel, in association with the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

With a growing evidence base in Israel, HIPPY was introduced in countries outside of Israel. It has been implemented in nine countries, including the United States, New Zealand, Germany, South Africa, Mexico, Chile, Turkey and Canada and more recently in Australia (Westheimer, 2003). The program is managed by HIPPY International, based within the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in Israel, which owns the rights to the program. A contractual agreement between HIPPY International and licensees operating the program ensures that the basic model of HIPPY is delivered and that licensees take part in training activities emanating from Israel and fund an annual visit for the Director of HIPPY International.

HIPPY was established in Israel as a three year program for children yet to enter formal schooling. However, it can also operate as a two year program for four and five year old children. In Australia and New Zealand, HIPPY is offered in its two year format and as children typically begin school earlier than most other countries, in these countries, HIPPY spans the child's pre-school year and then first year of formal schooling.

3.3   The standard two year model of HIPPY

The following outline of the standard model of HIPPY is drawn from Lombard's (1994, 1997) blueprint. The model of HIPPY involves a set curriculum embedded within HIPPY materials and activities aimed at developing certain skills within the child, as well as a number of key components concerning the delivery of the program.

3.3.1 Materials and activities

The HIPPY materials consist of 18 story books, a set of 16 plastic shapes and 60 weekly activity packets for parents which include instructions for the teaching of the 60 weekly lessons to the child over a two year period. The HIPPY materials also include instructions for Home Tutors in teaching parents. Examples of the HIPPY lesson

activities, including instructions for parents are presented in Appendix I. Along with what is provided to families, the program also encourages the use of materials that are commonly available within the family home. Decisions regarding the development and selection of activities associated with the use of these materials were based on the criteria that they are (a) appropriate to the developmental age of the child, (b) they may contribute to school success, (c) they are appealing and enjoyable to the child, (d) they can be accomplished within the home without the need for special equipment, and (e) they are easily understood and make sense to the parent (Lombard, 1997).

3.3.2 Areas of skill development within the curriculum

Lombard (1994) specified that the key developmental areas that the HIPPY curriculum aims to enhance are:

- the child's cognitive development, through language, memory, discrimination and problem solving skills;
- the child's physical development, though activities that promote fine motor skills;
- the child's emotional development, through promoting independence, a positive self concept and learning to deal with issues in storybooks that are problematic for preschoolers;
- the child's social development, by contributing positively to their social behavior as a student at school; and
- the development of creativity, through the promotion of parent-child interactions that acknowledge the child's creative efforts rather than focus on performance.

3.3.3 Core components of the HIPPY delivery system

The key components of program delivery, as outlined by Lombard (1994), can be understood within the three main levels of implementation at which HIPPY operates. These are:

- the delivery of the program within the community context including components guidelines for the targeting and setting up of the program;

- the delivery of the program from within the context of the service provider including components related to staff training, and delivery of the program to the parent; and

- the delivery of the program within the home context, including the actual delivery of the program to the child.

Within each core component are a number of more specific components. These are presented in Table 1, on page 34 below, and are developed from Lombard's (1994) specifications.

3.3.3.1 Development and implementation of HIPPY within a community framework

According to Lombard (1994, p. 109), "HIPPY is only available to parents within the framework of a community project". In order to achieve this objective, Lombard stipulated a number of steps be taken to facilitate a community commitment to the program. The first is to actively engage the local community in the decision making process of whether and how to adopt the program. She recommended the development of a local steering committee, in association with some kind of local family support agency, to gather information about HIPPY, assess local needs, evaluate the capacity of the agency to meet staff and budgeting requirements and to secure funding for the program A second step is to facilitate ongoing interaction between local service providers and HIPPY during the recruitment and implementation phase of the program, to ensure compatibility between the essential elements of HIPPY and the specific local situation. A suitably qualified Program Coordinator would need to be sought, appointed and trained with respect to the program.

A further step towards this objective is the recruitment of the paraprofessionals, Home Tutors, from within the local community in which the program is provided. For the first implementation of the program, the Coordinator is responsible for selecting paraprofessionals from the pool of parents already enrolled in the program. They are assessed as suitable if they have an interest in the program, have good communication skills, and where necessary are proficient in another language to assist parents who may not be proficient in the country's official language.

Table 1

Core Components of HIPPY Implementation

LEVEL	COMPONENTS OF DELIVERY	SPECIFICATIONS
COMMUNITY	Program delivered within community context	Assessment of local needs and capacity to provide program Ongoing interaction between local service providers and program operators
	Time frame	Delivered over two years, child aged 4 and 5
	Target population	Educationally disadvantaged families
	Recruitment of Home Tutors	Typically mother of similar aged child within same community as participating families
AGENCY	Training and supervision of program staff	Group based training and ongoing supervision of Home Tutors by Coordinator.
	Initial recipient of program	Parent (usually mother) of preschool child*
	Technique of instruction	Program materials delivered in weekly packages Home Tutors use role-play to instruct parents whereby the two take turns to play the roles of parent and child to familiarize parent with materials
	Mode of delivery (1)	Home Visits -Bi-weekly by Home Tutor who Instructs parent on how to deliver program to the child
	Mode of delivery (2)	Group meetings- Alternate bi-weekly- parent receives within group context instructions on how to deliver following week's materials. Group meeting to include enrichment component
HOME	Delivery to child	Parent delivers program to child** Weekly packages include worksheets to be completed on each week day (approx.15 minutes per day) Role-play between parent and child included in content of program

*Older sibling/other family member may be
trained by Home Tutor if parent unable
**Similarly other family member may deliver
Program to child

As members of the community and as peers of the target families, Home Tutors are considered likely to share similar backgrounds and be better able to deliver materials in a way that is sensitive to the cultural and life experiences of participating families. Furthermore, both in and as a result of their role as Home Tutors, they have the potential to strengthen and benefit the local community through acting as community role models for further education, as well as being "candidates for future community leadership roles" (Lombard, 1994, p. 117).

3.3.3.2 Group based training of program staff

Each newly selected local Coordinator attends a week-long training and enrichment course, combining formal lectures, discussions and workshops with ongoing informal discussions with experienced peers. Where possible, during the year, the Coordinator receives training at monthly meetings conducted by a regional Coordinator or Director, where the educational materials to be used for the month are reviewed and issues relating to their work are raised and discussed. Home Tutors attend weekly group training sessions provided by the Coordinator. Here, Home Tutors become familiarized with the lessons and activities for the upcoming week, report and discuss the previous week's work and share and discuss experiences and problems (Lombard, 1994).

3.3.3.3 Role-play as a method of instruction and learning

Role-play is the technique of instruction used at all levels to teach the content of HIPPY lessons. It is used in the monthly group based training of Coordinators, in the weekly training of Home Tutors, in the instruction of the program materials to the parent within the home, and from the parent to the child. It involves both parties in the dyad playing the role of "teacher" and "child" in the activities, in order to gain direct experience of both roles.

The technique of role-play was chosen because it was believed to be particularly appropriate in instructing disadvantaged groups how to teach their children. Lombard (1994, p.18) maintained that role-playing emphasizes "action rather than talk; it is interactive experiential learning...and its informal tempo provides a game-like rather than a test-oriented setting". Furthermore, the experience of role-play enables parents to identify with the child as a learner thereby enhancing parents' sensitivity to the child. Lombard also considered role-play appropriate because of the use of Home Tutors in the program, whose own lack of education "precluded the possibility of transmitting a set of verbal rules for teaching in a meaningful way" (p. 18).

3.3.3.4   Home visiting

One of the two modes of delivery of the program materials to the families is fortnightly home visits. Every second week the Home Tutor visits the parent at home for approximately one hour. During that time, the Home Tutor introduces the parent to the upcoming week's set of lessons using the role-play technique described above. This also provides the opportunity for the parent to discuss with the Home Tutor any difficulties or problems they are experiencing concerning the content of the program, the child's progress, or other issues that may be impacting on the family's participation in the program.

3.3.3.5   Parent group meetings

The other mode of delivering the program materials to the family is the fortnightly parent group meeting. On alternate weeks to the home visit, Home Tutors and parents engage in role-play as the method of teaching and learning the lessons. The parents have the opportunity to discuss experiences with each other. The group meeting ideally includes an additional enrichment activity component, the content of which may be driven by parents, Home Tutors or the Coordinator.

3.3.2.6   Daily instruction of the child by parents

The standard requirement of parents engaged in the program is that they deliver the 60 weeks of lessons and related activities across a two year period, spending approximately 15 minutes per day, Monday to Friday, in teaching the child. This provides 75 hours of parent to child instruction over the two years of the program.

3.4   HIPPY evaluation research

Research examining the effectiveness of HIPPY as a program for disadvantaged children spans over four decades and six countries, and has generally addressed the basic question of whether children are doing better as a result of their participation in the program (Westheimer, 2003). Consequently, the bulk of the HIPPY evaluation

research, as with most early educational intervention efficacy studies, concerns outcomes of program participation for children. As assessed by Westheimer, this body of research has been characterized by a lack of integration and consistency in methodology, both between countries and over time. Some studies have employed quasi-experimental designs, involving a comparison group of children not receiving HIPPY. Some have focused both on child and parent or family outcomes, and a few solely on parents and Home Tutor outcomes. The process of the program's implementation has received less attention, although a few studies have combined outcome and process evaluation, examining both the issues and challenges associated with implementation as well some of the underlying processes.

The following sections review outcome and process evaluation studies published or formally reported. Their presentation is organized firstly in terms of their focus, beginning with those concerning outcomes for children, followed by those concerning parent and Home Tutor experiences, and then ordered chronologically within the country in which they were conducted.

3.4.1 Outcome evaluation

3.4.1.1 The effect of HIPPY participation on children

3.4.1.1.1 Research in Israel

The first systematic study of the effect of participation in HIPPY on children was conducted in Tel Aviv between 1969 and 1972 (Lombard, 1994). It involved 161 children aged 4 to 6 years who were assigned to one of three groups, namely those instructed in HIPPY materials at home by a parent (n=58), those instructed in HIPPY materials at school by a teacher(n= 48) and a control group who received no HIPPY instruction (n=30). The groups were considered well matched on a number of demographic variables, including age, the disadvantaged nature of their neighborhood and their attendance at some type of pre-school. They were also well matched in terms of their initial performance on a battery of assessments. Those in the intervention groups received HIPPY over a three year period, during the two years

prior to entry into school and during their first year at school. Group meetings were not offered to parents as part of the intervention.

It was found that during the three years of the intervention, the home instructed group of children consistently outperformed both the teacher instructed and control groups of children on all measures of learning and school achievement used. One year after the intervention had ceased, the findings were similar, with the home instructed group of children scoring statistically significantly higher than those who were not home instructed on assessments of reading and mathematics.

The above study was replicated in Jerusalem between 1972 and 1975, with a sample of 137 children who were attending pre-school classes in two disadvantaged neighborhoods (Lombard, 1994). Similar findings, although with smaller effect sizes, were reported as in the original Tel Aviv study. The results of these two studies indicated that HIPPY did have a positive effect on children's school achievement and that this effect was sustained one year after the intervention had ended. Given that the early gains made through interventions had been reported to fade away once children began school, as highlighted in Section 2.2.1 above, further follow-up was considered imperative.

The follow-up studies on both the Tel Aviv and Jerusalem groups of children were conducted between 1974 and 1979 (Lombard, 1994). Both involved testing of children in third grade, 2 years after the intervention concluded, in math achievement and reading comprehension. In the Tel Aviv study, teacher assessments were sought at fifth grade (4 years after the intervention) and again at ninth grade (8 years after the intervention). The groups of children that had participated in the Jerusalem study were followed up again at fourth grade, 3 years after the intervention. Although findings were generally not statistically significant, overall they supported those found earlier and added strength to the suggestion that the positive effects of participation in HIPPY on children's school achievement were sustained for some time after the intervention had ceased. It was on the basis of this research that the Israeli government introduced HIPPY on a nationwide basis.

3.4.1.1.2   Research in Turkey

The first implementation of HIPPY outside of Israel was in Turkey. The promising signs of sustained positive gains of participation on the child's development indicated in the Israeli studies found further support in the research efforts of Kagitcibasi, Sunar, and Bekman (1987). In 1983, the program was incorporated into the Comprehensive Early Enrichment Project, and evaluated as part of a university-based four-year longitudinal action research study aimed at examining the impact of existing centre-based early childhood education programs on the overall development of the child. The two main elements of the Comprehensive Early Enrichment Project consisted of a pre-school educational program and a mother training program, and it was within this element of the project that HIPPY was incorporated and its effectiveness examined.

The study by Kagitcibasi et al. (1987) involved 255 mother-child pairs, the children of whom were attending either educational pre-school (n=64), custodial pre-school (no education, n=105) or home care (n=86). Half of each mother-child pair in each group were randomly allocated to the Mother Training Program (HIPPY) in the second and third year of the Project. In other words, the families participated in HIPPY for two years. A range of measures designed to assess the child's overall development were applied before and after the program. Baseline data obtained prior to initiation indicated that all groups of children were well matched.

The hypothesis that the intervention would have a positive effect on children's overall development, as compared to no intervention, was supported. In all three groups, HIPPY children outperformed non-HIPPY children on cognitive tasks measures, school achievement tests and school grades. Children who participated in HIPPY were also found to demonstrate less aggression, more autonomous behavior and a better emotional state than non-HIPPY children.

A follow-up study was conducted seven years after the conclusion of the intervention, involving 225 of the original 255 families (Kagitcibasi, 1996). Children were aged between 13 and 15 years. Three measures of long-term effects were examined, namely attendance at school beyond completion of compulsory primary schooling,

school performance based on school records and direct testing of cognitive performance. On these measures, HIPPY children scored significantly higher than non-HIPPY participants, with a higher percentage still attending school, achieving a higher overall academic average and scoring significantly higher on the measure of cognitive performance. HIPPY and non-HIPPY children and their parents were also interviewed. Qualitative data revealed that, in comparison to the non-HIPPY group, children who had participated in HIPPY were more pleased with their success at school, thought teachers were more pleased with them, and believed they had the potential to excel as students. Qualitative data also suggested that those who received HIPPY were more autonomous and better integrated socially.

3.4.1.1.3   Research in the Netherlands

The generally positive findings of the Israeli and Turkish studies inspired the trial of HIPPY in the Netherlands in 1987 (Eldering & Vedder, 1996). Here a quasi-experimental design was utilized to evaluate effects. It involved the comparison of test scores from a group of children in 141 mother-child pairs from disadvantaged communities who participated in HIPPY, with a matched group of children who did not receive the intervention. A distinguishing feature of this study was that families in this study were from several cultural groups, comprising Dutch-born (n=56), Turkish (n=33), Surinamese (n=29) and Moroccan (n=23) families. Children were tested on a range of cognitive developmental measures at the beginning and end of the two year program, and teacher assessments relating to children's classroom behavior were obtained.

Overall, the findings did not echo those reported in Israel and Turkey. No meaningful differences were found on the measures of cognitive performance between the two groups both in either the short term or the long term (Eldering & Vedder, 1996) Process data that had been obtained alongside outcome data were useful in helping to understand why the program appeared to have not produced, in this case, the same positive effects on children's development that it had elsewhere. Throughout the program, process data relating to the weekly activities of participating mother's and their children was obtained in the form of a weekly questionnaire filled out by the

Home Tutors. This revealed a large degree of variation in the intensity of the participation of mothers in the program. It was found that no families in the study completed the expected 60 weeks of activity books. While the majority of families were found to complete around two thirds of the 60 week lessons, the Moroccan families completed less than half. Furthermore, it was found that for the majority of families, planned weekly contact, either through home visits or group meetings did not consistently occur, such that it was concluded that some of the lessons were delivered to families without instruction or guidance from program staff.

Further statistical analysis confirmed the relationship between level of involvement in the program and outcomes for children (Eldering & Vedder,1996). Significant positive correlations were reported between the intensity of mothers' participation in the program and children's cognitive development and classroom behavior. These findings indicated that the more of the program that children received through their parents delivering the weekly lessons in the home, the better they performed in a test of cognitive functioning, and their classroom behavior was rated as being more adaptive by their teachers.

The early failure to replicate more positive findings, and the thorough analysis of possible explanations, culminated in the development of a new version of the program in Netherlands called OPSTAP OPNIEW (van Tuijl, Leseman, & Rispens, 2001). While retaining all the major delivery components of the HIPPY model, the change occurred in the program's content or curriculum. The effectiveness of this version of HIPPY was evaluated using a quasi-experimental design, with children from 205 mother-child pairs from two different ethnic groups (Turkish n=122, and Moroccan n=83) who were participating in HIPPY, and 114 comparison group children from the same ethnic groups (Turkish n= 59, and Moroccan n= 55). Children were tested on a range of cognitive and language measures. Furthermore, in light of findings from the previous study in the Netherlands, systematic data concerning the degree of involvement in the program were obtained, and within-group analyses were conducted to explore the possible effect of this variable.

Mixed outcomes were reported by van Tuijl et al. The program was found to have modest effect on the Turkish group of children, but no effect on the Moroccan group of children. Specifically, modest effects were found for the Turkish group of children in terms of their cognitive development and emergent literacy, small effects on Turkish language development, and no effect on Dutch language development. This latter finding was explained by the fact that Turkish families chose to work with the Turkish version of materials and as such did not improve their Dutch language skills. In this study, parents' level of participation in the program did not emerge as a possible explanation for the overall small effects reported. In contrast to the earlier Netherlands implementation, participation in the program was considered good, with over 90% of activities being carried out by mothers within the home and similarly high percentages of home visits and group meetings were attended. However, one explanation for the lack of progress in the Moroccan group of children proposed by the researchers was that, within Moroccan families, older school-aged children were often given the task to do the program activities with the target child. This was found to occur either because the mother was too busy attending the needs of other younger children, or because their language and literacy skills were insufficient to do the activities themselves. Overall, it appeared that while the Moroccan group of children received the intended *amount* of HIPPY lessons, the *way* in which they were instructed may have been less than optimal.

3.4.1.1.4 Research in the United States

HIPPY was introduced in the United States in 1984 in Oklahoma and Virginia, and was taken up quite quickly in several other States (in 25 by 2006) (http//www.hippy.org.il/html/map.html). The first major outcome study examined the effects of HIPPY on children's school performance at two separate sites (New York and Arkansas), and across two cohorts of children at each site, as part of a series of interconnected research studies (Baker, Piotrkowski, & Brooks-Gunn, 1998; 1999). Different research designs were used at the two sites. In the New York site, families in both cohorts were randomly assigned to the HIPPY program (Cohort 1, n= 37, Cohort 2, n= 47)or a control group (Cohort 1, n= 32, Cohort 2, n= 66). In Arkansas, in contrast, a quasi-experimental design was used in which HIPPY families (Cohort 1, n=

58, Cohort 2, n= 63) were compared with matched families (Cohort 1, n= 55, Cohort 2, n= 50) drawn from the same community. Children at both sites were tested on at three points in time, these being at the end of their participation in the program, one year after participation, and again the following year. A range of standardized measures of cognitive, school readiness, reading and math skills were utilized, as well as teacher assessments of classroom behavior.

As in the Netherlands, the findings of this study concerning the effectiveness of HIPPY were mixed. Varying results were reported across both sites and also across both cohorts of participants at each site. For Cohort 1, children who had been enrolled in HIPPY scored higher than children in the control/comparison groups on measures of cognitive skills (New York site only), classroom adaptation (New York and Arkansas sites), and standardized reading (New York site only). While these results suggested that the HIPPY group of children from Cohort 1 at both sites had a better entry into school with better skills, better performance and with higher assessments from teachers, these results were not replicated in Cohort 2 at either site. In fact, in this Cohort at the Arkansas site, the non-HIPPY children performed statistically significantly better than the HIPPY children on measures of school readiness and standardized achievement at the end of the program. Nevertheless, at one-year follow-up, this difference had disappeared (Baker et al., 1999).

In light of such mixed findings, Baker et al. (1999), stressed the importance of replication studies before generalizing positive or negative results from single-sample, single-sample evaluations. Furthermore, while systematic indices of parents' level of involvement in all aspects of the program were not collected, findings from two further qualitative process studies reported by Baker et al., and reviewed in Section 3.4.2.2 below, suggested that parent level of involvement varied greatly among HIPPY programs. Once again, the value in examining process variables alongside outcome variables was highlighted by these studies reporting contradictory findings.

Further research findings to emerge from the United States have generally been more straightforward, tending to indicate positive gains for children who participated in HIPPY.

A large scale study examined the relatively longer term effects of HIPPY on 516 children who had participated in the program across 21 sites in Arkansas (Bradley, 1999; Bradley & Gilkey, 2001). Utilizing a quasi-experimental, post hoc design, HIPPY children's performance on a range of outcome measures were compared with those of a matched comparison group of children three years after participation had ceased, and again six years after participation had ceased. The comparison group consisted of one group with pre-school experience and one with no pre-school experience. Findings indicated that participation in HIPPY had positive effects for children in terms of higher grades, higher achievement test scores, better classroom behavior, reduced levels of suspension, reduced use of Title 1 services (compared to children with no preschool). However, participation in HIPPY had no observable impact on retention in grade or special education placement, or on classroom behaviors such as curiosity and use of assistance. While positive effects were not statistically significant, they were considered by Bradley to be noteworthy, given that they indicated that HIPPY was effective over and above the effects of another pre-school experience, and also that the effects appeared to have persisted over some time.

A series of three interconnected studies were conducted on the effectiveness of HIPPY in Texas, looking specifically at children's adaptation to kindergarten and parents' involvement in their children's education (Jacobson, 2003). Unlike all HIPPY research so far reviewed, the study design employed in all three studies did not involve comparison or control groups. Data were obtained primarily from parents participating in HIPPY, who were predominantly Mexican-born, and also from children's kindergarten teachers.

The first study in Austin, Dallas and Houston involved structured interviews with 89 parents using the Kindergarten Parent Interview (Jacobson, 2003). The interview was conducted by Home Tutors who received specifically training for this. The 70-item interview schedule was designed to elicit information concerning parent activities and beliefs related to school, family literacy and home environment, as well as demographic information about the child, child's family and the child's schooling. Teachers were asked to complete a 64-item Kindergarten Teacher Survey asking

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them to rate the child on overall classroom adaptability, verbal classroom behavior, language/arts reading instruction as well as parents contact and involvement with their child's education. The teacher survey was completed for 38 HIPPY children.

Findings from the parent interview were consistent with the program's broader objective of increasing parents' level of involvement in their children's education (Jacobson, 2003). The majority of parents (70%) reported feeling more confident engaging in school activities. As a result of feeling more confident, nearly half of parents reported engaging in more discussion with teachers including principals and other parents about their child's education as well as participating more in school activities such as school meetings and observing in their child's classroom. Parents also reported high expectations for their children's educational success, with the majority of them (79.5%) expecting their children to graduate from college. Findings from the teacher surveys indicated that 96% of HIPPY children were perceived doing better than or the same as their classmates in terms of adaptive classroom behaviors such as listening and paying attention. Most of the HIPPY children were rated as excellent in their enjoyment of books, reading and school work generally. Over 40% of HIPPY children were rated as above average in terms of their expressive and receptive language skills and their attention to details and instruction. Teachers confirmed HIPPY parents' involvement with the school, as they reported knowing the majority of mothers personally, and that most had informal discussion with them about their children's education.

The second study in 1998 and 1999 (Jacobson, 2003), was based upon the same program goals as in the first, but changes were made to the method. One change was the addition of new program sites in Denton and Richardson, smaller cities than Austin, Dallas and Houston. Further changes involved families being randomly chosen to participate in this second evaluation as well as the inclusion of families of three and four year olds, (in addition to the five year old group), rather than just families of five year olds, as in the previous study. A total of 353 parents were interviewed using a shortened modified version of the Kindergarten Parent Interview schedule. Also, a standardized 50-item Parent As A Teacher (PAAT) Inventory was added to the evaluation. This additional measure was designed to reveal how parents

feel about parent-child interaction, what priorities they assign to various child behaviors, and what they understand about facilitating child development. The teacher surveys were also modified. Only the section of the Kindergarten Teacher Survey relating to children's school adaptability behaviors was retained, and added to it were the 17-item Getting Ready for School (for teachers of 4 year olds) and a 20-item A Kindergarten Scholar (for teachers of 5 years olds).

The findings from the parent interviews (Jacobson, 2003) were similar to those of the first study. Of particular interest was evidence concerning the positive influence of HIPPY on the family literacy environment. Almost all parents (97%) reported having basic learning materials in the home (such as crayons and puzzles) and most reported having at least one children's book from each of the categories asked about. Over 80% of parents reported reading to their children at least three times a week and over 50% reported increasing their personal reading in the past year. Findings from the PAAT indicated that almost all parents had attitudes consistent with those from conventional early childhood practice aimed at facilitating optimal child development. Parents were found to have positive attitudes towards play as a method of teaching, towards their continuous involvement in their child's education, towards providing a learning environment at home, and towards the acceptance and support of child creativity. One area where parent attitudes were found to diverge from conventional practice was in relation to their attitudes towards giving their child control and freedom to make decisions. The finding that nearly half the group of parents held negative attitudes in this regard was interpreted in terms of the strong emphasis placed on parental authority in the Mexican culture. A possible effect of parental attitudes towards control of their children and negative regard for freedom of expression emerged in the findings reported by teachers. While both groups of children enrolled in HIPPY were rated as adapting well in their classrooms and demonstrated expected developmental levels of most ratings of personal, social, physical and academic development, they demonstrated less competence than other children in areas related to conflict resolution, problem solving and exploratory learning.

The final in this series of three studies involved a smaller, randomly chosen group of 45 parents (Jacobson, 2003). While the process and procedure of the study remained

essentially the same as in the previous study, both the parent and the kindergarten teacher interview schedules were revised to facilitate parental understanding of questions, as well as to allow for cross-state comparisons of data. Findings from this study were similar to those previously reported and were also consistent between the four HIPPY sites.   Overall, the qualitative findings from all three studies suggested positive benefits for both children and parents participating in HIPPY. Children were found to be adapting well in the classroom setting and parents were found to be well engaged with their children's education, both in terms of their involvement at the child's school and in terms of providing an educational environment in the home.

3.4.1.1.5 Research in South Africa

HIPPY was introduced in South Africa in 1988. Its first implementation was evaluated for its effectiveness in terms of children's school readiness, utilizing a matched comparison group design (Adams, Skuy, & Fridjhon, 1992). The HIPPY and the non-HIPPY comparison groups of preschool children were drawn from two disadvantaged urban communities, namely a "coloured" group (mixed race, n=48) and an "African" group (n=56). In total, 104 children initially enrolled in HIPPY across two sites. Children were tested at one time only, after completion of the program. Measures involved school readiness and vocabulary tests, as well as a teacher assessment of student behaviors.

As was the case in the Netherlands and for Baker, Piotrkowski, & Brooks-Gunn, (1998), findings of Adams et al. (1992) were mixed. While children from both groups did statistically significantly better on tasks requiring perceptual, spatial and reasoning skills than the non-HIPPY group, only the children from the "coloured" group outperformed the non-HIPPY group on tasks requiring verbal comprehension. However, differences were found between the two HIPPY groups in terms of their participation in the program. Attrition rates were exceptionally high for the "African" group (78.6%), with only 12 children graduating from the program, whereas most of the "coloured" group (79%) graduated. Explanations for the differing effects and attrition rates between groups were framed mainly in terms of the degree of disadvantage experienced by the groups. The children from the "African" group were

reported as coming from a community that suffers extremely high level of deprivation, in which parents were typically trying first and foremost to survive. Such conditions would naturally detract from the energy that could be invested in the program. In contrast, the children from the "coloured" group came from a less disadvantaged and more organized community, which could potentially bring greater energy and motivation to the program.

3.4.1.1.6   Research in New Zealand

HIPPY initially opened in New Zealand in 1992 under the umbrella of a larger body of services known as Family Service Centres (BarHava-Monteith, Harre, & Field, 1999a). The first, government funded evaluation by Burgon et al. (1997), utilized a quasi-experimental design involving the comparison of the developmental progress of 435 HIPPY group children drawn from two cohorts and across seven sites, with the progress results of another group of non-HIPPY children from who were involved in the large longitudinal Competent Student study (n=704). Families involved in HIPPY were of Maori, New Zealand European or Pacific Islander descent. Data concerning the HIPPY group of children were obtained from a number of sources including observations of children, interviews with parents, teachers and Board Members, teacher assessments and psychometric testing. Data were gathered during the first year of participation and at completion of the program.

Of the children who completed the program, 75% showed improvements in receptive vocabulary and performed better than the Competent Student study in math (Burgon et al. 1997). The majority of parents (82%) also reported that HIPPY had positively influenced their child's performance and behavior at school. Teacher assessments confirmed these findings in part, rating HIPPY children as performing better at math, but performing the same as the Competent Children group in receptive vocabulary. While teachers did not indicate strongly that HIPPY had improved children's developmental progress at school, there was a trend towards fewer of the HIPPY children being described as having slow progress since beginning school when compared to the Competent Children sample.

However, Burgon et al. (1997) acknowledged that this evaluation suffered from a fundamental problem of the unsuitability of the comparison group used for most measures. This group was found to differ from the HIPPY group in terms of age (on average 4-5 months older), ethnic background (greater proportion of families of European origin), family income (came from a wider range of household incomes) and pre-school experiences (all had attended, whereas HIPPY group was unknown). Also the attrition rate from these two cohorts (58% and 56%) was significantly higher than the average international rate of 25% (Lombard, 1994), and higher than those reported in the Netherlands (40%) by Eldering & Vedder, (1996). The suggestions offered by Burgon et al. to account for such rates were similar to those reported in the research from South Africa by Adams et al. (1992). Families living under high levels of stress associated with extremes of disadvantage may have limited reserves of energy or resources to invest in a program such as HIPPY. Burgon et al.also noted the high levels of mobility among target families in New Zealand, as well as the perception that they maybe stigmatized for their participation in a program operating in conjunction with the Family Services Centre, as other factors that may have contributed to the relatively high attrition rates.

Subsequent New Zealand research aimed to provide a more rigorous investigation of the effectiveness of HIPPY, through a series of three evaluation studies examining the impact of HIPPY on children's reading abilities, school readiness and classroom behavior (BarHava-Monteith et al.,1999a). A quasi-experimental design was used to compare the progress of 106 children who had participated in HIPPY with 733 non-HIPPY children who were drawn from the same school. Data were obtained from a variety of sources including teacher assessments, psychometric testing and archival data from schools.

Overall the findings were mixed. While a trend of higher scores for the HIPPY group children over the non-HIPPY group on all 11 measures was reported, these differences reached statistical significance on only four of the measures (BarHava-Monteith et al., 1999a). HIPPY children outperformed non-HIPPY children on three of six aspects of school achievement (concepts about print, reading vocabulary and word recognition skills), and on the measure of school behavior. It was anticipated that the

use of a more appropriate comparison group in these studies than was used in the previous New Zealand study, would facilitate "a more rigorous evaluation" (BarHava-Monteith et al., 1999a, p. 105). However, the researchers reported that they had come to believe that, as a self-selected group, the comparison group of parents may have been particularly motivated and educationally oriented, consequently being a more advantaged group than the HIPPY group, and consequently again not strictly comparable.

3.4.1.1.7 Research in Canada

HIPPY was introduced in British Columbia in Canada in 1999, and one evaluation study has been published so far (Le Mare & Audet, 2003), with a relatively small group. A quasi-experimental design was employed to examine the effect of HIPPY on both cognitive and socio-emotional development of children. It involved the comparison of a multi-ethnic group of children who had participated in two years of HIPPY and one year of pre-school (n=14), with two other groups of children from the same kindergarten classroom. One comparison group had prior pre-school experience, (n=13) while the other group had no pre-school experience (n=14). Children in all groups were considered otherwise well matched. Data were collected once, at the end of the first school year, one year after participation in HIPPY, and included direct psychometric testing of children as well as teacher assessments.

Overall, the findings were neutral. No significant differences were found between any of the three groups. However as discussed by Le Mare and Audet (2003), this was not unexpected, given the small sample size and hence reduced statistical power of the analysis. Nevertheless the researchers found the pattern in results noteworthy, and reported a trend of higher scores for the HIPPY group over both non-HIPPY groups on most of the measures of cognitive, social and emotional development. These trends were considered promising, given that data had been obtained one year after participation in the program had ceased. Also noteworthy were teacher reports that the HIPPY children had began the school year better prepared both academically and socially than other groups. Le Mare and Audet speculated that the findings indicating benefits to children in terms of their social development may have been

mediated by improvements in the quality of the parent-child relationship as a result of their participation in HIPPY.

3.4.1.1.8   Research in Australia

HIPPY was introduced in Victoria, Australia, in 1998 in its two year form. An evaluation examining the outcome effects of HIPPY was conducted on the program's second implementation in Australia with a multicultural community of families during 1999-2000 (Gilley, 2002). A quasi-experimental design was used to compare the educational progress of a HIPPY group of children (n=33) with a comparison group of children drawn from similar communities (n=33). Data were gathered from both direct psychometric testing of the children, from teacher assessments and from interviews with parents. A range of measures were used to examine children's learning readiness, their math and literacy skills, and their academic self esteem. Data were collected at two points in time, these being towards the end of the second year in the program (during children's first year at school), and again one year later (during their second year at school, and approximately nine months after they had completed the program).

Findings were generally positive. Both quantitative and qualitative data were reported by Gilley (2002) to indicate that the program enhanced children's school progress. Findings from parent reports revealed a range of skills and abilities perceived to have been learnt through participation in the program, and parents believed these had helped their children at school. Findings from quantitative data tended to support these beliefs, in that HIPPY children scored significantly higher than non-HIPPY children on all measures of learning readiness, math and literacy skills, and higher, though not significantly so, on a measure of children's behavioral academic self esteem. Further, it was reported that the HIPPY group of children maintained a significant lead in scores in the year after the program had ceased, in terms of their literacy skills, and at the same time had significantly improved their scores on the measure of academic self esteem.

3.4.1.2   Outcomes for parents, families and Home Tutors

Most of the HIPPY research efforts have been directed towards evaluating the program in terms of outcomes for children, but a significant body of evidence has been accumulating that indicates gains for parents, families and Home Tutors as a result of their participation in the program. While the largest proportion has been anecdotal, more recently several studies have primarily focused on parent, parent-child and to a lesser extent Home Tutor outcomes. Largely, these studies have employed qualitative methodologies.

3.4.1.2.1   Anecdotal evidence

According to Lombard (1994), one of the original primary assumptions in HIPPY was that through the process of participating in the program, parents would see a rise in their children's achievement that would not only serve to reinforce their participation in the program, but would also stimulate pride in their part in bringing this about. Lombard's assertion was supported by considerable anecdotal evidence gathered by the Research Centre in Israel. Parents were reported as viewing some of their children's success as their own, connecting positive changes in the child's attitude and behavior with participation in the program. They also often expressed pride in the child's increased levels of achievement, particularly in relation to competency at school.

Many parents also reported improved relationships with their child as a result of participation in the process (Lombard, 1994). Through the process of working together on HIPPY lessons, parents frequently noted a closer bond with the child, becoming more patient and less frustrated, and having resolved previous tensions within the relationship. Improvements in relationships were also reported to extend beyond the parent-child dyad into other family relationships. Parents have reported that family members have come together to work on HIPPY activities, resulting in an increased eagerness to spend more time together, both within and beyond the HIPPY setting. Further, parents often reported that attendance at group meetings provided an opportunity to develop relationships with other parents and strengthened their sense

of connection to the wider community. Beyond this, parents reported gaining increased cognitive and literacy skills themselves, as a result of working through the HIPPY lessons with the child. Furthermore, participation in HIPPY led to some parents to actively advance their own education through other avenues.

While such evidence has highlighted many potential benefits of participation for parents and families generally, this body of anecdotal evidence suggested that Home Tutors benefit most of all from involvement with HIPPY. According to Lombard (1994), Home Tutors partake of everything given to program parents, but in addition benefit from the highly motivated learning experience of having to repeatedly articulate what they have learnt (in their work with parents), and review and clarify newly learnt materials under the guidance of a professional. The role also brings with it a respectable salary and hours, that enable them to still function as mothers and homemakers, as well as facilitating new relationships, new skills and, as Lombard remarked, "a new sense of competence" (p. 94). Home Tutors were also reported to benefit from their role in terms of the sense of fulfillment it brings them from bearing witness to the development of children and families to whom they provide the service. Furthermore, Lombard's anecdotal evidence indicated that, as with parents involved in the program, Home Tutors are likely to act on a growing desire to further their own education.

3.4.1.2.2 Formal outcome Research

The potential benefits of HIPPY to parents was first specifically examined in the New Zealand study that used a quasi-experimental design, involving three groups of parents, mainly mothers (BarHava-Monteith, Harre, & Field, 2003). Participants included a group of HIPPY Home Tutors (N=44), a group of HIPPY parents (n=52), and comparison group of non-HIPPY parents (n=38). The HIPPY group of parents were in their second year of the program, and Home Tutors all had at least two years experience in the role. Assessment measures included two surveys designed to elicit information regarding parents' level of involvement in educational activities and their attitudes towards parenting, school and their child's education. Parental self esteem was also assessed using The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale.

The findings were mixed. While both HIPPY Home Tutors and parents were found to be significantly more likely to be involved in formal educational activities, and significantly more likely to attend adult education classes, than the comparison group, no differences between groups were reported in terms of attitudes towards parenting, school and their child's education, and self-esteem. However, as noted by BarHava-Monteith et al.,(2003) the lack of attitudinal differences between HIPPY and non-HIPPY groups may have resulted from a ceiling effect, given that parents from all groups reported highly positive attitudes towards parenting, school and their child's education. In relation to the lack of differences between parental self-esteem, BarHava-Monteith et al. proposed that, taken together, the findings suggest that over time participation in HIPPY may lead indirectly to enhance parental self esteem through facilitating more positive attitudes and behaviors in educational activities. It appears that parental self-esteem within the context of participation in HIPPY may therefore be more fruitfully examined *over time* and perhaps *some time after* participation in the program, rather than simply at one point in time during involvement in the program.

A descriptive study of the characteristics of HIPPY families in Florida was conducted in 2002 (Cuenca, Black & Powell, 2003), involving a relatively large number of both current and former HIPPY parent participants (n=832), and Home Tutors currently involved in the program (n=83), from across numerous sites within the state. The study aimed to document the influence of HIPPY on parents' involvement in their children's education and their own professional development, as well as the academic achievements of participating children. Data was obtained utilizing The Florida HIPPY Parenting Survey, a 64 item self report survey that had been developed as a pilot instrument for the study.

Findings were reported separately for Home Tutors and parents. Concerning the influence of HIPPY on parents' level of involvement in education, participation in HIPPY appeared to have a dramatic impact on family literacy, with 80% of parents reported having become more aware of the importance of reading and had increased the amount of time they spent reading. They reported being very involved in their

child's educational activities, regularly checking schoolwork and discussing school events with their child, and many had developed interest in furthering their education and increasing job skills since becoming involved with HIPPY. Findings for Home Tutors and parents were similar in terms of the level of involvement with their child's education and family literacy, but Home Tutors were more likely to pursue their own educational opportunities, express interest in developing business initiatives, seek further employment, become involved in their community and begin voluntary work.

Two Australian studies have also utilized qualitative methodologies to explore the impact of HIPPY on parents and families, within the context of broader evaluation research. Conducted with multicultural groups of participating immigrant families, both have reported positive benefits for parents as a result of participation in the program. From information gleaned from semi-structured interviews with parents (n=30), conducted during the second year of involvement in the program and after completion of the program, Gilley (2002) reported positive benefits for parents in relation to improved English language skills, increased engagement in their child's education and improved relationships with their child.

Similar benefits for parents were reported by Grady (2002). This study further included a more focused examination of the parent-child relationship, namely the influence of participation in the HIPPY on the quality of attachment within the relationship. Information was obtained from semi-structured interviews with a sub-sample (n=7) of parents from the larger group of parents (n=16) who had participated in general process evaluation. The interview questions were designed to elicit parent's retrospective accounts of changes in the parent-child relationship generally, as well as changes in the security of attachment in their interactions with their children during HIPPY activities. Information relating to four phases of parent-child interaction was examined, including initiation of HIPPY activities, response to that initiation, the quality of engagement during the activity, and the disengagement phase of the interaction. Findings indicated parents' perceived participation in HIPPY had improved their relationship with their child. Parents reported feeling an increased sense of closeness, intimacy and attunement with their child. Also, within the specific context of HIPPY activities, in all four phases of interaction, enhanced security of attachment in

the parent-child relationship emerged in their reports. Grady interpreted these findings in terms of attachment theory and suggested that the improved parental emotional sensitivity to their children, as facilitated by participation in HIPPY, was associated with an improved capacity of children to have the freedom to explore their environment, and thus engage in new learning.

Most recently, a smaller qualitative study was conducted with Australian non-immigrant Anglo-Celtic families experiencing transgenerational disadvantage to determine how HIPPY impacted on parents and families involved in the program, and what they perceived as outcomes for themselves and their children (McDonald, 2004). A semi-structured interview with 12 HIPPY parents, at one point in time during their second year of the program, was designed to elicit information regarding the impact, benefits and perceptions of the program for parents and "tapped into three levels of individual, interpersonal relationships and community" (McDonald, p. 30). Parents reported many positive benefits for themselves and their families as a result of their participation. However, while all families were involved in the same implementation of the program, and all parents experienced improvements in their relationship with the HIPPY child, considerable variation was reported within the group. More socially isolated parents appeared to gain more from their participation, reporting added benefits in terms of enhanced confidence and pride in their role as their child's teachers, improved organizational skills, less punitive parenting styles, and increased cognitive abilities.

3.4.1   Process evaluation

As in evaluation of early educational interventions generally, process evaluation of HIPPY has been scant, in comparison with outcome evaluation. When reported, it has generally occurred concurrently with outcome evaluation. Much variation exists between the dimensions of implementation that have received attention, although two broad aims and purposes can be identified within the body of process research. The first is to use process evaluation to investigate challenges associated with cultural and community aspects of the program's implementation in the standard way. The second

is to use process evaluation to explain or understand how program outcomes may have occurred.

3.4.2.1 Investigating implementation challenges within differing communities

Studies in the Netherlands, New Zealand and Australia have made the investigation of the challenges associated with the program's standard implementation within differing cultural communities one of their primary aims. These have found, to varying degrees, a range of cultural attitudes and practices that may present barriers to the programs' full implementation. These barriers have been reported at a number of levels of implementation.

For example, in their process evaluation conducted concurrently with an outcome evaluation of HIPPY with ethnic minority groups in the Netherlands, Eldering and Vedder (1996) identified a number of cultural factors that adversely influenced standard implementation, both at the level of recruitment of parents and Home Tutors, and at the level of participation in the program. It was found that within traditional Moroccan and Turkish families, the cultural expectation that women involve themselves largely within home-based activities where the presence of outsiders were often not permitted, presented barriers to the acceptance of home visiting and also presented a problem in recruiting families and Home Tutors to the program. Beyond recruitment, language issues in some ethnic minority groups presented challenges for implementation. For example, the low literacy levels of the majority of mothers often resulted in an older sibling assisting with the delivery of program materials to the HIPPY child. Furthermore, Home Tutors, while proficient in the language of origin of the parents to whom they delivered the program, were often not proficient in the Dutch language in which they needed to communicate with program staff. This inability to effectively communicate the content of the program between staff, Tutors and parents was considered by the researchers to have serious implications for the program's successful operation.

Process evaluation conducted of the five stand-alone HIPPY programs in New Zealand (BarHava-Monteith, Harre, & Field, 1999b) highlighted implementation challenges at the national and community level. Specifically, it was reported that, as HIPPY grew within New Zealand, there was a need for the program to become more standardized nationwide, and to have centralized coordination and increased support for local Coordinators. The need for HIPPY to be strengthened at the community level was also emphasized, particularly in respect to developing stronger links with local schools. Further, some educational organizers, from Maori and Pacific Islander cultural groups, were concerned that in using English as the main language of instruction, HIPPY minimized the importance of children's first language and their cultural heritage. However, for those HIPPY parents with English as a second language, participation in the program was viewed positively, as it enabled them to help their children with English skills as preparation for school.

Process evaluation research conducted in Australia with ethnic minority immigrant groups also revealed language and cultural beliefs and practices as variously influencing the program's implementation (Grady, 2002; Gilley, 2002). While these issues were not reported to have influenced the program's operation at the level of recruitment, as in research from the Netherlands, cultural beliefs, practices and language were found to variously influence the implementation of the program within the home, at group meetings and at the level of the service provider. From the service provider's perspective, both studies reported that the major challenge overall in implementing the program to families from a variety of cultural backgrounds was that it magnified the work required to implement the program, most notably in the need to translate HIPPY materials. Cultural and language issues were also found to influence the level of involvement in the program, with these issues impacting more for some cultural groups than others. Grady reported Hmong families to be less engaged than Vietnamese families in terms of their participation in group meetings and home visits, and in the delivery of materials on a daily basis. Within Hmong families, older siblings, rather than parents, at times instructed the child in the HIPPY lessons and consequently lessons were not always done regularly or consistently. This practice was explained in terms of rigid adherence to cultural expectations that Hmong

mothers assume full responsibility for often large families, often leaving them less available for other activities such as HIPPY.

Variation in attendance at group meetings was also reported in terms of cultural issues (Gilley, 2002; Grady, 2002). In the implementation of HIPPY evaluated by Grady, parents had been divided into three parent groups based on their cultural background for the purpose of group meeting attendance. Two were fairly homogenous, while the third group was culturally mixed. Parents belonging to culturally homogenous groups were more likely to attend group meetings than those belonging to the mixed group. It was suggested that as parents in the homogenous groups may have felt more connected than the mixed group, and therefore experienced the group meeting more positively they may have been more motivated to attend regularly. Similarly, Gilley reported variation among cultural groups in terms of attendance at group meetings as well as in terms of completing the two year program. In particular, a Somali group of families appeared to participate less in the program than other groups. Gilley suggested that this may have been due, in part, to the conflict between Somali families' traditional way of dealing with time, namely that they did not usually do things at specific times, and the demands of the program for punctuality.

In brief, research on challenges to implementation has, to date, focused upon the impact of various cultural and language factors upon the capacity to deliver the standard program. Cultural and language issues have been found to present problems in some communities in recruiting families and Home Tutors into the program, to influence the level of parent involvement within the home and at group meetings, to influence the capacity of parents to understand the HIPPY materials and to increase the workload to staff.

3.4.2.2   Explaining program outcomes in terms of process

As described in Section 3.4.1.1.4 mixed findings in terms of children's outcomes were reported in the two site, two cohort study conducted in New York and Arkansas (Baker et al., 1999). This study also included a process evaluation dimension that proved useful in terms of illuminating some of the implementation variables that may have

accounted for the differences in outcomes reported. Findings from this study revealed considerable variation in parents' level of involvement in the program, or as phrased by Baker et al. (p. 130), in "dosage" of the program. Specifically, while parents in both cohorts and at both sites were more likely to be involved in the home-visiting than the group meeting component of the program, different patterns of participation in both these components were identified as being related to certain characteristics of families. Firstly, parents who were not receiving welfare support, had more education, held higher expectations of their children's education, and reported a greater number of educational materials in the home, were more likely to participate in the home visiting component of the program. In contrast, families that received welfare, were headed by a single parent, or had fewer adults and more children in the household, were more likely to participate in the group meeting components of HIPPY. These findings indicated not only that many families across both cohorts and sites did not receive the full program as it was intended, but also that few families received the program at the standard level of intensity.

Similarly, Gilley (2002) reported different patterns of participation within the HIPPY group in terms of how much of the program they completed. Of the 33 families who took part in the Australian study, 13 of those completed only one year of the two year program. Post hoc analyses revealed that these different patterns of participation influenced the outcomes for the HIPPY group of children. Specifically it was reported that those children who completed two years of the program showed greater educational progress than those who completed only one year of HIPPY.

Roundtree's (2003) United States study examined how participation in HIPPY may influence parent's acquisition of teaching skills necessary to successfully engage their children in literacy tasks. In particular, the study aimed to investigate how HIPPY materials or methods may have affected mothers' scaffolding attempts, a concept closely aligned with Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the zone of proximal development, discussed in Section 1.3 in Chapter 1. A small scale qualitative case study approach was employed, entailing multiple observations of three mother-child dyads as they engaged around literacy materials, during three phases of investigation conducted over a one year period. The first involved observation of mother-child dyads as they

interacted around neutral literacy materials, such as puzzles and storybooks of parents. The second phase involved observation of interaction around HIPPY materials. The final phase was an exact replication of phase one. Findings indicated that the three mothers maintained moderate scaffolding levels throughout all three phases. While only one mother demonstrated an increase in scaffolding behavior during the post-HIPPY observation period, all three mothers demonstrated a range of scaffolding functions during HIPPY interactions. It was concluded that the HIPPY model appears to be an appropriate model for facilitating parental scaffolding behavior.

A recent study conducted in Australia (Nolan, 2004) aimed to understand the process of participation in HIPPY predominantly from the perspective of children. It involved 10 children and their parents, who were part of a cohort of 52 HIPPY families, participating in the second year of the program. Individual interviews were conducted with both children and parents. Children were also encouraged to draw a picture of HIPPY. Both the child's drawing and child and parent responses to a semi-structured interview were used to explore child and parent perceptions of the program, their perceptions of the other's enjoyment of the program, their respective experiences of HIPPY within the home environment, and the parent-child relationship. Of the 10 parent-child pairs, 7 reported wholly positive experiences of the program. Half of the children reported spending time with their parent as the most enjoyable aspect of HIPPY. The children's enjoyment and experience of the program was reported to be strongly linked with the parent's attitude to participating in the program and, to a lesser extent, to the frequency with which the program was delivered by parents to the child. Specifically, children with parents who participated positively in the program were more likely to report positive experiences of the program, while children reported less enjoyable experiences of the program where they perceived negative attitudes towards the program expressed by the parent. Similarly, children who received the program on a more frequent basis reported enjoying the program more than children who received the program less regularly. It is likely that this reflects an interactive effect, with children and parents encouraging each other.

3.4.3   Integrative summary of HIPPY evaluation research

Four decades of relatively small scale evaluation efforts indicate that HIPPY has the potential to positively influence the lives of disadvantaged children within a range of different national and cultural settings. HIPPY has been generally found to positively benefit children in terms of their school readiness, cognitive development and aspects of their socio-emotional development. Some of these effects were found to be sustained some time after participation in the program had ceased.   While examined to a far lesser extent, positive benefits for parents and home tutors were also reported. Parents were found to gain in terms of increased cognitive abilities, as well as from social and emotional benefits. Home Tutors were found to be more likely to pursue further education and employment. Positive benefits were also found in terms of improved parent-child relationships and to a lesser extent family functioning.

While the overall body of research concerning HIPPY outcomes presents a fairly consistent pattern of positive findings for HIPPY, few studies have not found positive trends to be statistically significant on all measures of learning readiness, and some findings (notably those of Baker et al., 1999) have been mixed. Process evaluation, when available, has proved most useful for illuminating factors associated with the program's implementation possibly underlying these latter findings. Varying levels of parental participation in the program both within the home and at group meetings, have been found to mean that not all children have received the full intervention. Generally, variations in participation have been found to be a function of factors specific to particular cultural groups and to the lifestyles of families living in extremes of disadvantage. Process evaluations that lead to a greater understanding of factors that account for variation in parental level of involvement are certainly relevant for a home-based program such as HIPPY, in that the intervention depends on strong parental commitment. It is important to note also, that differing findings concerning HIPPY outcomes may be, to a substantial degree, a function of methodological variations between studies, as commented by Westheimer (2003). Variations in overall research design, in the appropriateness of comparison groups, and in measures used are examples of factors making generalizations difficult.

The need for more evaluation efforts to include complementary process and outcome evaluations emerges clearly from the past literature. A number of other gaps are also evident that have implications for the present study. These include a lack of attention given to the wider impact of HIPPY on children's social and emotional development as well as its impact on parents and the parent-child relationship. The need for evaluation efforts that endeavor to increase understanding of whether and how HIPPY may operate to influence such variables largely underlies the rationale for the present study. The following chapter begins with a more comprehensive outline of the contextual influences that have contributed to the momentum of the present study.

CHAPTER 4

CONCEPTUALISATION AND PLANS FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

The research and practical context of the present study provided the background for the research questions and aims to be addressed. These are summarized below, followed by the hypotheses and expectations of the study. Next, the implications of the hypotheses and expectations for the use of complementary quantitative and qualitative methods are considered. The overall design of the study is then outlined.

4.1 The overall context of the present study

4.1.1 Key areas for further exploration

As indicated in the foregoing chapters, early educational intervention programs for disadvantaged children have now been a focus of social policy and research in numerous industrialized countries for over four decades. Over the past twenty years in particular, the field has become transformed from an innovative area of emerging service with a limited empirical base, to a robust area of theory and practice. As its knowledge base has matured, there has been growing recognition within the field of the need to widen its original focus on children alone to the broader family, community and societal factors that influence child development. At the theoretical level, this has been reflected in the growth of systems theories of child development such as that of Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1986). In human services practice, it has resulted in the emergence of several intervention models that aim to enhance child outcomes by targeting both the parent and the child, sometimes within the context of the family home (Duch, 2005).

On the other hand, evaluation efforts in this field have generally remained largely child-focused, giving less attention to the impact of such interventions on parents and overall family functioning. Also, research on the effects of such interventions on outcomes for children reflect relatively little attention to program effects beyond children's cognitive and or educational development. A prominent gap exists within

this literature regarding the effects of intervention on the broader range of children's functional capacities, particularly in the social and emotional domains.

As more intervention efforts focus on the level of the child within the family, the need for research efforts to enhance understanding of how such interventions may influence both parent and child outcomes is warranted. In addition, as the knowledge base underpinning the field suggests, children's social and emotional development are not only interrelated with cognitive development, but may also have implications for children's ongoing development and overall functioning. Therefore, the need to examine program effectiveness with these outcomes in mind is important. Beyond this need to broaden the scope of outcome evaluation generally, there is also a need for research to address the question that comes after asking if the intervention works, that is the question of how the intervention might work. Specifically, the field lacks research that gives priority to address questions about how different types of interventions influence specific outcomes for children and families who may face differential opportunities and vulnerabilities.

HIPPY fits under the broad umbrella of what have been referred to as family-focused early educational intervention models. However, the body of HIPPY evaluation literature has gaps similar in nature to those described above concerning early childhood compensatory interventions generally. As concluded in Chapter 3 above, only limited attention has been given to outcomes beyond the child's learning readiness and school performance, raising questions about the effect of the intervention on social and emotional outcomes for children, and on outcomes generally for parents and Home Tutors.

Questions concerning the effects on the intervention on parents appear particularly prominent in the HIPPY research, in that this model aims to target children directly through their parents. Essentially, the intervention aims to influence both child and parent outcomes. There remains a need for research directed towards understanding what and how particular features of the HIPPY model produce particular outcomes for parents. One such pathway that warrants further investigation is the impact of participation in HIPPY on the parent-child relationship. Grady's (2002) Australian research indicated that participation in HIPPY can facilitate a sense of closeness

between parent and child (parent and child outcomes) that enhances the security of the attachment within the relationship. These findings supported the notion, based on attachment theory, that enhanced security of attachment within the parent-child relationship as a result of participation in the program may facilitate children's capacity for exploration and effective learning, and therefore influence outcomes for children.

4.1.2. An opportunity for further exploration

As recounted in Chapter 3 above, research on HIPPY was conducted with the first implementations of HIPPY in Australia, with families of communities of newly arrived immigrants residing in inner Melbourne (Gilley, 2002; Grady, 2002). The Brotherhood of St. Laurence introduced the program to Australia in 1998, and in 1999, it was offered to a different population by Glastonbury Child and Family Services, a major family support agency in the Victorian regional centre of Geelong. This population served by Glastonbury comprises communities of educationally disadvantaged families who are Australian born and of Anglo-Celtic origins. Educational disadvantage here was observed to be transgenerational in nature, and to be associated with transgenerationally transmitted socio-economic disadvantage. Both the specific programmatic funding auspice of HIPPY and the overall mission of the Glastonbury agency required HIPPY to be evaluated on an ongoing basis, thus creating opportunities for the further research called for by the state of knowledge summarized above. Pursuing such research was strongly supported by HIPPY Australia, the program licensing body in Australia.

Glastonbury immediately implemented in-house monitoring of both process and outcome factors with its 1999 program, which resulted in a summary report (Duffield, 1999) and independent qualitative evaluation by Victoria University was conducted with the 2000 program (Godfrey, 2006). Each of these investigations revealed the program to be worthwhile with the new population being served, and indicated implementation areas for special attention by the agency. The ground was prepared for a quasi-experimental study of the third implementation program outcomes and for more in-depth examination of a range of issues.

Consideration of what has been illuminated in past research, that is, what is known, combined with what is still of interest but remains as yet unknown, led to a series of questions being posed. These research questions relate to specific domains of inquiry. With respect to some areas of proposed investigation, hypotheses could be developed and tested. In other areas, expectations only were formulated to be further explored. Through the evaluation, conducted over a three year period, of the effectiveness and process of the third implementation of HIPPY in a disadvantaged Australian-born community by Glastonbury Child and Family Services in Geelong, the following questions would be addressed and consequent aims of the study pursued.

4.2   Research questions

The research questions asked by the proposed study relate to both theoretical and practical levels across two broad domains.

The first domain concerns the process of implementation of the program. Answering questions here would establish to what extent the standard program of HIPPY was being implemented in this delivery, and would provide information about process factors possibly contributing to program outcomes. Four research questions were formulated concerning this domain, as set out below.

1. To what extent could the implementation of the program under study be characterized as the standard program prescribed by HIPPY International?
2. Were any adaptations made to the standard model to accommodate the new population involved, and if so, what were they?
3. From the perspective of both staff and parents, what worked well in facilitating the delivery of the program, both in terms of the agency delivering to participating families, and the parents delivering to participating children?
4. Were there any difficulties from the perspectives of both staff and parents in terms of implementing the program, and if so, what were they?

The second domain relates to the outcomes of the program. This domain was conceptualized broadly, beyond children's cognitive/educational or learning readiness

outcomes, to embrace socio-emotional outcomes, and such outcomes for parents and Home Tutors as well as children. Five research questions were generated concerning this domain of inquiry, as set out below.

1. Did the program have the intended beneficial effects on the educational development or learning readiness of participating children?
2. Did the program have any beneficial effects on the general socio-emotional development of participating children?
3. Did the program have any beneficial effects on the socio-emotional development of participating parents?
4. Did the program have any beneficial effects of the socio-emotional development of participating Home Tutors?
5. Did the program have any beneficial effects of the relationships within participating families, particularly on the quality of the relationship between the parent and child?

4.3   Aims of the research

Within the process of implementation domain, the research aimed to conduct a systematic evaluation of the implementation of HIPPY including the examination of how the program was implemented at two main levels, namely the implementation of the program by the agency with participating families, and the implementation of the program by parents with the HIPPY child. A further aim here concerned the identification of perceived factors within the process of implementation that were facilitative and of those factors that presented difficulties in this regard.

Within the domain of program outcomes, the proposed research first aimed to examine whether the early childhood educational intervention had the intended beneficial effects on the educational development of participating children. The proposed research aimed then to go further, to explore whether the program had socio-emotional developmental effects for participating children, and for their parents and for Home Tutors as well, as suggested by theory and previous research.

It was anticipated that exploring links between the implementation process and outcomes domains would throw some light on how such processes may produce any emergent outcomes.

4.4   Hypotheses and expectations of the study

A series of hypotheses and expectations flowed from the research questions and aims stated above. The rationale underlying the hypotheses and expectations was sometimes grounded in past research findings pertaining to HIPPY, sometimes in past research findings pertaining to early childhood interventions in general, and sometimes in theoretical considerations. Each hypothesis and expectation, generated from research questions and aims within the two domains, is now presented.

4.4.1 The process of implementation: Hypotheses and expectations

It was expected that the process of implementation would be found to follow the standard program model, as this was the stated aim of both the Agency, Glastonbury, and of HIPPY Australia. However, given that research on the implementation of the program to the particular population under study, that is an Australian-born socio-economically disadvantaged group was relatively new, and given early indications by the two qualitative evaluations that were still ongoing at the time the present study was being planned, it was considered possible that variations to the standard model may be found by the present study.

In terms of the aim to identify both facilitative factors and difficulties in the implementation of the program, past research guided expectations. In particular, Grady's (2002) data, of which analysis was still in progress when the present study was being planned, identified the structured nature of the program, followed by role-play as a technique of instruction, as the most facilitative factors in the program's implementation. It was the expectation that the present study would produce similar findings. In terms of difficulties, however, Grady's research, with a culturally diverse population, identified language issues, including the use of American terminology within the program's content, as presenting challenges in terms of the program's

implementation. In this present study, it was expected that the use of American terminology may be reported as a lesser difficulty by participants, and that the other language difficulties reported by Grady were not expected to be replicated with this Australian-born group. In other words, it was expected that any difficulties experienced would be of a different nature for this particular population.

4.4.2 Program outcomes: Hypotheses and expectations

As discussed in Chapter 3, early childhood educational interventions, including HIPPY, have been found overall to have positive effects on the cognitive and/or educational development of children. Based on this past research, it was expected, and in the case of quantitative measures, hypothesized, that the HIPPY group of children would show greater progress in cognitive/educational development than an appropriate comparison group of non-HIPPY children.

In terms of socio-emotional developmental outcomes, past research again guided the expectations and the hypotheses of the present study, supported by theoretical proposals of the holistic, systemic nature of child development. It was hypothesized that children participating in the HIPPY program would demonstrate greater socio-emotional development than non-HIPPY children. It was further expected, and in the case of quantitative measures, hypothesized that participants, including children, parents and Home Tutors, would demonstrate developmental progress socially and emotionally as a result of their participation in the program.

Based both on past HIPPY research and theoretical considerations, it was expected, and in the case of quantitative measures, hypothesized, that participants in HIPPY would demonstrate greater progress in terms of the quality of the parent-child relationship than a comparison group of parent-child dyads. It was further expected that more secure attachment within the child-parent relationship would be discernable over the course of involvement in HIPPY.

Figure 1 below, presents the formal hypotheses of the study, as introduced above.

Cognitive/educational Outcomes for Children	
Hypothesis 1:	The HIPPY group would demonstrate greater improvement in scores on the *Who Am I?* assessment across Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 than would the non-HIPPY group
Hypothesis 2:	The HIPPY group would demonstrate greater improvement in scores on the *Early Screening Profiles* between Stage 1 and Stage 2 than would the non-HIPPY group
Hypothesis 3:	The HIPPY group would demonstrate greater improvements on the *I can do maths*, the *Gumpel Learning Readiness Scale*, the *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales* and the *Behavioural Academic Self-Esteem Scales* between Stage 2 and Stage 3 than would the non-HIPPY group
Socio-emotional Outcomes for Children	
Hypothesis 4:	The HIPPY group would demonstrate greater improvement in scores on the *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales (Socialisation Domain)* across Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 than would the non-HIPPY group
Socio-emotional Outcomes for Parents	
Hypothesis 5:	That parents participating in HIPPY would demonstrate a significant increase In scores on the *Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI)* between Stage 1 and Stage 3
Parent-child Relationship Outcomes	
Hypothesis 6:	The HIPPY group would demonstrate greater improvement in scores on the Parent-Child Relationship Inventory between Stage 1 and Stage 3 than the Non-HIPPY group

Figure 1. The formal hypotheses of the study.

The predictions to be explored by the study which could be formalized as hypotheses all involved measurement of variables in terms of numeric scores. Where expectations were less precise, qualitative comparisons would be made.

4.5   Design of the study and its rationale

4.5.1 Research in three stages

The research aims provided the framework for the design of the study. The first research aim to evaluate the process of HIPPY in Geelong would employ a staged or step-wise design involving individual interviews with participating parents Home Tutors and other HIPPY staff (Program Coordinator and Agency Director), at three points in time:

- Stage 1 would be midway through the first year of involvement in (2002);
- Stage 2 would be midway through the second year of involvement,(2003); and
- Stage 3 would be midway through the year after conclusion of the program (2004).

It should be noted here, that Stage 1 of data collection does not represent a baseline data point before the intervention began, but indicates functioning at approximately the six to nine month mark of receiving HIPPY.

This step-wise design would allow for information collected at each point in time to be examined for changes that may evolve in the process of the program's implementation. Also, obtaining information from all participants in the program over three stages would allow for an examination of how the program was experienced over time, from these differing perspectives.

Further information relating to the program's implementation would be obtained from observations of parent group meetings at six points in time, three times during the first year of the program's operation and three times during the second year.

In respect of the research aims concerning program outcomes, a staged design following the same timelines as for the process evaluation was planned. To assess the program's effectiveness in terms of children's cognitive and socio-emotional development, a quasi-experimental design was to be employed, comparing the progress of the HIPPY group of children with that of a comparison group of non-HIPPY children at each of the three stages of the research.

To assess the impact of participation in the program on the parent-child relationship, the same quasi-experimental step-wise design was planned, to compare the quality of the parent child relationship between the HIPPY parent-child pairs and the non-HIPPY parent child pairs. Data would be obtained from parents from both groups. Additional information would be obtained from the HIPPY group of parents over the three stages of the research concerning their perceptions of the security of attachment in the parent- child relationship, to examine possible changes over time as well their perceptions of the impact on their relationship with their child as a result of participation in the program.

To assess socio-emotional outcomes for parents and Home Tutors, qualitative information would be obtained over the three stages of the research concerning their experiences of the program.

4.5.2 Complementary quantitative and qualitative methods

To achieve the aims stated in Section 4.3, and to test and explore the hypotheses and expectations stated above in Section 4.4, it was proposed to use qualitative research methodologies and quasi-experimental, quantitative methodologies in a complementary way.

4.5.2.1   The qualitative methodology

The areas of investigation and research questions identified guided the choice of methodologies in the present study. The research questions and aims related to the study of the program's implementation focused upon exploration of particular aspects of individual participants' lived experience of HIPPY, and therefore a qualitative methodology was deemed appropriate. As discussed by Miles and Huberman (1994), inviting participants to express directly, in their own words, the detail of their experience and thoughts about the program would allow them freedom to raise issues not necessarily anticipated by the researcher. Their narratives could then be subjected to thematic content analysis in relation to the various domains of interest in the research, and in relation to domains of interest they themselves wanted to bring to the research.

Indepth semi-structured interviews conducted with all HIPPY participants as well as observations of HIPPY group meetings, were to comprise the qualitative methodology used to gather the majority of the data for the present study.

Firstly, the investigation of the process of implementation, the subject of the first aim of the research, would be explored qualitatively in interviews at three points in time, with participating parents and staff, concerning their experiences of the program, as well as researcher observations of HIPPY group meetings. The data gathered would be examined in terms of the research aims outlined in Section 4.1.2, specifically in terms

of how the program was implemented at all levels of participation, what facilitative and challenging factors were encountered, and what changes in parent-child relationships emerged as participation in the program proceeded.

Secondly, to address aims related to program outcomes for parents and Home Tutors, and for the parent-child relationship, as outlined in Section 4.1.1 and 4.2.1, semi-structured interviews with HIPPY parents and Home Tutors would be employed. This part of the interview would explore the lived experience of the HIPPY program for the participants, and data generated would be examined in terms of socio-emotional development, specifically self-esteem and relationships within the family, in particular the relationship between the participating parent and child.

4.5.2.2   The quantitative methodology

The quantitative component of the research design would involve measurement of educational and socio-emotional outcomes for HIPPY children, at three points in their participation in the program and comparing these with the educational and socio-emotional outcomes of a comparison sample drawn from the same regional population. A range of standardized and normed quantitative scales concerning educational and social functioning were proposed. Data would be obtained from three sources, namely direct psychometric testing of children, teacher assessments and parent reports.

The parent-child relationship would be assessed through the comparison of HIPPY group parent scores on a measure of the quality of the parent-child relationship, at three points during their participation, with scores obtained from the comparison sample of parents.

In addition, socio-emotional outcomes in terms of self-esteem for parents would be assessed through a within-group analysis of related data obtained at three points in time, from a self report measure.

CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGY

The samples that were proposed are first detailed in the chapter, followed by the measures used in the present study. The procedures for data collection are then set out, including the procedures for recruitment of participants. Finally, the proposed methods of analysis are described.

5.1   Sample selection

The sample was to comprise two groups of 33 children aged between four and five years (66 in all), one of the parents of each child, and the classroom teacher of each child in Grade Prep and Grade One, as well as the six staff involved in delivering HIPPY at Glastonbury Child and Family Services in Geelong, Victoria.

5.1.1   Participating families

5.1.1.1   HIPPY group families

The HIPPY group families, were those receiving the third HIPPY (HIPPY 3) implementation by Glastonbury Child and Family Services in Geelong. They were to be selected into HIPPY from the Corio area, noted as the fifth most disadvantaged community in Victoria (Vinson, 1999). Families residing within this community are often faced with multiple challenges, such as unemployment, social isolation, substance abuse, poor or unstable housing, lack of child-care, domestic violence, mental health issues, low income, and are often reliant on a single parent.

In each family, the child participating in the program and the parent participating in the program delivery, were to be invited to be involved in the research, over the three years of the study.

5.1.1.2   Comparison non-HIPPY group families

The non-HIPPY, independent comparison group would participate in the assessment of cognitive and socio-emotional development, contributing to the evaluation of HIPPY outcomes, over the three year period. They were to be recruited from the same demographic population as the HIPPY group (Australian-born, country town dwelling, low socio-economic status and educationally disadvantaged).

This group could not be conceptualized and recruited as a control group, since randomized allocation to groups is not scientifically or ethically appropriate in a community-based study of this kind. Also, the comparison group could not be drawn from the particular community offered HIPPY. This was because the HIPPY recruitment process involved the offering of participation in the program to all families of preschoolers in that area. It could be expected that those who volunteered to participate in HIPPY (the HIPPY group) may be different from those who chose not to participate (the remaining pool of preschool families from which the comparison group was to be drawn). It was therefore planned that the non-HIPPY group of participants (children and one parent) would be recruited through pre-schools in other parts of Geelong and in the township of Colac. These areas were deemed to encompass communities as similar to the Corio community as possible.

5.1.2   Participating HIPPY agency staff

5.1.2.1 HIPPY 3 Coordinator

The program Coordinator, employed by Glastonbury to fulfill the role of recruitment of families into the program, supervision of Home Tutors and to oversee the process of the implementation of the program, was to be involved in the present study both as a participant in the evaluation of the process of implementation of HIPPY 3, as well as a facilitator in the recruitment of the HIPPY group of families. Involvement would span the three year period.

5.1.2.2   Director of Agency

The Director of Glastonbury was to be involved in the present study in the evaluation of the process of implementation of the program, also at the three points in time over three years.

5.1.2.3   Home Tutors

Four Home Tutors, who had been selected and employed by Glastonbury as a result of past participation in previous HIPPY programs, were to take part in the evaluation of the process of implementation dimension of the research over the three years. Their participation would also contribute to the evaluation of HIPPY outcomes in relation to their own socio-emotional development as a result of their role in the program.

5.1.3   Prep and Grade One teachers

The Grade Prep and Grade One classroom teacher of each participating child from both the HIPPY and the non-HIPPY groups would participate in the evaluation of the program outcomes (quantitative) dimension of the study. Their involvement would be in either the second year of the research (Grade Prep) or in the third year, a year after the program had finished, (Grade One). Ethics approval from the relevant educational authorities, as well as from individual School Principals, was necessary.

5.2   Research Instruments

5.2.1   Quantitative instruments

In the evaluation of program outcomes, children's development was to be assessed through the administration of seven separate, standardized and normed quantitative measures of cognitive, educational and socio-emotional outcomes. The parent-child relationship and parental self esteem was also to be assessed using standardized and normed instruments also.

Table 2a, on page 79 below, and Table 2b on page 80 below, provide an overview of the quantitative measures to be used in the present study. They list the areas of outcome to be investigated, the instrument used to measure that area, the respondent to the particular test and the stage of the research process that the test was to be administered. As detailed in Section above, data were to be gathered at three points in time, as baseline measures shortly after the program began (Stage 1-2002), then one year later, approximately two thirds of the way through the program (Stage 2-2003), and again one year after the conclusion of the program (Stage 3-2004).

5.2.1.1 Assessing cognitive/ educational development of the children

As depicted in Table 2a, a range of measures were to be utilized to assess the hypothesized cognitive and educational program outcomes. The main criteria for selecting measures was that the content was relevant to school progress, for example, general development, literacy, mathematics and school behaviour/school readiness. Following is a detailed description of each measure to be employed in the present study.

5.2.1.1.1 The *Who Am I? Developmental Assessment*

The *Who Am I? Developmental Assessment* has been designed in Australia to evaluate the general cognitive developmental level of children aged from four to seven years and eleven months. Administered individually, the test involves the child in writing his or her own name, copying a number of shapes, writing number and letter symbols, writing words and a sentence, and drawing a picture of him or her self. It provides the three numerical sub-scores of Copying, Symbols and Drawing, and a Total score out of a possible 44. This measure was developed for use in the *Australian Council of Educational Research Project on Educational Research Curriculum and Organisation in the Early School Years* (de Lemos, 1999). In an Australian study, the estimate of reliability of the *Who Am I?* was .91 using the Quest analysis. The three areas of content, construct and criterion validity were reported (de Lemos & Doig, 1999, pp. 21-23). It was argued by de Lemos and Doig that content validity was strong, and construct validity was demonstrated by the test

Table 2a

Overview of Quantitative Measures: Cognitive/Educational Development

Area Measured	Test Used	Respondant to Test	Stage at which Administered
Cognitive processes underlying the learning of early literacy and numeracy skills • Copying • Symbols • Drawing	*The Who Am I?* Developmental Assessment	Children HIPPY and Non HIPPY Groups	Stage 1 (2002) Stage 2 (2003) Stage 3 (2004)
Numeracy Skills • Number • Measurement • Space	*I can do maths*	Children HIPPY and Non HIPPY Groups	* Stage 2 (2003) Stage 3 (2004)
Cognition - Non verbal reasoning abilities • Visual Discrimination • Logical Relations Language – Receptive and expressive language abilities • Verbal concepts • Basic School Skills	*The AGS Early Screening Profiles (ESP's)*	Children HIPPY and Non HIPPY Groups	Stage 1 (2002) (excluding Basic School Skills Subtest) Stage 2 (2003)
Learning Readiness	*The Gumpel Learning Readiness Scale*	Teachers – HIPPY and non HIPPY children Grade Prep Grade One	Stage 2 (2003) Stage 3 (2004)
Academic self-esteem • Student Initiative • Social Attention • Success/ Failure • Social Attraction • Self Confidence	*Behavioural Academic Self-Esteem (BASE)*	Teachers - HIPPY and non HIPPY children Grade Prep Grade One	Stage 2 (2003) Stage 3 (2004)
Language/ Communication Skills • Receptive • Expressive • Written	The *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales-Classroom Edition*	Teachers – HIPPY and non HIPPY children Grade Prep Grade One	Stage 2 (2003) Stage 3 (2004)

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Table 2b
Overview of Quantitative Measures: Socio-emotional Development

Area Measured	Test Used	Respondant to Test	Stage at which Administered
Socialization • Interpersonal Relationships • Play and Leisure • Coping Skills	The *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales – Survey Form*	Parent of HIPPY and non HIPPY children in relation to child	Stage 1 (2002) Stage 2 (2003) Stage 3 (2004)
Self-esteem • Adult	*The Coopersmith Smith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI) The Adult Form*	Parent of HIPPY children (only) in relation to self	Stage 1 (2002) Stage 2 (2003) Stage 3 (2004)
Parent-child relationship. Attitudes towards parenting and toward child • Parental Support • Satisfaction With parenting • Involvement • Communication • Limit Setting • Autonomy • Role Orientation	*The Parent-Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI)*	Parent of HIPPY and non HIPPY children in relation to child	Stage 1(2002) Stage 2 (2003) Stage 3 (2004)

reflecting developmental progression of children over time through increasing mean scores. Evidence for satisfactory criterion validity was reported upon in terms of correlations of *Who Am I?* scores with scores on measures of numeracy and literacy. Correlation results were between .61 and .63 for children in their first and second years of schooling for the *Literacy Baseline Test*, .48 for the *Primary Reading Test*, administered at the end of the second year of schooling and .56 and .48 for *I can do Maths* (de Lemos & Doig, p. 23).

Who Am I? was used recently to evaluate HIPPY outcomes in Australia by Gilley (2002), and was found to be relevant for the purpose. Gilley described the test as being age appropriate, able to differentiate children's abilities, easy to administer and having normative data for comparative purposes.

Who Am I? was to be used during all three stages of the research.

5.2.1.1.2 The AGS Early Screening Profiles

The AGS Early Screening Profiles is a screening battery for children two years to six years eleven months, developed and normed in the United States (Harrison, 1990). Its component tests identify developmentally delayed or potentially gifted children who may require further assessment and possibly early intervention. The battery measures development in multiple domains, including the *Cognitive/Language* component to be used in the present study. This latter component comprises two cognitive subtests, *Visual Discrimination* and *Logical Relations* (which evaluates nonverbal reasoning abilities), and two language subtests, *Verbal Concepts* and *Basic School Skills* (each measuring both receptive and expressive language abilities).

Three types of reliability estimates for the *Cognitive/Language* subtests of the *AGS Early Screening Profiles* subtests to be used have been reported by Harrison (1990, pp. 85-92). Co-officient alpha reliability, an estimate of internal consistency, was reported as .91 as the median for ages ranging from two to six years, computed using Guilford's formula. Test-retest reliability, referring to stability of test scores from one test session to the next, for the *Cognitive/Language* subtests were reported as .88 for the immediate test-retest, and as .80 for the delayed test-retest (re-administered 22 to 75 days after initial testing.

Comprehensive evidence of validity for the *AGS Early Screening Profiles* was also reported by Harrison (1990), obtained from field testing conducted prior to and during standardization, and also from several actual validity studies conducted on the instrument. Satisfactory validity of the *Cognitive/Language* subtests was demonstrated by moderate to high concurrent and predictive correlations with a number of cognitive development measures, including the *Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children (K-ABC)*, and the *Battelle Developmental Inventory Screening Test*.

The *AGS Early Screening Profiles* is considered appropriate for use in research in which a brief but reliable measure of children's development is required (Harrison, 1990). It has also been described by Harrison as being easy to administer, and

efficient in that it provides a relatively large amount of information in relation to the amount of time spent in assessment.

The *AGS Early Screening Profiles* was to be used during all three stages of the research

5.2.1.1.3 The *I can do maths.*

I can do maths is an Australian test developed to assess children's development in numeracy, within a context of assessing key learning objectives in the early years of schooling (Doig & de Lemos, 2000). Children write, draw, count and measure, to achieve a total numerical score of a possible 30.

Estimates of reliability for *I can do maths...* in the second year of schooling were .91 using a Quest analysis (Doig & deLemos, 2000). Correlations with other measures, indicating criterion validity were .49 for the *Literacy Baseline* and .63 for the *ACER Teacher Assessment of Progress in Reading.*

I can do maths has similar advantages to the *Who Am I?* It has been described as a brief, easy to administer and appropriate measure of children's abilities at the ages relevant to the present study (Gilley, 2002).

This was to be administered in Stage two and Stage three of the research when children were to be attending school.

5.2.1.1.4 The *Gumpel Learning Readiness Scale*

The *Gumpel Learning Readiness Scale* (Gumpel, 1999) was developed in Israel as a tool for assessing learning readiness of children, in association with HIPPY International. It comprises six items of readiness behaviour with a four point rating scale for each item, from 0 to 3, ranging from '*never behaves in this way'* to '*always behaves in this way'.* In research conducted in Israel, it discriminated significantly between children enrolled in HIPPY (more school ready) and children not enrolled in

HIPPY (less school ready) providing an overall score out of a possible 18 and can be viewed as Appendix 11.

An Australian study of 115 grade one children concluded that it was a reliable and valid measure of school readiness (Moussa, 2000). This study indicated a Cronbach's alpha of .90 and significant correlations with all but one of the subscales of the *AGS Early Screening Profiles*, namely .75 (*Communication Domain*), .33 (*Verbal Concepts*), .47 (*Visual Discrimination*), .14 (*Logical Relations*), .56 (*Basic School Skills*) and .30 (*Intellectual Performance*)

The *Gumpel Readiness Scale* has similar advantages to other measures chosen, being both brief and easy to administer. It also has an additional advantage in that its use in HIPPY evaluations internationally allows for comparisons across all HIPPY sites.

The *Gumpel Readiness Scale* was to be used at Stage 2 and Stage 3 of the research when children were to be attending school.

5.2.1.1.5 The *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales- Classroom Edition*

The *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales – Classroom Edition* is one of three forms of the *Vineland adaptive Behaviour Scales*. The *Classroom Edition* provides an assessment of adaptive behaviour in the classroom and includes items related to basic academic functioning (Sparrow, Balla, Domenic, & Cicchetti, 1985). It measures adaptive behaviour in four domains, the *Communication, Daily Living Skills, Socialization and Motor Skills* domains. In the present study, only the *Communication* domain was to be used. The latter contains 63 items related to three subdomains, these being *Receptive,* (what the student understands), *Expressive* (what the student says), and *Written* (what the children reads and writes). It is administered in the form of a questionnaire completed by a teacher of a student from 3 years of age to 12 years 11 months. Item scores range from 2 "yes, usually" the individual performs the activity described, or 1 "sometimes or partially" to 0 "no, never" the individual does not perform

the activity described. Standard scores for the domains (mean =100, standard deviation =15) are provided.

Evidence for the reliability and validity of the *Classroom Edition* of the *Vineland* have been reported in the manual by Sparrow et al., (1985). Cronbachs coefficient alpha for the *Communication* domain for the age range of children (4-8 years) in the present study was reported as .92 (median). As part of the standardization procedures the authors conducted several tests of validity. Content validity of the *Classroom Edition* was reported to have been supported through the thorough procedures used in the development of the items. The standardization sample of the *Classroom Edition* was reported to overlap with the standardization sample of the *Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children (K-ABC)*, providing some evidence of criterion –related validity.

The *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales- Classroom Edition* was to be used at Stage 2 and Stage 3 of the research when children were to be attending school.

5.2.1.1.6 The *Behavioural Academic Self-Esteem rating scale*

The *Behavioural Academic Self-Esteem (BASE)* rating scale is a United States teacher rating of children's academic self-esteem, based on observation of their classroom behaviour (Coopersmith & Gilberts, 1982). It consists of 16 items comprising five subscales measuring *Student Initiative, Social Attention, Success/Failure, Social Attraction*, and *Self-Confidence. BASE* items are rated according to the frequencies of behaviour and range, from a score of 1 (the child never acts this way) to 5 (the child always acts this way). The *BASE* provides a total possible score of 80 which is the sum of five subscale scores.

Evidence for the reliability and validity of *BASE* has been reported by Coopersmith and Gilberts (1985). Internal consistency coefficients based on intercorrelations of subscale scores with the total *BASE* score were found to be .83 for male students, and .84 for females, with interrater reliability reported as .71. *BASE* ratings were also shown by Coopersmith and Gilbert to be moderately strong predictors of academic

achievement scores among six graders and correlations with the *Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills Form S (CTBS)* and total *BASE* scores is .50.

The *Behavioural Academic Self-Esteem (BASE)* rating scale was to be used at Stage 2 and Stage 3 of the research when children were to be attending school.

5.2.1.2 Assessing children's socio-emotional development: The *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales – Survey Form*

One measure was to be used to assess the social emotional developmental outcomes of the participating children, hypothesized in the present study. This measure is based on a structured researcher interview with the parent about the actual behaviour of the child.

The Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales-Survey Form is one of three versions of the *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales* (Sparrow, Balla, & Cicchetti, 1984). The *Survey Form* measures adaptive behaviour in four domains, namely *Communication, Daily Living Skills, Socialization,* and *Motor Skills.* In the present study, only the *Socialization* domain was to be used. The *Socialization* domain contains 66 items related to three subdomains of *Interpersonal Relationships* (how the individual interacts with others), *Play and Leisure Time* (how the individual plays and uses leisure time), and *Coping Skills* (how the individual demonstrates responsibility and sensitivity to others). The *Survey Form* is administered in a semi-structured interview with a parent or caregiver of a child aged from a few days to 18 years 11 months old.

Item scores range from 2 "yes, usually" the individual performs the activity described, or 1 "sometimes or partially" to 0 "no, never" the individual does not perform the activity described. Standard scores for the domains (mean =100, standard deviation =15) are provided.

Reliability and validity research has been documented by Sparrow et al., (1984). An internal consistency reliability coefficient for the *Socialization* domain is reported .87 (median) for the age range of children in the present study (4-8 years). The median

test-retest reliability coefficient for this age range was .82. The reported progression of mean raw scores obtained by 15 age groups in the national United States standardization, and the lack of relationship with age for the maladaptive behaviour domain of the scales, provides some evidence for the construct validity of the *Survey Form.* Content validity was supported by the thorough procedures used in the original development of the items described by Sparrow et al., and correlations between the *Vineland* and scores from other adaptive behaviour scales and intelligence tests add further support to the measures validity.

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Because the *Vineland* does not require the presence of the individual being assessed, it is useful for research on, amongst other things, parent-child relationships.

The *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales-Survey Form* was to be used at all three stages of the research.

5.2.1.3   Assessing Parental Self-Esteem: The *Self Esteem Inventories* (SEI)- Adult Form

To test the hypothesis that parents' participation in HIPPY would lead to increased self esteem a self report measure of self esteem would be administered to the parents of HIPPY children.

The *Self Esteem Inventories (SEI) -Adult Form* measures a person's self-esteem, that is "the judgement of worthiness that is expressed by the attitudes he or she holds towards the self" (Coopersmith, 1989, p. 6). The *Adult Form* is adapted from the *SEI School Short Form,* created for use with persons over 15 years of age. It consists of twenty five items, taking the form of short statements (such as "I'm a lot of fun to be with") that are answered "like me" or "unlike me", and yields a total possible score of 100.

Evidence for the reliability and validity of the *SEI* has been provided by Coopersmith (1989). Internal consistency coefficients for the *School Form* were found to be in the range from .87 to .92. Whilst no evidence was reported specifically for the *Adult Form,* the *Adult Form* was adapted from the *School Form* and correlations between these

two exceeds .80. An investigation of a representative sample of over 7600 children attending school in grades 4 through 8, designed to observe the comparative importance of home, peers and school to the global self-esteem of preadolescents and adolescents, confirmed the construct validity of the subscales of the *SEI* as measuring sources of self esteem. Further evidence of construct validity was reported from an earlier study, using the same sample, in which norms, compiled by grade and sex of children, showed a consistency of score values at a given percentile regardless of the population. In terms of the stability of the construct, a longitudinal study showed children tested at the age of twelve and again at fifteen showed greater test-retest consistency (r=.64) than children tested at the earlier ages of none and twelve (r=.42) indicating that self-esteem becomes more stable as young people move into early adolescence. Generally, the construct has been considered by Coopersmith to remain consistent over a period of several years but may be subject to momentary or short-lived changes.

The *Adult Form* of the *SEI* is brief and easy to administer and is considered appropriate for use on a pre/post test basis in program evaluation.

The *Self Esteem Inventories (SEI) -Adult Form* was to be administered to HIPPY parents over the three stages of the research.

5.2.1.3 Assessing the parent-child relationship: *The Parent-Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI)*

To test the hyposthesized changes in the parent-child relationship, one self-report measure completed by a parent of participating children from both groups was to be used.

The *Parent-Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI)* assesses parents' attitudes toward parenting and towards their children and provides an overall picture of the quality of the relationship (Gerard, 2000). The *PCRI* is a 78 item self-report questionnaire. All the items have a Likert-type, 4 point response format: *strongly agree, agree, disagree* and *strongly disagree*. Items are arranged in seven subscales that reflect major

features of parenting and the parent-child relationship. The seven subscales are: *Parental Support; Satisfaction With Parenting; Involvement; Communication; Limit Setting: Autonomy* and *Role Orientation.* Scores for each subscale are expressed in two ways, namely as normalized T-scores and as percentiles. The *PCRI* has two validity indicators, *The Social Desirability* indicator and *Inconsistency* indicator.

The *PCRI* is intended for use in a wide range of contexts including research settings. It is easy to administer and user friendly.

The *Parent-Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI)* was to be used at all three stages of the research.

5.2.2   Qualitative research instruments

Semi-structured interview schedules were to be used to address two main domains of investigation in the present study. The first concerned the investigation of the overall process of the implementation of HIPPY and the experience of HIPPY as perceived by respondents. The second interview schedule, to be used with parents only, related to the evaluation of the expected outcomes of the program, in terms of changes in the quality of the parent-child relationship or attachment, as well as changes in parental socio-emotional functioning as a result of participation in HIPPY.

Observation of HIPPY group meetings was also to be employed as part of the evaluation of the process of implementation of the program.

5.2.2.1   Evaluating the process of implementation and experience of HIPPY

5.2.2.1.1   The semi-structured interview schedule

In relation to evaluation research, it has been well documented in the methodological literature (Miles & Huberman, 1994) that semi-structured interviews schedules are valuable in that they allow the researcher to ensure important areas about a program

are examined, while at the same time providing enough flexibility in the interview process to modify and/or add questions in an attempt to explore each participants unique experience.

Table 3 on page 90 below, provides an overview of the interview planned, the protocol of which is presented as Appendix II. The interview schedule was to be adapted slightly depending on the respondent to the interview, and also in relation to the stage of the data collection process. Table 3 includes the interview questions asked in relation to the area of investigation, the adaptations to be made during the data collection stages of the research, and the adaptations to be made in relation to the interview respondent. This interview protocol was to be used to investigate and evaluate the process of implementation of the HIPPY program. It was to be used in the three stages of data collection and with all participants from the Agency delivering the program as well as with participating parents. It was intended that the style of question would elicit enough information from participants in order for the research questions to be answered, while remaining open- ended enough to facilitate participants in freely expressing their perceptions and experiences of the program.

5.2.2.1.2 Observation of HIPPY Group Meetings

In addition to the semi-structured interview, it was expected that the researcher would attend six of the regular fortnightly parent group meetings, evenly spaced during the course of the two year program. Direct unobtrusive observation of the group meetings at which parents were to receive instruction was planned. After each observation session the researcher would record in writing the interactions observed to occur between group members and record reflections on the interactions and processes observed after each observation session.

It has been well documented in the methodological literature in relation to evaluation research that involvement of the researcher through observation is integral to the process of data collection, as it helps to detect what is important and how this fits into an overall understanding of the program (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Table 3
Overview of Semi-Structured Interview Schedule Concerning Process and Experience of HIPPY

Interview Schedule used/Respondent/s	Area of Investigation	Related Questions/Alterations
HIPPY Process Evaluation Interview protocol Stage 1 (2002) <u>Respondents</u> **-Parent** **-Home Tutors** **-HIPPY Coordinator** **-Agency Director**	• Operation of program according to standard model (all questions) • Factors facilitating implementation of program (questions 2, 3,6) • Issues involved in adaptation of program to specific context (all questions) • Perception and experience of HIPPY (questions 1,2,3,4) • Difficulties encountered during implementation of the program (questions 4,5,6)	1. What expectations do you have of HIPPY? 2. What has been your experience of HIPPY so far? 3. What aspects of the program have worked well so far? 3a. What dimensions of the Agency's management have been critical in facilitating what has worked well in the program so far? (Director only) 4. What aspects of the program have not worked so well so far? 4a. Can you describe how the Agency's Management has responded to challenges arising? (Director only) 5.Can you suggest any changes that could improve the program at this point? 6. Is there any thing more you would like to add? Interview question 3, 3
HIPPY Process Evaluation Interview protocol Stage 2 (2003) <u>Respondents</u> Parents Home Tutors Coordinator Agency Director	• As above	All interview questions as above Alteration to Question 1 1.Would you say HIPPY has met your expectations so far?
HIPPY Process Evaluation Interview Protocol Stage 3 (2004) <u>Respondents</u> Parents Home Tutors Coordinator Agency Director	• As Above	All interview questions as above Alterations to questions worded as "On reflection....?" Questions added for Director only 1. HIPPY has been operating for 4 Years now. What do you think has been its overall contribution to the Community/to the agency 2. What do you think it is about HIPPY that makes it work? 3. What could be improved?

5.2.2.2 Evaluating parent-child relationship and other socio-emotional outcomes

Here, two separate interview protocols were to be employed, one to be used in modified ways for parents and Home Tutors. Table 4 on page 92 below, provides an overview of the interviews planned.

The semi-structured interview schedule employed to examine the quality of the parent-child relationship was adapted from a semi-structured interview developed by Dean (1988) and was designed to elicit in detail, parental perception of security of attachment in the parent-child relationship during their everyday interactions. Its basic protocol format is presented as Appendix III. The initial set of questions contained in the interview schedule requires parents to think about the kinds of activities in which they would typically engage with the child. In thinking about their usual involvement with their child, parents were asked who would normally initiate the interaction, whether the child ever took the initiative and how each one went about seeking contact. The perceived readiness of response of either the parent or the child to the other as initiator of contact was then explored. If a delay in initiation of the contact occurred, how this was negotiated between the parent and the child was examined. If either party refused to engage in the interaction, the parent was asked what form the refusal took. Parents were required to comment on a number of aspects of their typical interaction with their child, including the degree of the involvement by both parties in the activity, the affective elements of the interaction as well as how or if any differences of opinion that may have emerged during the activity were negotiated.

This schedule, while collecting largely qualitative data, was designed to permit aggregation of the information elicited. In stages two and three of the data collection process, further questions were to be added to the interview schedule as shown in Table 4. These questions were designed to elicit information about expected changes in the participating parent-child relationship as perceived by the parent (added Stage 2), and to further elicit information about the impact of the program on social emotional outcomes for the child and the parent (added Stage 3).

Table 4
Overview of Semi-Structured Interview Schedule Concerning Parent-Child Relationship and Other Socio-Emotional Outcomes

Interview protocol re ***Parent-child*** *Stage 1 (2002)* __Respondent__ Parent of participating Children	• Quality of attachment within relationship participating families	1. Do you spend much time together? 2. Who usually gets things going? 3. What sort of things do you do together? 4. How would you describe your typical interactions together? 5. What happens if there is a difference of opinion between you? 6. What happens when it is time to draw things to a close? 7. Is there anything else important about your relationship with... that you'd like to tell me?
Interview protocol re ***Parent-child*** *Stage 2 (2003)* __Respondent__ Parent of participating children	• Quality of attachment within parent child relationship • Parent perception of changes to parent-child relationship	All questions as in Stage 1 Added question 1. Do you think HIPPY has had an impact on your relationship with your child?
Interview protocol re ***Parent-child*** *Relationship* *Stage 3 (2004)* __Respondent__ Parent of participating children	• Quality of attachment within parent-child relationship • Parent perception of changes to parent-child relationship • Perceived socio-emotional changes to parent in relation to participation in program	All questions as in Stage 1 and 2 Added questions 1. Do you think HIPPY has impacted on your child's life in any way? 2. Do you think HIPPY has impacted on your life in any way?
Interview protocol re ***Home Tutors*** *Experiences* *Stage 3(2004)* __Respondent__ Home Tutors	• Perceived socio-emotional changes to Home Tutors in relation to role within program	1. Do you think your work in HIPPY has benefited you in any way? 2. Is there anything in your life now that you believe has been as a result of your work in HIPPY? 3. Looking back were there any costs or difficulties for you that resulted from your work in HIPPY?

A separate semi-structured interview schedule was also designed to elicit information about the social emotional outcomes for the participating Home Tutors expected in the present study. As indicated by Table 4, this interview schedule was to be delivered in the third stage of data collection. This protocol is presented as Appendix IV.

5.2.2.3 A collaborative approach to the research

Efforts were made to conduct this study in as cooperative and non-intrusive way as possible. This was achieved by not only striving to explain to HIPPY Agency staff very fully the details of the research method, but also by participating in the regular Research Team meetings held on a quarterly basis. The meetings included the HIPPY Coordinator and Agency Director. At these meetings, reports on the progress of the research were provided with opportunities for full discussion.

5.3 Procedures relating to data collection

Set out below are the procedures used to accomplish the data collection tasks, commencing with the complex matter of recruiting participants to the various samples used in this research.

5.3.1 Recruitment of participants in the research

5.3.1.1 Recruitment of HIPPY group families

An *Invitation to Join in the HIPPY Research*, presented as Appendix V, was given to all families by the Coordinator at time of their enrolment in the program. The voluntary nature of participation in the research was included in this invitation. A further letter, was then given to each family by the Home Tutor, two weeks after the program commenced, seeking signed permission for the researcher to make contact with the family. The contact details of those families who gave permission to be contacted by the researcher were then provided to the researcher by the Coordinator. The researcher then made contact with volunteering parents by telephone, introducing herself and then briefly describing again the nature of involvement in the research. A suitable time would then be organized for the researcher to attend at the family home for the initial interview.

Consent forms, presented as Appendix VI were provided to parents at the initial research interview, as well as another copy of the *Invitation to Join in the HIPPY Research.*

5.3.1.2   Recruitment of non-HIPPY comparison group families

The task of recruiting the comparison group families involved consultation with several sources and included several stages. Contact was first made with the Department of Human Services Pre-School Advisor for the Barwon Region. The nature of the research was described and discussed. Approval for proceeding with the recruitment phase of the research was given by the Pre-School Advisor. Her only concern was to minimize the involvement and hence workload of pre-school teachers in the recruiting of participants. It was decided that a brochure outlining the research, the criteria for involvement and the nature of involvement be produced, presented as Appendix VII. This brochure could be placed with other notices typically sent home with the preschooler. The brochure contained a return slip to record contact details for those families interested in participating in the study. It was further decided that the brochure should state that a $20 payment per family, per interview, be offered to volunteering families as a recruitment incentive.

Once approval had been granted for the researcher to approach pre-schools in the area, several sources were utilized to identify the most appropriate pre-school communities from which to recruit the comparison sample. As indicated in Section 5.1.1.1 above, the Corio area, from which the HIPPY group were recruited has been cited as the fifth most disadvantaged area in the state of Victoria. Two areas were identified from this report as being the closest match in terms of disadvantage, Colac which was placed 14th and the Moolap region, placed at 33rd. Further consultation with the Pre-School Advisor identified specific pre-schools within those areas that had the largest concentration of Health Care Card Holders obtained from enrolment demographic data. Names of pre-school teachers were provided by the Preschool Advisor to facilitate introduction for the researcher.

Initial contact was made with selected pre-school teachers by telephone. The nature of the research was explained, and typically approval was given by the teacher for the researcher to attend the pre-school to meet with the teacher and to distribute the brochures. In all, ten pre-schools were attended and brochures were distributed at each. In two instances the researcher was asked by the teacher to be available to talk with interested parents at the end of a pre-school session. Arrangements were made between the researcher and the teachers for the researcher to collect any contact details slips returned to the pre-school.

Initial contact was then made by telephone with all parents who returned contact details. The nature of involvement was again explained by the researcher and an appointment was made for the researcher to attend at the parents home for the initial meeting.

Consent forms were presented and signed at this first meeting. These were identical to the one used for the HIPPY group, presented as Appendix IX.

5.3.1.3   Recruitment of participating Agency staff

Appointments were organized between the researcher and program staff by telephone. The nature of involvement was explained by the researcher and appointments were made for the researcher to attend at the Home Tutors family home for the initial meeting and at the Agency office for initial meetings with the Program Coordinator and the Agency Director.

Consent forms were presented and signed at this first meeting. These are presented as Appendix VIII.

5.3.1.4   Recruitment of Grade Prep and Grade One teachers

Approval for the research project was obtained from both the Department of Education and Training and the Catholic Education Office before the beginning of Stage 2 (2003) data collection. A package of materials, including a letter outlining the nature of the

research and of school and teacher involvement, was sent to the Principal of each school attended by participating children from both groups. This letter is presented as Appendix IX. The package also contained a copy of the Ethics Approval letter from the relevant bodies, documentation concerning the researcher's Police Check, the research proposal and copies of the teacher assessment forms to be completed in respect of each child for the research. Telephone contact was then made by the researcher with each school Principal. Approval was given by each Principal for the researcher to attend the school and appointments were then arranged for the researcher to conduct testing of the children involved in the research. Upon attending each school, the researcher met first with the Principal, who then escorted the researcher to the participating child's classroom and introduced the researcher to the class teacher.

The *Invitation to Teachers to Participate in the Research* and *Teacher Consent* forms were given to teachers upon the researcher attending the school. These are presented as Appendix X and Appendix XI.

5.3.2   Data collection process with participating families

As described in Section 4.5.1 above, the data collection process followed a sequence of stages over three years.

5.3.2.1   Stage 1 (2002)

The initial appointment was organized by telephone, between the parent of participating families and the researcher. The initial meeting was conducted at the family home, typically in the morning and typically when the participating child was attending pre-school. As stated in Section 5.3.1 above, an *Invitation to Join in the HIPPY Research* was given to the parent and, after reading this, a *Consent Form* was read and signed by the parent, on behalf of the parent and the participating child. The *Consent Form* included consent to audio-tape the interview sessions.

The data collected differed between the two groups of families. For the HIPPY group only, two semi-structured interviews were conducted with the parent, the *HIPPY Process Evaluation Interview* and the *Interview Protocol re Family Relationships*, as described above). HIPPY group parents also completed the *Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) – Adult Form.*

Both groups completed the *Parent Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI)* and The *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales- Survey Form* was also administered to both groups by the researcher.

At the end of this initial session, a further appointment was made for the researcher to return to conduct testing of the participating children. Comparison Group families were paid $20 and signed the receipt.

Stage 1 baseline assessment of the children took place in the family home. All testing of children was conducted between the hours of 9.00 am and 1.00 pm, to maximize the alertness of the children. After establishing rapport with the child, testing would commence. The mother was usually present at the start of the testing session, but invariably left the room or attended to other tasks while the assessment took place. The researcher administered the *Early Screening Profiles (ESP's)* and the *Who Am I? Developmental Assessment* to children from both groups. Sessions with children lasted approximately thirty minutes. At the end of the session, children were offered a packet of stickers in appreciation of their effort.

5.3.2.2 Stage 2 (2003)

Stage 2 data collection with participating parents followed the same format as for Stage 1 as detailed above.

Typically, no further meeting was made for testing of children at home, as this was to be conducted at the children's schools, except where a child may be repeating pre-school in which case data collection would follow the same format as in Stage 1.

Testing of children at schools began after initial Stage 2 meetings with all parents were completed. Phone contact was made with school Principals and a suitable time was

organized for the researcher to attend the schools. Parents were informed that the researcher would be attending the child's school and conducting testing there. Parents had consented to this and were assured by the researcher that they would receive a call from the researcher on the night before or morning of the researcher attending. This was intended to prepare the child that someone was coming to see him/her that day at school about HIPPY.

At the school, parent-signed Consent Forms for each child were handed over, usually to the Principal, when the researcher attended the school. A member of staff would then take the researcher to the child's classroom and introduce the researcher to the teacher and the participating child. A quiet place away from the classroom was provided for the testing and all children would be familiar with the researcher from the Stage 1 data collection. The session for both groups followed the same procedure as in Stage 1, beginning with the administration of *The Who Am I? Developmental Assessment, the AGS Early Screening Profiles*, and now going on to *I can do maths*. Children were again given a packet of stickers at the end of the session, before being escorted by the researcher back to the classroom.

5.3.2.3   Stage 3 (2004)

Data collection in Stage 3 followed the same process as described in Stage 2 for both participating parents and children. As detailed in Section 5.2.2.2, some questions were added to the interview schedule delivered to parents.

5.3.3   Data collection process with participating Agency Staff

For Agency staff, the data collection procedure followed the same process at each of the three stages. Appointments were organized by the researcher with each person, by the telephone. The Consent Forms were produced and signed prior to the commencement of each interview, which also included permission for audio-taping. Interviews with the program Coordinator and the Agency Director were conducted at Glastonbury in an interview room, and interviews with the Home Tutors were all conducted in the Home Tutors' own home.

5.3.4 Data collection process with participating teachers

Because it was anticipated that participating children would not necessarily be attending the same schools as each other, participating teachers were expected to have only a few children, perhaps only one, on whom to report.

The data collection process with participating teachers took place in Stages 2 and 3 of the research only. Prior to attending to the schools, the researcher prepared a package for individual teachers, that included an *Invitation to Participate in Research*, a *Consent Form* and the three teacher assessments for each child. Although it was clear to the teacher which child was being assessed, the child's name did not appear on any assessment form. Instead, each form was coded with the identification number assigned by the researcher to each family at the start of the research. This served to protect the confidentiality of the children involved. These were placed in an unsealed, stamped envelope addressed to the researcher. This package was given to the teacher by the researcher upon returning to the classroom with each participating child upon completion of the testing session. The researcher briefly described the contents of the envelope and presented and briefly described each teacher assessment to the teacher.

The envelope was then left with the teacher with instructions from the researcher to return the completed forms as soon as was convenient, to the researcher, by post.

5.3.5 Observation of parent group meetings

Observation of parent group meetings took place on six occasions at approximately six weekly intervals. Two were conducted towards the end of the first year, and four during the second year of the program. These times were negotiated with the HIPPY Coordinator and allowed for parents to be advised that the researcher would be attending. It was anticipated that parents would have already provided written consent to be involved in the study, including being observed at group meetings, so that further consent on the actual day would not be necessary.

At the beginning of each session to be observed, the Coordinator briefly introduced the researcher, and explained to parents that the purpose of the observation sessions was to observe how the group usually ran, and that written notes would be taken during the session. The aim was to remain as unobtrusive as possible, so the researcher would sit away from the main group, but within viewing and hearing distance. Following each observation, the researcher would summarize the progress of the meeting, including the dynamics of the roles between parents and staff and interactions within the group.

5.3.6   Transcription of interviews

The audio-tape recorded interviews obtained during Stages 1, 2 and 3 would be transcribed to permit analysis according to the procedures described in Section 5.4.2 below.

5.4   Analysis of the data

5.4.1   Analysis of the quantitative data

In the quantitative investigation of cognitive/educational and socio-emotional outcomes, it was considered most efficient to conduct a series of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) procedures testing the hypotheses concerning whether the children receiving HIPPY demonstrated a greater rate of improvement than the non-HIPPY children on the relevant measures. This straightforward approach was considered appropriate in view of what would necessarily be a small sample size, given only a maximum of 33 children to be recruited to the HIPPY program and thus to the research.

In instances where data were collected at the three stages of data collection (at the baseline, mid-point during the program and one year after its completion), it was planned to perform a repeated measures MANOVA. Where data were collected at Stages 2 and 3 only (as with some researcher and all teacher assessment measures), a MANOVA would be conducted to compare differences in group scores between those two times.

In instances where data was obtained in Stages 1 and 2 only, an independent groups t-test would be performed to determine whether HIPPY children demonstrated greater improvement than the non HIPPY children.

Where data were collected from the HIPPY group of participants only, as with the self-esteem measure used with the HIPPY parent, a paired t-test would be used.

5.4.2   Analysis of the qualitative data

As stated in Section 5.2.2.1, qualitative interview data would address the domains of inquiry concerning (a) the implementation of the program and outcomes in terms of how the program impacted on participants, and (b) the other concerning impacts on the parent-child relationship. The procedures for analyzing each set of data are outlined below. While these essentially involved the same interpretive process, the coding for the parent relationship data followed specific steps.

5.4.2.1   Data analysis procedures concerning program implementation and outcomes

Data analysis of the interview transcripts, involved a thematic analysis using methods adopted from Miles and Huberman's (1994) thematic content data analysis model. This model essentially involves three concurrent stages of analytic activity, namely data reduction, data display development and interpretation of the data. These three stages of analysis and how they were applied to the data collected are each discussed below.

5.4.2.1.1   Data reduction through thematic coding

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), data reduction refers to the process of focusing, condensing and transforming data, involving decisions that appear to emerge from interview material in relation to the research questions and aims. This process is essentially an inductive coding process.

In the present study, it was planned to begin data reduction with a re-reading of each individual transcript and punctuation of phrases, sentences or paragraphs to differentiate the identified domains of inquiry, and the coding of the themes or units of meaning emerging within each domain. Colour coding was used, such that text highlighted in yellow denoted data related to implementation within the home, while green indicated implementation from within the agency. Likewise, pink denoted benefits for children, orange for parents, purple for parent-child relationships, and so forth. The data were actually reduced through the development of descriptive codes that were then written at the side of the transcript alongside chunks of the text. The names of the descriptive codes were typically abbreviations of the concept they described. For example, the initial code developed for factors that facilitated the implementation of the program was "FAC". The combination of descriptive and colour codes allowed for easy identification of the main themes in the data set. Thus, when the descriptive code "FAC" was attached to yellow text it was easily identified as factors facilitating the implementation within the home.

This data reduction procedure was applied to the interviews given by each participant at each of the three stages of the research. This first level of coding prepared the data and provided the framework for data display dimension of the analytical process.

This initial stage of the analysis drew the researcher's attention to two distinct patterns that were already emerging. These were variations in the data related to participant's roles in the implementation and variation in relation to the three stages of the research. The second re-reading of the transcripts was guided by the research questions pertaining to each area of inquiry resulting in a more focused condensing of the data.

5.4.2.1.2 Data display development

As devised by Miles and Huberman (1994), data display is an organized compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action. The method of data display used in this study was a series of matrices or tables, with defined columns and rows for the main questions within each domain of inquiry.

Beginning with a listing of all emergent themes in a large matrix, higher order themes would be identified and summarized in a smaller matrix. This process of condensation can be continued until a concise and meaningful summary is judged to be reached.

5.4.2.1.3   Interpretation of the data

As Miles and Huberman (1994) have highlighted, data interpretation is not a separate process from other phases of data analysis, but rather is a process inherent in the entire, successive inductive coding, matrix development and presentation of findings.

Essentially, decisions made about how the data from this study were to be meaningfully presented as findings represented the final stages of data reduction. The thematic coding of the final stages of data reduction, relating to the conceptualization and presentation of findings, in terms of higher order, major and sub-themes would rely upon the tactic of quantifying the number of their occurrences within each domain. In order to report meaningfully what was found in relation to each domain, the higher order themes and the themes that clustered within them were reported in terms of the frequency with which they occurred across all participants. Unexpected themes that had emerged were also quantified and reported separately, but in tandem with the domain findings to which they were most relevant.

5.4.2.2   Data analysis procedures concerning parent-child security of attachment

Interview data concerning parent-child relationship was coded for the quality of children's attachment behavior manifested during day to day activities across the three stages of the research. Unlike the inductive process of coding described above, where meaning was to be generated freshly from the interview transcripts, the coding process for these data involved drawing meaning according to attachment concepts, as specified by Dean (1988). It involves a two step process, the first involving a content analysis of the raw data and the second determining the relative involvement of secure attachment.

In the first stage, data would be coded using the pro-forma presented as Appendix XII. This allows coding the parent's perceptions of elements of initiation of contact around day-to-day activities, response of the other person to initiation of the contact, engagement between the two around activities and disengagement from the parent-child interaction, as described below.

For the initiation phase, the parent's report could be coded regarding whether the child initiated the activity and whether the initiation was conducted in a confident or non-confident (insistent or tentative) manner. Coding also allows for lack of initiation by the child.

For the response to initiation phase, inferences can be made from the parent's report regarding whether the other (child or parent) was willing to engage in activities immediately, whether he or she was willing to negotiate a later time, whether he or she was overly ready to engage in activities, or whether he or she was unwilling to engage.

For the engagement phase, several aspects of the parent's reports are coded. Inferences can be drawn regarding the child's level of cooperation or non cooperation during the activity, about the predominating affect during interaction (coded as positive, negative or neutral) and regarding the child's ability to accommodate differences during the engagement phase, namely whether these differences were resolved, not resolved or avoided altogether.

Finally, for the disengagement phase, inferences can be made from parents' reports regarding the effect of cessation of activities on the child. Judgments were made of the degree to which the child was seen to acknowledge the cessation by the parent as well as the effect upon disengagement in terms of whether the child seemed satisfied or dissatisfied (sadness, worry, anger, relief, indifference) upon separation.

The second stage of coding then takes place. This involves making a rating of the relative predominance of secure, avoidant and anxious attachment. The behavioral categories in the coding pro-forma outlined above are seen as representative of

different attachment styles as perceived by the parent. For example, confident initiation would be regarded as an example of secure attachment behaviour, whereas insistent and tentative initiation is regarded as anxious. Non-initiation was regarded as avoidant attachment and passive non-initiation as mixed.

The final stage of coding would involve allocating scores, from 0 to 3, to represent the relative presence of secure, avoidant and anxious attachment in a given interaction. For example, scores of 3,0,0 represented exclusive attachment whereas scores of 0,2,1 represented an absence of secure attachment and relatively greater avoidant attachment than anxious attachment. Finally, as anxious and avoidant are both classified as insecure attachment styles, and as both are inversely related to secure attachment in the present analysis, only secure attachment is recorded.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS I: QUALITATIVE EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAM

This chapter begins with a description of the overall conduct of the present study in terms of seeking reliability and validity of the data. It then provides a description of the final sample of families and agency staff who participated in this program evaluation phase of the research. The findings concerning the implementation of the program are then reported.

6.1   Conduct of the research: seeking reliability and validity of the data

Reliability, that is the degree to which data are likely to be consistent over time and specified circumstances, is usually seen as a necessary condition for validity. Validity refers to the extent to which the data gathered represent the actual phenomenon under study. Essentially, the reliability and validity of the data affect the quality of the conclusions that can be drawn from the findings, especially the extent to which they can be generalized, or transferred, to groups and settings beyond the particular study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In the present study, efforts identified by Grady (2002) were adopted to maximize the reliability and validity of the data, so that the interpretation of findings represented a portrayal of participant's perceptions and experiences of the program that was as authentic as possible.

6.1.1   Collection of data from multiple sources

The first strategy to seek evidence of reliability and validity involved the collection of data at multiple stages, from multiple participant groups and from both qualitative and quantitative sources. This design and method of gathering data from more than one source to address research aims and questions is often referred to as triangulation (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Triangulation has been considered to demonstrate and enhance the reliability and validity of data by showing that independent measures and methods produce findings that complement each other or do not contradict one another.

6.1.2 Standardization of procedures

The second strategy involved attempts to standardize across participants the conditions under which data were collected. The standard procedures followed in initiating contact with participants, in organizing interview sessions, in arranging the setting and context of each setting, and in actually conducting each session have been described in Chapter 5. The one setting where conditions were most expected to be variable was within the family home. Particular efforts were made to standardize conditions in relation to sessions conducted with parents within the family home where other preschool children were sometimes present. When interruptions occurred, the same procedure was followed. The interview was stopped (audio tape turned off) to allow parents to attend to the needs of younger children (and in some cases to answer the telephone). The interview was resumed once parents were able to attend to the interview. Efforts made to follow the interview schedule as closely as possible also facilitated the likelihood that the interview continued from where it had left off.

6.1.3 Establishing positive rapport

The third strategy involved efforts to establish positive rapport between the researcher and participants so that the latter felt comfortable to share their thoughts, both positive and negative, about their experiences of the program. This was considered particularly important during Stage 1 of the research, when participants were unfamiliar with the researcher and the parents and Home Tutors were unfamiliar with participating in research. The researcher attempted to promote a relaxed atmosphere in the session by initially engaging participants in informal conversation. Within the family home, the conversation topics of children generally and of managing a household were ones in which parents readily engaged the researcher. The process of then moving the conversation to the related yet narrower focus of the interview flowed easily. In the subsequent stages of the research (Stages 2 and 3), establishing rapport was easier, as all participants were familiar with both the researcher and the expectations of the research. Furthermore, the researcher was also more familiar with each particular participant, such that initial conversations were often more specific and

drawn from what the researcher had noted during the previous session, such as comments to parents about how much a younger child had grown over the past year.

Interviews proceeded, both within each actual session and across the research project, in an atmosphere in which participants appeared to be comfortable to express a wide range of views. This was evident in participants' willingness to express negative experiences of the program, including aspects that they did not particularly enjoy or found difficult, and changes that could improve the program. There was some variation, however, in ease with which participants could explain the details of their experiences of the program. Some consistently (over the three stages of the research) gave relatively short responses to interview questions, while others gave consistently longer responses. However, the consistency of response style suggests that these variations were more likely to be reflections of differences in general verbal communication styles, than indications of variations in the extent that positive rapport had been established.

6.2 Description of the participants

The sample comprised 28 families enrolled in the HIPPY program and 6 staff involved in the delivery of the program within Glastonbury Child and Family Services.

6.2.1 Participating HIPPY group families

The HIPPY group of families who participated in the study were part of the third HIPPY (HIPPY 3) implementation by Glastonbury Child and Family Services in Geelong, recruited as described in Section 5.3.1.1 of Chapter 5. Families were mainly recruited through brochures distributed at local schools, kindergartens and shopping centres, while four had been previously involved with Glastonbury in other programs, and five had been involved in earlier intakes to the HIPPY program with older siblings.

All 33 families enrolled in the third implementation of HIPPY were invited to participate in the research.

6.2.1.1   Families commencing HIPPY: Research Stage 1 (2002) of study

Of the families invited to participate in the research, 28 families volunteered. One mother volunteered her own participation in the research but did not want her child involved. According to her Home Tutor, the mother believed that her child was already involved with a large enough number of professionals due to the child's diagnosis of developmental delay. One other parent had twins involved in both HIPPY and the research.

Five families did not volunteer their participation in the research. According to their respective Home Tutors, two mothers from these families said they had too many other commitments to be available for the research. While the further three families did not explicitly state their intentions to not participate, their Home Tutors reported that it became clear to them that the mothers did not want to participate in the research. In all three cases, the mothers did not return the initial consent to be contacted by the researcher despite several reminders from Home Tutors. It was decided in discussions between the Home Tutors and the researcher to not pursue these families further.

Against this background, then, the participants were 28 parents, all mothers, and 28 children. The mean age of children at the first time of testing was 4 years and 7 months (mean age = 55 months). There were 16 males and 12 females. The families all resided within the Corio/Norlane area and the majority of children (n=27) were attending pre-school within that area. One child did not attend pre-school due to his young age and speech delays, and was attending ongoing speech therapy. Another child, who was attending pre-school, was diagnosed with a developmental delay and was also attending ongoing speech therapy.

Family compositions included 21 families with two parents, 7 of which were step-families or blended families, and 7 single parent families. The majority of mothers who participated in the research performed home duties (n=26), with 2 mothers working outside the home, one as a Home Tutor with the HIPPY program, and the other as a Registered Nurse Division 2 (formerly known as a Nurses Aide). .

6.2.1.2   Families continuing HIPPY in second year of program: Research Stage 2 (2003) of study

Of the 28 families who initially took part in the research, by the time of the second phase of data collection, which commenced mid way through 2003, 5 families had withdrawn from the program itself. This left 23 families fully participating in the research. A mother from one of the families who had withdrawn from the program volunteered her participation in this evaluation of the program's implementation phase of the research only. In the interview conducted, she reported to the researcher that she had withdrawn from the program because the time commitment required to participate was too much in the second year of the program, after her child had commenced school. Of the other four families who had withdrawn from the program, three had moved away from the area. The fourth of these was unable to be contacted by telephone.

There were 13 male and 10 female children involved at this point of the research. While the majority of children were now attending primary school within the Corio/Norlane area and in Grade Prep (n= 18), five children were repeating a year in pre-school. Two of the children attending school were diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorders during this year.

6.2.1.3   Families completing HIPPY program: Research Stage 3 (2004)

A total of 19 families took part in the third stage of data collection, commencing approximately nine months after completion of the HIPPY program. Of the four families who did not participate in this stage of the research, one family had moved and left no forwarding address with Glastonbury. Three other families did not respond to a number of telephone messages, and while they did not make explicit an intention to withdraw from the research, the researcher concluded that they did not wish to continue in the research.

In this final stage of the research there were 10 male and 9 female children. The majority of children were in Grade One at local schools (n=15), whilst the remaining children (n=4) were now in Grade Prep after repeating kindergarten the previous year.

6.2.2   Participating Agency staff

Six agency staff participated in all three stages of the data collection process. They included the Director of Glastonbury Child and Family Services (male), the HIPPY Coordinator (female) and four HIPPY Home Tutors (all female). The Home Tutors all resided within the same Corio/Norlane area as the HIPPY families. There was a little variation in levels of HIPPY experience among the Home Tutors. At the commencement of the research, one was in her third year as Home Tutor, another in her second year, and the other two in their first year.

6.3   Interpretive findings concerning implementation of program

The findings reported in this section are the result of qualitative data analysis as outlined in Section 5.4.2. They encompass the data obtained at all three stages of the research and from all participants involved in the implementation of the program delivery. The broad question asked of this data concerned how the program was actually delivered and whether the program was delivered according to the standard model of HIPPY. The report of findings therefore begins with an outline of the ways in which the implementation followed the standard model of HIPPY delivery. Findings concerning the ways in which the program was delivered are followed by an outline of factors identified by participants as facilitating the delivery of the program, and then those of that experienced as difficulties. Any adaptations made in response to these difficulties over the life of the research are reported. Finally, participants' suggestions for improvements to the program are recounted.

6.3.1　The issue of adherence to the standard model of HIPPY implementation

The standard model of HIPPY delivery is outlined in Section 3.3 of Chapter Three above. As highlighted there, the model involves core components at three main levels of implementation:

(a) the delivery of the program within a community context, including components related to the setting up and targeting of the program;

(b) the delivery of the program within the agency context, including components related to the delivery of the program to the parent by two levels of staff involved; and

(c) the delivery of the program within the home context, including components related to the actual delivery of the program to the child.

Findings are presented below in terms of each core component and each specific component of the standard model.

6.3.1.1　Findings concerning implementation at the community level

Presented first are findings at the community level of implementation. This component encompasses the processes of setting up and maintaining the program's operation as well as the targeting and recruitment of participants in the program. These findings were derived from the analysis of interviews with the Agency Director and the HIPPY Coordinator.

6.3.1.1.1　HIPPY provided within a community framework

According to Lombard (1994, p. 109) "HIPPY is only available to parents within provided to parents within the framework of a community project". In other words, in its standard form, HIPPY is both adopted and developed within a context of dynamic interaction with the local community, including the range of local service providers. The Director of Glastonbury Child and Family Services reflected upon the Agency's philosophy of and commitment to HIPPY operating within the framework of a community project at the beginning of the third implementation under study. At Stage 1 of the research he stated:

*...We're just part way down the path of community development (with HIPPY)
...but it's the community having some say and having some influence about
HIPPY- about where it is held, having some degree of involvement...And
reaching parents through schools and pre schools and child care. And sort of
conveying the message that HIPPY is your program and in effect saying "Here's
an opportunity". And it's partly an evolutionary thing, because knowledge about
HIPPY is gradually disseminating through the community. So there's an
information development process that's going on and I think it's a credibility
process too... (Director, Stage 1)*

6.3.1.1.2   Interaction between HIPPY and local service providers

The second part of Lombard's (1994) criteria regarding the provision of HIPPY within
the framework of a community project is that during the recruitment and
implementation phases of the program, ongoing interaction between local service
providers and HIPPY is firmly maintained. Since the introduction of HIPPY, and
throughout the program's third implementation, interaction between local service
providers and Glastonbury Child and Family Services had developed and
strengthened over time. This was partly due to the clear intention of the Agency to
engage with the local community, particularly schools, as expressed in the following
quote by the Agency Director at Stage 1 of the research:

*...We want to get closer to the community... and there has been a much closer
cooperation with the Primary Schools, and in particular North Shore where we
now have an (HIPPY) office... (Director, Stage 1)*

Further, the Agency felt there was a growing awareness and developing reputation of
HIPPY within the community in general. According to the HIPPY Coordinator, the
evolutionary nature of HIPPY's reputation had been evident at the recruitment phase
of the program's implementation, at the level of families within the community as well
as local professionals, as revealed by the following quotations, all at Stage 3:

*...When parents ring up to enrol I say "Oh do you know much about the
program?" and they say "Oh, I spoke to this person, I spoke to that person, and
they said I should get involved...(Coordinator, Stage 3)*

*...There's been acknowledgment amongst professionals, and the community in
general. When you say you work in HIPPY, you get much fewer people who
say, "What's that?...(Coordinator, Stage 3)*

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...A shift has occurred....(in relation to recruitment) I am noticing this year, certainly. I've got referrals from professionals now for next year, so they are coming through a lot of therapists, psychologists. Those sort of people have actually already got their feelers out, getting children ready for the next year of the program, which is something that hasn't happened in the past. I'm finding that each year, those sorts of referrals are actually coming in a bit earlier... (Coordinator, Stage 3)

6.3.1.1.3   Recruitment of Home Tutors and families within community framework

The four Home Tutors involved in the third implementation of HIPPY were recruited from within the local Corio/Norlane community. All had been involved as participating parents of children enrolled in an earlier implementation of the program by Glastonbury Child and Family Services. One Home Tutor was also a mother of a child enrolled in this third implementation of the program, having been involved in an earlier implementation with an older sibling of the participating child.

All families participating in the program were recruited from within the local Corio/Norlane community. Brochures produced by the Coordinator describing HIPPY were distributed to pre-schools throughout the community. Of the 28 families who volunteered participation in the research, 7 reported reading about the program through the brochure they obtained at their local pre-school. These brochures were also displayed at a major shopping complex in Corio, and 8 families reported first obtaining information about the program from this shopping centre. A further 4 families reported hearing about the program from friends or relatives, and 9 families were aware of the program due to previous involvement with the program itself (with an older child) or with other Glastonbury Child and Family Services programs.

6.3.1.1.4   Program delivered to target population

The families and children who participated in the third intake of the HIPPY program in Geelong could be considered to fall in an "educationally disadvantaged" target group as outlined by Lombard (1994, p.11). All parents had completed less than Year 12 in

the Secondary School system, consistent with the recruitment criteria regarding education.

All families participating in the program resided within the Corio/Norlane area which, as outlined in Section 5.1.1.1 in Chapter Five, is an area well recognized as being socially and economically disadvantaged and was the area from which families were recruited for the past two HIPPY implementations. However, a feature of the HIPPY 3 intake of families was that many resided in, what the Agency Director described in the following quote, as *"very vulnerable areas"* within the Corio/Norlane community:

> *...We have tapped into more vulnerable families (with this third intake) and we can validate that by geographical mapping of where families are coming from. And (Program Coordinator) has done that, so we can see areas like Rosewall and Norlane. So we know that at least half the families are coming from those areas....which are very vulnerable areas... (Agency Director, Stage 1)*

6.3.1.1.5 Time frame of the program

The program was delivered within the two year time frame (2002 and 2003), in line with the standard model of HIPPY delivery for four and five year old children. Within the Australian education system, this meant that children commenced HIPPY in their pre-school year (2002) and continued into their first year of formal education (2003), namely the Prep year of Primary School. There were 30 weeks of the program to be fitted into 40 weeks of the school year. During this implementation, it was decided by the Coordinator that the start of the program's delivery in the second year would be delayed until March to allow families time to adjust to the HIPPY child's transition to Primary School which occurs within what is generally the hottest time of the school year. This decision was based on anecdotal feedback from previous implementations of the program, and is explained in the following quote from the Coordinator at Stage 1 of the research:

> *... I noticed, you know, in the first HIPPY program, there were lots of parents drop out in the first term of year 2. And so I thought "Okay what's happening? First year of term two, obviously they're going to school, its hot in Australia". And I thought- well- when children start school overseas, its probably not hot and you know these sorts of issues are probably Australian- specific. Um and that's what made me alter that first term of year two, and also the fact that it's a 30*

week program and we have 40 weeks of school and ...we actually have that time to play with a little bit ... (Coordinator, Stage 1)

6.3.1.2   Findings concerning implementation within the context of the Agency

Findings presented here relate to those components of the standard model of HIPPY involving the staff of Glastonbury Child and Family Services in the delivery of the program to participating parents. Findings at the Agency level of implementation relate to the training and supervision of the program staff and the actual delivery of the program to the participating parents by the Home Tutors.

6.3.1.2.1   Training and supervision of program staff

Home Tutor training began with an induction program that consisted of five workshops that, according to the Agency Director, *"covered a range of areas, such as how to work with parents and children.... services that were available and about child protection issues...."* (Stage 1). Home Tutors met as a group with the Coordinator at a set time once per week in a meeting room at the Agency. During this session the Home Tutors familiarized themselves with new materials for the week ahead by engaging in role-plays with each other and the Coordinator. This setting also provided a forum for Home Tutors to share their experiences and discuss any difficulties they were having with any aspect of the program or with any aspect of the program's delivery. Individual supervision sessions also took place between Home Tutors and the Coordinator. During these sessions Home Tutors discussed with the Coordinator, any specific concerns or challenges arising. One Home Tutor reported at Stage 1 of the research that these sessions occurred *"as needed"*, with the onus of need being placed on the Home Tutor. Judging from other Home Tutor accounts, these sessions took place approximately once a fortnight. The Coordinator also reported attending *"a couple of home visits with each Home Tutor"* each year of the program, to supervise in a more direct way how the program was being implemented at that level.

6.3.1.2.2   Program delivered to parent

According to the standard model outlined by Lombard (1994), the parent of the participating child (typically the mother) is the initial recipient of the program. Lombard stated, however, that if the mother is illiterate or cannot cope with the materials, an older sibling may be trained by the Tutor in the parent's presence. In this third implementation of HIPPY under study, it was the mother of the families who participated who initially received the program. However a few families reported that family members other than the mother delivered the program to the child at times. In one family, the child's grandmother delivered the program on occasions when she looked after the child. In another family, the mother reported that in the second year of the program, the child's father was the main person delivering the program within the home. While there were many reports of siblings joining in the HIPPY activities, there were no reports of siblings actually delivering the program to the child.

6.3.1.2.3   Fortnightly home visits

In line with the standard model, fortnightly home visits to the family to deliver the program were reported by Home Tutors as always being attempted. However, there were many reported instances when parents were not home to receive these visits and This is discussed in detail in Section 6.3.3.1 below, where difficulties related to the program's implementation are reported. In most cases, nevertheless, Home Tutors reported that parents were home for the scheduled appointment. To these visits, the Home Tutor would take with her the program materials for the following week and go through these materials with the parent and instruct the mother, as required, how to then teach the work to her child. According to Home Tutor reports, there was some variation in the extent to which materials were explained to parents. As is reflected in the following quote from an interview with one Home Tutor at Stage 2 of the research, whether worksheets were read to parents word-for-word, or explained less intensely, depended on Home Tutors judgments regarding the extent to which parents required explanation of materials:

> *...Sometimes, like, if there's a page of questions on the book, I might not go through every single -you know- word for word. I might say, you –know, like "Oh*

this is about memory recall here". And um..." They are asking you different questions here on the book" and I'll sort of adapt or filter it down, as long as I'm confident too that when I leave they're not going "Oh what do I have to do here? (Home Tutor 2, Stage 2)

Home Tutors reported that another aspect of the home visit was the going over and collection of the previous week's completed work, which provided an avenue for the parent and the Home Tutor to discuss how the child was coping with the work, and any difficulties the parent or child was having. At the conclusion of this session, the meeting time for the next home visit would be confirmed between the Home Tutor and the parent. Home visits were recorded as generally taking between 30-60 minutes.

6.3.1.2.4   Fortnightly group meetings

Lombard (1994, p.13), stated that "each mother who contracts to join HIPPY must commit herself to the regular attendance at the bi-weekly group meetings...." Not all participating mothers in this implementation attended the group meetings regularly. Table 5 shows parents attendance at the 20 group meetings held over the two years of the program (10 meetings each year), these figures being derived from the Coordinator's written record.

Table 5

Number of Group Meetings Each Parent Attended During Stage 1 and Stage 2 and Total Number Each Parent Attended

ID	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Stage 1 (2002)	2	8	10	10	3	3	0	9	1	4	7	8	2	0	4	0	4	8	0	1	5	1	0	0	0	2	5	0
Stage 2 (2003)	W	0	10	10	4	1	W	10	W	0	3	10	5	10	0	W	1	5	0	0	5	0	9	0	W	1	1	0
Total	2	8**	20	20	7**	4**	0	19	1	4*	10	18	7**	10	4**	0	5**	13	0	1**	10	1**	9**	0**	0	3**	6**	0**

Key **= less than 10(half total group meetings attended)
   W= Withdrawn from program

Table 5 reveals much variation in group meeting attendance, with four parents attending all or most meetings, while the majority (65%) of families completing the program attended less than half of the 20 meetings held (n=15). On average, group

attendance rates were higher in the second year of the program (39%) than the first year (32%). Non-attendance at group meetings presented difficulties for program staff in terms of implementation of the program to participating families, and is discussed further in Section 6.3.3.1 below.

However, consistent with the standard model, fortnightly group meetings were organized and convened by the Coordinator. Meetings were held on Wednesdays at a local community centre between the hours of 9.30am and 11.30am. Child care facilities were provided at the centre for parents of preschoolers (in first year of program) and for those with younger children. The format of the meetings typically involved the first hour spent going through the next week's work, and the second hour spent on enrichment activities. Examples of enrichment activities taken from the agenda for Term 3, 2002 (in the first year of the program) were talks given by guest speakers about encouraging language development in children, and how to help your child be ready for school, as well as a "Healthy Foods Morning Tea" that involved sharing and sampling healthy recipes.

The following extract taken from the researcher's field notes at one of the six group meetings the researcher attended as an observer, describes the typical format of the group meeting. This is consistent with the standard model of group meetings as outlined by Lombard (1994).

Observation of HIPPY group meeting 19/6/2003
11 in attendance
Coordinator
4 home tutors
6 parents
- *Session began with everyone talking and chatting and then going through the worksheets for the upcoming week. Book is "The Pig Got Out". Tutor read book and went through story and then asked question to parent sitting next to her. Parent role played child, made some mistakes and tutor encouraged parent to make correct answer.*
- *Second tutor did next exercise. Parent nearby participated as child. Coordinator gave examples of how parents may help their child who was having trouble with work- prepared parents by noting some aspects of worksheets that may cause problems. As tutors and coordinator had already been through worksheets at (tutor training) session on Friday- they themselves have already experienced potential problems so they share this. Parents also offered suggestions about the things they think that children may misinterpret etc.*

- *Coordinator also emphasized what specific goals of each exercise is so that parents are aware of the specific aims, for example, in one exercise the goal is centred around vocabulary extension, however asks child to draw some part of answer. Coordinator points out that this exercise is not focused on developing fine motor skills required for drawing so parents are not to worry about child who cant draw picture- they may help their child and draw it themselves if necessary*
- *Lots of chatting going on through session- usually dyads*
- *Third and 4th tutors continue working through exercises asking parent sitting next to them to 'play' child. This appears a fun experience*
- *Very informal process- conversations popping up everywhere prompted from something from exercises- lots of laughing and anecdotes. Lighthearted and very social*
- *Coordinator asks for ideas for group meetings for next term. Some ideas are offered- consumer rights, reading, card making, bread making*
- *Third term will be the last for ideas as 4th term will be devoted to graduation preparation. Some ideas have already been floated about- something that the group will make together for graduation- for example a mural to represent their experience. Suggestions also of a HIPPY garden because children have grown like a garden*
- *The second half of the session was spent with Ron Hinkley from Vic Roads talking about traveling with children- basically road safety and children- very interesting and informative. At the end of this session parents were provided opportunity to ask questions which they did. I think the relevance of the information to parents' lives (any parents life) naturally facilitated parents involvement in the session.*

6.3.1.2.5 Role-play as a major technique of instruction

According to Lombard (1994), role-playing is used as the program's basic technique of instruction for teaching Home Tutors and parents "how to teach", because "it has been found to be especially successful for use with the disadvantaged", as "the emphasis is on action rather than talk; it is interactive, experiential learning that is down to earth and concrete; and its easy, informal tempo provides game-like rather than test-oriented setting" (p.18). Furthermore, Lombard (1994) claimed that the role-play technique provides an atmosphere in which parents can clarify specific problems and gaps in their understanding of materials.

Both the researcher's observations of the six group meetings, and the reports from the Home Tutors and Coordinator, confirm that within this group setting of the program's delivery, role-play was definitely used as a technique of instruction of the program's

materials to the parents. However, according to both Home Tutor and Coordinator reports, parents were not always comfortable with the technique, in particular with the expectation that they would *"act like a four year old"* (Coordinator, Stage 1). The Coordinator explained that the way in which role-play was used within the group setting was modified in response to this:

> *...There's a certain uncomfortable feeling about role-play. A lot of parents find it difficult, um...for lots of reasons. Sometimes it's about their own difficulties with being a child. It might be distressing for them to put themselves back in there, in that space. So if we can do it in a way that, you know, that they can understand why they are doing this... so rather than say, "We're going to role play this bit", um, we might say "What do you think your child might say to this?" And then working it from that angle rather than saying pretend to be four... (Coordinator, Stage 1)*

The question concerning the use of role-play as a technique of instruction between Home Tutor and parent in the home visit setting was not directly asked of participants, and therefore no systematic data was collected. Interestingly, very little data regarding this aspect of the program's delivery naturally emerged in the interview.

6.3.1.3   Findings concerning implementation within the home

The findings reported next concern those components of the standard model of HIPPY delivery that involved the teaching of the HIPPY materials by the parent to the child.

6.3.1.3.1   Delivery of program's content

Implicit in the standard model of HIPPY delivery is that parents deliver the whole of the program's content to their child, that is, all the activities contained within the packet of materials they receive each week. However, it was evident from parent accounts that this did not always occur. Many parents reported both omitting and adapting certain activities contained within the worksheets. In some cases, parents reported leaving out certain activities that they believed their child did not like doing, such as colouring activities. Other parents reported that the activities that involved their child leaving the table they were working at, such as a cooking activity, was too disruptive to the rest of the activities and so they would bypass that activity. A few parents reported that when

they were feeling under time pressure they would leave out activities that they felt their child was competent with, such as colours and shapes in the first year of the program, and focus on completing activities with which they felt the child was less accomplished. Both of the parents of children diagnosed with developmental delays in the cohort reported adapting the content of the program to suit the child's capacities. One mother explained during Stage 1 of the research, how she adapted the content for her child:

> ...Because of the language delay, I do taper the program down a bit. Like there's a sheet where she'd have to, I think its like "on and under" and like "the pencil's on top of the book" and" the books on the table and the table's sort of under the book". All that was a bit too much for her, (so) instead of like so many objects, I would taper it down, so like just stick to "the book is on the table"... (Parent A18, Stage 1)

6.3.1.3.2   Daily teaching of child

According to Lombard (1994), "HIPPY requires a mother to allot a certain amount of time each week, preferably on a daily basis, to working through a packet of activities with her child" (p.12). The weekly packet of materials delivered to the parent are organized to facilitate this daily teaching of the child as a series of self contained activities represented in numbered worksheets for each of the five days of the school week. Systematic collection of data related to this component of the standard model of delivery was not collected, as the direct question asking how often parents did HIPPY with their child, was not included in the interview protocol. However, enough information did emerge from the interviews with parents to indicate that, although parents were aware that daily teaching of their child was the expected component of the program, few parents actually delivered the program on a daily basis. Table 6 presents the data collected concerning this component of the standard model of HIPPY delivery.

As can be seen in Table 6 below, some parents within the group did report delivering the program to their child on a daily basis. However, the majority of parents that commented on the frequency of delivery of the program within the home reported delivering the program to their child over 2-3 days of the week. This trend was more evident in parent reports collected during the second year of the program's delivery,

when the majority of children were attending school. Table 6 also highlights that approximately 25% of children received the program over 1 day of the week, either from their parent, or the Home Tutor.

Table 6

Parents Reports of Frequency of HIPPY Lessons

Frequency of delivery of program to child within home	No parents reporting and time reported T1 (N=28)	T2 (N=23)
Daily	14% (n=4)	8% (n=2)
2-3 days per week (typically over weekend)	39% (n=11)	57% (n=13)
One day per week	11% (n=3)	-
*Other	14% (n=4)	26% (n=6)
Not reported	21% (n=6)	8% (n=2)
Total percentage not delivering program daily	**64%**	**83%**

Key: *Program delivered to child by Home Tutor typically on one day per week

A common theme in parents' accounts regarding when they did the HIPPY program with the child was that the frequency and duration of the HIPPY session was determined by a combination of the parents allocating time to doing the program with the child, and the response of the child to doing the HIPPY work. In many cases, parents reported that once they allocated the time to sit down with the child to do HIPPY, the child often wanted to do more that just the daily worksheet. In response to the child's enthusiasm, parents reported that they often worked through more than one daily worksheet in a session with the child. The following quotations from parents highlight how parent and child needs worked together to determine the frequency of HIPPY sessions:

> *...She may take two days to do it. We never sat down and did 20 minutes a day each day. It just didn't work for us...(Parent A27, Stage 2)*

> *...I find we don't do it each day. It's more like, we might do it over two or three days and once we're set up, we'll just keep going and...once I think that (child) is getting sick of it, we stop...(Parent A2, Stage 1)*

> *...We'll do the whole week in one sitting, because it's easier to get her to sit still in one session than to get her to come back the next day...(Parent A4, Stage 1)*

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...Actually, I'm three weeks behind now but we'll catch up....I mainly do it on weekends ....I used to try and do it on a Sunday morning, but then we mightn't do anything for a few weeks, and then we'll have a really big session over the two or three days and get through maybe 4 weeks worth.."(Parent A13, Stage 2)

As the above examples highlight, variation to the frequency of the program's delivery had implications for the duration of HIPPY sessions within the home. Rather than the expected 15 minute daily sessions, parents tended to report more extended sessions. While data related to the exact amount of time that these extended sessions took was not collected, parents that did comment on the duration, talked in terms of hour-long sessions. Similarly, when Home Tutors delivered the program to the child within the home for a limited period, these were extended sessions on a weekly basis, rather than 15 minute daily sessions. Overall, these variations in both the frequency and duration of the program's implementation within the home affected the delivery of the program to 64% of children in the first year, and 83% of children in the second year.

6.3.1.3.3   Parent as teacher of child

A further finding concerning the delivery of the program to the child, evident in Table 6, was that in a few cases, the Home Tutor, rather than the parent, took on the role of delivering the program to the child within the home. In all cases in which this was reported, the mother had begun the program as the teacher of the program to the child. As the family's participation in the program progressed, various problems occurred within the home setting in relation to the parent's capacity to continue delivering the program to the child. In response, the Home Tutor took over the teaching role with the child. The frequency of occurrence of this phenomenon was more evident in the second year of the program's implementation, in the year that the participating child commenced school. As can be see in Table 6, four parents in the first year of the program reported that their Home Tutor was delivering the program to their child and six parents in the second year of the program reported the same. The necessity for this practice was a source of difficulty for program staff in terms of their role in the implementation to the parents, and is discussed further in Section 6.3.3.1.7.3 below.

6.3.1.4 Summary of findings concerning adherence of implementation to standard model

In terms of the Agency's role in the implementation, it was evident that the program began and continued to be directed in accordance with the standard model of HIPPY. This was particularly evident in respect to the development of the program within a community framework, the training and supervision of staff and organization and functioning of group meetings. As the life of the program evolved however, certain variations were made in regard to the delivery of the program to the families in response to the difficulties some families experienced in their capacity to fully participate in the program. These included weekly instead of fortnightly Home Tutor visits for families not attending group meetings and missing appointments, and in some cases, the Home Tutors delivering the program to the child. Variations were most evident, however, within the context of the home, in the delivery of the program to the child. Parents reported variations to the standard model in terms of daily teachings with their child, in the delivery of the program's content, in their attendance at group meetings and in their role as the child's teacher.

6.3.2 Factors facilitating the implementation of the program: Interpretive findings

The findings presented here concern those factors reported by participants as facilitating the implementation of the program. These findings emerged predominantly in response to the question asked of all participants about aspects of the program that they believed worked well. Findings were also gleaned from participants' reports of their overall experience of the program.

The initial data analysis guided the decision for the development of eight spreadsheet matrices to display the data, as indicated in Section 5.4.2.1.2 of Chapter 5. These spreadsheets related to the following distinct themes: Factors facilitating the program's implementation within the home, factors facilitating the implementation from within the Agency, difficulties experienced in implementation within the home, difficulties experienced from within the Agency, benefits of participation for parents, benefits for

children, benefits for the parent-child relationship and benefits for Home Tutors. Each column of the matrix represented the stage of the research and each row represented the emergent themes. The matrices also allowed for the inclusion of unexpected themes that did not directly pertain to specific research questions, but were related to the research aim of exploring participants' experiences of the program.

Once the matrices were designed, the data reduction process continued with the development of descriptive codes for emergent themes within each of the eight areas as well as unexpected themes that emerged from the data. The major themes that emerged from this stage were then transferred to the column headings in their related matrices. The sub-themes of each major theme were transferred to the column cell under these headings. For example, in relation to facilitating factors for parents, 'content of program', was a major theme and hence a column heading. 'Storybooks' was a sub-theme related to the content of the program and so was placed in the column cell. The reoccurrence of sub-themes across the data set was denoted in the matrix with the families identification code. This produced a set of matrices consisting of the entire collation of data obtained over the three stages of the research. The data was reduced further to produce the final matrices which are included as tables below.

Initial analysis of the data revealed differences between facilitating factors reported by parents and those reported by staff. This was to be expected, given that the different roles that parents and staff played in the implementation of the program would naturally give participants different perspectives. It was therefore decided to organize and present these findings separately both for clarity and to highlight these differences. The findings are presented as two sections related to the two main levels of implementation of the program. The first are referred to as 'within Agency' factors and consist of those factors that were identified as facilitating the actual delivery of the program to the targeted families, that is from the HIPPY staff to the participating parents. The second are referred to as 'within home' factors and consist of those factors identified as facilitating the delivery of the program within the home, that is, from the parent to the child. The findings are presented in each sub-section in order of the predominance in which they occurred in the data. The time at which these findings emerged during the research process is also indicated.

6.3.2.1 Facilitating factors in the delivery of the program by the Agency

Table 7, on page 128 below, presents the emergent themes related to those factors that program staff within the Agency which were perceived as facilitating the implementation of the program to the participating families.

6.3.2.1.1 Supervision and training of program staff

As can be seen in Table 7, the ongoing supervision and training of program staff was perceived to be one of the most major facilitating factors concerning the implementation of the program to the families. As documented in Section 6.3.1.2.1 above, there were several aspects to the supervision and training of program staff and the combination of these reportedly served a number of facilitating functions in terms of the implementation of the program from the staff to the participating families.

6.3.2.1.1.1 Peer support

Peer support between Home Tutors during the weekly group training sessions was the most frequently reported facilitating component of training. According to accounts from the Agency Director and Home Tutors, the weekly training sessions provided a forum for Home Tutors to discuss any problems they were experiencing with their peers, who in turn would offer feedback and suggestions, often based on their own experiences with similar issues. This not only provided practical strategies for the Home Tutor to deal with the issues at hand, but also enabled them to see the problems they were experiencing as not unique to them personally, but rather as being common to the Home Tutors as a group. This is reflected in the following quote taken from an interview in Stage 1 of the research with one Home Tutor who talked about the issue of families not being home for appointments:

> ...Well, I sort of wondered that (if it was personal), and I sort of was sensible, telling myself "Oh you- know it's you- know", and then I'd hear from the other Home Tutors too, "You know, it's not you. Don't worry, we've had the same experiences and same problems", and so that's good too. You sort of feedback from everyone and sort of the possibilities of how to address issues and stuff... (Home Tutor 2, Stage 1)

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Table 7

Themes and Sub-Themes Emerging from Staff Reports Concerning Factors That Facilitated the Delivery of Program to Parents

Themes (capitalized) and sub-themes	Staff reporting and stage of research reported		
	1	2	3
TRAINING AND SUPERVISION OF STAFF • Peer support from other home tutors during training	T1 T2 D	T1,T2,T3, D	T1,T2,T4,D
• Feedback and troubleshooting during supervision And training – early intervention with problems	C,T2,T4	C, T1,T2,T4	C
• Ongoing review of program's implementation – Capacity to learn from past experience	C, D	C, D,T2,T4	C, D
• Training geared towards specific problems of Population	D, C, T4	*	D
• Regular and structured training sessions	D, T1	*	*
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STAFF AND FAMILIES • Developing and maintaining a trusting and supportive relationship between parents and staff, particularly Home Tutors	C, T2	D,C,T1,T2, T4	D,C,T2,T4
APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTATION • Maintaining flexibility in delivery of program in response to individual needs of families	C, D,T2	C, T1,T2,T3 T4	C, T1,T4
• Developing practice strategies in response to the needs of families	*	C, T1,T2,T4	C, T4
GROUP MEETINGS • Structured agenda for meetings	C, T4	C	C
• Clear expectations as to group meeting attendance specified at time of recruitment	C, D, T4	*	*
• Style of meetings- parents encouraged to take 'ownership'	C	C	C
• Group meetings enjoyable for parents	*	C, T3	C
CHARACTERISTICS OF FAMILIES • Most families reliable- keep appointments	T1,T2,T4	T3,T4	*
• Dedicated to children and program		T2	
OTHER FACTORS • Structured nature of program- easy for families to Manage	D	*	T1
• Maintaining balance of families for Home tutors- in terms of challenges within families	*	C	*

Key: D= Agency Director   T 1=Home Tutor 1   T3= Home Tutor 3
      C= Program Coordinator   T 2=Home Tutor 2   T4=Home Tutor 4
      *=Theme not identified at this stage of research

The value of the ongoing peer support and feedback from other Tutors appeared especially pertinent to the less experienced Home Tutors, who reported gaining many ideas and learning strategies from their more experienced counterparts, as is highlighted in this first year Home Tutor's report:

> *...So if I have any questions or anything, I can discuss that in training and get feedback and especially from all the other Home Tutors, because there's only one other new one so they all sort of you- know. If I ask one question, I get five different answers and so it's really good...(Home Tutor 1, Stage 1)*

The individual supervision sessions between Home Tutor and Coordinator reportedly provided a forum in which specific difficulties Home Tutors were experiencing with individual families were discussed. As the following quotes indicate, Home Tutors felt confident in the Coordinator's capacity to deal with any issues arising in these sessions in a competent and efficient manner:

> *...Whenever you have any hassles you just discuss it with (Coordinator) and she puts you on track...(Home Tutor 4, Stage 1)*

> *...I'm really happy with it, the supervision and the support there. I feel really like um, she (Coordinator) has been like really good, and any issues that come up they are dealt with really quickly...(Home Tutor 2, Stage 2)*

6.3.2.1.1.2   Feedback and troubleshooting

Another reported facilitating function of the individual supervision sessions was the opportunity it provided for feedback from the Home Tutors to the Coordinator regarding problems families were experiencing in the implementation of the program within the home. This mechanism allowed the Coordinator and Home Tutor to devise strategies aimed at assisting the families with the specific problems they were encountering. As explained in the following quote from the Coordinator, early help with any problems could increase the capacity of a family to keep going with HIPPY:

> *...If a parent has difficulties in actually doing the program, if something's happened in the household that the parents actually have difficulty in actually doing the program for a few weeks, instead of the Home Tutor going in there and giving the next week's program so they end up with a stack 6 inches high of work that they are behind in, and then they say "This is too hard, I'm out of*

here", you- know, "I cant keep up with this program",....So now when that's happened, (I) try and get the Home Tutors to get onto it straight away and when they do their visit, organize so the child is actually home and do their visit with the parent and child. So it will actually give the HomeTutor, who will be able to tell me, if there's issues in doing the program. Be it that the parent might have difficulty, or the child might have difficulty, and a parent doesn't know how to go about assisting the child...There might be lots of reasons why. It may be the program has made them fall behind, and so we can actually assess that if they get in there quickly...(Coordinator, Stage 1)

6.3.2.1.1.3   Ongoing review process

A further facilitative function provided by all aspects of staff training and supervision, including the annual review, was the use of these sessions as forums for the development of knowledge to guide the ongoing implementation of HIPPY. In the following quotes, taken from interviews in Stage 1 and Stage 3 of the research respectively, the Coordinator highlighted the Agency's philosophy of, and commitment to, the practice of learning from past experiences to improve the ongoing implementation of the program:

> *...I say to all the Home Tutors, I say "Okay this has happened and what can we learn from this?" A-B-C, or whatever. It might be so that in the future we really need to make sure that we do whatever to prevent this from happening again. So it's learning from our experience...(Coordinator, Stage 1)*

> *...I do continue to appraise and value-add to the information I can give to the Home Tutors, to the knowledge base we can draw from in order to maintain a family...Because the more times you've done it the more likely that when a situation arises you've either had, if not that experience at another time, or a similar experience at another time, and we can live and learn based on what happened in that experience and how it was managed...(Coordinator, Stage 3)*

6.3.2.1.1.4   Training specific to needs of families

Another aspect of the training that was reported to facilitate the implementation of the program was the focus upon issues that were relevant to the families involved. As is discussed in more detail in Section 6.3.3.1.1 below, many of these families were dealing with a range of social and family problems often associated with socio-economically disadvantaged groups. As the Agency Director explained in the following quote in the first stage of the research, the Home Tutor induction program

included training in specific areas that Home Tutors may find confronting during home visits:

> *...The support and supervision of the Home Tutors has been remarkably improved (from previous year) and there is a very good induction program...The (program) has covered a range of areas, such as how to work with parents and children. Also provided them with input into the services and about child protection issues so if they identified child protection issues, they would be able to talk about it with the Coordinator....(Agency Director, Stage 1)*

Home Tutors also reported that the practice adopted by the Coordinator, in the first year of the program, of arming them with knowledge regarding some of the challenges their particular families were facing before they met the family themselves, was a helpful and facilitative practice. During the recruitment and enrolment process, the Coordinator gained some insight into some of the issues surrounding each family and passed on this knowledge to the respective Home Tutors. As one Home Tutor explained, this practice helped prepare her in her role:

> *...What happened this year is that (Coordinator) sat down and went through each family and what hassles there were. More or less told me beforehand and so I was prepared before I went in, and if then (you) come up against something that's too difficult, you just go and see (Coordinator)...(Home Tutor 4, Stage 1)*

6.3.2.1.2   Relationship between staff and families

As can be seen in Table 7 on page 128 above, along with training and supervision of staff, the relationship between the program staff, and parents was reported to be a main facilitating factor in the implementation of the program.

As was reported by most of HIPPY staff, particularly in the second year of the program and beyond, the importance of developing and maintaining a trusting relationship between the Home Tutors and the parents was a key component of success. The development of trust was considered of particular importance given the implementation role Home Tutors played that involved engaging with parents in the family home. As one Home Tutor stated in an interview during Stage 1 of the research, trust was an essential element in facilitating the ongoing home visits to deliver the program:

...If they (parents) don't have confidence or trust in you they won't want you to come around every week... (Home Tutor 3, Stage1)

The Home Tutors provision of support and encouragement to families over the two year life of the program was also reported as a key component in maintaining families within the program. The importance of this relationship to the implementation of the program was acknowledged and explained in the following quote from the Coordinator during Stage 3 of the research:

...They (parents) make that engagement, that connection with their Home Tutor and that is a really important connection...The Home Tutor is an integral part of really of a lot of the program working... It has to be, because over a two year period things happen in everyone's life, and everyone has situations where like you fall a bit behind and it's hard to maintain enthusiasm for two years. And you need that person coming, being enthusiastic, and reminding you of what a good job you are doing. Just re-igniting the passion, I suppose. They're the ones that the parents see... (Coordinator, Stage 3)

Many Home Tutors reported that over the two years of the program, the relationship they developed with the families, particularly with the mothers, became increasingly social. They reported that as the relationship developed, parents often began sharing information about other aspects of their lives. As one Home Tutor reported in the second year of the program, this increasing intimacy between Home Tutor and parent was to be expected given the context and duration of their relationship:

...It becomes like a social relationship as well. And I mean, you know, often they want to tell me things. And I guess I'm kind of always there to listen to anybody. And I guess I have gone into their homes a lot of times, and if I was standoffish and they felt uneasy with me, you know, I don't think they'd want me back in their house...(Home Tutor 3, Stage 2)

6.3.2.1.3   Approach to implementation of the program

Another factor revealed by Table 7 to be frequently reported by staff as facilitative to the program's implementation concerns the approach adopted by staff to the delivery of the program to participating families. While it was clear that staff were aware of the standard model of the implementation of the program, most staff reported in all three stages of the research, that flexibility in some aspects of the program's delivery was

crucial to maintaining families within the program. Furthermore, it appeared that program's staff capacity to respond to the needs of families with thoughtful development of practice strategies was a further facilitating factor in the implementation of the program.

6.3.2.1.3.1 Flexibility of teaching in response to individual needs of families

It appears that, through the development of trust and intimacy within the relationship between parents and Home Tutors, program staff became more aware of the individual needs of families as their involvement with the program progressed. This increased awareness of the family situations and needs enabled HIPPY staff to identify challenges families were encountering in their participation in the program. As is reflected in the following quote from the Coordinator during Stage 2 of the research, she believed that it was necessary for staff to both recognize and flexibly adapt the delivery of the program to the individual needs of the families:

> ...Not everyone is starting from the same point. And that needs us to actually recognize where they are starting from, and adapt what we are doing in order to match it to what parents are able to do...(Coordinator, Stage 2)

Evident in staff reports at all three stages of the research were instances of how particular Home Tutors had responded to the needs of individual families with flexibility. At the end of the first year of the program, the Coordinator gave several examples of how this approach was enacted. In the following quote she spoke of one young mother, who was expecting her fourth child at the start of the following school year, and the start of the second year of the program. She reflected upon the need to consider each family's individual situation in respect to the delivery of the program, within the set time frame and the set weekly rate of receiving program materials:

> ...So what I've said to her is maybe she'd like to have some (HIPPY materials), a few weeks to do during the holidays, so she's not feeling quite so pressured during February. Because she's going to have a newborn, two little ones and one starting school. So, you know, just looking at the individual families, rather than running it as everybody starts on this date, and we do one every week and that's all there is to it...(Coordinator, Stage 1)

Within the same interview, the Coordinator gave another example in which she demonstrated to a parent how to adapt the program's content in order to best meet the specific needs of the child:

> *...If you've got a child that is having difficulties with um doing an activity, just using pen and paper actually isn't the point, where he can visualize bigger and smaller you know. ...I actually went out to one parent and spoke to the parent about that. I said "Okay, why don't you just get...have a look at what is being covered in that week's work and then do it interactively with your child. Get your child to go and get, or go with your child and go and get a big toy and a little toy, and have it so that you've got concrete objects". Because, you know, that is the stage of development that children will understand. Concrete objects prior to pictorial representation. So that parents and child are actually getting value, feeling that they are covering the work covered in the program, but in a way the child understands...(Coordinator, Stage 1)*

This approach was also evident in Home Tutors' reports. One particular aspect mentioned by them was the process of reading through the week's materials with the mother during the home visit. According to most accounts, Home Tutors did not always read through the whole of the upcoming week's materials with the parent. It appeared that Home Tutors operated with some flexibility in this regard, in response to the particular family they visited. The following quote from one Home Tutor in the second year of the research echoes the accounts made by most of the Home Tutors regarding this aspect of the program's implementation. As is reflected in this account, as Home Tutors became more aware of the needs of particular families, they adapted their approach in response to those needs:

> *...I always adapt it to each and every family to how much. Like, I won't sit there and read a whole book with them if I think their going to feel uncomfortable with this... because I've had feedback. Also, I know that some mums get really frustrated there and they get you know. Like, that's when you are in danger of losing your families, you know, and you don't want that at the end of the day... (Home Tutor 3, Stage 2)*

6.3.2.1.3.2   Developing flexible wider practice strategies in response to families

A further finding that emerged from staff reports that was considered facilitative in terms of the program's implementation was the development of wider practice strategies that were responsive to the individual needs of families.

According to both the Coordinator and to all Home Tutors, the scheduling of appointments for home visits was another aspect of delivery of the program to parents that required both flexibility and adaptability by staff in response to the needs of particular families. This finding emerged in the second year of the program, and by all accounts, the practice of purposely scheduling appointments around the needs of each family was adopted by program staff in response to the phenomenon that had evolved during the previous year, of Home Tutors discovering certain parents not at home when they visited at the appointed time. According to Home Tutor accounts, parents had forgotten the appointment time. Through the process of feedback and troubleshooting in training sessions, several strategies were devised and employed by program staff to assist parents to remember appointments. The main strategy employed was the practice of making appointment times on the same day of the week at the same time of the day. In the following quote taken from an interview with the Coordinator in the final year of the research she described other strategies developed to facilitate the home visit aspect of the program's implementation. Reflected in this account is the evolving nature of such practice strategies and the ongoing adaptive response by program staff:

> *...We have developed those sorts of strategies for those families where it's hard for them to actually remember, even though it might be the same time and day every week. I have yellow sheets that they can give to the parent that says your next appointment is and they can stick it on the fridge....Another thing we look at is trying for those families, where it's often difficult to catch them, is to make the appointment early in the week so that if you miss them you can actually catch them up later in the week. So there's lots of those little strategies and... looking at the individual families...(Coordinator, Stage 3)*

6.3.2.1.4   Group meetings

According to accounts by the Coordinator and the Agency Director, attendance at group meetings by parents was higher in this third implementation of the program under study than had been in the past two implementations by the Agency. A number of factors were reported by staff as enhancing the functioning of the group meetings, perceived by staff as facilitative in attracting parents to attend group meetings and also maintaining their attendance over the course of the program.

6.3.2.1.4.1 Expectations regarding group meeting attendance specified at recruitment

The Coordinator stated that during the recruitment phase of the program, when families were considering enrolling, she stressed to parents all aspects of the commitment involved in participation in the program, including the fortnightly attendance at group meetings as the means of receiving the program materials for that week ahead. According to reports from the Coordinator, Agency Director and one Home Tutor during the first year of the program, expectations regarding attendance at group meetings had not been made as clear to families in the previous two implementations of the program. The staff further reported that they considered the practice by the Coordinator of ensuring expectations regarding group meeting attendance were made clear to families at time of recruitment, was a facilitating factor in the reported improved group attendance rate in this third implementation.

6.3.2.1.4.2 Organized and structured agenda of enrichment component of group meetings

Another factor reported as facilitating attendance and enhancing the overall functioning of group meetings was the organization and structure of meetings. In this third implementation, the enrichment component of the meeting was now planned before the start of each term, allowing the Coordinator to produce an agenda detailing forthcoming activities that was given to families during the home visit at that early stage. As one Home Tutor reported during Stage 1 of the research, this was perceived to facilitate the functioning of the group meetings:

> ....What worked well: (the Coordinators) organization, because it's all structured now. You know what's going on. All the enrichment programs, they're good...Like before we had other people coming in, but (the Coordinator's) got a list. She's got the term already prepared out, so you can see what's happening..." (Home Tutor 4, Stage 1)

Towards the end of the first year of the program, the Coordinator reported that along with the agenda produced each term, a reminder was produced:

...What we've done towards the end of the year, I actually did a little yellow slip for the Home Tutors to give to the parents, to put on the fridge when they visit. Reminding them what's on next week. So that's actually on their fridge, and so less inclined to forget...(Coordinator, Stage 1)

6.3.2.1.4.3 Parent-directed agenda of enrichment component of group meetings

At all three stages of the research, the Coordinator described parents' increasing involvement in determining the agenda for the enrichment component of the group meetings. She stated that she had actively sought to improve the experience of the group meetings for parents by encouraging them to express what they want from these meetings, in terms of the enrichment component. She wanted the agenda to reflect their suggestions through guest speaker topics and other organized activities. In the following quote, taken from her interview towards the end of the first year of the program, she commented on what she sensed as a shift in roles, as parents began to take a more directive role in the meetings' agenda, while she took more of the facilitator role:

...I sense more and more, parents are starting to say what they'd like in groups. Now I have a sense of what the parents are actually wanting from the groups, so I can plan for the next year's knowing that this is what parents have asked me for...I'm wanting parents to see it as <u>their</u> group...and I'm sensing that they're taking ownership of that group, and that they see me there to facilitate. Which is what I've really tried to keep my role as....rather than me dominating, do you know what I mean? So it's not seen as, that I'm just part of their group, rather than me running the show...(Coordinator, Stage 1)

6.3.2.1.4.4 Group meetings enjoyable for parents

The final factor considered by staff as enhancing the overall functioning of group meetings was the level of enjoyment afforded by activities at the meetings. According to some staff reports, based on their observations of parents as well as from feedback they had received from parents attending group meetings, most parents found the experience enjoyable. In an interview at Stage 1 of the research, towards the end of the first year of the program, the Coordinator made the following observation of parents attending group meetings:

...I sense there's a good feel amongst parents. Parents are actually saying that they actually enjoy coming. It's their time away from their kids. They look forward to it. It's their time to be able to have a couple of hours without the kids and chat with other parents...(Coordinator, Stage 1)

From the Coordinator's perspective, the importance of parents' enjoyment of group meetings to the overall functioning of group meetings became more important as the life of the program progressed. This is reflected in the following quote from an interview conducted at Stage 3 of the research, in which the Coordinator explained how she had began to shift her own focus on group attendance away from the number of families attending the meetings, and towards the quality of the experience for those who did attend:

...My perception of group attendance has varied, has changed. I now look at group attendance as- rather than as a failure because not everyone is there, I look at the people that are there. Are they enjoying it and are they regular?...(Coordinator, Stage 3)

6.3.2.1.5   Characteristics of families

As shown in Table 7 on page 128 above, another factor reported by HIPPY staff as being facilitative in terms of delivering the program to the parents related to characteristics of the participating families. Specifically, some staff reported that their experience with families involved in the program were that most families were reliable in terms of keeping home visit appointments. Also they reported that most parents involved in the program were dedicated to their children and to doing the program with their children, and that these characteristics facilitated the task of delivering the program to the families involved.

6.3.2.1.6   Other facilitating factors

Two other factors were reported by staff as facilitating the implementation of the program to the families involved. The first concerned the structured nature of HIPPY itself. One Home Tutor described the program as easy to manage for families. The Agency Director described the program as *"initially a task involvement"* that *"has*

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boundaries" and "*a framework*" the combination of which he believed "*helps*" with the particular population of families involved in the program (Agency Director, Stage 1). The other factor that was reported by the Coordinator (Stage 1), involved the process of allocating families with Home Tutors. She considered that it was important to allocate and maintain a balance for Home Tutors in terms of the more challenging and less challenging families they were to work with.

6.3.2.2   Facilitating factors in delivery of program to the child within the home

The findings reported here emerged from interviews with parents participating in the program conducted at the three stages of the research. Table 8, on page 140 below, presents the themes and sub-themes related to those factors that parents reported as facilitating the delivery of the program to the HIPPY child within the home. The themes are presented in the order of their predominance in the interview data. The percentage of parents reporting each main theme at each stage of the research is indicated. Also, the number of parents reporting each sub-theme related to the main theme is shown.

6.3.2.2.1   Positive response by child to program

As can be seen in Table 8, the most commonly reported theme in terms of facilitating the delivery of the program within the home for parents concerned the responsiveness of the child to the program. Specifically, this theme represented the many reports from parents that their child responded positively to doing the program, and that the task of delivering the program to the child appeared to be made easier because of this response. What parents typically reported was that it was their child who would initiate the doing of the program, rather than the parent having to encourage the child's participation. At Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the research, when parents were still participating in the program, up to three quarters of the group reported this theme

Table 8

Parents Reports of Factors that Facilitated the Delivery of Program to Child
Within the Home

Themes (bold) and sub-themes in order of predominance	Stage of research theme reported		
	T1 (N=28)	T2 (N=23)	T3 (N=20)
	Percentage of parents reporting theme and no. reporting each sub-theme		
Positive response of child to program	**71%**	**74%**	**70%**
• Child clearly enjoys program	n=16	n=5	n=14
• Child driven- child wants to do program with parent	n=16	n=15	*
• Child's enthusiasm for program increased	*	n=6	*
• Child's capacity to concentrate when doing program increased	*	n=3	*
Content of program	**75%**	**73%**	**60%**
• Storybooks and related activities such as sequencing	n=13	n=6	n=3
• Age appropriate- matches school curriculum	n=2	n=8	n=7
• 'Hands on" activities; experiments; cut/paste	n=9	n=4	n=3
• Follow the lines (beginning writing)	n=10	*	*
• Program becomes progressively harder	n=2	n=4	*
• Child enjoys role playing activities	n=5	*	*
• Drawing/colouring in	n=2	n=2	*
• Games	*	n=2	n=2
Structured nature of program	**57%**	**26%**	**55%**
• Manageable within family context	n=10	n=1	n=8
• Easy to implement	n=6	n=6	n=2
• Everything provided to teach child	n=8	n=1	n=1
Relationship with program staff	**32%**	**26%**	**15%**
• Parent and child enjoy home tutor visit	n=7	n=4	n=4
• Parents feel supported by program staff	n=2	n=2	*
• Flexibility of home tutors to work around family	n=3	n=4	*
Flexibility of program	**21%**	**21%**	**10%**
• Program can be adapted to needs of child	n=4	n=2	*
• Content of program can be applied to day to day activities	n=2	n=2	*
• Program can be extended	*	n=2	n=2
Other facilitating factors	**10%**	**9%**	**15%**
• Cost-cheap	n=3	*	*
• Graduation as motivator	*	n=2	*
• Graduation as memorable experience	*	*	N=3

Key: *= sub-theme not reported at this stage of research

when talking about their experience of the program. One year after participation had finished, 60% of parents reported this theme when reflecting upon their experiences. The following quotes from parents illustrate their view that the implementation of the program in the home was largely driven by the child, and highlight the role that the child played in both initiating and maintaining HIPPY activities.

...He asks me every day, "Please come on, can we do the HIPPY?" and like-mainly the normal time he asks me is just after tea. And I'm totally too tired, and I say, "Oh can you wait till tomorrow N?" and he's like, "Oh mum, please... (HIPPY Parent A7, Stage 1)

...She is the one that wants to keep going. As soon as we finish one sheet, she can't wait for the next day, "Let's keep going mum"..." (HIPPY Parent A9, Stage 1)

... And I suppose I just keep doing it because he's really enjoying it...(HIPPY Parent A2, Stage1)

Similarly, the majority of parents reported that it was obvious to them that their child enjoyed doing the program while they were actually working through the activities with them. Many parents spoke in terms of the child "loving" HIPPY. For these parents, seeing the child's enjoyment of the program appeared to make delivering the program easier for them, and also enhanced the enjoyment they obtained themselves from their role in the implementation. As reflected in the following quotes from mothers at Stage 1 of the research, the child's "love" of the program enhanced the experience for them:

...He loves it .Absolutely loves it. I mean he won't put it down...I love it...(HIPPY Parent A17, Stage 1)

...Because she likes it, I really like it too....(HIPPY Parent A18, Stage1)

Many parents also reported their children often preferred to do HIPPY over other activities. This experience is captured in the following account from one mother during Stage 2 of the research:

...Like last night, he had mates here and all, and he's like "Na, I'm going to do HIPPY, you wait here and play without me and I'll come out when I'm finished"... (HIPPY Parent A7, Stage 2)

Some parents attributed their child's enthusiasm for the program as being due, in part, to the fact that the child enjoyed spending time one-on-one time with the parent. As one mother put it "*...he loves it because he gets me all to himself*" (HIPPY Parent A25, Stage 1). As shown in Table 8 on page 140 above, some parents reported the child's enthusiasm for the program increased in the second year of the program once the child had begun formal education. Parents typically understood the child's increased

enthusiasm in terms of developing maturity. Similarly, some parents reported that the child's capacity to concentrate had increased in this same year, and that this too facilitated the program's delivery.

6.3.2.2.2   Content of program

As can be seen in Table 8, the second most commonly reported theme in terms of facilitating the delivery of the program to the child were factors related to the actual content of the program. When parents were asked what aspects of the program worked well for them, the majority of them, consistently across the three stages of the research, reported aspects of the program's content that the child both enjoyed and that they believed were helpful for the child. The most reported aspect of the content of the program was the storybooks. Many parents reported that their child both loved having the book read, as well as the receiving of each new book, as this mother described:

> *...She loves getting the new book. Every time we get a new book, I've got to read it to her every night in bed... (HIPPY Parent A20, Stage1)*

Some parents reported that their children still loved reading or having the storybooks read to them at Stage 3 of the research, up to one year after their involvement in the program had ended. As well as their child's obvious enthusiasm for the storybooks, many parents reported that they believed in the value of not just the reading of the books to their child but also of the comprehension activities surrounding the stories within the books. These beliefs are reflected in the following quote from one mother at Stage 3 of the research:

> *...What worked well-the books, actually reading. Like she really learnt the story-understood the concept of the story, like what it's all about, and to be able to remember and talk about it. That's what I really liked about it... (HIPPY Parent A21, Stage 3)*

Another aspect related to the content of the program that many parents reported facilitated the delivery was the age appropriateness of the materials for their child. According to parent reports, the fact that the content of the program was age

appropriate ensured the child was able to be challenged enough by the worksheets, yet not find them too difficult to manage. As is reflected in the following quote from one mother, the graduated age appropriateness of the materials helped maintain her child's enthusiasm for the program:

> *...Everything's worked out really well. I mean- It's not too hard and it's not too easy for him, so he's not getting discouraged.... (HIPPY Parent A17, Stage 1)*

In the second year of the program, many parents commented on how closely the materials within the program matched the school curriculum. They further reported that the relevance of the HIPPY activities to the child's school work facilitated the delivery of the program. This is reflected in the following response from one mother to the researcher's question of whether she had found it harder to manage the program in the year her child had started school:

> *...No. Because what they're doing actually in HIPPY, they're sort of approaching it the same at school, and so if they've started it at school, HIPPY introduces it. Or, like if HIPPY has introduced it, they've started it at school, and so it's worked out really well... (HIPPY Parent A17, Stage 2)*

As can be seen in Table 8, several other aspects related to the content of the program was reported by parents as working well in terms of what their child enjoyed about doing the program. These included the 'hands on' type of activities such as 'cut and paste', and experiments such as cooking, follow the lines of drawing, role playing activities where the child and parent acted out the role of characters within the books, drawing and colouring in, and games such as bingo and memory quizzes.

6.3.2.2.3   Structured nature of program

The third most commonly reported theme in terms of facilitating the delivery of the program to the child were those aspects related to the structured nature of the program. As Table 8 on page 140 above highlights, a combination of the program providing both everything parents needed and having the program all set out for them in a structured fashion made easier the task of implementation, as reflected in the following comments from parents:

...I like the way that it provides everything that you need. Like you get the box at the start, and you've got your shapes and you get your sticks when you need them. And it's all sort of provided for you, and it's structured and that's the biggest thing I've found with HIPPY.... (HIPPY Parent A3, Stage 1)

...I don't have to think of something to do. Its all there, its easy. Its very self explanatory and everything, so you just sit there and breeze through it. You don't even have to think about it...(HIPPY Parent A19, Stage1)

Having the program both delivered to the home and picked up from the home was another aspect that made the program easy to deliver, as this mother commented in Stage 2 of the research:

...Yeah and it's easy.... I mean I love it too, the fact that it's bought to my door and I love the fact that they come and pick it up, and so forth. Because the way I am and how busy I am, there's no way we'd get it you know...(HIPPY Parent A17, Stage 2)

For many parents, the structured nature of the program that made the program easy for them to implement was also a facilitating factor in enabling them to find the time within the context of their other family and work commitments, to actually sit down and do the HIPPY activities with the child. As is reflected in the following quote from one mother, knowing the program was easy to follow made the task of setting aside the time easier for busy mothers:

...I like the way it's all set out for you...Like being a mum with two, you get busy. You're working and you've got your whole family. This gives you that 15-20 minutes put aside every day, and you have to do it, and yeah it's good....(HIPPY Parent A1, Stage1)

6.3.2.2.4   Relationship with program staff

As can be seen in Table 8, approximately one third of parents reported aspects associated with their relationship with the program staff that that facilitated the delivery of the program to their child. The main aspect centered on the enjoyment and anticipation of the Home Tutor visit for both the parent and the child. As one mother commented during Stage 1 of the research:

*...And yeah it's nice to have a visit from (Home Tutor). The kids look forward to
her visit and yeah it all works quite well...(HIPPY Parent A2, Stage 1)*

For some parents, the fortnightly visit from the Home Tutor, as well contact with the
program staff at group meetings, provided a sense of being supported in their role of
delivering the program to the child. As is reflected in the following account from one
mother at Stage 1 of the research, the consistency of the contact with program staff
ensured parents felt that they were not left to manage on their own, and that this
ongoing contact was considered an important element in facilitating parents role in the
delivery of the program to their child:

> *.. It's sort of like you're catching up every week either with your Tutor or your
> group meeting or whatever, you know. So you're not just provided with
> everything and just left. So that's good...(HIPPY Parent A3, Stage 1)*

Other parents reported on the practical support their Home Tutors had provided them
to assist in their role of delivering the program to their child. For example, some
parents reported on the flexibility Home Tutors had demonstrated in terms of
scheduling appointments around the needs of their family commitments, even
providing weekly visits to parents if required. Other parents reported on the practical
help Home Tutors had provided in terms of assisting them in actually working through
the program with the child when they were experiencing difficulties keeping up with the
work themselves. The following quote from one mother with twins participating in the
program provides one example of the ways in which this family's Home Tutor assisted:

> *"...Yeah... (Home Tutor) had to come in and do the lessons with us. With the
> two of them, you-know, it's hard and yeah, she'll leave work at home for us to
> do. She comes in twice. She comes on a Monday and the Friday and then she'll
> leave some work for us to do in between the sessions...(HIPPY Parent A22,
> Stage 1)*

6.3.2.2.5   Room for flexibility and applicability of content of program

As recounted in Section 6.3.4.1 above, parents took advantage of what they saw as
flexibility in the program. This was seen by them as a further facilitating factor. They

were pleased to be able to adapt activities to their children's needs. For some parents, this meant that they would taper down some aspects of the program's content if their child was not responding well to a particular activity. For example, a number of parents reported that their child did not particularly like colouring activities and so they would sometimes leave those activities out.

Other parents reported that the fact that the content could be easily extended to meet the needs of the child was a positive aspect of the program. This theme is reflected in the following parent account:

> *...Even though the actual thing may be quite basic, you can extend it. That's worked really well, because I find, like the other night he had to match up numbers. It was one number....and then there were boxes of other numbers to match up. Well, as well as that he wrote the number and then he added them up....He thought "What else can I do here?" And it was open for more, and most of the activities are like that...They can trigger off more activities..." (HIPPY Parent A3, Stage 2)*

Yet other parents reported that the content of the program in general was easily applied to day-to-day activities. This offered parents further opportunities to interact with the child about HIPPY concepts beyond their usual HIPPY work setting. As one mother explained, the applicability of the program's content to day-to-day activities enabled her to still engage with her child in the spirit of HIPPY, even when they were not sitting down, working through the actual activities together:

> *...As we go through what we have to do that week, even if we don't get a chance to do some of it that week, you still remember what you have to do, and you apply it to different things you do around the house....Like if you're out driving or something, we can't go and get the list of activities for that week, but we can apply it to other things, which is really good...(HIPPY Parent A14, Stage 1)*

6.3.2.2.6   Other facilitating factors

A few parents mentioned the affordable cost of HIPPY ($1 per week) as a factor that both attracted them to the program in the first instance, and as an ongoing facilitating factor in maintaining their involvement in the program. Anticipation of the graduation

ceremony, held at the end of the program, was mentioned by some parents as being a motivating factor when the child's enthusiasm waned towards the end of the second year.

6.3.3 Summary of findings concerning overall factors that facilitated the program's implementation.

In brief, for staff involved in the implementation of the program, the most commonly reported facilitating factors were those surrounding staff training and supervision. Regular staff training and supervisory sessions served a number of facilitating functions for program staff. For Home Tutors, the most vital function was the sense of support and guidance they received from each other during group training sessions in which they shared practice experience, strategies and wisdoms that in turn, assisted them in their ongoing role. Individual supervision sessions with the Coordinator also provided a sense of support and specific guidance for Home Tutors, although its main facilitative function was as a mechanism for troubleshooting, enabling identification of and early intervention with any problems arising in the program's implementation. The process of feedback and troubleshooting embedded within supervisory sessions provided for the ongoing review by program staff of the effectiveness of any practice strategies developed in response to problems arising. The capacity of program staff to respond effectively to emergent problems was influenced by the development of the relationship between Home Tutors and families, mainly the participating parent. Staff placed equal importance on the development of a relationship where parents felt supported by, and trusting of, program staff, particularly in their relationship with their Home Tutors. The quality of this relationship thus facilitated maintaining families within the program.

Other facilitating factors perceived included the enhancement of group meetings through the development of a structured and parent directed agenda for the enrichment component, as well as expectations regarding group attendance being made clear to parents at time of recruitment. The commitment by most families to the program, the structured nature of the program's content, and the maintaining of

balance for Home Tutors in terms of challenging families were also reported to facilitate the delivery of the program.

One of the most vital factors underpinning the success of the program's implementation appeared to be the approach to implementation demonstrated by staff that was both flexible and reflexive. Staff acknowledged that rigid adherence to the standard model of implementation would not have worked well with this particular population. They considered that the willingness and capacity to be adaptive in response to the needs of individual families often helped support and maintain families within the program. As the life of the program evolved, knowledge and experience gained was used reflectively to guide both the ongoing training of staff and the implementation of the program generally.

For parents delivering HIPPY to their own children, the main facilitating factor perceived was the child's enjoyment of the program. Many parents reported that it was their child who would initiate HIPPY sessions, making the task easier for parents. Parents identified numerous aspects that made the program's content appealing to the child including the activities themselves as well as the age appropriateness of the materials. The structured nature of the program, including the provision of everything needed to do the program, also made it easier for parents to manage within the context of other family and work commitments. The development of the relationship with the Home Tutor, which parents experienced as enjoyable and supportive as well as the adaptability of the program's content to meet their child's needs, were further facilitating factors. The affordability and graduation ceremony were also appealing factors mentioned by parents.

6.3.4 Difficulties in the implementation of the program: Interpretive findings

Findings concerning difficulties experienced in the implementation of the program emerged mainly in response to the question asked of all participants about aspects of the program that they believed had not worked well. They were also gleaned from responses to participants reports of their overall experience of the program. Once

again, differences between what staff and parents experienced as difficult was evident, and to be expected given their differing roles.

Findings are presented first in terms of perceived difficulties in program delivery by HIPPY staff, and then in terms of perceived difficulties in delivery to the child by the parent. In the first section presented, findings concerning the responses made to the implementation difficulties and any variations made to the standard model of the program's delivery are included. As these findings were consistently reported by all participating staff over the life of the research, they are presented as overall emergent themes.

6.3.4.1 Concerning difficulties in the delivery of program to parents by staff

The findings presented here are taken from the analysis of interviews with all HIPPY staff and concern those findings related to the difficulties they experienced with the implementation of the program to the participating parents, as well as the responses that were made to such difficulties. A number of themes emerged from the analysis that appeared consistently in all staff accounts. Figure 2 below, presents these themes by way of a flow chart of difficulties encountered and responses made by program staff. An outline of each theme highlighted follows.

6.3.4.1.1 Social and family difficulties experienced by families

During the life of the program's implementation and over the three years of the research, staff consistently raised the theme of challenging social and family issues surrounding the particular population from which participating families were drawn. The identified this as the major underlying factor associated with the difficulties experienced by program staff in the implementation of the program. As discussed in Section 4.1.2 in Chapter 4, it is well documented that the Corio/Norlane area from which families were recruited, is a generationally socially disadvantaged community. As was further highlighted in Section 6.3.1.1.4, families participating in this third intake were recruited from some of the most disadvantaged pockets within that community.

According to staff reports, a number of participating families faced a range of issues associated with poverty and disadvantage that made full participation in the program

| Family/Social difficulties experienced by families | Agency responds to needs of families |

Families do not keep home visit appointments

Home tutors make weekly visits to deliver program. Staff employ strategies to assist families to keep appointments and attend meetings

Families do not attend group meetings

Families have trouble delivering program regularly to child

Agency assess situation and offers assistance to families

Families fall behind with program- feel overwhelmed – want to withdraw

Parents not always able to resume role

Home tutors take over delivering program to child within home until family catch up and parent can resume role

Child still receives program however parent/child do not receive full benefit of program

Figure 2. Difficulties reported by program staff in the implementation of the program to parents and the responses made to these difficulties.

extra challenging for them. The following quotes from program staff identify some of the challenges families faced. They also highlight how these challenges were considered specific to this particular population, and how they presented different challenges to the language barriers facing earlier implementations within Australia:

> ...I feel that our families have got more different issues (in comparison to the Fitzroy program). Not like the language barriers and all that. They've got different family issues...from anything like family domestics to... you know... I've seen different things like drug substance issues, parenting issues... Some struggle with putting a routine in place at all... (Home Tutor 3, Stage 1)

> ...Whereas our families, a two year program, most of them don't stay in the same house for that long. They don't even stay with the same partner for that long. I mean they have quite a transient lifestyle, transient in their friendships. They know everybody, because a lot of the time you're looking at third generation from that area. So they actually... their parents went to school there, then they went, you know. So it's getting to third generation school leavers, teenage pregnancy, unemployment, all those sorts of thing. Certainly not all of Norlane/Corio, but in some pockets we're looking at third generation of this lifestyle.... (Coordinator, Stage 2)

> ...You're looking at poverty too, you know. You're looking at families who may not have transport. Well, that makes day-to-day life very difficult, when you're relying on public transport. You might look at families that have three preschoolers and expecting their fourth, and you know it makes it very tricky....normal day-to-day life... (Coordinator, Stage 1)

6.3.4.1.2   Families not keeping home visit appointments

All program staff reported that the fundamental difficulty experienced with this aspect of the implementation was Home Tutors not finding some parents at home at the scheduled fortnightly home visit time. Whilst staff pointed out that most families were reliable, all Home Tutors experienced some of their families as being unreliable in terms of keeping appointments. For some Home Tutors, this not only presented problems for families not receiving the work, but was also a source of frustration, given the organization and effort Home Tutors themselves put in to keeping those appointments. One Home Tutor made this comment in relation to her experience of families missing appointments:

...Like it (parents not being home) happens every now and then, and things happen, you know. But when it's a regular thing, that's a bit of a bummer, especially if you sort put in a lot of effort to get there yourself, you know. Like I've been walking or riding my bike and then you get there, and they're not even there..." (Home Tutor (2), Stage 1)

The result of families missing appointments was an increased workload for Home Tutors who would have to organize and implement an extra home visit with families. Despite some expression of frustration by Home Tutors in relation to this, staff more commonly expressed an understanding of why this phenomenon occurred, framed within the context of the various personal, family and social challenges these families faced. As the following comments from program staff highlight, these challenges ranged from very practical difficulties such as housing problems and lack of amenities (for example a home phone), to entrenched lifestyle practices:

...Like if the family, for a number of reasons, has to move, and this has happened- and hasn't got a roof over their heads, they're probably not in a place where they can concentrate on the program. They're actually more worried about where they are going to sleep tonight... (Coordinator, Stage 1)

...Like if my kids were sick I'd always call and I've got a phone on I know that but some of them don't have (a phone)...(Home Tutor 3, Stage 1)

...It's like their lifestyles, their social networks. Like they are so sort of out of the workforce and doing other sorts of things, so they might be going to bed at two or three in the morning and getting up at, you know, ten or eleven and their children are up at eight or nine...So actually remembering to be home, to make a time to remember to be there at that time...To do things on a regular (basis), some sort of routine. So to be able to do things at a regular time each day, or to be able to organize...these (things) they have struggled with...(Coordinator, Stage 2)

6.3.4.1.3 Families not attending group meetings

Another important component integral to the process of the implementation of the program is attendance at the fortnightly group meetings, during which the next week's materials are delivered to parents as a group. All program staff reported that not all families attended group meetings, as demonstrated by Table 5 on page 123 above.

As the following quote highlights, explanations given by staff for some families' non-attendance were framed once again within the context of the personal, family and social problems that some of these families faced:

> ...There's one mum, she just has a lot of struggles in her life that are just...I cant really ever see her getting to one (group meeting). Even though she promises she'll try and get there, she has lots and lots of different issues. So that's why I guess she's most unlikely to ever make it to one....And there's two, they're so shy or so scared about what the groups going to be like. They're really anxious about it.... (Home Tutor 3, Stage 1)

6.3.4.1.4 Families have difficulties establishing routines

Program staff also recounted difficulties some families experienced in establishing the routine and the level of organization required to be able to deliver the program regularly to the child within the home. Some of the observations made by staff in relation to these difficulties are presented here:

> ....I know that people struggle to try and do it every day. How they say the program should be done 10-15 minutes (per day), that just doesn't happen. Um, I know they try and cram it in when they can, especially when they go to Primary School, they try and do it on a weekend. They say their time is sort of taken up with more things, and they struggle sometimes as a family with routines anyway... (Home Tutor 3, Stage 1)

> ...I was sort of leaving work and going through it and she was "Oh yes", and really keen. And then I'd go back and she hadn't even got the work out, or she'd lost it, you know. Like the whole HIPPY box was lost..." (Home Tutor 2, Stage 1)

6.3.4.1.5 Families fall behind with program

As can be seen in Figure 2 on page 150 above, the consequences, stemming from a range of family and social problems, of families missing Home Tutor visits, not attending group meetings and not routinely delivering the program to the child led to these families falling behind with the workload of the program. Consistently reported in staff interviews was the concept that families who fell behind with the HIPPY work were considered to be at risk of dropping out of the program, due to parents feeling

overwhelmed by the need to catch up. This concern is reflected in the following quote from one Home Tutor at Stage I of the research:

> ...When they get behind that's when big trouble starts. If you don't' get them caught up and then they're way behind then. And most times they want to drop out, because they feel pressured that they can't catch up...You sort of don't want them to do that and lose the whole program and they've probably worked hard at the start...(Home Tutor 3, Stage 1)

6.3.4.1.6   Response of staff to families' needs

Consistently reported by program staff was the further theme of assisting families wherever possible to 'catch up' with their work in an effort to increase the likelihood of those families completing the program. As the life of the program evolved and program staff became aware when families were falling behind, a number of strategies were employed to assist these families to both keep up with the program and to be maintained within the program.

6.3.4.1.6.1   Weekly visits by Home Tutors

As was mentioned in Section 6.3.2.2.2 above, a number of practice strategies were developed and implemented by staff to assist families to keep appointments. These included making appointments at the same time and day each week, organizing these appointment times around the particular needs of the individual family, and the practice of leaving yellow appointment cards. When families missed home visit appointments, Home Tutors would make a further appointment with the family for another home visit. The practice of making appointments at the beginning of the week, so that missed appointments may be rescheduled later on that week, was a strategy reported by program staff aimed at ensuring families received the weekly materials.

When families did not attend group meetings, Home Tutors made weekly, rather than fortnightly home visits, to ensure families were receiving their HIPPY work weekly.

6.3.4.1.6.2 Staff assistance to families to keep them in the program

Staff also consistently reported many instances whereby practical assistance was provided to families who had fallen behind in the program. Recognition that families were struggling and the provision of early intervention were considered important factors in helping families at risk of dropping out of the program, as described in the following quote from the Coordinator at Stage 2 of the research:

> *...So its sort of been the way that we've looked at it. To try and get in quickly, to try and assess what might be difficult. And even if it something outside HIPPY, we can still get in there and help...And certainly I'm not saying there's not going to be drop out rates, because some things we can't control, but to make the program as suitable as possible to individual families, so that it (the program) is not the rationale for them leaving...(Coordinator, Stage 2)*

This assistance took a number of forms, depending on the particular issues families were struggling with, and relied upon staff being particularly alert to the individual needs of the families. As the Coordinator explained in the following quotation, a family's capacity to fully participate in the program had to be considered within the context of their whole family situation, and the role of program staff sometimes was to support a family through a crisis, to maintain them in the program:

> *...Rather than seeing the program in isolation you know. It doesn't matter what else is happening in your life, you need to do this week's work. That doesn't happen, you know. And when there is a crisis, we actually need to be able to work with the families to move them through, so that they are able to get back to work on the HIPPY program without having that on top of the crisis. So that we actually hold it together for them whilst they go through their crisis, and then they're right to go again...(Coordinator, Stage 2)*

For some families, attending group meetings was difficult because they did not have a car and so staff provided transport to group meetings to assist in those situations. For other families, parents' own struggles with literacy made delivering the program to the child more difficult. As the following comments from the Coordinator highlight, staff offered sensitive yet practical assistance when this was identified:

> *...Literacy is sometimes a bit of a problem, and parents in our society find that hard to admit. To admit that they're actually struggling...with the language, with the reading of the books...and I've got one (family) at the moment who is*

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behind, and I know that mum has literacy problems. And I have said to (Home Tutor), "Why don't you go there and make sure the child is home, and say to mum, in a really non threatening way, how about if we do some of the program, it will help you catch up"...So she (Home Tutor) actually reads the book to the child with the mum present, so that the mum can actually get the gist of the book...and that way she can actually do the questions about comprehension with her child...(Coordinator, Stage 1)

The difficulties that other families were experiencing with the program were less specific and more, as this Home Tutor explained, lifestyle issues that presented multiple challenges to participation in the program:

...The ones where I have had to lend a helping hand- they have had chaotic sort of lifestyles. And sometimes they're not sure, you know, from one day to the next what is going on...and, yes, it's just chaotic circumstances..." (Home Tutor (3), Stage 2)

6.3.4.1.6.3   Home Tutors assist with the delivery of program to child

The most reported form of assistance offered to families to maintain them within the program was the practice of Home Tutors delivering the program to the child themselves within the family home and in the presence of the mother. Such special assistance was recommended by the Coordinator as a time-limited strategy when families were under particular pressure. According to staff reports, in these instances weekly home visits were introduced, involving the Home Tutor to work through a backlog of materials with the child, rather than instructing the parent on the next week's materials as was the standard practice. Evident in staff accounts and highlighted in the following example given by one Home Tutor, was the finding that offers of such assistance from program staff did indeed maintain families at risk of withdrawing, within the program:

....I had one (mother) the other day, and she said, "I've been thinking, I've made a decision about...", and before she said "I'm going to give up", I turned and said, because I'd already discussed it with (Coordinator), because she'd (mother) fallen behind because she had a lot of hassles. And as soon as I said that (Coordinator) had said for me to help work with her daughter, she had a completely different outlook and, um, she was happy to stick with it...(Home Tutor 4, Stage 1)

This practice evolved during the life of this implementation of the program, but systematic data related to the rate of its occurrence was not available. However, all Home Tutors reported working directly in this way with at least one, and sometimes two of their families during both years of the program's implementation. In most instances, it appeared that the parent sat with the Home Tutor and the child in the family home, whilst the Home Tutor took the main role in delivering the program to the child. In the second year of the program, when children were attending school, the Home Tutors stated they attended the family home after school to work with the child. One Home Tutor reported, attending the child's school and delivering the program to the child. This was done after consultation with the school authorities and the child's parents.

As reflected in one Home Tutor's account, this practice was intended to be a short term intervention to assist families to catch up with the program. The aim was for the parent to then resume the role of delivering the program to their child:

> ...I've worked hands on with the kids to help them stay in the program because its been hard for the parents to get into a good routine....I don't mind helping to keep them in there and hopefully, you know, we can share that role. Even I start out helping a lot, I hope to gradually, you know, "You do this much and I'll do this" and then they end up with the bulk of it and wean them off me.... (Home Tutor 3, Stage 1)

As was evident in this Home Tutors interview, in some instances this gradual resumption of the role of the child's teacher by the parent did occur:

> ...She's (mother) taken over the role. Because at first it was me doing the reading out of the book and everything, and gradually she's sort of happy to take over sort of reading the book, and you know...I sort of don't just jump right in there now, I hold back a bit..." (Home Tutor 2, Stage 1)

6.3.4.1.6.4   Parents not always able to resume role of instructing child

However, despite the intention expressed by all program staff that this practice was to be a short term intervention to assist families struggling to keep up with the program, some Home Tutors revealed that, in some families, the intervention did not go as

planned and parents did not always resume the role of instructing their child in the program. In some instances, another crisis or challenging issue would occur within the family, such as a relationship breakdown or the birth of a baby, that made it difficult for the parent to resume the teaching role. This presented a dilemma for program staff who expressed concerns that whilst the child was still receiving some benefit from receiving the program via the Home Tutor, the full potential benefit of the program to the family was being undermined:

> ...It's taking away from the parents, the whole aim of it. So that's been a challenge for me. Because I sort of thought "Oh now where's this going, why isn't this panning out the way it was meant to?" Because more and more, I'm just starting to, for a lot of families, I'm becoming their tutor for their child instead of to the parents...(Home Tutor 3, Stage 1)

> ...Sometimes the Home Tutor has had to take over the role from the parents. And in one sense its been very important that that's been done otherwise the child would have missed out. And in another sense it undercuts the program, because I think the core of the program is the parent participating and being the child's teacher... (Agency Director, Stage 3)

6.3.4.2 Concerning difficulties in the delivery of the program to the child

The findings presented here are drawn from interviews with parents participating in the program conducted at the three stages of the research. Table 9 on page 159 below, presents the emergent themes and sub-themes related to the reported difficulties experienced by parents in the delivery of the program to their child within the home. Included are those findings related to difficulties parents experienced with group meeting attendance to receive the fortnightly group instruction of the following week's work. The themes are presented in the order of frequency with which they occurred in the data. The percentage of parents reporting each main theme at each stage of the research is indicated. The number of parents reporting each sub-theme is also shown.

Table 9 demonstrates that the most common response to the question asked of parents regarding aspects of the program that did not work well for them was that they experienced no difficulties at all with any aspects of the program. This is highlighted by the following quotations:

...None of them, its all worked really well. It's all fitted in really nicely.... (HIPPY Parent A4, Stage 1)

...There's no problems with the whole program. It's been really good... (HIPPY Parent A10, Stage 1)

Table 9

Parents Reports of Difficulties Experienced in the Delivery of the Program to Child

Themes (bold) and sub-themes	Stage of Research Reported		
	T1 (N=28)	T2 (N=23)	T3 (N=20)
	Percentage of parents reporting theme and no. reporting each sub theme		
No difficulties with program	43% (n=12)	43% (n=10)	60% (n=12)
Difficulties with Content of program	60%	35%	20%
• Use of American terminology in books	n=2	n=4	n=2
• Repetitiveness of some activities	n=4	n=1	*
• Child did not enjoy colouring in activities	n=5	*	*
• Books not holding child's interest/ books too long	n=3	n=2	*
• Too easy for child	n=2	*	n=2
• Child did not enjoy role playing activities	n=1	n=1	*
Difficulties finding time to do program	21%	48%	25%
• Difficulties due to demands of other family members	n=3	n=4	n=1
• Difficulties due to child's school commitments	*	n=5	n=1
• Difficulties establishing routine	n=3	n=1	n=1
• Difficulties due to work commitments	n=1	n=2	n=2
Difficulties attending group meetings	32%	25%	*
• Work commitments	n=3	n=3	*
• Commitments to other family members	n=4	n=1	*
• Other commitments	n=1	n=2	*
• Behind in program	n=1	*	*
• Mother cannot leave child	n=1	*	*
Difficulties due to child's response to program	14%	9%	5%
• Child took awhile to settle in to routine	n=4	*	*
• Child needed motivating to continue	n=1	n=2	n=1
Other difficulties			
• Parent did not like Home Tutor	n=1	*	*
• Found going through worksheets with Home Tutor tedious	n=1	n=1	*

Key: *= sub theme not reported at this stage of research

However, many parents did report difficulties with aspects of the program. Whilst most of these were expressed by parents in response to a direct, focused question, others were identified through the analysis of data related to parents' reports of their overall experience of the program.

6.3.4.2.1   Difficulties with content of program

Among the difficulties identified by parents, the most common theme related to the
actual content of the program. As can be seen in Table 9, this was particularly
obvious in the first year of enrolment. The most common difficulty experienced by
parents in terms of the content of the program was the use of an American context and
terminology in the HIPPY storybooks. For some parents this made the task of reading
the storybooks to their child more difficult as they had to try and think of the substitute
Australian word for the American terminology. For parents who struggled with literacy
themselves, this presented a further barrier for them in delivering that aspect of the
program to their child, and as one mother with literacy problems herself explained,
finding the substitute word was not always possible:

> ...Some of the words that are in those books,... like quite a few times he's
> (child) asked "What is that?" And some of the words, I didn't even know...
> (HIPPY Parent A26, Stage 2)

Another aspect here concerned the repetitiveness of some activities, particularly in the
first year of the program, with activities related to shapes and colours As this parent
explained, her child found this boring and needed to be 'pushed' to continue with the
activities:

> ...Doing the shapes over and over again...It sometimes gets a bit boring for him
> and you've really got to push them to do some of that repetitive stuff because
> they do get sick of it... (HIPPY Parent A12, Stage 1)

Other parents reported not doing the particular repetitive activity with their child as this
mother explained:

> ...Yeah, and sometimes I just miss that part out and not do it. Like it gets to the
> stage of shapes, like we can do that for 3 weeks in a row and they're constantly
> just going on and on about shapes. And I get sick of it myself and he must get
> sick of it because I go "oh not this again"....And so I just say, "No we don't do
> the shapes one" and I go past it... (HIPPY Parent, A19, Stage 1)

Similarly, in the first year of the program, some parents stated that the child did not like
completing all the colouring in activities. Allowing the child to skip past those particular
activities was a common response parents adopted. For some parents, both the

length and content of the storybooks presented difficulties for them, in terms of holding their child's interest. As this mother explained, her child did not find all the storybooks interesting:

> ... I just found the books a bit long...It's just that it didn't hold his interest. Every single time it was like he was excited at the start, and then towards the end it was, like, "Sit down buddy." And I didn't want to make it a chore for him to have to sit down and listen to the book...(HIPPY Parent A20, Stage 2)

Other parents reported that they found the program too easy for their child, particularly in the early weeks of the first year of the program. Another mother reported that her child did not like the role-play activities in the first year of the program, and that she would skip past those activities.

6.3.4.2.2 Difficulties finding time to do program

As shown in Table 9, the second most common theme concerning difficulties parents experienced with delivering the program to their child related to finding time within their day-to-day lives for HIPPY sessions. This theme emerged across the three stages of the research, but was most dominant in the second year of the program's implementation, when children began their formal education at school. Parents reported family commitments as the most common reason they struggled to find time, across the three stages of the research. Typically, parents recounted problems with other children wanting their attention whilst they tried to do the HIPPY work. As this mother explained:

> ....Well, it can be hard some days, because if you, like sit with one, one will be "But I want to do this now- no, I want to do this now", and you go "This is this one's time...(HIPPY Parent A23, Stage 1)

In the second year of the program, parents stated that starting school presented them with the most difficulty in terms of finding time for HIPPY, often citing that the child was tired at the end of a school day. Other parents reported difficulties trying to find time to supervise the child's school homework as well as HIPPY. Work commitments were also mentioned as problematic by some parents. For others, establishing the routine

required to implement the program as regularly as required was a struggle, as one mother explained:

> ...What aspects haven't worked so well?"...Doing it every day. It's really hard to keep up doing so many sheets a day...I haven't really got a good routine as far as that goes...(HIPPY Parent A19, Stage 1)

6.3.4.2.3   Difficulties attending group meetings

The most common reasons given by parents for non-attendance at group meetings related to other commitments they had to attend. Work commitments and attending to the needs of other family members were reported by some parents as barriers. In the second year of the program, two mothers reported that their own study commitments prevented them from attending meetings. One mother reported in the first year of the program that her child's insecurity about leaving her prevented her from attending, whilst for another mother, the fact that she was behind with the program made it difficult for her to fully participate in the group meetings. She explained:

> ...I've been to a couple, but because I'm so far behind, I just normally go to the speaker part, 'cos once I went early and I was sitting there like, "Okay"... I couldn't really follow it...(HIPPY Parent A26 ,Stage 1).

6.3.4.2.4   Difficulties due to child's response to the program

As can be seen in Table 9, some parents reported difficulties with delivering the program to the child due to the response of the child to doing the program. In the first year of the program, four parents reported that they experienced difficulties initially with getting their child to sit down and concentrate on the tasks. Consistently these parents reported a 'settling in' period of around six weeks from the start of the program, until their child was able to sit and focus for long enough to complete the work involved. Towards the end of the first year and at the start of the second year of the program, three parents reported that their child lost some enthusiasm for the program and needed to be encouraged by parents to continue. Parents explained this lack of enthusiasm in terms of the demands on the child of starting school.

6.3.4.2.5   Other difficulties

One mother responded to the question of what aspects of the program did not work well for her in terms of the practice of the Home Tutor going through the next week's materials with the parent. And she explained in the following quote, she found this practice tedious:

> *...Sometimes I find it, without being rude, a bit longwinded when the Tutors are here. I don't feel that I need them to sit down and go through the whole lot with me, but I know that's part of their job to do that... (HIPPY Parent (A27), Stage 1)*

Another mother experienced her relationship with the Home Tutor as difficult, having had some association with her in a social context several years earlier which she, the mother, had experienced as negative. This mother reported discussing this problem with the Coordinator and requesting another Home Tutor. At the time of the interview, towards the end of the first year of the program, the Home Tutor had been working directly with the child, delivering the program to the child in the home. The mother had experienced difficulties doing the program with her child whom, as she said in the following quote:

> *... (he) Enjoys doing the program more with somebody else than me doing it...(HIPPY Parent A24, Stage 1)*

Further on in the interview, this parent explained that her child's enjoyment of the program and his relationship with the Home Tutor was the reason she had persevered with the program:

> *...Like she does really encourage him a lot when she's working with him and yeah...I mean he does really love (Home Tutor) and that's the only reason why, you know. If he didn't like (Home Tutor) I wouldn't put up with it, I wouldn't be doing it. I would have said "No", other than the fact that he likes (Home Tutor) (HIPPY Parent A24, Stage 1)*

This family did not participate in the second year of the program, or any further stages of the research. The family had moved and staff were unable to locate them.

6.3.5   Summary of findings concerning difficulties experienced by participants in the implementation of the program

For staff, the main difficulties they experienced in terms of the implementation of the program centered on maintaining some families within the program. They identified a range of social and family issues associated with the surrounding disadvantaged community as underlying factors that prevented some families participating fully in the program. Some families were unable to keep all appointments with their Home Tutors, to attend group meetings, and/or to sustain a routine within the home to do the program with the child. As a result, they fell behind with the workload of the program and were then considered at risk of dropping out of the program altogether. Staff adopted a supportive role and an adaptive approach to implementation in response to family difficulties. Strategies to assist parents to keep appointments and attend group meetings were employed and practical assistance was given where possible. In some cases, Home Tutors took over the role of delivering the program to the child, intended as a short term intervention until the parent could resume the role. Not all parents were able to resume the role due to similar issues that led to the intervention. Staff experienced this outcome as a dilemma. While they believed the child still gained some benefit from continuing in the program, they also believed that the full benefit of the program was lost, specifically its potential to impact positively on the relationship between the child and parent.

Interestingly, parents made little mention of social or family issues as difficulties in delivering the program within the home. Rather, the focus of their difficulties centered mainly upon the content of the program itself. The American setting and terminology used in storybooks, the repetitiveness of some activities, and their child's disinterest in colouring-in and in some of the storybooks were some of the difficulties they experienced with the content. Some parents did express difficulties with finding the time for HIPPY activities, citing family and work commitments as the main reasons. These other commitments were also the main reasons given for non-attendance at group meetings. A few parents said that they found it difficult to establish the routine necessary to deliver the program regularly to the child, some reported difficulties with the child settling in with the program, and some children needed motivating to continue

the program. One parent found her relationship with her Home Tutor difficult and another experienced aspects of the home visits tedious.

6.3.6 Suggestions for improvement of program

All participants were asked at each stage of the research for suggestions to improve the program. Staff and parent suggestions reflected a difference in perspective on where improvements could be made, based on the different roles they played in the implementation of the program. Findings from staff reports are presented first, followed by parent suggestions.

6.3.6.1 Suggestions made by program staff

Analysis of the data related to suggestions made by staff also revealed further differences within staff reports that reflected the different positions staff held and their roles in the implementation of the program. For example, the Coordinator suggested changes related to her main role in the program, as trainer and supervisor of Home Tutors. These were different suggestions than those made by Home Tutors. For this reason these findings have been organized and presented separately.

6.3.6.1.1 Suggestions made by the Agency Director

From the Agency Director's perspective, improvements to the program could be made by more support given to the Geelong HIPPY program from the HIPPY Australia organization, in terms of more contact and involvement between the parties. He also believed that the program would benefit from contact with the other programs being run elsewhere in Australia:

> ...If there were increased meetings between the various HIPPY programs....There is a deficiency in the amount of support we have received (from HIPPY Australia)...a bit of isolation to HIPPY programs that are operating in Melbourne...So in terms of improvement, ..., the three programs, while that is hardly a basis to establish a national conference, there's no reason why we couldn't be getting together...(Agency Director, Stage 1)

Further on in the interview, he stated that he believed in the benefits of more contact between HIPPY programs, not only for HIPPY Geelong but for the international HIPPY community:

> ...If there was more contact between HIPPY Australia and HIPPY USA or Canada or Germany, for the sharing of experiences and the sharing of practice wisdoms...And the sharing of research. And as far as I know, probably Australia is doing as much research if not more than elsewhere, so in that respect we have a bit to perhaps give to HIPPY International..." (Agency Director, Stage 1)

Another suggestion made, at both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the research by the Agency Director concerned the need to ensure that balance was achieved for Home Tutors in terms of their individual workloads. More specifically he referred to the need to assess in more depth at the time of recruitment, the degree of challenge each family appeared to face that may impact on their participation in the program. This would allow for an even allocation of more challenged families among Home Tutors.

The issue of the use of the use of American terminology and context in the story-books was commented on by the Agency Director and was the one theme to emerge consistently for all participants in the program. He expressed concern that some parents and children may experience difficulties with some of the language used in the books, and suggested that future implementations in Australia would benefit from books embodying Australian context.

6.3.6.1.2   Suggestions made by Program Coordinator

The Coordinator also suggested the need to ensure balance for Home Tutors in terms of the number of high need families and low need families, and felt the program would be improved by providing storybooks more oriented to Australian culture. During Stage 3 of the research, she also suggested future implementations of the program may be improved by changes to the starting time of its implementation, as well as by adopting practices in Home Tutor training to improve the quality of the instruction within the home.

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She suggested that group meeting attendance may be enhanced by commencing group meetings at the very beginning of the first year, rather than waiting until families had settled in. She also believed that, while the practice of not beginning the program until some weeks after the start of the school year was beneficial, in that it allowed families time to adjust to the transition to school, Home Tutors and families were feeling pressured at the end of the year to finish, in preparation for the graduation ceremony. She suggested that a two week, rather a four week delay at the start of the year may be more appropriate.

In terms of Home Tutor training, she suggested that the practice of note-taking during training sessions would assist Home Tutors to retain as much as possible from these sessions thereby enhancing the quality of the instruction that Home Tutors provided parents within the home. Further, she suggested that the quality of instruction within the home could be improved by Home Tutors emphasizing to parents the particular aspects of their child's development that each activity was built upon.

6.3.6.1.3   Suggestions made by Home Tutors

All Home Tutors made similar comments to those of the Agency Director and the Coordinator concerning the use of American terminology in storybooks and offered the same suggestions that providing an Australian context for the storybooks could improve the program.

One Home Tutor suggested that the implementation of the program within the home may be improved if parents were encouraged to plan how they were going to manage to allocate time to deliver the program to the child, within the context of the demands of their daily lives. She suggested that allocating some time during the home visit to discuss this with parents may increase the likelihood that parents did manage to complete the week's work and become less likely to fall significantly behind with the program.

Another Home Tutor suggested a reunion for past HIPPY families, in part to alleviate the sense of loss she felt and she perceived they may have felt when their involvement

with the program had ceased. She also believed that families would enjoy such a reunion and that she herself would enjoy *"seeing how they were going"* (Home Tutor 3, Stage 2)

6.3.6.2 Suggestions made by parents

Suggestions for improvement made by parents are presented in Table 10 below. The number of parents reporting each sub-theme at each stage of the research is indicated as is the percentage of parents who did not suggest changes.

As can be seen in Table 10, the majority of parents at both Stage 1 and Stage 3 of the research did not wish to offer any suggestions for improvement of the program. A number, such as the parent quoted below, did not see any need for change:

> *...No I couldn't (suggest changes for improvement), I honestly couldn't. We've got a great home tutor. It's great fun. I'm getting a whole heap of stuff to keep for when he's older and I'm getting a book made and he gets to graduate and everything, you- know. There's nothing that needs to change. Its perfect. I love it... (HIPPY Parent (A24), Stage 1)*

Table 10

Parent Suggestions of Ways Program may be Improved

PARENTS REPORTS OF SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS OF PROGRAM	STAGE OF RESEARCH REPORTED		
	T1 (N=28)	T2 (N=23)	T3 (N=20)
	Percentage and number of parents reporting		
Program does not need improving	50% (n=14)	35% (n=8)	70% (n=14)
Improvements to content of program			
• Provide Australian context for books	n=2	n=4	n=2
• Make books more appropriate for child	n=2	n=1	*
• Extend numbers component of program	*	n=3	*
• Provide more writing practice	n=1	n=1	*
• Less colouring in activities	n=1	*	*
• Make program more challenging	n=1	*	n=1
• Introduce new book earlier	*	n=1	*
• Introduce one new colour/shape at time	n=1	*	*
• Give incentives to children (certificates)	N=1	*	*

Key: *= sub-theme not reported at this stage of research

6.3.6.2.1 Content of program could be improved

The suggestions to improve the program offered by parents all concerned the content of the program, and these suggestions were related to the storybooks. The most common suggestion was to provide an Australian context for the storybooks that would include more Australian terminology. Parents offering this suggestion commented that not only did the child sometimes not understand the American terminology used in the books, but they also implied that some of the meaning of the story was lost to their child as a result of the lack of relevance of some concepts within the stories held for their child's life. For example, one mother referred to "...*the book on Indians and stuff*" which she believed children "...*didn't really get*". She went on to suggest stories about "...*Koories or something*" in which case she believed, "*they'd know about didgeridoos*" *(HIPPY Parent, A3, Stage 1)*.

A few parents also commented on aspects concerning the content of some stories within the HIPPY books that they felt were not that appropriate for their child. Two parents mentioned a book about "*feelings*" that was introduced in the first year of the program (Stage1) that they felt "*was beyond*" their children's comprehension and/or interest at that time (HIPPY Parent A1, HIPPY Parent A20, Stage 2). During the second year of the program, when most participating children had begun formal education, some parents felt that their child may have benefited by having more math-orientated activities.

6.3.7 Summary of suggestions for improvements

The most common suggestion offered by both program staff and parents was that the program could be improved by providing an Australian, rather than an American context for HIPPY storybooks and activities. The Agency Director suggested that the program could best be improved through strengthening the relationships between HIPPY in Geelong and other HIPPY programs operating within Australia and internationally. The Coordinator suggested future implementations may benefit from

starting earlier in the school year to reduce the pressure of the workload on both Home Tutors and participating families at the end of the school year. She further suggested that the quality of the instruction that Home Tutors provided parents within the home may be enhanced if Home Tutors adopted the practice of note-taking during training sessions. Home Tutors suggested allocating some time during the home visit to planning with parents when they may manage to complete the up coming week's work. The opportunity for a reunion of past HIPPY families was also suggested by one Home Tutor.

CHAPTER 7

FINDINGS II: THE OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN

The quantitative and qualitative findings concerning the outcomes of the program for participating children are now reported. In accord with the aim of the study, set out in Section 4.3 of Chapter 4, these are presented in two sections. The first deals with those concerning the intended effects of the program on the cognitive and educational development of participating children. The second section presents those related to the socio-emotional development of participating children.

The quantitative findings involved the comparison of assessments of children participating in HIPPY with those of the matched comparison group of children who did not participate in HIPPY. The presentation of the findings begins with a description of the sample of children and their parents who participated in the research as the comparison group, followed by an examination of the degree of matching of this with the HIPPY Group of families. The quantitative findings are then presented in terms of cognitive/educational outcomes, and secondly, in accord with the principal focus of this research, in terms of socio-emotional outcomes.

7.1   Sample characteristics

7.1.1 The HIPPY families

The HIPPY group of families are described in Section 6.2.1 in Chapter 6 above.

7.1.2 The non-HIPPY families

The non-HIPPY comparison group were recruited from a number of pre-schools within the Geelong and Colac regions. Initially it was hoped that the non HIPPY Group could be recruited from pre-schools in one area of Geelong, namely Whittington, which was identified as being the closet match in terms of socio-economic status within Geelong to the Corio/Norlane, as explained in Section 5.3.1.2 in Chapter Five. However, the

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response rate to the number of brochures handed out in that area was extremely low, and so the researcher was forced to recruit from further afield. Some 250 brochures were delivered to 10 preschools in the Geelong and Colac regions. The recruitment criteria outlined in the brochures were the same as that employed by Glastonbury Child and Family Services in their recruitment into HIPPY, specifically asking for volunteer families with a child turning 4 by April 2002, and with parent education up to Year 12.

7.1.2.1 Comparison group at Stage 1 of study (2002)

In all, 27 non-HIPPY families volunteered to take part in the study. One family included 2 girls, both of whom met the age criteria, making 28 children in total. Five families were recruited from Whittington pre-schools, five from South Geelong pre-schools, five from Winchelsea pre-schools, four from Birregurra pre-schools and eight from Colac pre-schools. The mean age of children at time of the first assessment was 4 years and 10 months (58 months), making the non-HIPPY group on average 3 months older than the HIPPY group. The gender breakdown of the non HIPPY group was 13 males and 15 females. One of the children in the group was currently receiving speech therapy. The parents participating in the research were all mothers and the majority of families were headed by two adults (n=25), with one family being a step-family and one family a single parent family. Twenty one of the mothers performed home duties, whilst six worked outside the home, including three nurses, two pharmacy assistants, and one police officer.

7.1.2.2 Comparison group at Stage 2 of study (2003)

Of the 27 non-HIPPY families taking part in Stage 1 of the study, 4 families dropped out of the research, and 23 families and 24 children remained. Three families could no longer be contacted at their previous addresses. The other family did not respond to a number of phone messages left by the researcher, who concluded that the family no longer wished to participate in the study. At this point, the majority of children were attending schools local to their homes and were in Grade Prep. Only one child from

the non-HIPPY Group repeated a year in pre-school. The gender breakdown of children at this stage of the research was 10 males and 14 females.

7.1.2.3   Comparison group at Stage 3 of the study (2004)

By the final stage of data collection, 21 families and 22 children of the non-HIPPY group were still involved in the research. Two further families dropped out of the research, and one family did not respond to phone messages left by the researcher. The other family had notified the researcher that the family was moving house and left a forwarding phone number, but when the researcher attempted to make contact the phone number was incorrect. All children were attending schools local to their homes, with the majority in Grade One (n=21) and the other in Grade Prep. Two of the children were diagnosed during this year with Attention Deficit Disorder.

7.1.2.4   Comparison with the HIPPY group

As outlined in Section 5.1.1.2 of Chapter 5, the criteria used for the recruitment of the comparison group of families was based on where the families resided (areas within the Geelong region that had been identified as being socially disadvantaged) parent's level of education (up to Year 12) and the age of the child (turning 4 by April in the year of recruitment). While it was anticipated that the families recruited for the comparison group would be similar to the HIPPY group of families, over the life of the research, the significance of differences between the two groups became obvious. Table 11 below outlines some of the known characteristics of the two groups of families.

Table 11 on page 174, shows that the two groups were well matched in terms of the gender breakdown of participating children, as well as the number of dependent children within each group of families. Beyond these similarities, a number of differences between the two groups of families are evident. These were known at the end of the recruitment period. The non-HIPPY Group of children were slightly older (between 2-3 months) than the HIPPY Group at each

Table 11.

Characteristics of Participating HIPPY and Non-HIPPY Families

Characteristics	HIPPY group	Non-HIPPY group
Children's mean age*		
Stage 1	4years 7months	4years 9 months
Stage 2	5years 9 months	6years 0 months
Stage3	6years 10 months	7years I month
Family Type**		
Two parent family	14	25
Sole parent family	7	1
Blended family	7	1
Number dependent children***		
One child	-	2
Two children	16	12
Three children	6	6
Four or more children	6	7
Children: gender		
Female	13	15
Male	16	13
Number address changes	7	5
Phone changes	13	6
Missed appointments	41 (12 families)	2 (2 families)

Legend: *refers to child's age at time of researcher administered testing
  **refers to Family Type at time of recruitment
  ***refers to Number Dependant Children at time of recruitment

testing time over the three stages of the research. While 90% of non-HIPPY Group families were two parent families, only half of the HIPPY group comprised two parent families. The other half of HIPPY group gender families consisted of sole parent families (25%) and blended families (25%).

However other differences emerged over the course of data collection that seemed very important. As shown in Table 11, there were differences between characteristics of the two groups that appear to reflect the stability of the lives of the participating families. During the life of the research, the HIPPY group families experienced more changes in their lives than the non-HIPPY group of families, in place of residence and in contact phone numbers. In particular, the HIPPY group were less likely to keep appointments with the researcher than the non HIPPY group. A further difference between the two groups not contained within Table 11, concerned more qualitative differences noticed by the researcher in terms of the environments in which families lived. The non-HIPPY group of families tended to live in more spacious, well ordered and aesthetically pleasing housing than the HIPPY group. These differences bought into question the comparability of the two groups in terms of degree of disadvantage,

and this factor must be taken into account in the analysis of the data relating to the hypotheses of the study.

7.1.3   Participating classroom teachers

Classroom teachers were involved in Stages 2 and 3 of the research, when participating children were in Grades Prep and One respectively. In some cases, more than one participating child had the same classroom teacher. Not all teachers who were invited to participate in the research completed assessments of participating children. At Stage 2 of the research, data relating to five children were not returned, and at Stage 3 of the research two were not returned.

7.2   Comparison of cognitive/educational developmental outcomes

The presentation of findings begins with findings resulting from the testing of the hypotheses of the study, generated for the assessments used to measure outcomes for children, and then by the qualitative findings in this domain.

7.2.1   Testing of hypotheses concerning children's cognitive/educational outcomes

As stated in Chapter 4, which describes the conceptualization of the study, while the principal focus of the present research was an exploration of the possible social effects of this early educational intervention, it was considered critical to simultaneously discover whether or not the program had its intended effects on learning readiness. To test the hypotheses of the study that the HIPPY group would demonstrate greater improvement in cognitive/educational outcomes than the non-HIPPY group, comparative analysis were performed on six measures, between the two groups of children.

Section 5.2.1 in Chapter 5, outlines the nature of these measures, three of which were researcher administered, while three were teacher scales, and the timing of their use. The assessments were collected as planned, within a three month period each year.

Because of age-range constraints, only one of these assessments, namely the *Who Am I?* was administered over the three stages of the research. One other assessment, namely the *Early Screening Profiles* was administered only during participation in the program, that is, during Stages 1 and 2. The other four assessments were administered only from Stage 2 of the research onwards, when the majority of children had began formal education (Grade Prep). As a result, both the formulation of hypotheses and analysis of scores from these cognitive/educational assessments were conducted separately.

Hypothesis 1: The HIPPY group would demonstrate greater improvement in scores on the _Who Am I?_ assessment across Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 than would the non-HIPPY group.

The hypothesis that the HIPPY group would demonstrate greater improvement in scores on the *Who Am I?* assessment across Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 than would the non-HIPPY group, was tested by performing a repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance (RM-MANOVA) on three dependent variables represented by total scores on the *Who Am I?* at Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 of the research. The independent variable was group membership, HIPPY group or non-HIPPY group. The results are presented in Table 12.

Table 12.
The Means and Standard Deviations (in parentheses) of Group Total Scores on the Who Am I? Across Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3

Group	Score Stage 1	Score Stage 2	Score Stage 3	F	DF	Sig
HIPPY N=19	19.3 (4.1)	31.9 (5.0)	38.9 (2.3)			
Non-HIPPY N=21	20.9 (6.1)	33.2 (4.3)	39.4 (1.7)	.32	2,37	.72
*Norms	26.9 (5.0)	33.9 (4.5)	38.9 (3.1)			

Key
*Victorian School norms for the average age level (de Lemos & Doig, 1999, p.24)

Using Wilks' criterion, it was found that group scores did not differ significantly across Stage 1 testing, Stage 2 testing and Stage 3 testing, $F_{(2,37)} = .320$, $p > .05$, and therefore the hypothesis was not supported. In other words, the HIPPY group of children did not demonstrate significantly greater improvement on *Who Am I?* test scores across Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 than the non-HIPPY group.

Inspection of Table 12 also shows that at Stage 1 both groups were performing below the Victorian school age norms, but by Stages 2 and 3, both were keeping pace with their age peers in the aspects of cognitive/educational development tested here. It is possible, of course, that the HIPPY group had been functioning far lower than the non-HIPPY group before the intervention began.

Hypothesis 2: The HIPPY group would demonstrate greater improvement in scores on the *Early Screening Profiles* between Stage 1 and Stage 2 than would the non-HIPPY group.

To test the hypothesis that the HIPPY group would demonstrate significantly greater improvement in scores on The *Early Screening Profiles* than the non-HIPPY group, an independent groups t-test was performed, with the dependent variable being the difference between the *Early Screening Profiles (ESP's)* scores at Stage 1 and Stage 2 and the comparison made between the two groups. The results are presented in Table 13 below.

Table 13.
The Means, Standard Deviations (in parentheses), T Statistic and Significance Level for the Differences Between Total Group Scores on the ESP Between Stage 1 and Stage 2.

GROUP	Standard Score Stage 1	Standard Score Stage 2	Difference between ESP scores at Stage 1 & Stage 2	T Statistic	Sig (1 tailed)
HIPPY N=22	106.25 (9.4)	106.82 (12.0)	.57 (9.2)	-.30	.38
Non HIPPY N=23	105.70 (4.9)	105.40 (8.9)	-.30 (11.2)		

Table 13 reveals that this hypothesis was not supported. The HIPPY group of children did not demonstrate significantly greater improvement in scores on the *Early Screening Profiles* between Stage 1 and Stage 2 than the non-HIPPY group. Again, of course it is possible that the HIPPY group were functioning lower than the non-HIPPY group before HIPPY began.

Hypothesis 3: The HIPPY group would demonstrate greater improvement in scores on the I can do maths, the *Gumpel Learning Readiness Scale*, the *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales* and the *Behavioural Academic Self-Esteem scales* between Stage 2 and Stage 3 than would the non-HIPPY group.

To test this hypothesis that the HIPPY Group would demonstrate greater improvement in scores on the relevant educational measures between Stage 2 and Stage 3 than the non-HIPPY Group, a MANOVA was conducted with the dependent variables being represented by differences between scores on the *I can do maths*, the *Gumpel Learning Readiness Inventory*, the *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales* and the *Behavioral Academic Self-Esteem* at Stage 2 and Stage 3 for both groups. The results are presented in Table 14 below.

Table 14.
The Means and Standard Deviations (in parentheses) of the Differences in Group Scores Between Stage 2 and Stage 3 on the I Can Do Maths, The Gumpel Learning Readiness Inventory, the Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales (Communication Domain) and the Behavioural Academic Self-Esteem rating scale

GROUP	Maths	Gumpel	Vineland	BASE	F	Df	Sig
HIPPY N=15	3.8 (2.5)	0.5 (2.7)	5.9 (11.1)	4.1 (8.2)	1.1	4,27	.37
Non HIPPY N=17	3.1 (2.0)	0.4 (2.7)	-0.2 (13.7)	0.2 (11.7)			

The hypothesis was not supported. Using Wilks criterion, it was found that the group scores did not differ significantly between Stage 2 and Stage 3, $F_{(4,27)}=.37$, $p>.05$. In other words, the HIPPY group of children did not demonstrate significantly greater improvement on the combination of scores on the educational measures tested between Stage 2 and Stage 3 than the non-HIPPY group. However, as Table 14

shows, a trend of greater improvement in scores between Stage 2 and Stage 3 by the HIPPY group over the non-HIPPY group was evident in the data for each of the educational measures employed.

7.2.2 Qualitative cognitive educational outcome findings

The findings presented here result from qualitative analysis of the interviews with HIPPY group parents only, over the three stages of the research, concerning their experiences of the program. This begins with an outline of the context from which the outcome findings were generated, as well as some of the preliminary findings that emerged in the initial stages of the thematic analysis, described in Chapter 5 Section 5.4.2. This is followed by the presentation of qualitative findings concerning parent perceptions of cognitive/educational outcomes for participating children.

7.2.2.1 The context of these qualitative data

The semi-structured interview schedule used with HIPPY group parents related to the processes of the implementation of the program, as described in Section 5.2.2.1.1 above. Parents were not asked any direct questions concerning outcomes for their children. However, initial qualitative analysis of these interview data resulted in the identification of a number of themes directly related to children's developmental outcomes. These were revealed in parent responses to the question asking about their experience of the program. Parents typically responded to this question in terms of their perceptions of how the program had helped the HIPPY child. Parents were also asked, in the initial interview at Stage 1 of the research, about their expectations for the program. It was in their responses to this question that a context emerged for parents talking about their experiences of the program predominantly in terms of outcomes for the child.

The majority of parents (71%, n=20) had quite specific expectations that the HIPPY program would assist children in terms of their learning and help prepare them for school. This was understandable given that HIPPY was marketed as a program to promote children's learning readiness in preparation for school. Parents' experiences

of the program were interpreted by them through that specific frame of reference. However, that was not the whole picture. It was evident in the language used by parents when talking about their experiences of the program that they then spoke in terms of being able to *"see"* or *"notice"* the things that HIPPY had done for the child, coupled with language concerning movement or change that appeared to be describing the progress or growth of the child developmentally. The following quotes from mothers during Stage 1 of the research are typical examples:

> *...Yeah, I can see that he has actually just gone ahead in leaps and bounds...(HIPPY Parent, A25, Stage 1)*

> *"...Now he's just zooming ahead with so many things...(HIPPY Parent A23, Stage 1),*

> *...We've noticed the change in her this year...(HIPPY Parent, A4, Stage 1)*

> *... She's come a long way since we've done it...I've already seen that....(HIPPY Parent A21, Stage 1)*

It became apparent that parents felt inclined to talk about their experiences of the program in terms of outcomes for their children not only because of their expectations of the program, but also because through the process of participating in the program with their child, they witnessed the development of their child. The progress they saw the child make was a potent aspect of their experience in the program, and indeed became the forefront of that experience.

Parents then went on to describe, at the three stages of the research, specific areas in which progress was noticeable to them, presented as follows.

7.2.2.2   Cognitive/educational outcomes for children observed by parents

Parents spoke of the ways in which HIPPY had benefited the HIPPY child in an educational/cognitive sense. Finer grained analysis of these emergent themes resulted in the identification of two higher order themes within which the various outcomes could be clustered. The first is related to the specific educational/cognitive skills that parents perceived their children had developed through their participation in HIPPY. The second concerns the relationship between childrens' participation in HIPPY and

academic performance at school. These themes and sub-themes are presented in Table 15, in order of the frequency with which they occurred in the data across the three stages of the research.

Table 15.

Interpretive Findings From Parent Interviews Concerning Cognitive and Educational Outcomes for children

Higher order themes (capitalized) and sub-themes	STAGE OF RESEARCH REPORTED		
	Stage1 (N=28)	Stage 2 (N=23)	Stage 3 (N=19)
DEVELOPMENT OF COGNITIVE/EDUCATIONAL SKILLS	Number parents reporting sub-theme		
Increased knowledge of shapes	7	3	2
Improved writing skills	6	3	2
Improved reading skills	1	5	5
Improved concentration – able to sit for longer periods	7	3	-
Increased knowledge of numbers-maths skills	2	5	2
Increased knowledge colours	6	-	-
Improved drawing /colouring skills	4	1	-
Improved memory	2	2	-
Improved motor skills – holding pen, scissors, pasting etc	2	1	-
Increased range of vocabulary	1	2	-
Improved hand-eye co-ordination	1	1	-
DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE			
Prepared child for school		10	7
Enhanced child's performance at school		10	3
Teacher comments on child's enhanced performance at school		8	2

7.2.2.2.1   Development of cognitive/educational skills

Parents identified a range of skills in which the child progressed through the course of their participation in HIPPY. As can be seen in Table 15 above, many of these emerged most strongly in the perception of parents in the first year of participation in the program, especially increased knowledge of shapes and colours. Others, such as improved reading skills and math skills, emerged more strongly in the second year of participation in the program. It appeared that noticing of these skills corresponded with the introduction of activities focused upon developing these skills within the program's content. Parents were able to identify, through the process of doing the HIPPY activities with the child, increased capacity to, for example, sit still and do the

work (improved concentration) or to retain knowledge from previous activities (improved memory). The following quotation from one mother is fairly representative of the range of skills parents identified as achieved by Stage 1 of the research:

> *...He's doing really well. He's learning with scissors and glue and sticking things in the right positions and his drawing has gotten better....He knows his shapes. He's sitting still. He's writing. He's doing really, really well...(HIPPY Parent A24, Stage 1)*

7.2.2.2.2 Development of academic performance

As can be seen in Table 15, from Stage 2 of the research onwards, the year in which participating children began their formal schooling, parents were more likely to frame their experiences of the program in terms of the child's academic performance. It was clear from parent accounts that the range of skills that they had identified their child having achieved during the first year of the program were considered by them to be important skills for their child to achieve before starting school. Parents believed that HIPPY had not only prepared their child for school during the previous preschool year, but that performance at school continued to be enhanced by participation in HIPPY. A number of parents referred to the child's school report as evidence of the positive contribution HIPPY had made to their child's performance at school, and many commented that they believed their child would not have done as well as they had done (in their reports) without HIPPY. The following parent quotations in the second year of the program sum up the beliefs expressed by many about the role HIPPY played in their child's start and ongoing performance at school:

> *...I feel that if I hadn't have got (child) into HIPPY, he wouldn't have as much of a good report, because he wouldn't have known. He would've went into school knowing nothing. Whereas with HIPPY, he went into school knowing everything more or less...(HIPPY Parent A7, Stage 2)*

> *....I think for his age, like because of HIPPY, he's a lot smarter than some of the other kids in his class....And like on his reading, he's hit level 5 and um, there's only one or two kids that are higher... (HIPPY Parent A26, Stage 2)*

At least one third of parents also referred to the positive feedback they had received from the child's teacher in relation to their child's participation in HIPPY. According to

parents, the teacher made comments to the effect that they could identify the children in the class who had done HIPPY, because *"they were ahead of the other children in the class"* (HIPPY Parent A7, Stage 2). A number of teachers had also told parents as one mother recounted, that *"they wished more kids would do it (HIPPY), because it makes their lives easier"* (HIPPY Parent A23, Stage 2).

7.2.2.3   Summary of cognitive/educational outcomes for children

Although the statistical analysis of differences between group scores during Stages 1, 2 and 3 of the research did not demonstrate significantly greater improvement in the HIPPY group over the non-HIPPY group, the HIPPY group did show a trend of greater improvement on all cognitive/educational measures used. The HIPPY group showed a trend of greater progress than the non-HIPPY group in overall cognitive development (as measured by the *Who Am I?*) between the first year of their participation in the program and one year after participation had ceased. Further, the HIPPY group of children showed a trend of greater progress than the non-HIPPY group in terms of their maths skills, school learning readiness, and in particular their receptive, expressive and written communication skills and their academic self-esteem, between the second year of participation in the program and one year after participation had ceased.

The qualitative findings emerged within the context of parents talking about their experiences of the program, which were found to be predominantly framed around educational outcomes for their children. This phenomenon was identified as being consistent with parents' expectations regarding the aim of the program. Through the process of participating in the program with their child, parents observed the developmental progress of their child both in general and in more specific terms. Parents identified a range of cognitive and educational skills that they believed their child made progress in during the course of their participation in the program. Parents also believed that the HIPPY program had prepared their children well for school, and also perceived that HIPPY had enhanced performance at school. The qualitative findings concerning parent perceptions of the cognitive/educational outcomes for children appear consistent with the general trend found in the quantitative data, that

children participating in HIPPY showed progress in terms of their cognitive/educational development throughout the life of the research.

7.3 Comparison of quantitative socio-emotional developmental outcomes

The presentation of findings begins with findings resulting from the testing of the hypothesis of the study, generated from the assessment used to measure outcomes for children, and then by the qualitative findings in this domain.

7.3.1 Testing of hypothesis concerning children's socio-emotional outcomes

As made clear in the conceptualization of the study, described in Chapter 4, it was the potential socio-emotional developmental outcomes of the program that were the principal focus of interest in this research. Using the same design and sample as outlined in the Section above, the findings presented here involved comparisons of socio-emotional assessment scores of children participating in HIPPY with those of the non-HIPPY group.

The researcher administered/parent response assessment, *The Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales* was collected at all three stages of the research. Section 5.2.1.2 outlines this assessment and the timing of its use. These data were collected within the same time frame as the cognitive/educational assessments described above, that is, within a three month period each year.

The hypothesis formulated and tested was as follows:

Hypothesis 4: The HIPPY group would demonstrate greater improvement in scores on the _Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales (Socialisation Domain_) across Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 than would the non- HIPPY group.

The hypothesis that the HIPPY group would demonstrate greater improvement in scores on the *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales (Socialisation Domain)* across Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 than would the non-HIPPY group was tested by performing a repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance (RM-MANOVA).

The three dependent variables were represented by scores on the *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour - Socialisation* Stage 1, *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour - Socialisation* Stage 2 and *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour – Socialisation* Stage 3. The independent variable was group, namely the HIPPY group or non-HIPPY group. The results are presented in Table 16.

Table 16.
The Means and Standard Deviations (in parentheses), on the Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales- Socialisation Domain Across Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3.

Group	Vineland Score Stage 1	Vineland Score Stage 2	Vineland Score Stage 3	F	DF	Sig
HIPPY N=19	90.2 (6.9)	89.1 (5.4)	94.2 (5.3)	4.6	2,37	.01*
Non HIPPY N=21	96.4 (8.2)	92.0 (8.0)	92.9 (5.6)			

Using Wilks' criterion it was found that group scores did differ significantly across Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 testing, $F(2,37) = 4.6$, $p < .05$, and hence the hypothesis was supported. As shown in Table 16, the HIPPY group of children demonstrated significantly greater improvement in socio-emotional development as measured by the *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales- Socialisation Domain*, across Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 than the non-HIPPY group. The HIPPY group of children scored higher than the non-HIPPY group on this measure by Stage 3, one year after involvement in the program ceased.

7.3.2   Qualitative socio-emotional developmental outcomes findings

As with the cognitive/educational findings, initial qualitative analysis of HIPPY parent reports of their experience of the program revealed numerous benefits perceived by parents to be as a result of their children's participation in the HIPPY program that were interpreted as being related to the socio-emotional developmental of participating children. Finer grained analysis of these emergent themes resulted in the identification of a set of higher order themes within which the various outcomes could

be clustered. The higher order themes identified relate to three aspects of the child's socio-emotional development, which were labeled the child's relationship to education/learning, the child's relationship to self and the child's relationship to others. These findings are presented in Table 17 on page 187 below. Sub-themes within each higher order theme are presented in order of the frequency with which they occurred within the interview data, and the stage of research at which these themes were reported is also included.

7.3.2.1 Child's relationship to learning/education

Findings reported here are those themes identified from parent interviews that concern the way parents perceived their children to approach both learning and education. Included are parent perceptions of their child's attitudes to and interest in learning and education, as well as the behaviour they demonstrated in relation to learning and education.

7.3.2.1.1 Development of positive attitude towards education

The most commonly reported finding concerning children's relationship to learning and education revealed a perceived positive attitude towards education and learning, and in particular accompanying self-confidence. Parents reported that their children were confident in relation to learning and education, as expressed through their approach to tasks such as HIPPY, schoolwork and homework. This theme first emerged in Stage 2 of the research when children had begun school, with up to one third of parents reporting children approaching their HIPPY work with more confidence as they progressed through the program.

Furthermore they reported on feedback they had received from teachers that the child was typically not afraid to try new educational tasks in the classroom setting. As can be seen in Table 17, one year after participation in the program had finished, this finding was not only sustained, but also there was a slight increase in the number

Table 17.

Interpretive Findings From Parent Interviews Concerning Socio-Emotional Outcomes for Children

Higher Order Themes (Capitalized) Emergent themes (underlined) and sub-themes	STAGE OF RESEARCH REPORTED		
	Stage 1 (N=28)	Stage 2 (N=23)	Stage 3 (N=19)
	Number of parents reporting		
RELATIONSHIP TOWARDS EDUCATION/LEARNING			
• <u>Devolopment of positive attitude towards education</u>			
Increased confidence towards school work	-	7	9
• <u>Development of habit of learning</u>			
Development of routine for homework	-	3	4
Self-directed in terms of school work	-	3	3
Self-directed in terms of HIPPY work	-	3	
• <u>Development of creative approach to learning</u>			
Increased enthusiasm to engage in other activities	4	1	2
Increased interest in learning- inquisitiveness	1	5	
Capacity to adapt learning from HIPPY across contexts	2	2	2
Increased use of imagination	1	2	1
Increased independence in play	2	1	2
RELATIONSHIP TO SELF			
• <u>Development of sense of pride in relation to education</u>			
Proud of achievements in relation to HIPPY work	3	4	3
Proud of achievements in relation to school work	-	7	2
• <u>Development of self-esteem</u>			
Increased self esteem generally	2	7	1
RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS			
• <u>Development of communication skills</u>			
Improved communication skills- clearer speech	4	3	2
Improved listening skills	3	-	-
Improved comprehension	3	1	3
• <u>Development of relationships</u>			
Positive relationship with home tutor	5	-	4
Increased interaction with peers	5	-	3
Improved interaction with peers- less shy	2	-	2
Improved relationship with siblings	4	1	2
Decreased separation anxiety from mother	1	-	-

of parents reporting this theme. The following quote from one parent at Stage 3 of the research summed up what many other parents said in this regard:

> ...The teachers have told me he's so confident in himself. He doesn't care if he gets something wrong - he'll give it a go until he gets it right...(HIPPY Parent A12, Stage 3)

Parents clearly attributed this confidence in school work to their children's participation in HIPPY in the pre-school year, as well as their ongoing participation in the program in the first year of school. Some parents understood this enhanced confidence in terms of the child's familiarization, through the HIPPY experience, with the process of

completing written worksheets. This understanding is highlighted in the following quotation from one mother:

> *...Yeah, (she's) very confident. Got a lot of self esteem, and I think HIPPY has really helped that as well, because it's prepared her for what's in store at school. And that's why she's got a lot of confidence already, because she really knows what she's doing at school. Because she's familiar with doing worksheets..."* (HIPPY Parent A21, Stage 2)

Similarly, some parents attributed this increased confidence in their child's relationship to education as due to their child's prior exposure to some particular aspects of the Year Prep curriculum. For example, two mothers gave similar examples of their sons easily completing a specific activity at school and when the teacher expressed surprise, the children explained their progress as *"we did it in HIPPY"*. For other parents, this solid confidence emerged as a result of the repetitive and progressively harder nature of the programs content. As this mother explained, the child's confidence was built up through ongoing success at completing HIPPY tasks:

> *...It's the challenge thing, I think. I mean, a lot of it is repetitive in the way that's building up their confidence and that, because you're getting it all right. And it's like "I'm so clever, I'm getting this all right". You know, and It's building, and so they don't mind being challenged. The teachers going to give them a hard maths problem and it's, like, "Oh I can do this, I've done everything else".* (HIPPY Parent A8, Stage 2)

7.3.2.1.2   Development of habit of learning

It also became apparent from parent reports that some children were perceived to have begun to establish a habit of learning, by developing routines of self-discipline necessary to complete educational tasks in a self-directed manner. It appeared that through the practice and process of doing HIPPY at home, some children began to develop the habit of doing schoolwork at home. According to some parents, as their child was already familiar with the routine of doing *HIPPY work* at home, the completion of homework upon starting school was second nature to them. This is how one mother explained in a Stage 3 interview the early stages of this development:

...It showed him that he had to sit down and do stuff.... And I think all that helped him because he knew when he got the reader (from school) that "I've got to sit down here and read that" and so he got used to doing homework...(HIPPY Parent A12, Stage 3)

Some parents drew on their problematic experiences with older children and homework tasks, comparing these experiences with those of the HIPPY child and his/her straightforward approach to homework. The following quotation from a Stage 3 parent interview is an example of the differences noticed between her HIPPY child's approach to doing homework from that of her older daughter who had not done HIPPY:

...It's helped (HIPPY child) in the fact that homework isn't a problem, whereas with (Older sister) it's a problem...(HIPPY child) comes home and "I've got homework" and we will sit down and do the whole lot - well at least over one night, maybe two... Whereas (older sister) takes the whole week to get her homework done...(HIPPY Parent A4, Stage 3)

It also appears that through the practice and process of doing HIPPY work at home, some children had become more self-directed in terms of their educational tasks generally. As can be seen in Table 17, some parents noticed that the child had become more self-directed in terms of their HIPPY work during the second year of the program and the research (Stage 2). Over and above parents view of HIPPY as being predominantly 'driven' by children wanting to do the program because they enjoyed it, reported in Chapter 6 above, self-directedness was perceived as akin to children taking responsibility for doing their HIPPY work. Some parents explained this in terms of the child seeing HIPPY work in the same context as school work and developing an understanding that they both needed to be done. As one mother stated:

...Yeah, he's more interested in doing it now because seeing school work and he sees it as homework...So in one sort of way....he's more, I think, taking it upon himself to do it now..." (HIPPY Parent A3, Stage 2)

Some parents also reported that they had received feedback from the child's classroom teacher indicating that the child demonstrated a self-directed approach to schoolwork within the classroom as well. According to parent reports of comments made by teachers, these children required less direction or instruction from teachers than other children in the classroom, and would often begin tasks independently,

requiring little prompting from teachers. As one mother summed up, after talking about how well her child was doing at school and what his teacher thought of him:

> ...Yeah, he's one of those kids that she (the teacher) can just leave...(HIPPY Parent A26, Stage 2)

7.3.2.1.3   Development of creative approach to learning

Another finding regarding children's relationship to education and learning that emerged from parent reports was that some children's relationship to learning appeared to become more creative as a result of HIPPY. Parents reported many examples of this development. Some parents reported that the child had become more interested in a greater range of activities than prior to participation in HIPPY. According to parents, involvement in the HIPPY activities gave the child more ideas about things to do. As one mother explained, a year after the program was finished, her daughter's range of activities had extended:

> ...It's (HIPPY) made her want to do different things, like around the house. And she's more interested in art work and different ways of doing things...(HIPPY Parent A19, Stage 3)

Other parents had noticed that the HIPPY child was more able to play independently since participation in the program. It appeared that ideas derived from HIPPY activities led to having more ideas about play. As one parent commented, her daughter had developed the capacity to play on her own, rather than needing her activities to be organized by others, as she had in the past. Another mother explained towards the end of the first year of the program (Stage 1) the change she had noticed in her son's interest in learning, or what she called his "*inquisitiveness*" since beginning the program:

> ....He's asking questions...Yeah, he's got a bit more inquisitive I think. Sort of - he wants to know something now. I think he's just got a whole lot more willing to ask questions now...(HIPPY Parent A20, Stage 1)

Further examples of the emergence of this development were evident within parent accounts of the ways in which the child adapted aspects of what was learned in HIPPY

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across contexts. For instance, one mother explained how her child began to notice the shapes of letter boxes as they walked and would say *"That's a rectangle, mum"* some time after learning about shapes within HIPPY (HIPPY Parent A11, Stage 1). Some parents had also noticed that the child had a broadened imagination since beginning HIPPY. One said in the second year of the program that her son's imagination had expanded greatly, using her arms to demonstrate the growth. For her, this development was a result of the ideas her son had received from the story books within HIPPY:

> *...Like his imagination has gone from this little to this big. Like the other day at kinder, for example, he was a pig because he'd done (the book about pigs). He was a pig and then the other day he was a bird. So his imagination is coming alive..." (HIPPY Parent A12, Stage 2)*

7.3.2.2 Child's relationship to self

The second most commonly reported higher order theme related to the socio-emotional development of participating children concerned what parents had noticed concerning the child's relationship to himself or herself, specifically what they reported in terms of their child's thoughts or beliefs about self both academically and in general.

7.3.2.2.1 Development of pride in relation to education/academic abilities

Contained in parents' reports of their experiences of HIPPY were examples of what appeared to be the development, for some children, of a growing sense of pride of their own academic or educational abilities. As can be seen in Table 17 on page 187 above, some children seemed to begin to display this sense of pride in relation to their achievements with their HIPPY work during the first year of the program. It appeared to parents, that through the practice and process of doing HIPPY work, successfully completing the worksheets and activities, children became aware of their developing abilities and began to express a sense of pride in relation to them. As is reflected in the following quotation from one mother during the first year of the program, with each successful completion of a HIPPY task, her son experienced how *"good"* he was becoming at such tasks:

...Like with every bit of work, he's- like- "Look mum, is that good or what?...(HIPPY Parent A7, Stage 1)

Parents also reported instances of the child wanting to show or tell others about theses developing abilities. For example, some parents recounted examples in which the child would show older siblings their *"HIPPY work"* and draw attention to *"how good"* they had become at specific tasks, such as *"drawing on the lines"* (HIPPY Parent A14, Stage 1). Another parent reported that her daughter is *"really proud of herself"* and *"tells all her friends"* that she does *"HIPPY work"* (HIPPY Parent A4, Stage 1). Another child's sense of pride in relation to her achievements in HIPPY is reflected in the following quotation from one mother a year after participation in the program had ceased, regarding her daughters response to the HIPPY graduation ceremony:

> *...She loved the graduation. She thought she was "it and a bit" for the day. She still wears her tee shirt...Her certificates are all on the wall and she thinks she's "it". She shows them off to grandma...(HIPPY Parent A4, Stage 3)*

Table 18 reveals that during the second year of participation in the program and the year most children began their formal education at school, parents reported instances of children displaying this same sense of pride in relation to their abilities to do their schoolwork. According to parent reports, situations emerged in the classroom that allowed children to gauge their abilities against those of others. These parents spoke of specific instances that the child had relayed to them about classroom performance, where he or she had been able to complete tasks quicker than classmates, having already grasped the concepts involved because of prior experience in HIPPY. As a result, parents considered that the child knew he or she was performing well at school, and appeared proud of his/her achievements.

7.3.2.2.2   Development of self-esteem

Simultaneous with growing pride, parents noticed that some children's self esteem in general increased as a result of their participation in HIPPY. Some understood this increase in self-esteem in terms of HIPPY providing children with a sense of

importance through having something considered important to do (namely HIPPY work). Similarly, other parents understood this increase in self esteem in terms of the successes their child experienced in terms of managing both their HIPPY and school tasks. These understandings were reflected by two mothers at Stage 3 of the research, a year after participation in the program had ceased:

> ...Generally, really, he's just, I think, coming out of himself more. He's sort of like um, whether he feels smarter because he was doing it - and he's like "I'm a big boy now because this is a big boy thing". So I think it's sort of boosted him up, you know...(HIPPY Parent A23, Stage 3)

> ...I think it made him more confident to go to school and made him feel like he could do anything basically... I think it made him feel like he was important and stuff...(HIPPY Parent A12, Stage 3)

7.3.2.3   Child's relationship with others

A further higher order emergent theme in parents' reports of their experience of HIPPY that related to their child's socio-emotional development, as displayed by Table 17 on page 187 above, was their perceptions of changes in the child's relationships with others as a result of participation in the program. Such changes encompassed the development of both quantity and quality of the child's social relationships generally. These findings are relevant beyond the parent-child relationship, which is specifically addressed in Chapter 9 below.

7.3.2.3.1   Development of communication skills

As outlined in Chapter 6, Section 6.2.1.1, four children enrolled in HIPPY were receiving speech therapy at the beginning of the research. The parents of these four children all spontaneously commented on the improvements to their child's speech since beginning HIPPY, and in particular noticed that speech had become clearer and easier to understand. Parents attributed this improvement in part to involvement in HIPPY. Each commented that the child's Speech Therapist was aware of their participation in the program, and that they too had noted the advance in the child's speech, actively encouraging parents to continue with HIPPY. Parents understood the improvement in the child's speech in terms of the practice and process of HIPPY

requiring the child to use more language than otherwise. Parents typically referred to the comprehension activities surrounding the HIPPY storybooks as being most helpful in this regard. Following is a quotation from one mother at Stage 1 of the research, in which she explained how she understood the progress her daughter had made in terms of speech development:

> *...Her speech has come along, and that's been to do with the program as well ...Like getting her to answer questions. Because if she doesn't say it correctly, you go back and ask her again which helps with her speech development... (HIPPY Parent A4, Stage 1)*

Towards the end of the program, one year later, this same mother commented on the improvement in the clarity of her child's speech, and what this meant for her communication at home and with others:

> *...You can actually have a conversation with her now, and you're not –like– "Hang on, what was that? Translate that". We're not even having to translate for other people now... (HIPPY Parent A4, Stage 2)*

Parents also spoke of other ways in which the child's communication skills had improved since participation in HIPPY. Some parents had noticed that the child seemed to comprehend more of what they, the parents, were saying, while others commented on improvements in the child's listening skills. Parents understood these shifts in terms similar to those concerning improvements in the clarity of some children's speech. It appeared to them that the process of doing the activities within HIPPY, in particular those surrounding the storybooks, involved not only the use of a greater range of language, but also, through having to understand and follow concepts within the story, the expansion of comprehension and listening skills. The following quotation highlights this understanding, shared by other parents, of changes perceived in this regard:

> *...Where we have to talk about something because it really gets him to having things explained to him....He's starting to listen a whole lot more, so far as his listening to me, to what I'm saying and asking questions...(HIPPY Parent A20, Stage 1)*

7.3.2.3.2   Development of relationships

Parents gave many examples of ways in which they perceived the child's relationships with others had developed or improved since their participation in HIPPY. Some believed HIPPY provided children an opportunity to develop relationships with others that they may not have if they were not involved in the program. For example, parents spoke positively about the relationship that their child had developed with the Home Tutor. As can be seen in Table 17 on page 187 above, this relationship between the child and the Home Tutor emerged in parents accounts of their experience of the program during the first year of participation in the program. This was the year that children attended pre-school and they were often at home when the Home Tutor visited. Parents sometimes used the word "*love*" to describe how the child felt towards the Home Tutor and that the child looked forward to the visit. One year after participation in the program had ceased (Stage 3 of the research), most of these parents still talked about this relationship and said the child missed the Home Tutor.

For some children, attending the fortnightly group meeting crèche was seen to represent a chance to develop relationships with others their own age who were also involved in HIPPY. As is highlighted in the following quotation from one mother, a year after the program had ceased, this was considered beneficial for children whose social networks had previously been limited:

> *...Yes, (child) got a lot out of it (HIPPY), especially the social side of it. Just her being the youngest and not having many friends her age. The aspect of going once a fortnight and her being able to go into crèche and with the other kids her age and to get to know them. She has got a couple of good friends out of it...(HIPPY Parent A4, Stage 3)*

Another mother commented that the attendance at group meetings had assisted her child with adjusting to changes, by learning to manage separating from her to participate with the other children in the crèche. As highlighted in the following quotation, this mother found that he had since become more adaptable generally:

> *....I couldn't believe this, but he - the first time he went there (group meeting), he was a bit upset. But after that, that's it - and he's adjusting a lot more easier with changes. He's not putting up a scuffle about changes or anything like that.*

Whereas beforehand, he would, you know,, fight to make sure everything stayed the same...(HIPPY Parent A17, Stage 1)

Two parents commented that their children had become less shy generally since participation in HIPPY. One considered that the increased interactions with his peer group in the crèche setting at the fortnightly group meetings had assisted her child become more experienced socially and therefore less shy. The other parent said her child had *"come right out of his shell"* since participating in HIPPY and was, by Stage 2 of the research, able to talk to others of whom in the past he had been extremely shy. In the following quotation she explained how she believed the positive experiences her son had with role-playing assisted this aspect of his development. It may be that for this child, the safety of the role-play sessions with his parents allowed him to experiment with speaking up, thereby facilitating the development of his confidence in using his voice around others:

> *...A lot of kids his age at kinder are not still acting things out. Whereas (HIPPY child) is quite willing to get in there and act like a pig for example. Or act like anything. He's quite willing... It's because we do the role-playing at home, and because he thinks because me and (his dad) make it really good, you know. We make it feel good. He's happy to do it and he's speaking. Like he will speak to everybody. He's come right out of his shell, because when I first started he wouldn't speak to anybody. Not even (Home Tutor). But now he's all over her...He wasn't like that before... (HIPPY Parent A12, Stage 2)*

Other parents spoke about how relationships between the HIPPY child and their sibling(s) had improved since participation in the program. In particular, parents talked about the positive interactions between the HIPPY child and his/her sibling(s) during a HIPPY activity that they were able to share. Typically, the storybook was the activity shared with siblings and often became part of the bedtime routine:

> *...Its helped them a hell of a lot. I mean, they go off to bed together at night and read (HIPPY child's) book. It doesn't have to be the latest one. They'll go back and start from the beginning and read all of them in one sitting...(HIPPY Parent A4, Stage 1)*

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7.3.3   Summary of socio-emotional outcomes for children

Overall, the findings from the analyses of both the quantitative and qualitative data indicate that children benefited markedly in terms of their socio-emotional development as a result of their participation in HIPPY. In respect to the quantitative findings, statistical comparison of differences between group scores during participation in the program and one year later were significant. Children who participated in HIPPY demonstrated greater improvement in group scores on the *Vineland Adapative Behaviour Scales* than the non-HIPPY group of children across Stages 1, 2 and 3 of the research. Specifically, the HIPPY group of children showed greater progress than the non HIPPY in terms of the three domains related to social-emotional development measured in the assessment, that is, in terms of how they related to others, their play and leisure and their coping skills.

Findings from the qualitative data both supported and amplified the findings from the quantitative data.   Parents' accounts of their experience of the program revealed a number of benefits they perceived that their child had gained from the program that were interpreted as being related to the social and emotional development of the child. Three main outcome themes were identified within these data. Parents perceived the child to benefit from participation in the program in terms of the child's relationships to learning and education, the child's relationship to self and the child's relationship with others.

In terms of children's relationship to learning and education, a number of parents reported the child becoming more positive and confident in approaching learning generally, and schoolwork in particular. The developing relationship with education and learning was also reflected in the self-directedness with which some children tackled educational tasks both at home and at school, as well as the display by some of increased enthusiasm for learning and increased inquisitiveness generally, and also more instances of both imaginative and independent play.

Parents also reported perceived benefits for the child in terms relationship to self, and especially how the child seemed to feel about his or her academic abilities and self

esteem generally. Some parents reported that the child was observed to manifest pride in achievements in both HIPPY and schoolwork, which in turn seemed to raise their overall self esteem.

Finally, parents perceived the child to have benefited in terms of their relationship with others, with improvements in the ways of relating to others, including the development of both positive new relationships and improvements in the quality of existing relationships. Some parents reported greater clarity in the child's speech, as well as enhanced listening and comprehension skills, leading to improvements in both the effectiveness and quality of communications with others. As a result of their participation in the crèche at HIPPY group meetings, some children formed altogether new relationships with HIPPY peers, while others became less shy and interacted more. In some cases, the child's relationship with siblings improved and the relationship formed with the Home Tutor was both a positive and significant one for some.

CHAPTER 8

FINDINGS III: OUTCOMES FOR PARENTS AND HOME TUTORS

The findings reported in this chapter involve both quantitative and qualitative data collected with parents and Home Tutors at all three stages on the research, from the HIPPY group of parents only. As with the child outcomes, in Chapter 7, the quantitative findings are presented first, and are followed by the qualitative findings.

8.1   Outcomes for parents

8.1.1   Social-emotional outcomes for parents: Quantitative findings

In accord with the aim of the study in the domain of evaluating parents' progress socially and emotionally during their participation in the program, analysis of scores on one self-esteem assessment was performed. As described in Section 5.2.1.2.3 of Chapter 5, the *Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI)* is a self-report measure of self-esteem completed by participating parents at all three stages of the research. At each stage, the assessments were collected within a three month period.

The relevant hypothesis here was as follows:

Hypothesis 5: That parents participating in HIPPY would demonstrate a significant increase in scores on the _Self Esteem Inventory (SEI)_ between Stage 1 and Stage 3.

To test this hypothesis, a repeated measures t-test was performed comparing the *Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI)* group scores at Stage 1 with the *Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI)* group scores at Stage 3. The results are reported in Table 18, indicating that the hypothesis was supported.

As can be seen in Table 18 on page 200 below, HIPPY parent group scores of self-esteem increased significantly between Stage 1 and Stage 3 of the research. These findings demonstrate that the self-esteem of parents participating in HIPPY increased during their participation in the program and was significantly higher one year after

Table 18.
The Means, Standard Deviations (in parentheses), Norms, T-Statistic and Significance level for the Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) at Stage 1 and Stage 3.

Parents Self Esteem Scores Stage 1	Parents Self-Esteem Scores Stage 3	*Norms Female 20-34yrs	T Statistic	Sig (1 tailed)
72.7 (20.0)	81.1 (15.4)	71.7 (18.8)	-2.2	.01

Key: *Norms cited by Coopersmith (1989)

their participation in the program had ceased. By Stage 3 of the research, group scores were higher than norms.

8.1.2   Qualitative findings concerning outcomes for parents

The findings presented here emerged from the qualitative analysis of interviews with HIPPY parents over the three stages of the research, concerning their experiences of the program. The presentation of findings begins with a description of the context within which the data was generated. The same thematic analysis as applied to previous qualitative data as described in Section 5.4.2 in Chapter 5, was used here.

As was highlighted in the findings concerning outcomes for children (Chapter 7, Section 7.2.2), the interview questions asked of parents primarily sought an understanding of what the experience of their participation in HIPPY meant to them within the context of talking about the implementation of the program. Parents typically responded to these questions in terms of their roles in the implementation of the program. However included within parent accounts, was evidence of benefits of their participation in the program to them personally. In addition, in the final year of the research (Stage 3), parents were asked about any impact on their lives of their involvement in HIPPY. The findings that emerged in both contexts are presented below.

Parents' accounts contained a number of identifiable themes that were interpreted as socio-emotional benefits they derived from participation in the program. Initial analysis

revealed very similar themes to those identified as outcome findings for participating children. Three higher order themes concerned parents' relationships with others, their relationships with education and learning and their relationship to themselves. These emergent and sub-themes are presented in Table 19 below. The order of frequency in which they occurred in the transcripts is listed as well as the stage of the research in which these data were reported.

Table 19.
Interpretive Findings from Parent Interviews Concerning Developmental Outcomes of Participation in the Program.

Higher Order Themes (Capitalized) Emergent themes (underlined) and Sub-themes	STAGE OF RESEARCH REPORTED		
	Stage 1 (N=28)	Stage 2 (N=23)	Stage 3 (N=19)
	Number of parents reporting		
RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS Development of relationships			
• Increased interaction with child	13	6	6
• Positive relationships with other parents	5	4	1
• Positive relationship with home tutor	3	3	2
• Improved family relationships	4	2	1
Development of sense of connectedness			
• Engagement with wider community	4	5	1
• Sense of feeling supported in role as parent	4	4	1
RELATIONSHIP TO EDUCATION/LEARNING Expanded involvement with education/learning			
• Increased confidence in capacity to teach child	9	7	7
• Increased engagement in own education/learning	4	7	9
• Increased involvement in child's school	1	2	4
RELATIONSHIP TO SELF Development of pride			
• Proud of own involvement in HIPPY	1	6	11
• Proud of child's achievements	1	3	2

8.1.2.1 Development of relationships with others

The most commonly reported higher order theme to emerge from parent accounts that has been interpreted as being a socio-emotional benefit for them concerned changes in their relationships with others. The relationships identified in parent accounts included the relationship with the participating HIPPY child, as well as relationships

with the wider family and the community. It also included the parents' relationships with other participating parents and program staff, in particular the Home Tutor. The nature of change or development in these relationships was reflected in both their feelings about those relationships and in reported behaviors towards and within those relationships.

Parents noted both increases in the quality of existing relationships with family and the wider community, in terms of more positive interactions with others, and increase in the range of relationships they began to enjoy. These they attributed to their participation in HIPPY, and the benefits are highlighted below.

8.1.2.1.1 Increased interactions with the HIPPY child

The most obvious relationship influenced by participation in HIPPY was of course the relationship between the parent and the participating child. As can be seen in Table 19 above, almost half the parents interviewed at Stage 1 of the research commented on this relationship when talking about their experience of the program. They reported spending more time with the HIPPY child since participating in the program and indicated clearly that they perceived this increase in time was a positive benefit of participation. Further, parents reported feeling good about themselves for spending more time with the child. As can be seen in Table 19, this theme was more salient for parents during the first year of the program (Stage 1 of the research) than during the later stages of the research. Clearly parents were reporting their perceptions of the change in time spent they spent with their child having closer reference of their "before HIPPY" experiences during the earliest stage of the research. How this reported increase in time spent with their HIPPY child impacted on the relationship between parent and child is addressed in Chapter 9 below.

8.1.2.1.2 Improved relationships within the family

Some parents also reported changes within family relationships more generally as a result of participation in HIPPY. From parents' accounts, it appeared that certain HIPPY activities, such as teaching the storybooks and playing the games, were appealing to siblings, and parents spoke of instances in which these activities involved

siblings, in positive terms. They said HIPPY provided an opportunity for family members to interact within a fun and educational context, and parents experienced this interaction with their children in a positive way. Two sole parents stated clearly that HIPPY provided them with an opportunity to connect with and spend quality time with all of their children:

> *...Yes, so its sort of like really good, because it pulls us all back together. So, like, during the week we go (our separate ways)...and then its like, instead of sitting around and doing a meal, it's sort of like that, HIPPY's like doing that for us. Like when we finish HIPPY, we'll talk about other things and, you know, things they've done at school and things I've done at home...(HIPPY Parent A17, Stage 2)*

8.1.2.1.3 Development of supportive relationships with other parents and Home Tutor

Other relationships beyond the family that parents commented on when talking about their experiences of the program were those that had developed with other parents participating in the program and program staff, particularly Home Tutors. For some parents, one of the benefits for them of their participation in the program was the chance, within the context of the fortnightly group meetings, to develop relationships with other HIPPY parents. While most parents who attended group meetings typically described them as being *"good to have a coffee and chat with other mum's"* (HIPPY Parent, A18, Stage 1), the findings reported here refer to those parents who appeared to benefit beyond this. For these parents, it appeared that their attendance at group meeting provided them with more significant social and emotional benefits. For some, their social networks appeared somewhat limited, and the group meeting was one of the few social outlets they had. These were the parents who spoke of the group meeting as *"an outing"* to which they *"looked forward"* (HIPPY Parent A11, Stage 1). It appears that for these parents, the fortnightly group meeting was not only one of their few outings, but also one of the few opportunities they had to develop relationships beyond the home setting. As one mother commented at Stage 2 of the research, the relationships she had developed with other HIPPY mothers had expanded her social life significantly:

...I've got to know other mums...you sort of see people when you're out now, and they'll say hello...It's a broader group, instead of just having my own little group of friends, I've got this broader group...(HIPPY Parent (A12), Stage 2)

The group meetings not only provided some parents with the opportunity to develop relationships they may otherwise not have, it appeared that these relationships served a further function by offering parents a sense of feeling supported in their role as parents. Parents gained useful ideas about any challenges arising, and gained insight into the commonalities within family life. Reflected in the following quotation from one mother talking about the group meetings, this sharing of experiences gave some parents a sense of feeling connected and supported in their roles both within HIPPY and as parents more generally:

...I don't think I've missed one fortnight. I find it's good because I'm with other parents that are in the program and....yeah, you're not alone. There's other parents out there who are having the same or even worse problems with their kids. So you sort of feel okay- I'm not doing this on my own. It's good...(HIPPY Parent A4, Stage 2)

Similarly, some reported their relationship with the Home Tutor in terms of providing a social and emotional benefit for them. While nearly all parents spoke of their Home Tutors in positive terms, often describing them as "lovely" or "nice", others spoke of a value they placed on their active relationship with the Home Tutor. For example, some mentioned looking forward to the Home Tutor visit as a welcome chance to talk, and in some instance more specifically, to talk about their child. For these parents, this relationship appeared to provide them with a desired social connection that also served to support them in their role as a parent. Some parent accounts indicated that their social networks were limited, and it appeared that these were the parents who derived the most socio-emotional benefits from the Home Tutor relationship. As reflected in the following quotation from an interview at Stage 3 of the research, for some parents, particularly those who had previously felt socially isolated, the development of this relationship provided a sense of feeling connected, and even as this mother said, of feeling "human again":

...It meant I had something once a fortnight, even once a week. With the home visit when (Home Tutor) would come out, it would give me something to look forward to. Another human contact....It was someone different, and then once a

*fortnight getting together with the other mums...It made me feel human again...
That I wasn't just a mum, and there were other things out there to help cope
with, you know... (HIPPY Parent A4, Stage 3)*

8.1.2.1.4   Development of relationship with wider community

Beyond the development of relationships within the family and with other HIPPY
parents and staff, some parents also appeared to benefit more widely, becoming more
aware of, and subsequently more engaged with, the community generally. In
particular, the enrichment component of the group meeting, that often involved guest
speakers talking on topics considered of interest to parents, was the most influential
aspect of the program facilitating this relationship between parents and their
community. While most parents who spoke about this component of the group
meetings described them as "interesting" and "useful", within these accounts were a
number of examples whereby parents had used the information to connect with the
community. For example, towards the end of the first year of the program (Stage 1 of
the research) one commented on the *"things out there (in the community) that you
wouldn't even click onto"* that she had learnt about through the enrichment component
of the group meetings (HIPPY Parent A17, Stage 1). She went on to speak of learning
about a local craft recycle shop that she had since frequented, while another
commented on learning more about the roles of the various childhood professionals.
Such knowledge could assist parents to connect more effectively with others in the
community:

> *...Yeah and that's really great too (guest speakers at group meetings) 'cos a lot
> of times you think, "Oh do I need to see a psychologist, or does she need this or
> that?" And you don't really know where to go, unless you know all the
> system...(HIPPY Parent A18, Stage 1)*

8.1.2.2   Development of relationship to education/learning

The second most commonly identified theme related to the socio-emotional benefits of
participation in the program to emerge from parents accounts of their experience with
the program concerned their own relationship to education and learning. This theme

includes aspects from parents' accounts indicating both changes in self concept (themselves in relationship to education and learning), and their own involvement or engagement with educational institutions. Of particular relevance to these findings is a further theme that emerged from parent interviews concerning parents' past experiences with education and learning. The latter findings are presented first, and provide some context to findings that suggest change or development in some aspects of parents' relationship to education and learning.

8.1.2.2.1 Parents' past experiences with education/learning

Embedded within parent accounts of their experiences of participation in the program were references to past experience or relationship with education and learning. Of the 28 parents who participated in the research, nearly half of the group (46%, n=13) reported having prior negative experiences with overall education and learning. Parents who reported this theme typically did so within the context of explaining why they had initially enrolled in HIPPY. For these parents, past negative experiences and lack of confidence with education and learning were significant motivating factors in their decision to enrol their child. Seven of the mothers reporting this theme said they were motivated due to difficulties the HIPPY child's older sibling/s was experiencing with school and/or learning. They typically went on to explain that they did not want (their HIPPY child) to "struggle" as his/her sibling/s had done upon starting school. Four mothers commented on their own past relationship with education and revealed that they themselves had found school and teachers difficult. They also were motivated to join HIPPY because they did not want their child to have the same experiences as they had. Their motivations and relationship with education and learning were reflected in the following quotations:

> ...I want to help him (HIPPY child) as much as I can....to help him make it that little bit easier through school, so I can see him doing really well instead of struggling like I did. Because once the teachers see you struggle, they know when you're struggling. They're just going to hang shit on you...I struggled heaps. I struggled to Year 8, and then I just gave up...(HIPPY Parent A7, Stage 2)

> ...At school, if you don't know it, its sink or swim. I remember I used to always sink at school...(HIPPY Parent A6, Stage 2)

...My whole family are illiterate and um, you know, I want for him (HIPPY child) to have that head start, hoping he's not going to fall behind like we all did....My side of the family, like my dad - can sign his name and that's about it. My mum learnt to read and write through playing Scrabble with the family. Me, myself, I've got a Year 8 pass...(HIPPY Parent A26, Stage 1)

Two reported that the child's father had a history of learning difficulties, and referred to the father as "dyslexic". As is reflected in the following account from one of these mothers, this had motivated her to enrol in the program:

...I want (HIPPY child) to like learn more. That was the reason why I did it. Because her father's like got a disability: like he can't spell. I think he's dyslexic, and that's why I wanted her to do this...(HIPPY Parent A15, Stage 1)

8.1.2.2.2   Development of capacity to teach child

Underpinning the expanded relationship with education and learning appeared to be the development, for some parents, of the concept of themselves as their child's teacher and the corresponding increase in confidence in their capacity to teach their child. Firstly, it was clear that many parents became involved in the program with the desire to teach their child. As they spoke about their experience of the program, especially their motivations and expectations for enrolling in HIPPY, most parents expressed the desire to help their children with education and learning. However, many parents spoke in terms of needing guidance in knowing how to go about this. Typically, parents went on to say that, since participation in HIPPY, they were more able to help the child, in an educational/learning sense. Clear within these accounts also, was their belief that HIPPY had provided them with the link between what they had desired to do, that is to teach their child, and what they came to see they were achieving.

For some parents, it was evident that their HIPPY experience as their child's teacher was one of their first such experiences. When talking about their previous experiences, they indicated they had not known where to begin in teaching their child something. The following quotation from one mother during the first year of the program is fairly representative of how others described this situation:

...I've always wanted to sit down with (HIPPY child) because of school next year...but I didn't know what to do or where to start, and nothing like that...(HIPPY Parent A17, Stage 1)

For others, it was evident that they already had some concept of themselves as the child's teacher prior to their involvement in HIPPY. For these parents, it appeared to be more a matter of not knowing what to do next, as reflected in the following example:

....I was always trying to find something to make them (her children) more creative and things to help them. But you get stuck going through the same basic things, and then you get stuck, and you couldn't find many things to do...(HIPPY Parent A14, Stage 1)

Regardless of how parents perceived themselves in terms of their role as teacher of their children, there had been a shift or development of their self concept and a corresponding increase in their confidence in that role as a result of their participation in the program. How participation in HIPPY had facilitated these developments also became evident.

For those mothers who appeared to have little concept of themselves as the child's teacher before participation in HIPPY, it emerged over the life of the research that there was a change towards perceiving themselves as the child's teacher. This was particularly noticeable for parents who reported past negative experiences in relationship to education/learning, and sometimes these spoke in terms of a link they saw between these and an inhibited capacity as a parent to teach children. For these parents, HIPPY appeared to provide them with both the knowledge of exactly what to begin teaching the child, and the actual experience of the teaching. This is reflected in the following quotations:

...Because with the other two (children), I didn't really know how to spend time with my children, 'cos like, I didn't know what to do. 'Cos, like I said, my mother never done it with me as a child, and so I had no idea. So yeah, it's sort of taught me how to spend time with my children, and sort of given me guidelines on what to do with them, like read and write, and say the alphabet and things like that...,like to teach them...(HIPPY Parent A7, Stage 2)

*...Yes, I could help her, you know, because I didn't go to school for that long.
And I could actually start to help her, like, with her reading and stuff like that.
With some sort of school and education...(HIPPY Parent A15, Stage 3)*

For parents who appeared to already have some concept of themselves as the child's teacher before participation in HIPPY, it became evident that their concept of themselves as the child's teacher strengthened, and corresponded with an increased confidence in their capacity within that role. For these it appeared that HIPPY facilitated these developments by providing them not only with more knowledge of what to teach their child, but also of how their child was learning. For example, some spoke in terms of now knowing more about what to teach their child since their participation in the program. For these parents, HIPPY provided both more specific and greater range of things for them to teach their child. That this greater knowledge of what to teach their child developed further their concept of themselves as the child's teacher emerged in some parents' accounts in which they described instances where they applied ideas from HIPPY of what to teach their child into other settings, and in some cases with their other children. The following quotations illustrate this development:

*....With the HIPPY program, its given me a more wider range of ideas and
things to help them before they start school, and things like that...And most of
the things I wouldn't even of thought of...(HIPPY Parent A14, Stage 1)*

*...I've found it really good...Its given me something to focus on, like when we go
out, like that's a rectangle shape or that's like we can talk about different
things...Like beforehand, you wouldn't even think like that, or what shapes
what...whereas now, you're more aware of different ways to help her to get to
know different things...(HIPPY Parent A11, Stage 1)*

*...Its been really good for me because I've learnt a lot. And I've helped the
other kids with their reading problems and things like that too. So it's sort of
helping me, helping my other kids, helping (HIPPY child). A bit of
everything...(HIPPY Parent A16, Stage 1)*

Accompanying the development of the concept of themselves as the child's teacher, was an increase in confidence in some parents' capacity within that role. Just as the increase in knowledge of what to teach their child appeared to facilitate the development of parents' concepts of themselves as teacher, parents also seemed to gain confidence in that role as a result of further knowledge and experience HIPPY

provided them in terms of how the child was learning. For example, as the life of the research progressed, a number of parents reported that since their participation in HIPPY, they now felt more confident in their role as their child's teacher, as being sure that they were teaching the child correctly. Parents made references to the explanations given within the content of the HIPPY materials as to the particular skills that each activity may enhance or develop in the child. Parents often went on to say that they found these explanations useful in terms of their understanding of why they were doing the particular activity with their child. For these parents, the process of participation in HIPPY, in which they came to understand more of the "why" of their teaching, parents began to experience themselves as more competent in their roles as the child's teacher. This is reflected in the following examples:

> ...Actually it (HIPPY) gave me a better understanding of teaching kids at an early age...I think it's important to teach your kids at home. I think if you know how to teach them, its better. And for the parents too, you feel confident then that you're doing the right thing...(HIPPY Parent A14, Stage 3)

> ...It helped me understand more how to teach kids as well, and to have more "in" with your own kid's education...(HIPPY Parent A21, Stage 3)

> ...(HIPPY)made me more confident in being a parent, and to teach them and know that you're doing it right.... and that you're doing everything you can at this time in their life...(HIPPY Parent A12, Stage 3)

> ...I feel more confident now, because, like, when I was going through the school- doing the school system when (older daughter) was at primary school, I would go in her classroom, I felt... Oh I felt comfortable, but not as comfortable as I am now. Not as comfortable to give the kids that extra bit of encouragement, the extra knowledge right. Whereas now, I will say to them- Okay, well, if they have a problem, I will say put your hand up and we will sort of work through it. Whereas before I would give them the answers, now I stop and show them how to work it out...(HIPPY Parent A17, Stage 3)

8.1.2.2.3   Involvement with child's education and school

As can be seen in Table 19 on page 201 above, for some parents their expanded relationship with education and learning was evident in their increased involvement in their children's school and education/learning in general. These parents found themselves expressing more interest in their children's learning since participating in HIPPY. They spoke of in terms of wanting to continue being able to see what and how

the child was learning (as they had obviously experienced with HIPPY), once their child started school. This was most evident in parents' accounts in from the second year of the program, when most children had begun school and is reflected in the following quotations from parents in the latter stages of data collection:

> *...(HIPPY) made me realize what he was really good at, and what he enjoyed, sort of, you know. Because you're not at school when they're doing stuff like that, and they might come home and say "Oh, look what I did", but seeing them do it was different... '(HIPPY Parent A3, Stage 3)*

> *...With HIPPY you can keep track of what they are up to, so yeah, that's probably the hardest thing I've found with them starting school. Whereas in kindy you walk in, you see what they're doing. Where you get to school and you kind of drop them at line up and they walk in. But I'm starting a parent helpers' course, so you can go in the classroom too. Because, I thought, once all this (HIPPY) has finished, then I'll be able to go in and see what they're doing in the actual classroom...(HIPPY Parent A13, Stage 2)*

> *...Now I sort of, like, I realized how much I've missed it, how much I've missed actually going to the school and interacting with the school...Like I do this (HIPPY) with him and I read to him, and I think "Oh, I really wish I could go to school...(HIPPY Parent A17, Stage 2)*

The most obvious change for some parents in relation to their children's education/learning was that they became active in the HIPPY child's school, in the role of classroom helpers in the school's literacy program. Increased interest appeared to motivate them to become more involved in the school. However, a further mediating factor that facilitated the change in parents' involvement with their child's education and learning was an increased confidence to engage with school professionals, in particular with the child's classroom teacher, and in particular about the child's learning. Within this context, some parents spoke of feeling more confident to communicate with teachers because of the knowledge they had gained through HIPPY. These parents' confidence seemed to benefit from familiarization with some of the concepts often used within the language of the teaching profession. For example, one mother talked about her experience prior to HIPPY, in which she received a pre-school report for one of her other children stating that her child needed help with her *"fine motor skills"*. The mother reported that she had not known how to respond as she did not know what her child's fine motor skills were. She went on to say that she now knew "....*more because the HIPPY program has it written on the sheet. Like, this*

activity is for fine motor skills, and this one's for gross motor skills and now I know which one's for what..."(HIPPY Parent A18, Stage 1).

Many parents drew attention to a link between their increased confidence in their role as their child's teacher, as a result of HIPPY, and their increased involvement with their child's education and learning generally. The following quotations exemplify this:

> *...Like with (HIPPY child's older sister), I was terrified of talking to her teachers. One of her teachers made me feel so small and insignificant, and, now, well I think, I almost sort of think "You're only a teacher, I'm her parent. You don't speak to me like that." And yeah, I've sort of got a bit more confidence with dealing with the teachers...(HIPPY Parent A4, Stage 2)*

> *...I went in and started helping out in the school and everything in the classrooms and that's when I started doing that ....I felt more confident to go in and not scared to speak my mind and everything. And, like, say sorts of things that I want to come out with to the teachers and that... I can speak to them properly and not feel like I'm saying the wrong thing or anything, and, yeah, its been really good...(HIPPY Parent A21, Stage 3)*

8.1.2.2.4   Increased engagement with own education and learning

A number of parents emphasized becoming more engaged with their own education and learning, as seen in Table 19 on page 201 above, reporting this first at Stage 2 of the research (towards the end of their participation in the program), and again at Stage 3. Within all these accounts, the link between parents' participation in the HIPPY program and their increased engagement with their own education and learning was acknowledged.

In most of the cases reported at Stage 3 of the research, parents had either expressed their desire in, or had already begun the process of, training to work with children in an educative sense. As mentioned above, by the end of the research, three parents reported undertaking training at their children's schools to enable them to work as parent helpers with other children in the school's literacy program. At Stage 2, one mother had undertaken training and began working as a Home Tutor within HIPPY with the 4th implementation by Glastonbury. By Stage 3, of the research a further three parents had expressed their desire to or interest in becoming a Home Tutor within the program or in another similar role such as a kindergarten or teacher aide.

One of these parents had almost completed her own Year 12 studies at the time of the Stage 3 interview, during which she stated her intention to apply for a Primary Teacher's course at university the following year. For these parents, the link between HIPPY participation and their desire to engage further in a teaching role, appeared quite straightforward. Through the process of participation they began to develop the sense that they could handle a teaching role well. While these parents spoke in terms of feeling more confident to teach their children since participation in HIPPY, evidently their experiences had led them to expand their self concept beyond this, to a classroom setting.

For the other cases reported at Stage 3 of the research, their engagement with education and learning had taken different avenues from that of a teaching role. All three parents acknowledged that their involvement in HIPPY had facilitated the pathways they had undertaken. One parent, who expressed wanting to stay connected with her HIPPY child's school, had begun working in an administrative position in the office at the school and was in the process of studying for a diploma in that field. Another parent had begun a tertiary course in horticulture. She had stated that prior to HIPPY she would not have had the confidence to consider undertaking such a course. Another parent had begun her own party-plan business that she ran from home. Participation in HIPPY had assisted her to read, as she explained in the following quotation:

> ...Like it helped me, like I have told you before. I can't really read or write properly, so its helped me...Beforehand, I wouldn't sit there and read things, do you know what I mean? I would never used to push the issue of reading if I could get away with not doing it. I pretty much wouldn't do it. Because I had struggled at school and when I was younger I chose not to pursue it. Like, I chose not to do it. Like, and with (HIPPY), it was like, "Well, I have to do this and I have to do this for my child". Like with HIPPY, I had to read, like, the preview sheet. So I'd sit there and I'd have to. And it might have taken me like, 2 or 3 times, but now I find that I can read more. Like I can read. I mean, even though it was pretty simple and stuff...Like, I've started to read more. We read stories. Like, we were reading stories at night like, after HIPPY and stuff...And like we continued doing that now...(HIPPY Parent A26, Stage 3)

This parent further reported that the party-plan business that she had embarked upon entailed both reading and writing, particularly when writing up orders and invoices.

She maintained that had it not been for involvement in HIPPY and the resultant improvement in her literacy skills, she would not have considered pursuing such an opportunity.

8.1.2.3   Relationship to self

The third higher order theme to emerge from parent accounts related to the socio-emotional benefits of participation in the program concerned their thoughts and feelings about themselves. As can be seen in Table 19, a number of parents revealed a sense of pride in relation to their participation in the program, firstly in how proud they felt about their child's success at school. All parents expressed at some point in the research, the very high value they placed on success at school. In some instances, pride in child's success was evident within the context of parents comparing their own struggles at school with the HIPPY child's success. In these instances, it appeared that the HIPPY child's success at school was one of their first such experiences these parents had had with education. These parents appeared, beyond their pride, to be somewhat surprised that their child was doing so well, given their own past negative experiences. However, parents clearly believed that the child's success at school was as a result of the child's participation in HIPPY and it was the role that parents played in their child's participation in the program that provided another context for the development of pride.

It was also clear that these parents believed that their child would not be doing so well at school, had it not been for their involvement in the program. The fact that they, as parents, were instrumental in starting the child in the program became a further source of pride. Parents talked of knowing that they had done the right thing by their child by *"getting them into HIPPY"* in the first instance (*HIPPY Parent A21, Stage 2*). Such an acknowledgement appeared particularly potent for those parents who stressed having experienced limited previous success themselves with education.

Evidence for the development of pride within this context emerged within parent accounts mainly towards the end of HIPPY, as well as after their participation in the program was finished. It was during this stage of the research that parents also began to express pride in relation to them managing to continue doing the program with their

child. For some of these parents, it was clear that it had been a struggle at times for them to continue with the program for a variety of reasons unrelated to the program. They spoke of feeling good about themselves for managing to keep doing the program with their child. As can be seen in Table 19 on page 201 above, when interviewed one year after their participation in the program (Stage 3) more than half the parents (n=11, 57%) expressed pride in having done the right thing by maintaining their commitment for the two years of the program. The following quotations demonstrate some of the ways in which many parents expressed their developing sense of pride in themselves as a result of their participation in the program:

> ...It makes me feel good, because like I got him into it and he loves it now and I don't look back on it now. I'm so glad. I feel I've done the right thing as a parent to getting him into it and... I'm rapt for (child) because he's achieving something I never achieved. I always said from day one that I was going to help him as much as I can- even if I don't know how, I'm still going to give it a go. Just to help him make it that bit easier through school. So I can see him doing really well, instead of struggling like I did...(HIPPY Parent A7, Stage 2)

> ...I never, like, when I first started it, I never thought that I'd be able to do it. Because of the other kids and that. But no, we've done well to keep up with it... (HIPPY Parent A15, Stage 2)

> ...I feel good in myself that I'm actually helping her with her education...(HIPPY Parent A21, Stage 2)

> ...Makes me feel good, makes me feel like I've achieved something...(HIPPY Parent A12, Stage 2)

> :...I feel, like, in my mind, I have done the right thing by her, you know, on the right path for learning. That's made me feel really good having done that...(HIPPY Parent A18, Stage 3)

8.2   Summary of emergent outcomes for parents

Findings from both the quantitative and qualitative data indicate that parents benefited from their participation in the program in terms of their own socio-emotional development. The quantitative findings showed that parents' self esteem increased significantly from their first year of participation in the program to one year after participation had ceased. Findings from the qualitative data revealed outcomes for parents supporting the quantitative findings. Three main outcome themes were

identified from the analysis of the interview data. Parents appeared to benefit from their participation in the program in terms of their relationship with others, their relationship to education and learning and their relationship to themselves. Within each of these themes, the consistent finding was the expansion or development of these three areas of participants' lives.

In terms of the development of relationships with others, parents appeared to benefit both socially and emotionally from the increased interactions with their HIPPY child, from improved relationships within their family and from the expansion of relationships beyond the family, that provided them with both a sense of feeling supported in their roles as parents as well as feeling more connected to the wider community.

As a result of their participation in the program, parents also expanded their relationship with education and learning. This was evident in the development of their self concept of themselves as the HIPPY child's teacher, their increased involvement with the child's education and learning, and also an increase in their engagement with their own education and learning. Parents' developing confidence in their capacity to engage successfully with education and learning was found to be a socio-emotional outcome of the process of their participation in the program, as well as being fundamental to their increased engagement with education and learning. With nearly half of the group reporting limited or negative past experiences with education, this outcome of parents' developing confidence, and its apparent mediating effect on the ongoing development of parent's relationship with education and learning, was considered to be of some significance.

Finally, parents also revealed the development of their sense of pride in respect to both the academic success they perceived their child achieved as a result of HIPPY participation, and their own sense of achievement in being instrumental in both initiating and successfully completing the program with their child. Parents' beliefs that they had assisted their children in terms of their education and learning appeared the most potent force in the development of pride in themselves.

8.3   Qualitative findings concerning outcomes for Home Tutors

In order to address the research aim outlined in Section 4.3 of Chapter 4, concerning the exploration of possible socio-emotional outcomes for participating Home Tutors, the content of the interviews conducted at all three stages of the research with Home Tutors were analyzed. During Stages 1 and 2 of the research, these interviews were focused upon Home Tutor experiences of being involved in the program, while at Stage 3 Home Tutors were asked specifically if they believed there had been any costs or benefits for them personally as a result of their participation in the program as Home Tutors.

As outlined in Section 5.1.2.3 of Chapter 5 above, four Home Tutors were involved in this third implementation of HIPPY by Glastonbury. There was some variation in the level of previous HIPPY experience. At the commencement of the research, one was in her third year as Home Tutor, another in her second year, and the other two were in their first year. Nevertheless initial analysis of their interviews demonstrated that the perceived outcomes that Home Tutors reported were very similar within the group. Therefore, it was decided to complete the analysis by pooling the data given by all four. Furthermore, the overall or higher order themes identified in the analysis were consistent with those reported previously as both child and parent outcomes. However, for Home Tutors, their relationship to self can be viewed as underlying their relationship with others and their relationship to education and learning.

8.3.1   Relationship to self

Evident in all Home Tutor accounts were changes in how they felt about themselves as a result of their participation in the program as Home Tutors. Two emergent themes concerning their relationship to themselves were identified. These were the development of pride in relation to the role of Home Tutors and the development of their self-confidence as Home Tutors, as well as across a more general spectrum.

8.3.1.1　Increased confidence

Embedded within all interviews were references to life *before* and *after* becoming a Home Tutor. All recalled specifically how they felt when they were first asked by the Coordinator to become Home Tutors, and spoke in terms of feeling unsure of their ability to take on the role. Three of the four reported not believing they had the skills necessary to take on such a role, saying that they were *"too shy"* (*Home Tutor 1, Stage 1 and Home Tutor 2, Stage 1*) and one because she *"hadn't worked for yonks"* (*Home Tutor 4, Stage 2*). These three reported expressing their concerns to the Coordinator and then being encouraged by her reassurances to give it a try. During the later stages of the research, all reported feeling more confident since becoming a HIPPY Home Tutor. It was clear that, during the process of their role, these four participants had experienced change in terms of how they perceived themselves, that in turn facilitated the development of their self confidence generally. This was most evident when they described their own growth since participation in the program.

Certain critical skills were viewed as necessary to carry out the tasks and responsibilities inherent in the Home Tutor role. One of the most fundamental was to implement the home visits with the families, and all Home Tutors made reference to the need to be organized in order to do this task well. Organizational skills appeared particularly important to Home Tutors, considering the regularity with which they were required to reschedule appointments when families were not home, as reported above in Section 6.3.3.1.2 of Chapter 6. None of these workers believed that they were particularly organized before they became Home Tutors, describing themselves typically in the following way *"I was never a very organized person" (Home Tutor 2, Stage 1)*. However, all reported that they had become organized, or at least, more organized since their participation in the program.

Similarly, they reported that during the course of the program they had become both *"more resourceful"* (*Home Tutor 1, Stage 1*) and *"more able to cope with situations"* (*Home Tutor 4, Stage 3*) in their role as Home Tutor. In all the situations described, the Home Tutor responding to the situation needed to be organized, or resourceful, or flexible, or all of those things to manage the situation. That each Home Tutor did

respond appropriately appeared to surprise them with two Home Tutors stating that "...*I surprised myself how well I managed that...*" (*Home Tutor 1, Stage 2, and Home Tutor 4, Stage 2*).

Clearly, they had been required to utilize skills that they had been unaware of possessing. In the process, they experienced themselves as expanding. As a result, their self concept grew as was reflected in their many references of "*becoming more...*" than what they were before they became Home Tutors. In turn, part of their developing self concept was an increased confidence in their abilities more generally.

8.3.1.2   Development of pride

Further, Home Tutors reported the development of pride in relation to their role. Three related that what they actually did as Home Tutors, made them feel proud of themselves. They explained that the role they played in assisting families to participate in the program made them feel that they were doing something very worthwhile.

The development of pride in the Home Tutor role appeared to be mediated by two factors. The first was the degree of experience Home Tutors had in the program. The longer they had been involved in HIPPY, the more they seemed able to see the potential benefits of the program for families involved, and the more they observed the benefits of the program, the more they came to perceive the worth in what they did. As the most experienced Home Tutor commented at Stage 1 of the research, the longer she had gone on with the program the larger had become her perspective on its benefits. She now viewed HIPPY in "a bigger picture", involving not just the helping the child but also "*families to have quality time (that) they could extend... from HIPPY to ... use it in other areas of their lives... to help the families to strengthen themselves.*" She went on to say how "*rewarding*" it was "*at the end when you see all the benefits, when they finally make it to graduation...*" (*Home Tutor 2, Stage 1*). For her, the value of the program and of the role she played in it increased the longer she was involved.

The second factor that played a role in the development of pride was the degree to which Home Tutors actively assisted all families to stay on within the program. This was most evident when Home Tutors spoke of the graduation ceremony and how proud they felt watching their families graduate. It was clear that, in a few instances Home Tutors had been instrumental in helping a family maintain participation in very difficult circumstances, and this led to a great sense of achievement.

8.3.2 Relationships with others

Home Tutors recounted changes in terms of how they related to others as a result of their participation in the program. Two major themes emerged here, namely an increase in their communications with others, and the development of relationships that provided mentoring or role model functions.

8.3.2.1 Improved communication skills

The most obvious change for all Home Tutors in terms of their relationships with others was an improvement in how they related to others. All reported that they were more able to communicate with others as a direct result of their HIPPY involvement. One of the major concerns, in terms of their initial responses to being asked to consider a Home Tutor position, for at least three of the four Home Tutors was the thought of having to relate to people they did not know, or as one expressed it, "*having to go into strangers' houses*" *(Home Tutor 1, Stage 1)*. In talking about their experiences before and after becoming Home Tutors, these three each described themselves as being shy before they undertook the role. As one put it, "*I was alright with people I knew...*(but)*...not comfortable with people I didn't* (know)*..." (Home Tutor 4, Stage 2)*. However, all reported that since their experience as Home Tutors within the program they had become less reserved and, in effect, more comfortable in communicating with others.

While Home Tutors spoke of this change mainly in terms of their interactions with HIPPY families, they also reported instances where this decrease in shyness had extended and influenced other relationships in their lives. For example, one reported

in her second year as Home Tutor (Stage 2 of the research) that she was now *"not as shy"* as she had been, and could now *"talk with her children's school teachers" (Home Tutor 1, Stage 2)*. Another reported in her third year as Home Tutor (Stage 2 of the research), that she had previously been *"too scared"* to talk *"in front of others"*, particularly those in authority of any form, but since her experience as Home Tutor was now more comfortable to do so (*Home Tutor 2, Stage 2*). She went on to describe an incident where she had talked openly in front of the Agency Director, and her surprise, after the event, that she had been able to do so. It appeared that in both these instances, practice in talking with strangers in their roles as Home Tutors had given them the confidence to extend their communications with others beyond this role.

8.3.2.2   Development of positive relationships with other program staff

The relationships that Home Tutors developed with other program staff, especially with other Home Tutors and with the Coordinator, were reported by all as being very positive. The most obvious benefit of these relationships for Home Tutors was the sense of support they provided them in terms of their role within the program. As reported in Section 6.3.2.1.1.1 of Chapter 6, such support was considered one of the most facilitative factors for program staff in terms of the program's implementation. However, these relationships also appeared to provide Home Tutors with benefits of a more personal kind, as they operated in terms of providing them with both positive role-modeling and mentoring.

Within the accounts of all Home Tutors was evidence that their peers had served as positive role-models for them. For example, in her first year in the role (Stage 1 of the research), one of the least experienced Home Tutors talked of how she aspired to become as good a Home Tutor as one of her more experienced colleagues. She spoke of *"still having a long way to go"* to become a *"good"* Home Tutor but went on to say that *"...if I could be up to (her peers) level by the time I finish, that would be good" (Home Tutor 1, Stage 1)*. Even for the more experienced Home Tutors, there were aspects of how others provided inspiring examples. One of the more experienced Home Tutors' spoke of admiring how *"...calm and collected..."* one of her peers

seemed. She described herself as being too *"wishy washy,"* and aspired to present as confidently as did her peer (*Home Tutor 2, Stage 2*). Another relatively experienced Home Tutor, described herself as both *"shy"* and *"not very sociable"* and aspired to become as *"outgoing and friendly"* as another of her colleagues (*Home Tutor 4, Stage 2*)..

Similarly, all Home Tutors indicated that their socio-emotional development was enhanced through the relationship they developed with the HIPPY Coordinator, particularly through the mentoring function the program provided. For example, as stated above in Section 8.2.1.1, all Home Tutors spoke of their initial fear of not being able to fulfill the role of Home Tutor, and the encouragement they received from the Coordinator being instrumental in spurring them on to take up the challenge that the position offered them. During the course of their practice, too the Coordinator had encouraged them to take on extra challenges, such as organizing guest speakers for group meetings. It was also evident in all Home Tutor accounts, that the Coordinator had encouraged exploration in relation to their futures beyond their lives as Home Tutors, providing them with guidance needed to pursue further education for themselves.

8.3.3   Relationship to education and learning

During Stage 3 of the research, all four Home Tutors reported either having already begun that year, or having enrolled for the following year, for courses at a local college offering pathways to tertiary education. Two had enrolled for a Diploma in Community Welfare to commence the following year. Both expressed their desire to work with school-aged children once they had completed their Diplomas. Another had already begun fulltime studies that year, working towards a Diploma in Child Care. The fourth had already begun a course of study midway through her final year as Home Tutor, working towards a formal Certificate in Aged Care.

When asked if their experiences as Home Tutors had influenced their decisions to further their own education, all were adamant that this was the case. All stated that they had not even considered pursuing further education prior to participation in

HIPPY. Only one reported considering further education after she had been involved in the HIPPY as a parent, but had been unsure until now of her options and her own interests. She maintained that her three year participation in the program as a Home Tutor helped give her direction in terms of the pathway she had chosen towards the end of her involvement with the program. Furthermore, her experience as a Home Tutor also counted towards prerequisites of her chosen course of study. For the other three, their participation in HIPPY in the role as a Home Tutor appeared to serve a more general function in terms of this outcome. Their experiences as Home Tutors provided them with both the desire to pursue their own education, as well as the belief that they were capable to do so. As reported above, the Coordinator provided these Home Tutors much encouragement to pursue further education. In the final stage of the research, when Home Tutors talked about these plans for the future, some reflected on where this journey begun, upon their initial involvement in HIPPY. As one home tutor reflected, she *"had been on a pension and hadn't worked for yonks"* when she first became involved in the program as a parent. After four years as a Home Tutor and five years overall involvement in the program, she was now *"on the right track"*. For her, as it appeared for all other Home Tutors, the changes to her life since her involvement with HIPPY had been *"huge"* and *"all good" (Home Tutor 4, Stage 3)*.

8.4   Summary of outcomes for Home Tutors

Home Tutor accounts revealed that undertaking the role of Home Tutor challenged all four to operate beyond previous experience. All expressed their initial doubts in relation to their capacity to take on the role, and reported ongoing personal challenges within the role. As a result of undertaking and developing their competency within that role, all Home Tutors appeared to gain benefits in terms of their overall socio-emotional development. Evident in all Home Tutors accounts was a fundamental change or development in terms of how they perceived themselves. Their sense of pride in themselves, in terms of the importance of their role in the lives of HIPPY families, developed during the course of their involvement in the program. Also evident was the development of their confidence in both their abilities within the role as Home Tutor, as well as increased confidence more generally. The latter was reflected in changes they reported in terms of increased confidence in their communications

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with others, as well as their increased confidence in relation to education and learning. All four Home Tutors had begun some form of further education by Stage 3 of the research, a life trajectory that had not been considered before their involvement with the program. Finally, the mentoring role played by the Coordinator, as well as the support and positive role modeling provided by their peers, were found to be instrumental in facilitating and enhancing these outcomes for all Home Tutors.

CHAPTER 9

FINDINGS IV: OUTCOMES CONCERNING THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

This chapter reports the quantitative and qualitative findings concerning the parent-child relationship. These findings augment those relating to both the socio-emotional outcomes for children, and those for parents. It begins with the presentation of the quantitative findings concerning the comparison between the HIPPY group and the non-HIPPY group on one assessment measuring the quality of the parent-child relationship over the three stages of the research. The qualitative findings follow, and encompass HIPPY parent reports of perceived changes within the parent-child relationship as a result of their participation in the program, as well as HIPPY parent perceptions regarding the HIPPY child's security of attachment in day-to-day parent-child interactions.

9.1 Quantitative findings concerning the parent-child relationship

To test the hypothesis outlined in Section 4.4.2 of Chapter 4, that the HIPPY group would demonstrate greater improvement in the quality of the parent-child relationship than the non-HIPPY group, analysis of scores between two groups on the *Parent Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI)* was conducted. As indicated in Section 5.2.1.2.4 of Chapter 4, this assessment is a self report measure. It was completed by all parents in both groups, and administered over the three stages of the research.

Hypothesis 6: The HIPPY group would demonstrate greater improvement in scores on the *Parent-Child Relationship Inventory* between Stage 1 and Stage 3 than the non-HIPPY group.

The hypothesis that the HIPPY group would demonstrate greater improvement in scores on the *Parent-Child Relationship Inventory* between Stage 1 and Stage 3, was tested by performing a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). The dependent variables were the differences between scores at Stage 1 and Stage 3 for both groups, on the seven scales of the assessment: The *Parental Support Scale*; the *Satisfaction With Parenting Scale*; the *Involvement Scale*; the *Communication Scale*; the *Limit*

Setting Scale; the *Autonomy Scale* and the *Role Orientation Scale*. The results of this analysis, are presented in Table 20.

Table 20.

The Means and Standard Deviations (in parentheses) of the Differences in Group Scores Between Stage 1 and Stage 3 on all Scales of the Parent- Child Relationship Inventory(PCRI).

GROUP	SUP	SAT	INV	COM	LIM	AUT	ROL	F	Df	Sig
HIPPY **N=19**	3.8 (9.1)	- 1.8 (7.2)	-3.0 (9.0)	-1.2 (7.5)	3.3 (7.8)	-.53 (7.4)	3.6 (10.1)			
Non HIPPY N=21	1.6 (10.7)	1.1 (7.5)	.14 (6.9)	.95 (9.5)	2.3 (7.3)	2.3 (7.0)	1.2 (7.1)	1.26	7,33	.29

Key: Scales of the PCRI – SUP= the Parental Support Scale, SAT= the Satisfaction With Parenting Scale, INV= the Involvement Scale, COM= the Communication Scale, LIM= the Limit Setting Scale, AUT= the Autonomy Scale, ROL= the Role Orientation Scale.

Using Wilks' criterion, it was found that the HIPPY and non-HIPPY groups did not differ significantly between Stage 1 and Stage 3 $F(7,33)=1.26, p>.05$ and therefore the hypothesis was not supported.

9.2   Qualitative findings concerning the parent-child relationship

In order to further explore possible changes to the quality of the parent-child relationship as a result of participation in HIPPY, a series of interview questions were asked of parents concerning their relationship with their child, as outlined in Section 5.2.2.2 of Chapter 5. Interview questions asked of parents were directed towards two main lines of inquiry, first eliciting perceptions of changes within their relationship with the HIPPY child as a result of their participation in the program, and, secondly, perceptions of the child's security of attachment in interactions with the parent during day-to-day activities, rather than merely within the HIPPY setting. The findings from both these inquiries are now presented.

9.2.1 Parent perceptions of impact of HIPPY on parent-child relationship

Specifically, parents were asked, at Stages 2 and 3 of the research, if they believed that HIPPY had impacted in any way on their relationship with their child. Responses were analyzed using the same techniques as described in Section 5.4.2 in Chapter 5. Two higher order themes and a number of emergent themes were identified by the data analysis, and are presented in Table 21.

Table 21.

Parent Perceptions of Changes to their Relationship with HIPPY Child.

Parent Responses to Question Asking Whether HIPPY had Impact on Their Relationship with Child	Stage 2 N=22	Stage 3 N=19
• Yes	n=21	n=18
• Not really	n=1	n=1
Behavioural Changes		
• Spent more time with child	n=14	n=9
• Extended range of activities with child	n=3	n=4
• Communicate more together	n=2	n=1
Emotional changes		
• Interactions evoke positive affect	n=12	n=10
• Feels closer/bond stronger	n=8	n=7

As can be seen in Table 21, the majority of parents reported that HIPPY did indeed have an impact on their relationship with their children. During Stage 2 of the research, when parents were nearing the end of their involvement in the program, and again at Stage 3, approximately one year after their involvement had ceased, all but one parent believed that their participation in HIPPY had such an impact. The one parent who did not report this had not been working through the program with her child for at least the second year of the program. When asked if she believed that HIPPY had an impact on her relationship with her child, she replied, *"...No, because I haven't really been doing it with her. (Home tutor) has been. (HIPPY Parent A19, Stage 2).* She had reported that during Stage 1 of the research that she found it difficult to *"...have a routine..."* and it appeared, from her accounts, that the Home Tutor took over the role of delivering the program to her child towards the end of the first year of participation. It also appeared that the mother did not fully resume that role again during the remaining involvement with the program, although it was clear that she was present during the Home Tutor sessions with her child.

Parents who did report that their participation in the program impacted on their relationship with their child typically went on to identify the ways in which they perceived their relationship changed. The first theme here concerned behavioural changes that occurred within the relationship, and the second concerned emotional changes that occurred within that relationship.

9.2.1.1   Behavioural changes in the parent-child relationship

As can be seen in Table 21, the most reported impact on the parent-child relationship as a result of participation in the program, concerned the amount of time spent together. This theme was reported by at least half of the parents involved in the research at both Stages 2 (64%) and Stage 3 (50%). It appeared, from all accounts, that parents were saying not only that they had spent more time with their child since participation in HIPPY than they did before, but also more than they believed they would have done if they had not been involved in the program. Many parents spoke in terms of HIPPY *allowing* them to find the time to spend with their child, and in some cases *making* them spend time with their child. It appeared from their accounts that for many parents, although they had known that being a parent meant spending individual time with each child, they had not often managed to do that except within the context of HIPPY. The following quotations are three examples of how parents typically explained what HIPPY provided them in this way:

> *...It makes you sit down and do one-on-one...Like, you're meant to sit down and talk and have discussions and that. But if you don't have anything to make you sit down and do it, you won't do it...But with HIPPY, because its something you have to physically sit down and do, you do it...(HIPPY Parent A5, Stage 2)*

> *... It's given us more time together, because I wouldn't have had time to, well, you know... I do it because we have to do it, but yeah, it's a bit sad to say, but I probably wouldn't sit down with him and do that stuff...(HIPPY Parent A2, Stage 2)*

> *...I think (HIPPY) has improved things (parent-child relationship) because I'm a person who sort of finds it hard to, like, you know what I mean... like, I sort of juggle everything. But having the structure of the program, I sort of think, "Oh I better make time for that and I've sort of slotted it in. Whereas it's more regular*

*than if I had been just doing our own thing. So I think it's definitely improved it
(the relationship)...(HIPPY Parent A3, Stage 3)*

As can be seen in Table 21, beyond reporting changes to the amount of time they spent with the HIPPY child, parents also reported other behavioural changes in their relationship. Some parents reported that as a result of their participation in the program, their interactions with the child had extended to include a wider range of activities than previously. These parents spoke in terms of their participation in the program providing them with more things that they could do together, beyond working together on HIPPY activities. This appeared to involve both place and time. Moreover, this extension was maintained after participation in the program had ceased, being also reported at Stage 3 of the research. For example, one mother spoke of how participation in HIPPY had resulted in the development of a routine of reading together every night, an interaction they had not shared prior to their involvement in the program. Another reported that as a result of participation in HIPPY, she and her child had continued to work through activity books that she herself had purchased throughout the year following their involvement in the program. She described their time spent doing HIPPY as *"their time to sit down and work things out together"* and it appeared that the practice they maintained of working through these books were interactions conducted very much in the spirit of HIPPY (*HIPPY Parent A17, Stage 3*).

Another behavioural change reported by some parents concerned the amount of verbal interaction between themselves and their child. They noted an increase in the amount of time they spent talking together after becoming involved in the program. In these cases, parents spoke of instances in which the child had initiated communication with them where previously they had not done so. One mother reported that her child was more likely to seek her out as someone who could answer questions since their participation in HIPPY. From her accounts, it appeared that through the process of HIPPY, in which her child experienced her in the role as his teacher, her child had since began to relate to her at this new level. Similarly, another mother spoke of a change in her previously quiet child who had generally kept to himself, but since participating in HIPPY had begun to initiate more conversations with her. For her, it appeared this change resulted from their shared HIPPY experiences providing him with more frames of references with which he could engage his mother in

conversation. In such cases, it appeared that the process of participation in HIPPY, with the parent as teacher working through activities with the child, provided the foundation for the ongoing development of communication within that parent-child relationship. The following two quotations illustrate this:

> *...Yeah, because we communicate more, do you know what I mean?... He'll ask me questions and, like, before, I don't know what it was. But, like now, if he's got a question, he's going to ask me, because he knows that I'll help him with that...(HIPPY Parent A26, Stage 2)*

> *...I think it's improved it (parent-child relationship) really. Yes. We have probably ... gotten on well anyway, yes. But I think going through all that, it's given us more avenues of things to, you know, that we can do together...(HIPPY Parent A13, Stage 3)*

9.2.1.2   Emotional changes in the parent-child relationship

It also appeared from parent accounts that the experience of participating in HIPPY had led to some emotional changes in the relationship between themselves and their children. As can be seen in Table 21 on page 227 above, when parents were talking about the impact that participation in HIPPY had on their relationship with their child, at least half spoke in terms of how they and the child felt about doing the program. These parents perceived that the process of participating in HIPPY evoked good feelings for both them and their children. As mentioned previously in the findings related to behavioural changes within the relationship, it was clear that many parents believed that spending time with the child was the right thing to do for the child. At the most basic level, HIPPY appeared to facilitate good feelings for these parents by facilitating their doing the right thing by the child, by spending that mutual time. Quite clearly, these parents felt good about themselves in terms of that aspect of their relationship with their child. It also appeared that beyond this, parents' felt good because of how they perceived the child felt about the time together. The word "special" was used by many parents when talking about the time spent with their child doing HIPPY, as in *"it was our special time"*, and further as in *"it made him/her feel special".* In some instances, parents reported their children asking for their *"special time"* well after participation in the program had ceased, during Stage 3 of the research. It was clear

within these accounts that parents' perceptions of their child's "special" feelings surrounding HIPPY enhanced their own good feelings about the experience.

It was also evident that the process of participation in HIPPY evoked positive feelings not only for the parent and child individually, but also led to emotional changes in terms of how parents perceived the nature of the relationship itself. As can be seen in Table 21, a number of parents reported that their relationship or *"bond"* with their child was *"stronger"* or *"closer"* since their participation in the program. In these cases, parents were reporting that they felt closer to their child as a result of having shared the HIPPY time together. A number of parents explained the change in the closeness of the relationship between themselves and the HIPPY child, in terms of the program enabling them to know the child more or better. These parents often spoke of HIPPY allowing them to know where the child *"was up to"*, and also to know what the child *"could do"*. It appeared from these parent accounts that the process of participating in HIPPY with the child, allowed them to know their child in ways that they had not done previously, especially in ways associated with learning or development. This was most evident in the accounts of parents who appeared to have had little prior experience of themselves in the role of teacher to their child. In these cases, parents expressed surprise at how much their child had learnt since doing HIPPY, or how quickly their child appeared to learn particular concepts within the program's content. It appeared that HIPPY provided these parents with a novel context in which they were able to witness or experience their child learning or developing cognitively at a level they had not previously noticed. For other parents, who appeared to have had some experience of their child's capacity for learning, HIPPY provided them wth more specific knowledge of their child's learning or development. These parents spoke in terms of knowing more about what the child knew or did not know. For example, one mother commented that, while she knew that her child *"knew her shapes and colours"*, she had no idea prior to HIPPY that her child had limited *"letter recognition"* (*HIPPY Parent A5, Stage 1*). In other cases, participation in HIPPY appeared to provide some parents with other new ways of knowing this child, as reflected in one mother's comment in an interview in Stage 3 of the research:

...I think it was really good, because it gave me insight like into what he likes and how he copes with things. And what he was really good at...(HIPPY Parent A3, Stage 3)

9.2.2 Parent perception of child's security of attachment in parent-child interactions during day-to-day activities

Section 5.2.2.2 of Chapter 5, describes the semi-structured interview schedule used to elicit parents' perceptions of their child's security of attachment during four phases of interactions during typical day-to-day activities. While collecting predominantly qualitative data, the schedule was also designed to permit coding and quantitative summarizing of the forthcoming information. The data generated from parent responses to the interview questions were analyzed according to the process described in Section 5.4.2.2 in Chapter 5, and the findings are presented below in Figure 2, which graphs aggregated scores reflecting parent perceptions of the child's security of attachment to the parent during four phases of parent-child interaction

Security of Child-Parent Attachment
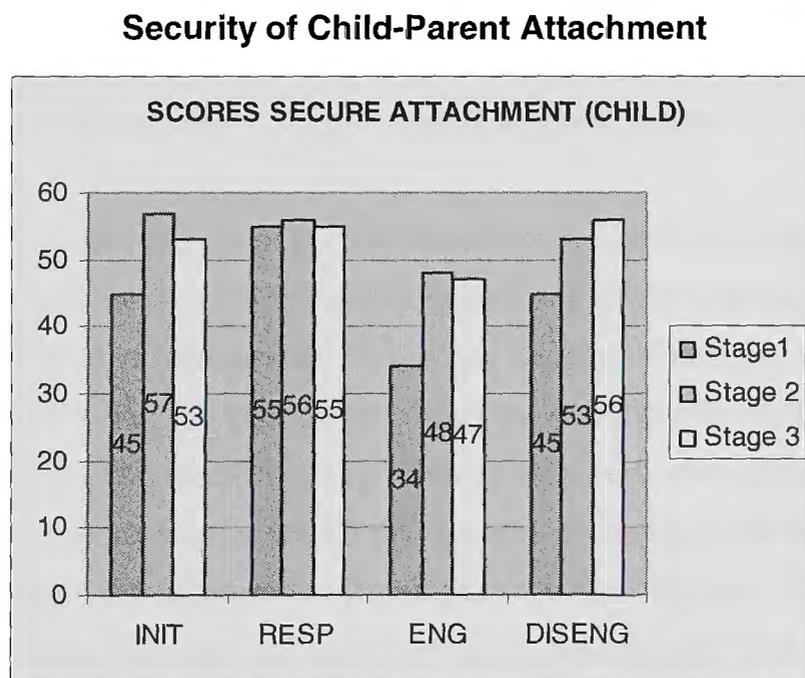
Phases of Interaction

Key: INIT= Initiation Phase. RESP= Response to Initiation Phase, ENG= Engagement Phase, DISENG= Disengagement Phase

Figure 3. Parent perceptions of child's security of attachment in four phases of interaction.

Inspection of Figure 3 reveals three patterns of change in parents' perceptions of their child's security of attachment during the four phases of interaction. The first was that scores indicating children's security of attachment increased in all four phases of day-to-day parent-child interactions, during their participation in the program, that is, between Stage 1 and Stage 2. This increase was most noticeable during the *engagement phase* and the *initiation phase*.

The second pattern evident was that less change occurred in scores of child's security of attachment between Stage 2 and Stage 3 of the research. At Stage 3, one year after participation in the program had ceased, children's scores tended to decrease slightly during the *initiation, response* and *engagement phases* of interaction. However, scores during the *disengagement* phase of interaction increased during this stage of the research.

Thirdly, one year after participation in the program had ceased, children's scores on security of attachment during all four phases of day-to-day interaction with their parents remained higher than were reported at Stage 1 of the research.

9.3 Summary of the parent-child relationship findings

Findings from the quantitative assessment revealed no significant differences between the HIPPY group and the non HIPPY group in terms of overall improvements in the quality of the parent-child relationship. However, qualitative findings indicated that participation in HIPPY had led to changes within the parent-child relationship as perceived by parents. The main impact perceived was that, while doing the program, they were spending more time with their child than they had prior to HIPPY, and that they would have been if they were not participating in the program. As a consequence of spending more time together, parents reported interacting with the HIPPY child more, getting to know the child more, and feeling closer to the child. Similarly, further qualitative findings showed that during participation in the program between Stages 1 and 2, and between Stages 1 and 3, parent perceptions of the child's security of attachment to the parent during interactions between parent and child increased

particularly during the engagement and initiation phases of their day-to-day interactions.

While scores of parent perceptions of their child's security of attachment dropped slightly between Stages 2 and 3 of the research, on three of the four phases of day-to-day interactions, they remained higher one year after participation in the program had ceased than they were at Stage I of the research.

CHAPTER 10
DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The discussion of the findings of the study is prefaced by an evaluation of the research in terms of strengths and limitations, providing an important context for the interpretation of the findings. The findings are then discussed within the two broad domains of inquiry of the study, namely that of the process of the program's implementation and that of the program outcomes, with specific focus upon socio-emotional outcomes. What is presented is an integration of the findings in respect of each aim, reviewed in relation to previously published literature in the field. The findings are then considered in the light of possible links between outcomes and the process of implementation of the program.

10.1 Strengths and limitations of the study

Both strengths and limitations of the study can be discerned in respect of a range of methodological issues. The main issues arising revolve around sample characteristics, the research instruments used, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

10.1.1 Sample characteristics

Section 7.1.2.4 of Chapter 7 draws attention to one of the major limitations to the quantitative dimensions of the study. This relates to the demographic characteristics of the HIPPY group and non-HIPPY group of families, involving important systematic differences between the groups that became obvious as the life of the research progressed. As stated in Section 5.1.1.2 of Chapter 5, the decision made in planning the research to not recruit a comparison group from the same local community as the HIPPY group, was made with both ethical and validity considerations in mind. The unfortunate consequence of this necessary decision was that the comparison group of families were recruited from other regional areas known to be less disadvantaged than the HIPPY target area of Corio/Norlane. Thus, there were several relevant dimensions on which the groups were found to be poorly matched. As outlined in Section 7.1.2.4

of Chapter 7, the groups were found to be not well matched in terms of family structure, the stability of their lives and their living environments. It was further likely that the parents who did volunteer to take part in the research as part of the comparison group may have been different in some ways from the much larger number of parents who did not volunteer. As there was very little offered in way of external rewards for these non-HIPPY parents time and involvement ($20 per session), it may be that they were motivated by more intrinsic rewards such as interest in child development, education or research. This, too, sets them apart from the HIPPY group of parents, for while it can be said that they too were motivated to participate in the program by the value they placed on their child's education, they received a more tangible reward in the provision of the program.

Limitations were also evident in the sample characteristics within the HIPPY group of families itself. The first was that not all families participating in the third implementation of the program agreed to participate in the research. Five of the initial 33 families enrolled did not take part in the research. Also, as outlined in Section 6.2.1 of Chapter Six, a number of parents had been previously involved with services offered by Glastonbury Child and Family Services. Five had been involved in earlier implementations of HIPPY with older children, and a further four families had previously been involved in a home-based program with the Agency involving children from an earlier age than HIPPY (typically between the ages of 3 and 4 years). Thus the small potential sample size of 33 was further reduced to 28. Although small sample size precluded the use of more fine-grained analysis, the sample was in fact large enough to justifiably conduct the MANOVAS and t-tests that had been planned.

At the same time, the groups were well matched in terms of age and gender mix. In addition, the numbers within the groups were well matched. At the start of the research, the comparison group comprised 27 families and the HIPPY group 28. The attrition rate of participants over the life the research also remained fairly equal for both groups across the stages of the research. Between Stage 1 and 2 of the research, 5 families from the HIPPY group dropped out and 4 families from the comparison group. Between Stage 2 and 3, a further 4 dropped from HIPPY group while 2 dropped from the comparison group.

Overall, though, the most likely effect of the limitations concerning the structure of the samples on the findings is that the extent of the progress made by the HIPPY group of children may have not have been accurately represented. In other words, given that the comparison group of families appeared to be less disadvantaged than the HIPPY group, the findings that emerged from quantitative comparisons made between the two are likely to reflect an underestimation of the relative progress made by the HIPPY group. This must be taken into account in the interpretation of the quantitative results.

10.1.3   Data collection instruments

In respect to the instruments used in the direct testing of children, several limitations as well as strengths warrant consideration. The first concerns the quantitative measures used to assess the progress of children's cognitive/educational development. Only one instrument, *The Who Am I?*, could be used across the three stages of the research. While it was planned that the *Early Screening Profiles* would also be used at all three stages of the research, this assessment was found to be inappropriate for use in Stage 3 due to some of the children in both groups being too old for the instrument at the time of testing. This occurred as a result of the testing being conducted later rather than earlier in the year. Therefore, the comparison of the children's progress could only be made between Stages 1 and 2 on that particular measure. The bulk of the data pertaining to the progress of children's cognitive development was collected during Stages 2 and 3 of the research.

In relation to the qualitative instruments used, some limitations were evident in terms of their use in the collection of data concerning children's outcomes. As was highlighted in Section 5.2.2.1.1 of Chapter 5, the interview schedule used to evaluate the process of implementation of the program asked participants about their experience of the program. As was reported in Section 7.3.1 of Chapter 7, participants, especially parents, predominantly responded to this question in terms of program benefits for the HIPPY child. Parent responses to this interview made up a large proportion of the findings reported as outcomes for children. However, not all parents responded to this question in terms of outcomes for their children and of those

who did respond, there were some within the group who reported less than others in terms of outcomes. Yet, when parents were asked a direct question about outcomes as in whether they thought HIPPY had impacted on their relationship with their child in any way, all parents responded enthusiastically. In retrospect, given that parents tend to respond to the question about their experience of the program in terms of outcomes for their children (this phenomenon was also reported by Grady (2002)), it may have been useful to ask them directly about benefits for their children. This may have ensured that all data related to parents' perceptions of the developmental progress of their child was captured within the qualitative analysis. A further question may then have followed asking parents how they felt about their child's progress which may have then been useful for eliciting more concerning their experiences of the program.

On the other hand, this style of open-ended questioning not directed at outcomes is considered a strength of the study in terms of the validity of the data produced. Parents were not cued through the interview questions to speak of outcomes and yet this evaluation found outcomes for both children and parents that were clearly beyond the expected cognitive educational outcomes, that the program is marketed to produce. Therefore the likelihood that parents were responding in socially desirable ways about the benefits of the program was decreased.

Overall, again, however, it is likely that this limitation led to an underestimation in the qualitative interview data of the strength of the outcomes as provided by parents. Again, this must be taken into account in interpretation of the findings.

10.1.4   Data collection procedure

A clear limitation of the data collection procedure of the study was the absence of securing baseline measures in both cognitive/educational and socio-emotional functioning domains. Ideally, such data would be collected before the program began. The intricacies of recruitment of families to the program itself, and then to the research samples, meant that no time was available for collection of data before HIPPY commenced. This has meant that the full progress of participants could not be evaluated.

One of the major strengths of the study in terms of the data collection procedures was that these procedures were developed and conducted within the context of a collaborative research approach that allowed the researcher to maintain regular contact with program staff and yet remain external to the program itself. As outlined in Section 5.2.2.3 of Chapter 5, attendance at HIPPY Research meetings with program staff including the general Research Team, the Agency Director and HIPPY Australia managers, provided a forum for the exchange of feedback where appropriate. It also allowed the researcher to gain a greater sense of the program's dynamics without compromising the sense of distance required to evaluate the program's implementation. Furthermore, collaboration appeared to promote program staff's sense of trust in the researcher and the research process, that in turn facilitated the researcher's access to Home Tutors and families throughout the life of the research.

A further major strength of the data collection procedure was that data were obtained from a number of sources. Findings concerning children's outcomes were obtained from three different but complementary sources, namely direct testing by the researcher, teacher assessments and parent reports. Likewise, findings relating to the implementation of the program were obtained from all program staff, including the Agency Director, HIPPY Coordinator and Home Tutors, as well as from participating parents and researcher observations of group meetings. This approach allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the multi-layered processes inherent in the program's implementation. It also served, in keeping with the spirit advocated by Lombard (1994) of HIPPY being "for the community", to acknowledge the value of parents' opinions and assessments concerning the program. Parent perspectives were considered an important source of data in terms of exploring the dimension of the family-service provider relationship, as well as being useful in helping to inform the Agency delivering the program how families experienced their service.

Furthermore, despite some flaws concerning the quantitative instruments as discussed above, the value of multiple sources of data was further strengthened by the fact that the data was collected in most cases at three points in time. In the case of both outcomes and implementation data, this approach allowed for not only the comparison

of participants' progress over time, but also allowed for the evolving nature inherent in the process of the program's implementation to be taken into account.

10.1.5   Data analyses

While the multi-sourced data added to the richness of findings concerning the program's implementation, a further strength was the combination of qualitative and quantitative data to examine program outcomes. This complementary approach provided for a more thorough picture to be drawn from outcomes findings of not only the range of benefits experienced by participants, but also how such benefits came about.

10.2   Discussion of findings concerning the process of implementation of the program

Considerable variation in how HIPPY has been implemented, both internationally (Kagitcibasi, 1996; Eldering & Vedder, 1993) and within Australia (Gilley, 2002; Grady, 2002), suggests the need to acknowledge that not all implementations of the program operate the same. Thus, the first aim of the study was to determine whether the program was delivered according to the standard model of HIPPY, and to identify any variations made to the standard model. A further aim of this inquiry was the identification of factors that facilitated and factors that presented difficulties to the program's implementation, with a view to better understanding the outcome dimension of the program.

10.2.1   The question of implementation according to the standard model

In relation to implementations of HIPPY adhering to the standard model, Lombard's (1994) recommendation has been for some flexibility in the program to respond to local needs. As far as possible, the extent to which this implementation of HIPPY operated in accordance with the standard model was assessed, at two levels, namely the delivery of the program from within the Agency to participating families, and the

delivery of the program within the home to participating children. Consistent with past evaluation findings, the program studied here was revealed to be directed in general accordance with the standard model, but with several areas of adaptations in response to the needs of the particular population of families.

10.2.1.1 Standard model features evident

In terms of the Agency's role in the implementation, important dimensions in line with the standard model included the broader role of the Agency in terms of the development and operation of the program within a community project framework, the time frame of the program, and who received the program. Findings suggest that the program followed Lombard's (1994) recommendation that HIPPY is adopted, developed and provided to parents within the framework of a community project. Consistent with that reported by Gilley (2002) in the study of the second implementation of HIPPY by the Brotherhood of St Laurence, the existing reputation of the expertise of the Agency delivering the program, (in this case Glastonbury Child and Family Services) as providers of services to families within the community, facilitated both the establishment and ongoing development of the program. Also, as this was the third implementation of HIPPY within the same Corio/Norlane community, the reputation of the program itself had developed within the community as was reflected in the relative ease in which families were recruited into this third intake of the program. The Agency's philosophy and commitment to HIPPY as being for the community as voiced by the Agency Director appeared to further serve to strengthen the interactions between the Agency and the local community, including other service providers. It was also found that the recruitment of Home Tutors and participating families occurred within the context of interaction between the Agency and the local community, in particular local pre-schools and schools.

In relation to the time-frame of the program, it was delivered in accordance with Lombard's recommendation of two years, beginning here in the year prior to the child beginning formal schooling and continued during the first year of school. Some flexibility in response to Australian needs was evident in relation to the program's

timing in the delay of the start of the second year of the implementation of the program for six weeks from the start of the school year.

As to who received the program, this appeared consistent with Lombard's identified target group of educationally disadvantaged populations. As outlined in Section 7.2.2.4, families participating in the program resided within an area well recognized as being socially and educationally disadvantaged, with at least 50% of families in this implementation residing in the most vulnerable areas within that community.

In terms of the Agency's role in the provision of the major components of the program to the families, this evaluation found, as with previous Australian studies, that overall these were delivered in accordance to the standard model. The training and supervision for program staff, alternate fortnightly home visits, and fortnightly parent group meetings that included an enrichment component, were all consistently provided.   One slight variation was reported in relation to the use of role-play as a technique of instruction within the context of the parent group meetings. The Coordinator reported modifying the emphasis of the role-playing technique away from the expectation that parents within the group act like four year olds, towards the expectations that parents try to imagine what their four year olds may say in response to a given question. This shift in emphasis was made in response to program staff's perceptions that some parents within the group were uncomfortable with the standard use of role-play due to their own experiences of childhood. This finding was not reported in the two previous Australian studies, although Grady (2002) reported initial discomfort on the part of Home Tutors in the use of role-play within the home with immigrant parents, which soon dissipated.

10.2.1.2   Variations in the standard model

Variations in several components of the standard model were found to have occurred in terms of parents receiving the HIPPY materials, and in the delivery of the materials to the child. As similarly reported by Grady (2002), and Gilley (2002), and Baker et al. (2003), there was much variation in parents' attendance at group meetings. Highlighted in Section 6.2.1.2.4, only just over a third of parents attended group

meetings during both the first and second years of the program. Gilley reported slightly higher group meeting attendance, with close to 50% attendance during the first year and a little more during the second year, while the actual percentage of non-attendance was not reported by Grady (2002). Both Australian researchers interpreted non-attendance as being in part related to the different dynamics of the mixed cultural groups involved. Within the present study, parents predominantly cited other family demands as preventing them attending, whereas staff framed their explanations of parents' non-attendance mainly in terms of the social challenges families faced such as difficulties with establishing routines and keeping appointments, as well as some parents' shyness and anxieties concerning group meetings. These explanations offered by staff were in line with those offered by Baker et al. (1999), who reported an association between the greater difficult circumstances faced by families and less attendance at group meetings.

Parents' non-attendance at group meetings resulted in a further variation, in the number of home visits made by Home Tutors. As found in previous research, Home Tutors often made weekly instead of fortnightly home visits when parents had not attended meetings, to deliver and instruct the missed week's materials. This increase in the number of home visits made by Home Tutors was further amplified by the frequency with which parents were not at home at set appointment times. While not reported in Grady's (2002) study, and mentioned only in passing as occurring in Gilley's (2002) study, this phenomenon was extensively reported here. It appeared to be associated with certain characteristics of the lifestyles of the particular population of participating families. HIPPY staff framed their interpretations of why it occurred within the context of the capacity of some families to plan ahead, to develop and maintain practices required to keep appointments.

Within the home, variation was found in terms of how Home Tutors delivered the program to parents as well as how children received the program. Home Tutors used the standard practice of reading through all the weekly materials with parents, but it appeared that as they became more familiar with each particular family, they adjusted this practice, depending on the extent to which they felt parents needed to have materials explained word-for-word. This variation was not reported in the previous

Australian research with mixed cultural groups, who may have had a stronger need for materials to be read word for word than did the English-speaking participants in the present study.

In relation to the use of role-play as a technique of instruction, neither parents nor Home Tutors mentioned this practice when talking about their experiences of the program. Thus, it remains unclear whether this standard practice was maintained throughout. Both Gilley (2002) and Grady (2002) emphasized this practice as occurring in accordance to the standard model, reporting that role-play made the materials easy to understand and repeat with parents and children where there were difficulties with English. It may be that without the language barriers, role-play was not as needed as a method of instruction for participants in the present study.

While both international (van Tuijl et al. 2002) and Australian research (Gilley 2002; Grady 2002) have reported cases in which older siblings delivered the program to the child, there were no reports of this occurring within this implementation. However, the amount of variation in how often parents delivered the program to the child appeared to be greater in this study than in previous Australian studies. While both Gilley and Grady found that the majority of parents delivered the program on a daily basis, in this study, very few parents appeared to deliver the program in accordance with the standard practice. As highlighted in Section 6.3.1.3.2, most parents reported delivering the program to their child over two or three days of the week, with this rate of delivery reported slightly more often in the second year of the program when children were at school. During this second year, well over half of parents reported doing the program with their child over the weekend. A combination of both the child's enthusiasm to keep working through more than one worksheet per HIPPY session, and the demands of other family commitments and difficulties in establishing daily routines were the main explanations given for these variations.

Parents also reported variations in terms of their delivery of the program's content to their child. Some parents reported leaving out or adapting certain activities contained within the worksheets depending on both theirs and their child's needs. This practice was found to occur in instances when parents were constrained by time, when they

believed the child was bored with repetition or would lose focus if they were to move to a cooking or outdoor activity, and in cases of children with a developmental delay. These variations were also not reported in previous Australian research, suggesting that parents from this Australian-born population are less likely than those from the mixed cultural groups to adhere to the standard model in terms of the program's delivery within the home.

Consequently, a substantial proportion of children within this implementation did not receive the full program, in terms of both its frequency and the repeated content of HIPPY sessions.

A further finding consistent with that reported in previous Australian studies was that in a small number of cases, the Home Tutor, rather than the parent, delivered the program to the child. Both Gilley (2002) and Grady (2002) reported this practice as occurring with most cultural groups, although it appeared to occur more frequently with Hmong-speaking families who reportedly requested their child be instructed by the Home Tutor on the basis that they felt their child would learn better from a Home Tutor than from themselves. In contrast, this study found this to be an evolutionary practice initiated not by parents but by program staff, as a short-term intervention to assist families to remain in the program. In all cases, parents had begun the program as teacher of their child, but as their participation in the program progressed, at least one fifth of parents struggled to keep up with the work due to a range of family and social challenges. In some cases, the intervention assisted parents to catch up and they resumed their role. In at least 3 of the 19 families in Stage 3 of the research, this did not occur and Home Tutors continued delivering the program to the child in the family home. This finding indicates that for a small proportion of families participating in the program the child still received the educational component of the intervention, but the full potential benefits of the program to the family were compromised.

10.2.2   Factors perceived as facilitating implementation

Participants were asked, at all three stages of the research, what aspects of the program worked well. It was found that parents and program staff had differing

perspectives in this regard, reflective of their differing roles. Parents reported that their child's enthusiastic response to the program and to much of its content as the overriding factor. That the positive program activities were achievable, enjoyable and relevant to the school curriculum were considered by parents as most appealing factors. The parents' experiences provide further empirical support for Lombard's (1994) claim that the program cannot work if children do not like it, such that a fundamental objective in the programming of HIPPY activities is for children to enjoy the learning process.

While the structured style of the program was found to make it easier for parents to manage doing the program within the context of other family commitments, it did not emerge as a major facilitating factor perceived by either parents or staff as was found in previous Australian studies, particularly by Grady (2002). Other appealing factors found were the adaptability of the program's content to meet children's individual needs, the inspiration of looking forward to the graduation ceremony and the affordability of the program.

Previous findings confirming the role-play technique of instruction as a facilitating factor were not replicated in this study. As highlighted previously, the use of role-play featured very little in participants' experiences overall, and was not mentioned within the context of what worked well by either parents or staff. While past Australian research (Grady, 2002; Gilley, 2002) has supported Lombard's assertion that role-play is an appropriate method of instruction for teaching disadvantaged groups how to teach, on the basis that it emphasizes action, the present study suggests that role-play was either considered to be not necessary as a method of instruction for English-speaking groups, or to be inappropriate for parents uncomfortable due to their own backgrounds with acting like a child.

The one facilitating factor to emerge consistently for both parents and staff was the relationship that developed between them. It was found that parents' relationships with program staff, and in particular with their Home Tutors, was a source of support both in terms of their role as parents within the program and as parents more generally. Parents also found the relationship enjoyable, and, in line with findings in

MacDonald's (2004) Australian study, for those who were generally socially isolated, it was considered a welcome opportunity for social interaction. For HIPPY staff, the quality of this relationship was also found to be one of the most facilitating factors. The development of trust within the relationship was considered vital to the success of the implementation at its most fundamental level, not only allowing the Home Tutor ongoing access into the family home, but also permitting program staff to respond quickly to emergent problems. This finding is consistent with Lombard's (1994) conclusion that the success of a program is largely dependent on program staff, and in particular Home Tutors. As in Grady's (2002) research, it was found that the establishment of trust within the relationship provided the basis for parents to feel comfortable with disclosing information related to their personal and family struggles impeding their capacity to participate in the program. In this evaluation, it emerged strongly that early intervention when families were experiencing difficulties helped maintain families within the program. It further emerged that equally essential here was the ongoing group training and supervisory sessions with the Coordinator, and the nature of the relationships that staff developed within them. This was in line with Gilley's (2002) findings of the pivotal role of the Coordinator. It was found here that ongoing staff training functioned as a mechanism for feedback and troubleshooting, enabling immediate identification of problems for families and review of practice strategies adopted. Further, Home Tutors were found to receive both emotional support and practical guidance from both their peers and the Coordinator that assisted them in their roles.

While this evaluation highlighted that attendance at group meetings was lower than that reported in previous Australian studies, as discussed above, all program staff reported improvements, in terms of both the functioning of and attendance at parent group meetings, in this third implementation compared to the Agency's earlier two implementations in Geelong. It was found that group meetings were enhanced through the development of a structured and parent-directed agenda for the enrichment component. Staff believed that the improved attendance was facilitated by both the enhancement of the meetings and the Coordinator making clear to parents at recruitment the expectations regarding group meeting attendance. Staff felt that expectations had not been made so clear in the previous two implementations.

Staff also attributed some of the success of the program to the commitment shown by most families to the program, and the Coordinator's endeavor to ensure a balance for Home Tutors in terms of families facing particularly challenging circumstances. Overall, this evaluation found that the most critical factor underpinning the success of the implementation was the flexible approach adopted by program staff to that implementation. A finding that strongly emerged was that rigid adherence to the standard model of implementation would not have worked well with this particular population. Program staff demonstrated the capacity to be both understanding and adaptive in their response to the needs of individual families, which often helped support and maintain families within the program. As the life of the program evolved, knowledge and experience gained was found to be used reflexively, to guide both the ongoing training and staff, and the implementation of the program generally.

10.2.3   Perceived difficulties in implementation and improvements suggested

Participants were asked about aspects of the program that they felt had not worked well for them, and for suggestions for improving HIPPY. Once again, qualitative analysis revealed differences between the experiences of parents and staff. It was found that, while the main area of difficulties encountered by staff were related to the impact of a range of social and family issues on families' capacities to fully participate in the program, parents talked very little of such challenges and framed their difficulties predominantly in terms of the content of the program itself. Understandably, parents were focused on their role in delivering the program to their child, while staff focused on the difficulties they experienced in relation to families' participation in the program.

Among parents' difficulties concerning the content of the program, the use of American terminology and the American context within storybooks was one of the most common findings. Likewise, the suggestion that storybooks be more grounded in Australian culture was the most commonly offered suggestion by parents in respect to program improvements. Parents reported that the use of American terminology resulted in them having to substitute a more familiar word, and that this disrupted the flow of

reading with their child. This was found to be most difficult for parents who struggled with literacy. These findings resonate with those highlighted in the process evaluations of HIPPY by BarHava-Monteith et al. (1999b), Gilley (2002) and Grady (2002), who all identified that content sensitive to the country of implementation needed to be included. During the first year of the program, around one-fifth of parents reported that the repetitiveness of some of the content, particularly in relation to activities focusing on shapes and colours as well as colouring-in activities, presented difficulties. These parents reported that the child was sometimes bored with repetition and needed persuasion to complete repeated tasks. Likewise, a few parents reported that the content of some of the storybooks were either too long or did not sustain their child's interest. Parent suggestions for improving the program were largely framed in terms of these same difficulties they expressed in relation to the content of program materials.

Family issues posed difficulties for some parents to find time to do the program within the context of family and other commitments, especially in the second year of HIPPY when children were attending school, with increased time constraints placed on parents as a result of the need to complete school home work tasks. However, this was reported by less than a quarter of parents. Parents also cited family demands and work commitments as preventing them from participating in group meetings, explanations consistent with those reported by Gilley (2002). Findings suggesting that parents did not always fully participate in the program due to a lack of understanding of the participatory requirements of HIPPY, as reported by Grady (2002) and Baker et al. (1999), were not replicated. In this evaluation, it was found that parents were well informed of expectations regarding all aspects of participation, including group meeting attendance. Very few parents reported personal or family issues as presenting difficulties for them. Those who did talked about the difficulties they faced with establishing the routine necessary to deliver the program regularly with their child. For these parents it appeared that their difficulties with establishing routines was not confined to the context of completing HIPPY work but extended to other areas of their daily lives.

In contrast, all HIPPY staff perceived certain social and family issues associated with the disadvantaged communities of Corio/Norlane were the underlying source of all difficulties encountered. They considered that a proportion of families participating in the program were faced with a range of issues associated with disadvantage that were clearly not conducive to the establishment of lifestyle practices and routines necessary for full participation in the program. Issues mentioned encompassed a lack of basic amenities such as stable housing, private transport or home phone, as well as social isolation, substance abuse, relationship conflicts and breakdowns, and entrenched unemployment. Of course, many of these factors can be seen as associated with low socio-economic means. It also emerged that staff considered these challenges as being somewhat specific to the particular population from which participating families were drawn, and identified them as being different to difficulties in previous Australian implementations of HIPPY. However, similar speculations by staff were found by Grady (2002) and Gilley (2002) except that they highlighted issues associated with cultural and language diversity, rather than those associated with poverty, as presenting the most difficulty for participant families.

In respect of staff difficulties, the present study has significantly contributed to the field. Previous HIPPY research has not focused in any depth in this area. It was found here that the biggest challenge to implementation was the prevention of families falling behind with the HIPPY work and withdrawing because they felt overwhelmed, understood by staff as flowing from the factors mentioned above. A finding to emerge strongly from staff reports was that the delivery of weekly materials to families was made difficult for them due both to non-attendance at group meetings, and to parents not being at home for scheduled home visits. As stated in Section 7.1.2.4, the latter phenomenon was similarly experienced by the researcher, resulting in the rescheduling of a total of 41 appointments over the life of the research. Sometimes parents were at home at the scheduled research time, but postponed the appointment because of situations occurring within the home preventing a research interview, such as domestic disputes or unexpected visitors. However, in most instances experienced by staff and the researcher, parents had forgotten the appointment time, in the absence of keeping diary or calendar recording of scheduled appointments. In response, the Coordinator and Home Tutors developed several strategies to assist

families to remember appointments and to ensure they received their weekly materials. In no case was it found that families fell behind with the HIPPY work as a result of not receiving the materials on a weekly basis. This was clearly a testament to the dedication and commitment of the Home Tutors and Coordinator to both the families and the program.

However, this evaluation revealed that, over time, a number of families did not manage to keep up with regular delivery of HIPPY within the home. Further, this fact was found to be the fundamental source of what could be considered the more major adaptations that were made to standard practice in this implementation. While no families were found to have left the program because they had fallen behind with work, there were staff reports that parents had considered leaving the program because they had fallen behind. Program staff philosophy in this regard emerged strongly, namely that the implementation of the program needed to be conducted from a holistic perspective. Specifically, the program could not be seen as occurring in isolation, but within the context of participants' whole family and social setting. Further, all staff articulated their belief that it was their role to support a family through a crisis to maintain them in the program. Accordingly, families were sometimes transported to group meetings, referred to appropriate agencies, and in some cases Home Tutors delivered the program to the child within the home themselves.

In these instances, a weekly home visit involved the Home Tutor working through the backlog of materials with the child rather than instructing the parent on the next week's materials. While this practice was found to achieve its aim of assisting families to catch up and remain in the program, it also was the source of a further difficulty for program staff in terms of the implementation. While in some cases the intervention went as planned, with parents resuming the role of the child's teacher, in a few this was not the outcome. Further challenging issues occurring within the family, such as the birth of a baby or relationship between parents breaking down, were found to make it difficult for some parents to resume the role of instructing the child. Staff expressed concern in research interviews that these families were not receiving the full benefit of HIPPY, as the parent was not fully involved. This presented a dilemma for program staff who, on the one hand, were clearly aware that this intervention undermined the

intention and full benefits of the program but, on the other hand, were also aware that not intervening was likely to result in families withdrawing and the child receiving no further benefits at all. By the program being delivered to the child by the Home Tutor, at the very least, the child was receiving the cognitive/educational component of the program.

In relation to suggestions made by staff to improve the program, the Agency Director perceived the need for relationships to be strengthened through more regular contact between providers of HIPPY within Australia and also those internationally, so that practice and research knowledge, particularly that emerging from within Australia may be shared to the benefit of the HIPPY community as a whole. At the level of the day-to-day operation of the program, the Coordinator suggested future implementations may be improved by beginning the program earlier in the school year to reduce the pressure of the workload at the end of the year when preparations for the graduation ceremony place extra demands on participants. She also felt that the practice of note-taking during Home Tutor group training, particularly in relation to how parents may extend HIPPY activities with the child, would enhance the quality of the instruction given to parents at home visits. In response to the difficulties some parents had with maintaining the routine needed to complete weekly HIPPY materials, it was suggested by a Home Tutor that some time be spent during the home visit, planning with parents how they may manage to complete the upcoming week's work.

10.3   Discussion of findings concerning the outcomes of the program

As argued in Section 4.1.1 of Chapter 4, the major thrust of this research was to explore the socio-emotional outcomes of participation in HIPPY. Within the domain of inquiry concerning program outcomes, the first aim, however, was to establish whether the program had achieved its stated goal of enhanced cognitive/educational outcomes with this population of Australian-born families. Beyond this, the research then aimed to explore the socio-emotional outcomes for all participants, including children and their parents, as well as the relationship between them, and for Home Tutors.

The effect of participation in HIPPY on developmental outcomes for children was examined both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative analysis involved comparing the progress of the HIPPY Group of children with a group of children who did not participate in the program, over the three stages of the research. The qualitative analysis involved parent reports obtained at the three stages of the research concerning their experiences of the program.

10.3.1   Outcomes for children

The hypothesis that children who participated in HIPPY would demonstrate greater cognitive/educational progress than children who did not participate was not supported to levels of statistical significance. However, differences over time between the means of the HIPPY and the comparison non-HIPPY groups displayed trends in the hypothesized direction. Of course this finding must be interpreted in the light of sampling limitations, outlined in Section 10.1.1 above. After recruitment, the non-HIPPY group was found to be considerably less disadvantaged than the HIPPY group. Such a situation was also found to be the case in the New Zealand evaluation of HIPPY by BarHava-Monteith et al. (1999a) who reported positive trends on all eleven measures used, yet the differences reached statistical significance on only four. These findings were discussed in reference to possible inherent differences between what BarHava-Monteith et al. (p. 152), called *"intervention groups targeted on the basis of need... and a self selected control group".* The researchers argued that in such a situation it is likely that when these groups are compared, the intervention group may represent a more disadvantaged population than the control group. Seen in this light, findings in the present study, indicating no significant differences between the rate of cognitive/educational developmental progress for the two groups suggest, at the very least, that the HIPPY group of children developed at the same rate as the more advantaged non-HIPPY group.

The findings from the analysis of relevant qualitative data support this interpretation. Parents reported unequivocally that their children had benefited in terms of cognitive/ educational development as a result of their participation in HIPPY, a finding that parallels those reported in many other evaluation studies both internationally

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(BarHava-Monteith et al.,1999a; Bradley & Gilkey, 2001; Burgon et al., 1997; Jacobson, 2001; Kagitchibasi, 1996; Lombard, 1994), and within Australia (Gilley, 2002; Grady, 2002). Parents reported a range of specific skills that their child had gained during the course of their participation in the program. They believed that HIPPY had prepared their child well for the transition to school, and that the child's academic success at school was due largely to participation in the program.

In contrast to the above findings, and in relation to the central focus of this research, the quantitative findings concerning children's socio-emotional development were very strong in the hypothesized direction. The HIPPY group demonstrated statistically significant greater improvement in socio-emotional development than the non-HIPPY group, in terms of relationships with others, coping skills and play and leisure skills. This greater rate of improvement was found to occur between the first year of participation in the program and one year after participation had ceased. This finding is particularly compelling in view of the sampling limitations discussed above.

Because the quantitative instrument employed, the *Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales,* relies upon data given in a structured interview by parents, it could be argued that the strong positive effect emerging for children here was a function of the parent-report method, similar in some ways to the qualitative interviews covering other aspects of the HIPPY experience. Against this, parents were not asked to actually evaluate the developmental progress of their children, a process which could potentially illicit biased statements. Rather, the *Vineland* simply calls for straight reports of current functioning, which were gleaned at different points in time. Bias was thus avoided.

The quantitative socio-emotional findings were supported by the qualitative data which revealed parent perceptions of a greater range of socio-emotional benefits than were examined quantitatively, and provided insight into how some of these benefits may have come about. The findings that emerged from the qualitative analysis are considered even more striking given that socio-emotional outcomes were not expected by parents as outcomes of the program, as highlighted in Section 7.3.1 of Chapter 7.

In their qualitative interviews, parents reported perceived improvements in three main aspects of HIPPY children's socio-emotional life, namely in children's relationships to education and learning, in how children felt about themselves, and in how the children related to others.

That participation in HIPPY would impact on a child's relationship with education and learning generally is to be expected. Indeed Lombard (1994) asserted that an overriding objective in programming the HIPPY activities was that they provided the opportunity for constant reinforcement of the child's sense of mastery in learning and self confidence in learning. The finding that participation in HIPPY facilitated the development of a child's confidence in relation to education/learning has been reported both anecdotally (Lombard, 1994) and empirically (Kagitcibasi, 1996; Le Mare & Audet, 2003; Gilley, 2002; Grady, 2002). Consistent with these past studies, this outcome was also found in the present research. Around one third of parents reported perceiving, during the second year of HIPPY, that the child was becoming increasingly confident in their approach to learning generally, as displayed by the child's preparedness to attempt educational tasks both in the context of HIPPY and in relation to school work. One year after participation, the proportion of parents who noted this change in the child had increased to nearly half, indicating that children's confidence continued to develop for some time after involvement in HIPPY ceased. Parents understood the child's developing confidence in terms of the child's ongoing success in the completion of HIPPY tasks as providing the experiential basis for them to tackle further tasks. Similarly, around one third of parents reported perceptions that through the practice and process of participating in HIPPY, the child became increasingly familiar with both the concept and requirements of educational tasks, and so was beginning to develop the habit of learning. Also, around one third reported that through exposure to novel ideas and experiences inherent in participation in HIPPY, the child was beginning to take a more creative approach to learning generally. These further two aspects of the child's relationship to education and learning have not been specifically reported in past literature, but the notion that participation in HIPPY may lead to this development seems plausible, in the light of a holistic theoretical perspective such as that of Bronfenbrenner (1979).

In the same way, the likelihood that participation in HIPPY would impact on how the child may feel about himself or herself seems high. While Lombard (1994) reported anecdotally that children gain a sense of pride in their academic abilities through their participation in the program, this idea has not received research attention. In the present study, the qualitative analysis of parent interviews revealed perceived benefits for children in terms of an increase in self-esteem generally. Up to three quarters of parents reported noticing, in the second year of HIPPY, the development of children's pride in relation to their academic achievements. This had began to emerge during the previous year and peaked during the child's first year of school (second year of the research).

Finally, in line with the quantitative findings concerning children's socio-emotional development, the qualitative analysis of parent interviews also revealed perceived benefits for children in terms of improvements in both the quality and quantity of the child's relationships with others. As reported anecdotally by Lombard (1994), participation in HIPPY can lead to improvements in the quality of a child's relationships with his/her siblings as a result of siblings becoming involved in some of the HIPPY activities with the HIPPY child and parent. In the present study, a few parents reported what Lombard predicted, that siblings sometimes joined in with some of the HIPPY activities. Reading of the storybooks featured most commonly as the shared activity described. Parents reported these interactions as having a positive effect on the relationships between siblings and also that, in two cases, the shared reading of HIPPY storybooks continued after participation in the program had ceased. Beyond providing the opportunity and context for enjoyable interactions between siblings, the quality and quantity of children's relationships also appeared to improve as a result of developing more effective communications skills in response to the program. While Jacobson (2001) reported that children who participated in HIPPY demonstrated more adaptive classroom behaviours such as listening and paying attention than their peers, no other cited research has reported improvements in children's communication skills, and particularly improvements in the clarity of children's speech. Yet, interpretations of how such improvements came about, offered by those parents perceiving the changes, make future expectations for such changes appear plausible. Parents largely attributed these improvements to participation in the HIPPY activities surrounding

storybooks that required children to engage with language at a number of levels including listening, speaking, and acting.

Beyond improvements in the quality of some relationships, it was also found that some parents considered that participation in HIPPY provided children with opportunities not otherwise available, to interact and develop relationships with others. Around one third of parents reported, during the first year, that the child had either begun to interact more or develop new and enduring friendships with peers. A handful of parents reported on the significance of the relationship the child formed with the Home Tutor. Once again, these outcomes have not been previously reported in the literature.

10.3.2   Outcomes for parents

In line with the research aim to explore the socio-emotional outcomes of participation in HIPPY, the effect on outcomes for parents was examined both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative analysis involved the examination of changes in the HIPPY group of parent self-esteem over the three stages of the research. The qualitative analysis involved parent reports obtained at the three stages of the research concerning their experiences of the program.

Findings from both sources indicate significant benefits for parents in terms of their social and emotional development. Although the main focus in the HIPPY evaluation literature to date has been on outcomes for children, both anecdotal evidence and findings from several studies have identified positive benefits for parents as a result of their participation in the program. The reported benefits have included improved cognitive skills and parent-child relationships (Grady, 2002; Gilley, 2002; Lombard, 1994) increased engagement in child's education (BarHava-Monteith et al.,1999a; BarHava-Monteith et al., 2003; Grady, 2002; Gilley, 2002; Lombard, 1994; McDonald, 2004; Westheimer, 2003) and increased interest in own education (Cuenca et al., 2003; Lombard, 1994). The results that emerged from this evaluation not only support previous findings but expand upon them through the insight they provide into the ways in which participation in HIPPY may have led to such outcomes.

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In the quantitative analysis, parents who participated in HIPPY showed a significant increase in scores on the *Self Esteem Inventory (SEI)* between testing conducted during the first year of participation in the program and at testing one year after participation had ceased. Findings from the one previous study that examined quantitatively parental self-esteem failed to find significant effects (BarHava-Monteith et al., 2003). However differences in research design present difficulties in terms of comparisons between findings. The New Zealand study involved the comparison of scores of self-esteem between a HIPPY and non-HIPPY group of parents at only one point in time, during the second year of the program. In the present study, the difference occurred within the group scores and across time, between first year of participation and one year after. As self-esteem is generally considered a relatively stable construct (Coopersmith, 1989), this finding of a significant increase over time suggests strongly that participation in HIPPY may have led to such an increase.

The qualitative findings added weight to this suggestion, revealing benefits to parents that would be considered as being associated with the enhancement of self-esteem. This evaluation found that parents felt that they benefited from their participation in the program as a result of apparent changes or developments in three key areas of their lives. These were identified as the development of their relationships with others including the wider community, an expansion of their own relationship to education and learning, and the enhancement of how they related to or felt about themselves personally.

In terms of the changes in parents' relationships with others, this evaluation found, as would be expected, that the relationship most influenced by participation in the program was parents' relationship with the participating child. Furthermore, as expected, it was found that this relationship was most influenced, in the view of the parents, by the increased time spent together as a result of participation in the program, with nearly half of all parents reporting this during the first year in the program. How this reported increase in time spent together impacted on the quality of that relationship is discussed below in Section 10.3.4. However, in respect to how this increased time spent with their child impacted on parent's socio-emotional development, this evaluation found that parents experienced this outcome of their

participation as especially positive in the sense that they knew that spending more time with their child was a good or right thing to do for the child. As a result, parents felt good about themselves because they were doing what they believed was a good thing to do. Similarly, several reported feeling good about improvements in the quality of relationships within the family that occurred as a result of other family members joining in with HIPPY activities.

Just under a third of all parents reported benefiting as a result of the inherent opportunity HIPPY afforded them (through home visits and parent group meetings) to develop relationships with others beyond the family. For most of the group, the benefits of these social opportunities did not appear to extend beyond the enjoyment of the social interaction they provided. However, this evaluation revealed that approximately one fifth of families participating in the program were socially isolated, with the fortnightly Home Tutor visit and group meeting seeming to provide one of their few opportunities to expand their relationships beyond the home setting. It was these parents, in particular, who noted most benefit from group meeting attendance, a finding similarly reported by MacDonald, (2004). Group meetings also provided the context for the development of the less obvious outcome concerning their sense of connectedness. Through the process of sharing experiences with other parents, as well as being informed through the enrichment component of the group meetings, some parents clearly began to experience their lives less in isolation and more with a sense of being connected to others and the wider community. The relationship parents developed with their Home Tutor as a result of the regular contact they maintained within the family home over a two year period, was found to provide similar benefits for parents. The relationship provided both practical and socio-emotional support for parents and was considered most significant for those few parents who were unable to attend and benefit from the group meeting experience due to their own anxieties and shyness in relation to meeting unknown groups of people, as highlighted above in Section 6.3.1.2.4 of Chapter 6.

Parents' self-esteem may have been further enhanced by the reported development or expansion of their own relationship with education and learning. It was found that participation in the program led to parents becoming more confident in their capacity to

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engage successfully with education and learning and that this socio-emotional outcome both preceded and facilitated the expansion of parents' relationship with education and learning. Over the three stages of the research, around one third of parents reported gaining confidence in their capacity to be their child's teacher. This gain in confidence appeared to have fuelled the outcome reported at Stage 3 of the research, close to one year after they had completed HIPPY, that almost half of the parent group had either expressed interest in or taken steps towards further education or job training experience. This proportion was similarly reported by (Cuenca et al., 2003) who also reported that around one third of all parents who indicated interest or involvement in further education said that HIPPY had a direct influence on their decisions in this regard. In this evaluation, HIPPY's influence on parents' decisions was found to be greater, with all the parents who had indicated interest or engagement in their own education or job training reporting that their involvement in HIPPY had influenced their decisions. That HIPPY appeared to have such a strong influence on parents' relationship with their own education is understandable, given the further finding that around half of the group of participating parents reported having past experiences with education/learning that were either limited and or negative. The likelihood that this figure underestimates the true proportion of parents in the group with similar past negative experiences with education is high, in that this was not information intentionally sought through the interview but rather emerged incidentally in some parents' accounts. Parents' past negative experiences with education and learning were found to be the major motivating factor in parent decisions to join the program. Quite simply, parents did not want their child to have similar negative experiences with education. However, prior to HIPPY, these parents did not know how to help their child avoid the same experience. For these parents, HIPPY not only provided both the what and how to teach their child, but also the opportunity, and for some it was clearly the first, to experience themselves in the role as their child's teacher. Designed as HIPPY was, to provide parents with a feeling of success in this role so as to reinforce their participation (Lombard, 1994), the experience of HIPPY appeared for many to be their first successful experience with education and learning, and the origin of their developing confidence in their capacity to further engage with education and its institutions.

Past negative experiences with education and learning may also be considered to have conditioned the strong sense of pride parents expressed in relation to themselves and their child. This sense of pride was shown to develop most strongly one year after participation in the program had ceased. At this final stage of the research, nearly two thirds of all parents reported feeling proud of their involvement in HIPPY. Previous anecdotal evidence has suggested parents may typically view some of their child's success as their own and to talk about it in terms of pride (Lombard,1994). However, the findings from this study indicate the source of parents pride as being more context-specific, and of more than one dimension. While parents showed the development of their sense of pride in respect to the academic success they perceived their child achieved as a result of their participation in the program, they also reported the sense of achievement they felt in acknowledging the major part they played in both initiating and successfully completing the program with their child. For many of these parents, a two year commitment, successfully undertaken, was a major achievement. However, the most potent force in the development of pride for the majority of parents was the belief that they had helped the HIPPY child in terms of their education, and in doing so, helped to prevent their own regretful history with education being repeated

10.3.3   Outcomes for Home Tutors

In line with the research aim to explore the socio-emotional outcomes of participation in HIPPY, the effect on outcomes for Home Tutors was also sought qualitatively through interviews regarding their experiences at three stages of the research. In the final stage of the research, Home Tutors were asked what impact their involvement in HIPPY had had on their lives. The qualitative analysis revealed similar findings to those reported for both participating children and in parents. Home Tutors were found to benefit socially and emotionally from their involvement in the program, in terms of how they felt about themselves and how they related to others, and in terms of their relationship to education and learning.

These findings are consistent with what has previously been reported empirically. Findings that have emerged from research that has widened its focus beyond

outcomes for children have reported benefits for Home Tutors similar to those found for parents. These benefits include increased mastery of English, as well as increases in confidence and self-esteem as reported by Grady (2002) and benefits in terms of employment and the pursuit of further education, as reported by BarHava-Monteith et al. (2003) and Cuenca et al. (2003).

These findings are also consistent with Lombard's (1994) view that HIPPY's greatest beneficial effects go beyond the participating child, parent and families, to impact most on the lives of the Home Tutors involved in the program. That Home Tutors appear to benefit most of all from their involvement in the program was not, as Lombard stated (1994, pp. 93-94), "one of the effects predicted for HIPPY". However as she maintains "it might have been expected" given that the Home Tutor, "partake of everything given to the program mothers", as well as the benefit of being taught and monitored by the professional Coordinator in a role that brings with it new experiences in terms of their relationships, skills and sense of competency. While it cannot be said that the Home Tutors benefited over and above other participants in this program, it can certainly be said that they benefited in very fundamental ways.

The findings from this evaluation are consistent with Lombard's (1994) insights concerning what maybe expected in terms of outcomes for Home Tutors, given the nature of the role. The benefits to the four participants in this evaluation were found to be facilitated by the requirement inherent in their role that they develop new conceptions of themselves in terms of their relationships, skills and competencies, as well as by the mentoring they received from the Coordinator and their more experienced peers. Furthermore, it was found that while there was definite variation in terms of the length of time the four participants had been in the Home Tutor role (see Section 8.3 of Chapter 8), their progress in terms of the benefits gained appeared to follow a consistent path. All four had not only expressed doubt in relation to their capacity to take on the role, but also reported ongoing personal challenges within that role. However, the mentoring role played by the Coordinator, as well as the support and positive role modeling provided by their peers, were experienced as instrumental in facilitating both the successful transition into the new role and then maintaining that role. As a result of developing their competency within the role, all Home Tutors

demonstrated further development in terms of how they perceived themselves. An expanding sense of self incorporated a developing sense of pride in the importance of the role they played in the lives of participating families, and developing confidence in their abilities as Home Tutor and within their daily lives. However, one of the clearest signs of the change that they asserted their involvement in HIPPY produced in their lives was in relation to education and learning. This evaluation found that the life course trajectories of all four participants had been significantly and positively altered by their involvement in the program. All four had begun some form of further education and training by Stage 3 of the research, a pathway that had not been considered before their involvement in the program.

10.3.4   Discussion of findings concerning parent-child relationship outcomes

In line with the research aim of exploring the socio-emotional effects of participation in HIPPY, changes in the relationship between the parent and child were explored both within the context of HIPPY as well in participant's day-to-day lives. In the quantitative analysis, differences between HIPPY and non-HIPPY group scores on the *Parent Child Relationship Inventory (PCRI)* were compared at all three stages of the research. In the qualitative analysis, the question was explored along two avenues. The first involved asking parents directly, during the later two stages of the research, whether they believed that participation in HIPPY had impacted on their relationship with the child in any way. The second approach was less direct and elicited information concerning perceived parent-child interactions, indicating the child's level of security of attachment within that relationship beyond the HIPPY setting.

In respect to the quantitative analysis, findings revealed no differences in improvements in the overall quality of the parent-child relationships between the HIPPY and non-HIPPY group over the life of the research. This neutral finding indicating that the parent-child relationship was not positively influenced by participation in HIPPY is neither in line with speculations made by Lombard (1994) and Le Mare & Audet (2002) regarding potential benefits to this relationship from the program, nor with the findings from the qualitative studies indicating that participation

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in HIPPY did improve the quality of this relationship (Gilley, 2002; Grady, 2002; MacDonald, 2004).

Further, in contrast to the quantitative findings, the qualitative analysis in the present study, of parent interviews regarding their perceptions of the impact of HIPPY on their relationship with the child revealed overwhelmingly that participation in HIPPY had a positive influence on the parent-child relationship. Nearly all parents reported emotional changes in their relationship with the child, either feeling closer to the child or feeling better about their relationship as a result of participation in HIPPY. These changes were reported both during the second year of participation and in the year after completion. Similarly, the majority of parents reported spending more time with their child during the program, with this change still reported by over half of the group one year after participation had ceased.

In the same view, the qualitative findings derived from parent perceptions of changes to their child's security of attachment in their day-to-day activities add support to the notion that participation in HIPPY positively influences the nature of the parent-child relationship. Increases in children's security of attachment during all four phases of parent-child interaction (initiation, response to initiation, engagement and disengagement) during day-to-day activities were found to occur during the two years of their participation in the program (Stages 1 and 2). One year after participation in the program, while a slight decrease was found to occur during three of the four phases of interaction (initiation, response and engagement), the overall increase from Stage 1 remained substantial, as scores for all phases remained higher after participation than during the first HIPPY year.

This qualitative examination of the security of attachment within the parent-child relationship derived from Grady's (2002), preliminary enquiry into whether attachment theory could provide a useful framework for understanding the psychological processes underlying the HIPPY relationship between parent and child. These findings extended those of Grady considerably, going well beyond retrospective to longitudinal data collection, including all participating parents (not just a sub-sample), focusing not just upon parent-child interaction in the context of the HIPPY activities themselves, but

upon day-to-day interactions generally. The same phenomenon of parents perceiving an increase in the level of security of the child's attachment in each phase of interaction occurred, adding weight to the suggestion that participation in HIPPY does influence the quality of the relationship between participating children and parents.

The contradictions between the quantitative and qualitative findings and previous research cannot be readily explained. It is possible that the quantitative measure used to assess the parent-child relationship (the *PCRI*) was not sensitive enough to pick up the changes to the relationship that were perceived by participating parents and reflected in the qualitative findings.

10.4 Links between process and outcomes

As outlined in Section 4.3 of Chapter 4, it was anticipated that exploring links between the implementation process and outcome domains would throw some light on how this process may have contributed to the outcomes found.

To some extent this is achieved by the discussion of program outcomes above, which considers identification by participants of how involvement in HIPPY appeared to lead to some of the outcomes reported. The discussion that follows attempts to go a little further in synthesizing the major program outcomes found with aspects of the program's process of implementation that emerged. Illuminating such links within the context of this particular implementation, and with this population of transgenerationally educationally disadvantaged participants, is of special interest. Where relevant, proposed links are considered in light of developmental theory.

10.4.1 Child outcomes and the HIPPY process

While the main focus of the present study was to explore the effect of HIPPY on participants' socio-emotional development, given that the program is essentially an educational intervention delivered to children by their parents within the family home, the most expected outcome was that the intervention would exert its greatest influence in the realm of children's educational or cognitive development in learning readiness.

Its effectiveness in terms of other aspects of children's development, may be expected, but to a lesser extent.

However, the quantitative analyses conducted here of the program's effectiveness in terms of children's development produced findings that ran counter to these expectations. Quantitative findings concerning educational outcomes for children indicated no statistically significant differences between progress in learning readiness of the group of children who participated in HIPPY and the group of children who did not participate in HIPPY. The acknowledgement (outlined in Section 7.1.2.4 of Chapter Seven and discussed in Section 10.1.1 above) that the non-HIPPY children may have come from a more advantaged group of families than the HIPPY group allowed for a more positive interpretation of these findings, that suggested that as a result of the intervention, the HIPPY group of children demonstrated the same rate of educational progress as a group of more advantaged peers.

The other major finding concerning outcomes for children was the significant positive effect of the intervention on children's socio-emotional development. Within this domain and notwithstanding the systematic differences between the two groups of children, the HIPPY group of children demonstrated significantly greater progress than the group of children who did not receive the intervention. These findings indicate that participation in HIPPY significantly enhanced children's socio-emotional development and that its influence in this domain was greater than it was on children's educational development.

Explanations as to why the program appeared to be less effective in producing the expected educational outcomes and more effective in enhancing children's socio-emotional development may be fruitfully explored within the context of the program's implementation, and in particular in how this particular program was delivered and received by participating children.

One of the most obvious links between the implementation of any intervention program and the outcomes of the program is related to the dosage of the program that participants receive. Specifically, the effectiveness of the program would be expected

to be related to whether or not participants received the full intended dosage of the intervention. The full intended dosage of an intervention can include the amount of the actual content of the program, the frequency with which the intervention was delivered or received by participants and the mode of the delivery, that is the context or way in which the intervention was received. This variable has been considered important in several previous studies of HIPPY (Baker et al., 1999; Gilley, 2002; Grady, 2002). As outlined in Section 3.3 of Chapter 3, the full intended dosage of the program includes a set amount of materials to be completed over the full length of the program. The program is initially delivered to parents by program staff using role-play as a method of instruction, in fortnightly home visits alternating with fortnightly group meetings. The program is then delivered by the parent to the child within the home. The intended rate of frequency between parent and child within the home is daily (5 days per week) sessions of approximately 15-20 minute duration.

In this particular implementation of HIPPY, one of the most significant findings in this regard was that not all parents and not all children received the intended dosage of the intervention. All three aspects of the dosage of the intervention received by participants (the amount, frequency and the mode) were found to differ from the standard model in various ways across the sample. While there were no reports that parents and children who completed the program (graduating at the end of the second year) did not receive or complete the intended amount of set weekly materials, there were reports of parents making adaptations to the actual content of the program materials according to their child's or their own needs. Some parents reported making tasks easier for those children who had special learning needs, while others omitted activities perceived as repetitious or disruptive. Similarly, Home Tutors reported that they did not always deliver the set materials to parents within the home visit in the intended full form, by reading through the materials word for word, but instead made adaptations depending on the perceived needs of particular parents. In respect to the intended mode of delivery of the intervention, it was also found that not all participants received the intervention through the same intended mode. Although some parents attended all group meetings and received the intervention as intended, some parents received it entirely through home visits, while others attended some but not all group meetings and therefore received the intervention as intended in part. As far as the use

of role- play as the intended method of instruction of program materials, particularly in the delivery of the program from Home Tutors to parents within the home, it also appeared that, at the very least, this practice may not have consistently occurred. Further, not all children received the entire intervention from their parents as intended, but some children received varying proportions of the intervention from the Home Tutor.

The inconsistency with which these variations occurred however (involving only some of the families, some of the time) reduces the likelihood that these aspects of the program's dosage may have had a systematic influence on the outcomes in question. The only variation in dosage that was reported with any consistency, and as such may be expected to have had some meaningful influence on outcomes for children, concerned the frequency with which the educational program was delivered within the home from the parent to the child. It was found that very few children received the intervention at the intended school-day rate, over five days per week. Rather, it appeared that most children received the intervention over two days per week, partly through their own enthusiasm to keep going with the session, and partly due to convenience to the busy parent. This reduction in the frequency had natural implications for the duration or length of time parents and children spent engaged in the intervention. In order to complete the set weekly materials over less frequent occasions, HIPPY sessions would be of a longer duration than the intended 15 minutes. Overall, it can be said that the majority of children participating in this particular implementation received the program within the home during HIPPY sessions that took place less frequently, and were of a longer duration than is intended by the standard program model.

Drawing links between this aspect of the program's implementation within the home and the outcomes in question, the following interpretation is offered. The aspect of the variation in dosage that appears most likely to have influenced cognitive outcomes for children was the reduction in frequency of the dosage, rather than the resultant longer duration of the dosage. Specifically, it may be suggested that frequency is important for enhancing cognitive outcomes for children, in that for the program to exert a fuller potential on children's cognitive development, the program would ideally be delivered

at the intended rate of frequency, that is, at a consistent daily rate of 15-20 minute duration.

In terms of the effect of this variation on socio-emotional outcomes, the significant findings in this regard suggest two possible interpretations. The first is that this variation had a neutral effect on these outcomes. This interpretation proposes that the significant progress in children's socio-emotional development occurred somewhat independently of the dosage through which it was delivered and received. This assumes that other factors inherent in the process of participation in the program are more likely to account for socio-emotional progress children demonstrated, and the qualitative findings offer some support for this interpretation. Parent reports of their experiences of the program highlighted a number of ways in which participation in HIPPY appeared to benefit children in terms of their socio-emotional development, many of which were factors related to children's engagement with the actual content of the program, such as the age-appropriateness of the materials that allowed children to successfully master the tasks that in turn enhanced their sense of confidence and self-esteem. A further example were the storybooks and comprehension activities surrounding them that enhanced children's communication skills, that in turn improved their capacity to relate to others.

However, qualitative findings concerning these same outcomes can also offer support to a second interpretation that assumes that children's progress in this regard did not occur independently of the dosage by which it was delivered by parents and received by children.

This second interpretation proposes that variations in dosage did impact on these outcomes, but in a positive way. It could be argued that the progress in children's socio-emotional development may have been actually facilitated by the longer duration of less frequent HIPPY sessions. This interpretation assumes a mediating variable, something effected as a result of the variation in dosage that in turn influenced the outcomes in question. Acknowledging that this aspect of the program's implementation involved both the parent and the child (in that parent and child were both engaged in

longer HIPPY sessions), the most likely mediating variable would be the relationship between the parent and child.

That participation in HIPPY impacted on the parent-child relationship is not in question here. In the qualitative findings concerning parents' experiences of the program, parents reported unequivocally that the intervention had impacted on their relationship with their child. This impact was most acutely experienced by parents in terms of an increase in time spent with their child, and parents reported feeling closer to the child as a result of spending more time together. In the qualitative findings concerning the quality of attachment within the relationship, parents also perceived across the program, an increase in the child's level of security of attachment in day-to-day parent-child interactions. Clearly, parents perceived that the time spent engaged in HIPPY activities had a positive impact on their relationship with their child. However, whether parents would have experienced this impact on the relationship to the same extent had the program been delivered between parent and child at the intended frequency remains unknown. As the majority of the group adopted this variation in dosage within the present study, comparisons could not be made. It may be speculated that the longer HIPPY sessions may have influenced parent perceptions of spending more time with their child than shorter more frequent sessions. It may also be speculated that spending longer, rather than shorter duration HIPPY sessions may have also facilitated parents' sense of closeness with their child. Further, these longer duration sessions may have enhanced the quality of the attachment relationship between parent and child more than shorter, more frequent sessions would have done.

10.4.2 The parent-child relationship as mediating child outcomes

The question then arising is whether the impact of participation in HIPPY on the parent-child relationship influenced socio-emotional outcomes for children. When both process and outcome findings from the present study are considered in light of developmental theories, the suggestion that the parent-child relationship actually mediated the positive socio-emotional outcomes for children seems plausible. Three of the developmental theories outlined in Chapter 1 are of most significance here. Vygotsky's (1978) scaffolding theory, Bowlby's (1969/1982, 1973) attachment theory

and Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 1986) ecological theory all draw attention to the importance of the parent-child relationship in influencing child outcomes. Further, and when considered in this same light, an understanding of how the parent-child relationship may have mediated positive socio-emotional outcomes for children is also possible. Attachment theory and ecological theory are particularly useful here.

According to Bowlby's (1973) attachment theory, the quality of the emotional bond that develops between a young child and the caregiver (attachment relationship) has the potential to greatly influence a child's later adaptation. Furthermore, the theory proposes that while the foundations for a child's sense of a secure attachment with the caregiver are laid down largely during their infancy, children's working models of this relationship are malleable, as they continue to develop. That the HIPPY program provided a context in which a child's working model of attachment with their parent may have been strengthened is both inherent in the process of participation and evident in the present findings. The delivery of the program between the parent and child clearly requires mutually responsive interactions. In particular, participation in the program involves parents in being responsive to the child. In their role as the child's teacher, parents are required to attend closely to children's responses to the content of the materials, and to how their child is responding to the HIPPY session generally.

In the present study, parents' responsiveness at both these levels was reflected in their reports of the particular activities their child liked and did not like, as well as in the finding that the extended duration of the HIPPY session occurred as a result of parents responses to their child wanting to continue the session. While this finding highlights that the HIPPY interactions were child-driven, there were no reports to indicate that parents were not willing participants in these longer sessions. Rather, it appeared that the sessions were typically both mutually consented and enjoyed. Overall, it may be inferred that, within the context of engaging in HIPPY activities, the parent and child interaction was mutually warm and responsive. That these mutually warm and responsive interactions took place with some consistency, and over an extended period in the child's life, it is highly likely that such experiences may have positively influenced children's internalized representations or working models of their attachment relationship with their parents. Indeed, the significant findings regarding

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HIPPY children's socio-emotional development are the domain of a child's development in which Bowlby's (1973) theory predicts that the quality of attachment will exert its greatest influence. While the quality of attachment is thought to underlie a child's capacity to effectively learn from their environment (cognitive development), it is most likely to exert its greatest influence primarily in the context of beliefs about themselves and relationships (socio-emotional development).

Bowlby's (1973) theory then, draws attention to the likelihood that enhancing the quality of the emotional bond between parent and child, the attachment relationship, will positively influence a child's socio-emotional development. However, it is Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 1986) ecological theory of human development that draws attention to how this is likely to occur. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979, p. 60), "learning and development are facilitated by the participation of the developing person in progressively more complex patterns of reciprocal activity with someone with whom that person has developed a strong and enduring emotional attachment…" However, the developmental impact of the dyad is not restricted to one member of the dyad, such as the child. In fact, Bronfenbrenner (p. 65) proposed that "if one member of a dyad undergoes developmental change, the other is likely to do so". He described a primary dyad, such as the parent-child relationship, as a "developmental system" that "…becomes a vehicle with a momentum of its own that stimulates and sustains developmental processes for its passengers as long as they remain interconnected in a two-person bond" (p. 66). From this perspective, the positive socio-emotional outcome for children can be seen to have been both influenced by the positive progress in parents' socio-emotional development as well as, in turn, having influenced these outcomes for parents. In other words, the socio-emotional development of participating parents, such as increased self-esteem, would have led to some developmental change in children's self-esteem. Likewise, the development of children's confidence in relation to education and learning would have influenced some change in parent's confidence in this regard. From this perspective also, then, it can be seen how children's progress in terms of their socio-emotional development may have been accelerated by the fact that participation in HIPPY simultaneously led to the socio-emotional development of the child's parent. In this light, the relationship between the parent and child and in particular, the quality of the emotional bond

between them, the attachment relationship, plays an important role in mediating the developmental impact for both members of the dyad.

10.4.3   Social relationships in program implementation and socio-emotional outcomes generally

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological perspective further proposes not only that the developmental impact for both persons in the dyad is bi-directional, but also that this relationship is in turn affected by connections with the larger social system. The idea that processes inherent within the implementation of HIPPY led to changes within the larger system, that, in turn, may have been conducive to sustaining the developmental impact of the parent-child dyad, can be supported by the findings reported concerning outcomes for parents.

Of particular relevance here is Bronfenbrenner's (1979) conception of the meso system as being the interaction between the immediate settings for development, the parent-child relationship, and the influences on those settings. The immediate support network for parents is a meso system connection and, according to the ecological perspective, families function in relation to the support they receive from others. The immediate support network for parents refers to all those who support the caregiver unit and may include all who live in the household but ideally would not be limited to those persons.

As reported in Section 8.1.2.1 of Chapter 8, the major theme to emerge from parent interviews of their experiences of the program in terms of their socio-emotional development was the development of relationships with others. In particular, the relationships developed with Home Tutors and other parents, in the group meeting setting, were found to offer a sense of being supported in their role as parent. The support offered by these relationships was found to be most potent for those parents who had previously been socially isolated. That the development of support for the caregiver unit may have sustained or indeed accelerated the momentum of the developmental impact of the parent-child dyad appears likely.

CHAPTER 11

IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Consideration of the findings of the present study resulted in the emergence of a number of implications for practice and future research. This final chapter outlines the implications of these findings for the operation and implementation of future HIPPY programs, for early interventions generally, and for future research within the field. Conclusions from the present study are then offered.

11.1   Implications for practice in early educational intervention

The major implications of the present study for implementation of HIPPY concern ways in which some of the barriers to implementation identified may be proactively addressed in future. Implications for ways in which the benefits of participation may be further enhanced are also outlined. Consideration is given to how these implications may apply beyond the particularities of HIPPY, to early educational intervention in general.

11.1.1   Facilitating families receiving the full intervention

For the HIPPY program to be implemented as intended, parents are required, over a period of two years, to attend fortnightly group meetings, to be available for fortnightly home visits and to deliver the program within the home on each week day during school terms. The present study identified many factors associated with the kind of disadvantage experienced by this particular group of families that impeded parents' capacity to fully carry out the program's requirements. On average, fortnightly parent group meetings were attended by just over a third of the group, at least one quarter of parents consistently missed their fortnightly home visit and the majority of families tended to do the HIPPY activities over two rather than five days each week. It may prove beneficial for future implementations with similar populations to adopt some of the practice strategies outlined below to increase the likelihood that parents' level of

involvement, in terms of the intended dosage, may be enhanced. Many of these recommendations flow from the actual practice of this implementation by Glastonbury as it was observed to develop, while others are suggested responses to some of the ongoing problems.

Firstly, the level and type of commitment to the program required of HIPPY should be clearly and fully outlined to prospective parents before they enrol in the program.

Secondly, it may prove good practice during enrolment to reiterate these required commitments through a standard set of questions asking parents how they can meet these commitments within the context of their particular family situation. For example, discussing with parents how they may get to the group meeting venue, what day of the week may suit them best for a home visit, and what time of the day they anticipate doing HIPPY with their child, may assist parents to more fully acknowledge the level of involvement required by the program. This process may also serve to alert program staff and families of any potential barriers to full participation, increasing the likelihood that these can be addressed proactively. If during this discussion it emerged that parents did not have, for example, reliable access to private or public transport to group meetings, program staff may then offer to arrange transport for families. Similarly, if parents did not have access to reliable telecommunications, such as no home phone, then staff and parents may discuss the best way they could contact each other to change appointments as needed. Such a practice of discussing detail with parents at an early stage may serve to enhance, at the outset, parents' planning and organizational skills considered necessary for full participation in a program such as HIPPY.

Thirdly, a number of strategies were found by program staff to assist parents to keep home visit appointments with their tutors. In other communities, too, it may prove beneficial for staff to produce a calendar in some form, with all HIPPY events highlighted. This could be given to parents soon after enrolment and then used by parents to note ongoing Home Tutor appointments details. A further strategy would be to maintain regularity in terms of appointment days and times, with routine home visits scheduled, on the same day and same time each fortnight. These practices may

increase the likelihood that Home Tutor appointments go ahead as planned and the workload of Home Tutors is not escalated through having to make extra visits to the home. Such practices may also assist with the development of the organizational and planning skills of the parents involved.

Fourth, in relation to the ongoing delivery of HIPPY by the parent to the child, it may be beneficial for Home Tutors to adopt the practice of setting aside a short time at the end of the home visit, to discuss with parents how, within the context of their family situation and at that particular time, they may plan HIPPY sessions over the upcoming fortnight. This practice, while useful for alerting program staff of existing or potential difficulties, may further assist with the development of organizational and planning skills.

Finally, despite efforts to assist families to implement the program according to the standard dosage, not all families will be able to participate to the full extent all of the time. A theme that emerged strongly from this evaluation was that rigid adherence to the standard model of implementation would not have worked well with this particular population. As highlighted in Section 6.3.2.1.2 of Chapter 6, one of the most vital factors underpinning the success of the program's implementation was the willingness and capacity of staff to be adaptive in response to the needs of the individual families. By maintaining a flexible and adaptable approach to the implementation and supporting families through difficult times, it is highly likely that this approach maintained at least one fifth of families participating in the current study (those families in which the Home Tutor worked with the child) within the program for the full two years. Consequently the benefits of the program to those families were not completely lost. Maintaining this approach in the future may ensure that families who may be most in need of this kind of intervention do not miss out completely on what the program has to offer.

Maintaining control of such flexibility would nevertheless be critical to program integrity, and this can be achieved by adapting the practice initiated by Glastonbury, of adaptations being fully discussed and decided by the Home Tutor and the Coordinator

together. In addition, clear documentation of adaptations should be made, to enable closer monitoring of their effects.

11.1.2   Enhancing participants' benefits of involvement

Beyond practice strategies that could serve to address potential barriers in future implementations, some suggestions may also be offered in relation to ways in which the potential benefits of the program may be enhanced in future practice. One of the reported benefits for all participants as a result of their participation in the program was the development of their relationship with education and learning. Overall, children, parents and Home Tutors were found to be more confident in their capacity to successfully relate to education and learning. This finding was considered particularly potent for parents within this particular implementation, given that at least 50% of the group reported their past relationships with education as being of a negative and/or limited nature. For a number of parents, their role in the implementation as their child's teacher, and their subsequent perceptions of their child as performing well academically, appeared to be one of their own first successful experiences with education and learning. As a result, these parents appeared more confident to engage in education and learning, demonstrated not only in an increased involvement in their children's education, but also through an increased interest/involvement in their own further learning/education. Findings concerning outcomes for Home Tutors provide some insight into how parents' relationship with learning/education maybe further enhanced in future practice.

In the present study, all Home Tutors were reported to be in the process of pursuing further education as a result of their participation in the program. It was found that this outcome was facilitated, to some extent, by the role modeling and mentoring provided to Home Tutors by both their peers and the Coordinator. The potential for role modeling and mentoring to similarly influence such outcomes for parents appears likely. Home Tutors, having begun their involvement with HIPPY as parents themselves from the same community, serve as potent role models for current participating parents. The enrichment component of the parent group meeting could be a viable forum in which former Home Tutors may be invited to share with parents, their

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own experiences of how their involvement in the program led to their current situation. The beginning of the second year of the program may be a suitable time to organize such events. At this stage of participation it is likely that parents would have sufficient experience of success in their role as their child's teacher for Home Tutors experiences to hold some relevance to their own developing relationship with education. Depending on feedback from parents, further related events may be organized. Information sessions about courses offered in the community is one example. The potential outcomes of efforts directed towards maintaining momentum to the developing relationship between parents and their own education, may prove considerable. It is likely that the development of this relationship will benefit both parents and their children. It is also likely that such benefits would be long-term in nature. This maybe considered a desirable aim given the known entrenched disadvantage that characterizes the particular communities from which participating families are drawn.

11.1.3   Implications for early intervention practice in general

Beyond the implications for practice in the implementation of HIPPY, the major findings from the present study have implications for early educational intervention practice in general.

Firstly, while the effectiveness or success of early interventions programs may be influenced by any number of factors, the level of participation or involvement by those receiving the program, is clearly important. To facilitate the likelihood that participants involve themselves fully in a particular program, and therefore receive the intervention at the rate of dosage intended, it may prove beneficial to adopt some of the general principles outlined above. In short this would involve making clear the expectations of participation at the time of recruitment, and then the on-going monitoring of the extent to which participants are managing to meet those expectations. Further, it would involve an approach to implementation that was holistic, therein recognizing participation within the context of an individual's particular life circumstances, and also an approach to implementation that was flexible enough to be adapted to individual or community needs.

Secondly, evidence suggesting that the parent-child relationship may mediate positive outcomes for children (or parents) would also have general implications for the practice of early childhood educational intervention. In short, these implications relate to the potential value of interventions that not only direct the intervention at the parent and the child, but also require that the intervention is exchanged between the parent and the child. If findings from the present study demonstrating positive socio-emotional development for participating children and parents have been largely mediated by improvements in the quality of the parent-child relationship, and if socio-emotional outcomes are considered valuable, then interventions that seek to strengthen this relationship through the parent and child rather than just delivering components separately, would be advisable.

11.2   Implications for future research

Implications for future research revolve around the kind of information that may be most fruitfully gathered as well as the kind of questions that may be most fruitfully asked of those data. Implications for methodology flow on from these considerations.

11.2.1   Broadening and deepening exploration of implementation data

More detailed data related to the two main levels of implementation, from staff to parents (within the Agency), and then from parents to children (within the home), need to be gathered in future research, with participation in all aspects at each level recorded quantitatively in a standardized way. This may require the production of a standard log book or work diary for Home Tutors. Such a book would allow for information regarding families' participation in the program. For example, information related to the home visit may be collected, such as the date and time of the visit, whether the visit went ahead as planned, how long the session took, and who received the HIPPY materials from the Home Tutor (the parent or the child). The log book would also allow Home Tutors to document, from parent reports, the frequency and duration of HIPPY sessions taking place within the home during the previous fortnight. This particular information may be recorded by parents themselves, on a coversheet

attached to the weekly materials, asking them to circle the particular days (or rate of frequency) that they did the HIPPY sessions with the child. In this way, the risk of parents feeling too closely monitored may be avoided. Families' attendance at group meetings would also be recorded by Home Tutors. Such information would allow for an examination of the effects that each variable or combination of variables may have had on child, parent or parent-child relationship outcomes.

The routine collection of such detailed information would permit much more extensive research than has been so far conducted, extending across numerous sites. This kind of extensive research is now sorely needed in the early intervention field.

Further, the effect of the various components of implementation on outcomes could be explored without the need to recruit a comparison group through, for example, by comparison of those HIPPY families who showed the most developmental progress with those that showed the least. Such research could have a profound effect upon the general nature of research in this area. The implications here lie in the potential of what may be learnt about how an intervention works from a within-group analysis of easily accessed information. Without the need to recruit a comparison group, the limitations placed upon evaluation efforts when the sample is found to be incompatible with the intervention group, as in the present study and reported elsewhere (BarHava-Monteith et al. 1999a), would be avoided.

11.2.2 Confronting the issue of identifying a comparison group

The findings of the present study also have a number of implications for the issue of identifying a comparison group, where this cannot be avoided. Essentially these revolve around the broader issue of recruiting a comparison group from the same pool of participants who take part in the intervention.

As stated in Section 5.1.1.2 of Chapter 5, the decision made in the planning stages of the present study to not recruit the comparison group from the same Corio/Norlane area from where HIPPY participants were recruited to the program, was made with both ethical and validity concerns in mind. In short, randomized allocation raised

ethical concerns about the non-provision of services within a disadvantaged community, while recruiting volunteers from the same pool of families who had been offered HIPPY, raised the issue of differences between those who chose the service and those who declined. Because of these concerns, it was decided to recruit from other areas in the region.

In retrospect, given the degree of disadvantage associated with the area where HIPPY was offered and provided, it may have been wiser to recruit the comparison group from the remaining pool of families within the same community who did not volunteer to participate in HIPPY. While it may be that those who volunteered to participate in HIPPY and those who did not, may have been different in some ways, it is unlikely that the differences between these two groups, drawn from the same community, would have been as great as the differences found between the HIPPY group and the comparison group of families recruited from less disadvantaged areas. As discussed in Section 10.1.1 of Chapter 10, parents who volunteered to be part of the comparison group may have been more motivated by intrinsic rewards such as interest in child development, education or research, than other parents living in the same area who did not take part. In contrast, parents who did not volunteer to participate in HIPPY may have been less confident or felt less able to participate in such a program. It is highly likely that this remaining pool of parents would be more, rather than less, disadvantaged than the HIPPY parents.

If these parents could be attracted to take part in future evaluation research, perhaps through reimbursement for their time, it would be important to gather sufficient data to interpret any differences between the two groups. Asking firstly whether they were aware of HIPPY and then, where appropriate, why they did not seek enrolment in the program, could provide useful information in this regard.

11.2.3 Explorations of hypothesizing arising from the present study

Several implications flow from the present study for the investigation of specific hypotheses arising from the findings. All the following questions may be explored

without the need to recruit a comparison group, either as within-group analyses or as follow-up studies.

Firstly, the idea raised above in Section 10.4.1 of Chapter 10, that the dosage of the intervention may have differential effects on children's cognitive and children's socio-emotional development, may be explored through the analysis of data obtained relating to how often HIPPY sessions took place within the home with findings concerning children's progress on these two dimensions of development. For example, the cognitive outcomes of children who received the program as intended could be compared to the same outcomes of children who received the program less frequently than intended. Similarly, the socio-emotional outcomes of children who received the program as intended could be compared to the same outcomes of children who received the program less frequently and for longer sessions.

Findings indicating that children who participated in less frequent, longer HIPPY sessions, showed greater socio-emotional developmental progress than those children who participated in more frequent HIPPY sessions, may add support to the hypothesis that the parent-child relationship mediates positive socio-emotional outcomes for children. This hypothesis may also be explored by looking for correlations between the quality of the parent-child relationship and children's socio-emotional outcomes, such that greater progress socio-emotionally would be associated with greater quality of the parent-child relationship.

Likewise, the idea that developmental change in either the parent or the child would lead to developmental change in the other member of the dyad, may also be explored by examining parent and child outcomes in tandem. For example, the socio-emotional development of one member of the dyad may be compared to the socio-emotional development of the other member of the dyad to establish whether an association exists.

Beyond exploring the developmental impact of the parent-child dyad on outcomes for children and parents, a further line of inquiry flowing from the present study would be the effect of participation on general parenting skills. As discussed above in Section

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10.3.4 of Chapter 10, numerous studies, including the present one, suggest that participation in HIPPY improves the quality of the parent-child relationship. The question of whether the nature of these improvements, namely that parents report feeling closer with their child, lead to any noticeable changes in parenting style or practices is clearly worth pursuing.

Similarly, the proposition that participation in HIPPY enhances the relationship between parent and child has largely been derived from sources other than from the child's perspective. As reported by Nolan (2004) in the only reported research focusing on the child's perspective of participation in HIPPY and reviewed in Section 3.4.2.2 of Chapter 3, half of the sample of children interviewed commented that spending time with their parent was the most enjoyable aspect of HIPPY. Nolan further reported that children's' experiences of the program was linked to parents attitudes towards the program, in that children with parents who participated positively in the program were more likely to report positive experiences where children reported less positive experiences where they perceived negative attitudes from parents. These findings suggest that children's relationship with their parent is an important aspect of their experience of the program and that the nature of the parent-child interaction may influence whether the experience is largely positive or negative for the child.

Given these propositions, future research may be well directed to firstly explore whether children's perspectives of their parents enjoyment of the program influences their own experiences of the program. Research of this nature would provide the remaining source of data, not yet gathered, concerning the importance of the parent-child relationship in early childhood interventions, such as HIPPY. If it was found that children's experiences of the program was influenced by the nature of the parent-child interactions surrounding HIPPY activities, then further research could then explore whether children's experiences of the program was associated with their developmental progress. Such research may add weight to the idea that the quality of the parent-child relationship mediates developmental outcomes for children.

Finally, follow-up studies of all outcomes reported are recommended and in particular, whether participants progress in terms of their socio-emotional development

continued. This could be explored by focusing on the three higher order themes that emerged consistently for children, parents and Home Tutors in the present study, namely participants' relationships with others, their relationship with education and learning, and, how they viewed themselves.

11.3   Conclusions of the study

Overall, the present research has added to the growing body of evidence that early intervention has important potential to impact positively on the development of children from disadvantaged communities. It has also confirmed the hypothesis that socio-emotional developmental outcomes are likely to be inextricably linked with efforts to enhance cognitive outcomes.

While the major aim of the present study was to explore the socio-emotional outcomes of participation in HIPPY for a group of Australian-born families in a regional centre experiencing disadvantage along several dimensions, the first task was to examine whether the program was delivered as intended. The study indicated that program could be implemented according to the standard model. Nevertheless, it was found that there were some factors that influenced the process of implementation many of which were associated with the difficulties arising from the socio-economically disadvantaged circumstances faced by participating families. Program staff willingness and capacity to maintain a flexible approach to implementation and to provide support to families when needed were found to be the most facilitating factors in effectively managing the difficulties experienced.

In the examination of the program's effectiveness, children who had participated in the program were found to have progressed at the least, at the same rate as their more advantaged peers in terms of cognitive/educational development. In terms of their socio-emotional development however, participating children demonstrated significantly greater progress than more advantaged peers. The study also found that parents and Home Tutors demonstrated gains in socio-emotional development as a result of participation in the program. While no difference between the quality of the parent-child relationship of participating and non-participating families were indicated

by quantitative means, HIPPY parents themselves perceived that this relationship had been positively influenced by involvement in the program, and their reports indicated that the child's security of attachment had also been enhanced.

Finally, the study highlighted the importance of using process and outcome evaluation in a complementary way in research aimed at understanding the effectiveness of early childhood interventions such as HIPPY. As a result of using such data in a complementary manner, the study raised the idea that improvements in the parent-child relationship may have mediated the positive socio-emotional outcomes found.

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SKILL BOXES
AGE 4 – WEEK 1

HIPPY USA

Parents: **Please read the skill box below that belongs with each activity before beginning the activity. The skill box explains what your child is learning when doing each activity.**

SOUNDS I HEAR (1)   WEEK: 1 DAY: 1

When you read the book to your child and point to the pictures, you are helping your child understand the story (*story comprehension*) and learn about books (*book knowledge*). Your child also begins to develop a love of reading. Coloring an existing picture or creating a new drawing (*fine motor control*) does not need to be exact. This experience helps your child relate to the story and helps to develop important readiness skills (*creative drawing, imagination*). When you and your child talk about her drawing she is developing *language skills*.

SAME-DIFFERENT (1)   WEEK: 1 DAY: 1

This is the first SAME-DIFFERENT activity. Young children learn best when first using hands-on objects. In this activity, your child will decide if the sets of objects are the same. This helps to develop *visual discrimination* skills needed in learning to read and write.

SMALL-BIG (1)   WEEK: 1 DAY: 2

In this first SMALL-BIG activity, you and your child will begin by identifying and comparing (*visual discrimination*) real objects, your fingers, hands and feet. Being able to see the differences in size is important in learning to see the differences in letters for reading and writing.

FOLLOW THE PATH(1)   WEEK: 1 DAY: 2

In the FOLLOW THE PATH activities, your child will move his finger and then a pencil along a path showing how two things belong together. First, you will tell your child what to do before he begins (*following directions)* and then he will make the path (*eye-hand coordination*).

SOUNDS I HEAR (2)   WEEK: 1 DAY: 3

Rereading the story in small parts helps to develop *story comprehension*. This book helps your child to become aware of different sounds (*auditory discrimination*). Coloring the pictures helps to develop *fine motor control* needed in learning to write. When your child talks about the pictures she is *developing language skills*. Pretending to be the animals (*dramatic play*) is fun and helps your child relate to the story.

"HIPPY" - Age 4 (2000)

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HIPPY USA

1. (Sit next to the child. Choose a
comfortable place for storytelling.
Take the book *Sounds I Hear* and show
the child the cover.)

   THIS BOOK IS CALLED *SOUNDS I HEAR.*
   IT IS A BOOK ABOUT THE SOUNDS WE HEAR.

2. (Turn to page 3.)

   THIS PICTURE SHOWS A BOY LISTENING
   TO SOMETHING.   HE'S LISTENING TO SOUNDS.

3. HE'S VERY QUIET.
   HE'S LISTENING TO THE SOUNDS.
   WHAT DO YOU THINK HE IS LISTENING TO?
   – sounds

4. NOW I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT THE SOUNDS IN THIS BOOK.
   (Read the story to the child and
   point to the pictures as you go along.)

HIPPY USA

HOME INSTRUCTION PROGRAM FOR PRESCHOOL YOUNGSTERS

1. (When you have finished reading the story, give the child crayons and this page.)

   HERE'S A PICTURE OF THE BOY WHO'S LISTENING TO THE SOUNDS. COLOR IT.

TELL ME ABOUT THIS PICTURE

2. TURN THE PAGE OVER AND YOU CAN DRAW ANYTHING YOU LIKE.
   (Turn this page over and let the child draw freely.)

   NOW TELL ME ABOUT YOUR PICTURE.

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HIPPY USA

(Place two same glasses on the squares.)
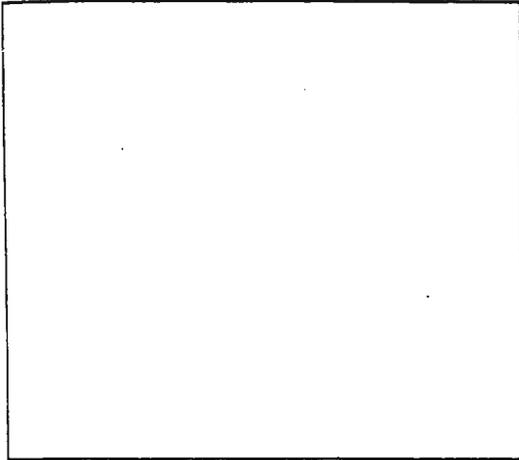
1. WHAT IS THIS?
    – a glass

2. ARE THESE OBJECTS THE SAME?
    – Yes, they are the same.

WHAT IS THIS?
    – a glass

(Place one glass and one fork on the squares. Point to each one and say:)
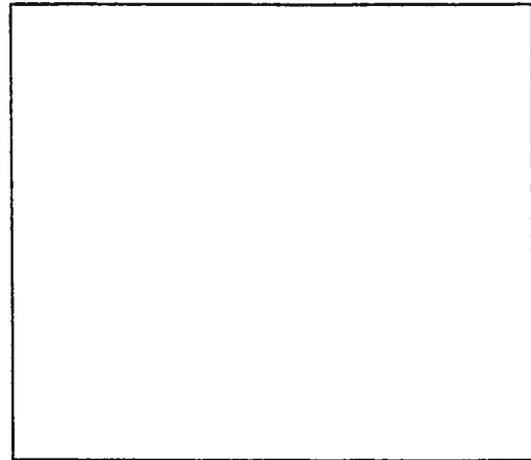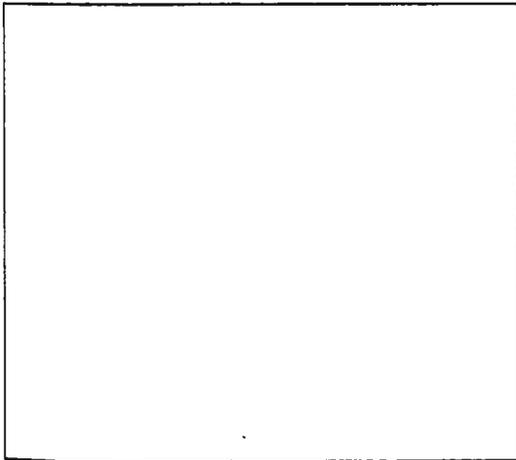
3. WHAT IS THIS?
    – a glass

4. ARE THESE OBJECTS THE SAME?
    – No, these objects are not the same.

WHAT IS THIS?
    – a fork

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HIPPY USA

(Place two same cups on the squares.)
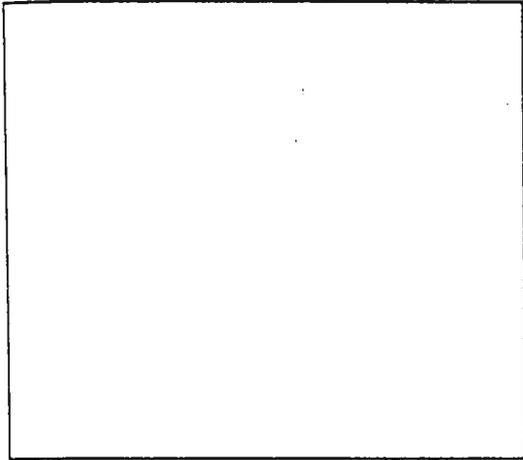
1. **WHAT IS THIS?**
   – a cup

WHAT IS THIS?
   – a cup

2. **ARE THESE OBJECTS THE SAME?**
   – Yes, they are the same.

(Place one cup and one pencil on the squares. Point to each one and say:)
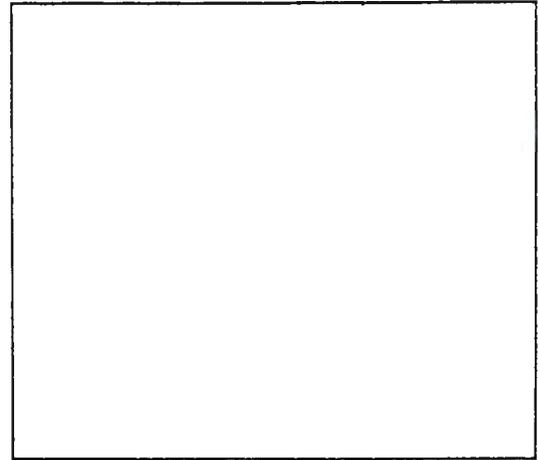
3. **WHAT IS THIS?**
   – a cup
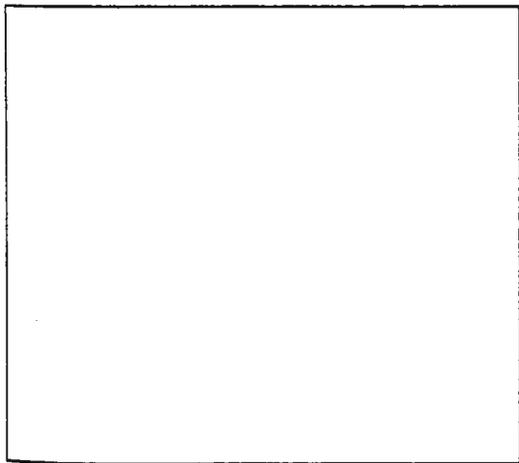
WHAT IS THIS?
   – a pencil

4. **ARE THESE OBJECTS THE SAME?**
   – No, they are not the same.

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ACTIVITY SHEET: 1

1. PUT YOUR HAND ON THE TABLE.
   (Point to the child's small finger.)

   THIS IS THE SMALL FINGER.
   WHAT IS THIS?
   – the small finger
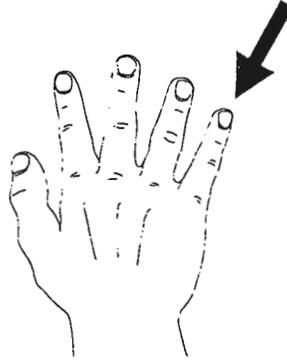
2. (Put your hand on the table.)

   WHERE IS MY SMALL FINGER?

   (Take your hand off the table.)
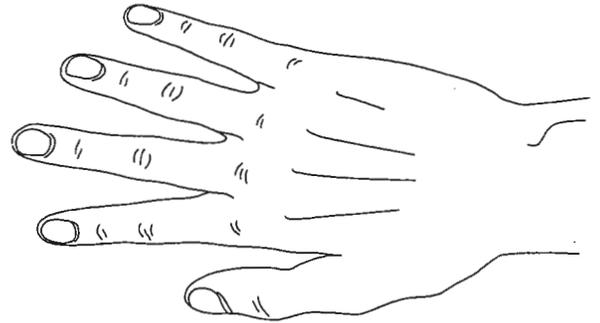
3. (Point to the child's big finger.)

   THIS IS THE BIG FINGER.
   WHAT IS THIS?
   – the big finger
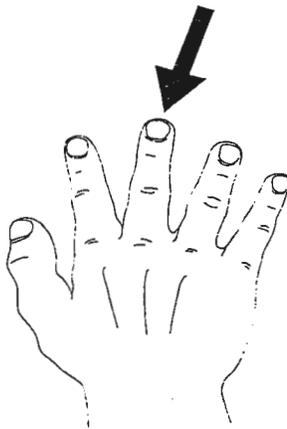
4. (Put your hand on the table again.)

   WHERE IS MY BIG FINGER?

5. (Put your hand on the table next to your child's.)

   WHICH HAND IS BIGGER, YOURS OR MINE?
   – yours

"HIPPY" — Age 4 (2000)

5

299

HIPPY USA
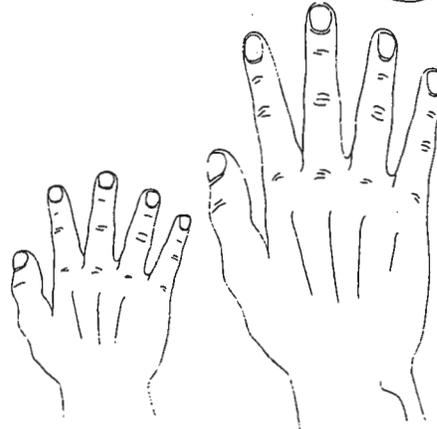
(Materials: crayon, scissors, 2 pieces of paper or the back of two old activity sheets.)

(Point to your child's foot.)

1. **THIS IS YOUR FOOT.**
   YOUR FOOT IS SMALL.

   (Point to your foot.)

2. **THIS IS MY FOOT.**
   MY FOOT IS BIG.

   (Put your foot next to the child's foot.)

3. **SHOW ME THE SMALL FOOT.**

   SHOW ME THE BIG FOOT.

   (Stand on the paper and trace your foot.)

4. **I WILL TRACE MY FOOT.**

   (The child stands on the paper.)

5. **YOU STAND ON THE PAPER.**
   I WILL TRACE YOUR FOOT.

   (Cut out the footprints.
   Place them on the floor next to each other.
   Point to each footprint.)

6. **HERE IS MY FOOTPRINT.**

   HERE IS YOUR FOOTPRINT.

   WHICH FOOTPRINT IS SMALL?
   – mine
   WHICH FOOTPRINT IS BIG?
   – yours

7. **STAND ON THE SMALL FOOTPRINT.**

   NOW STAND ON THE BIG FOOTPRINT.

300

HIPPY USA
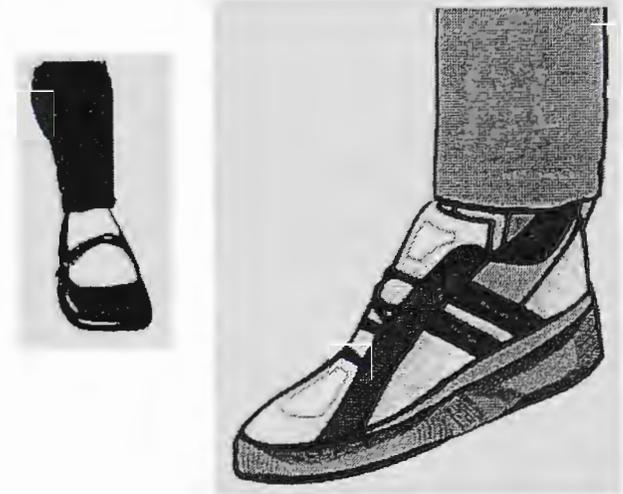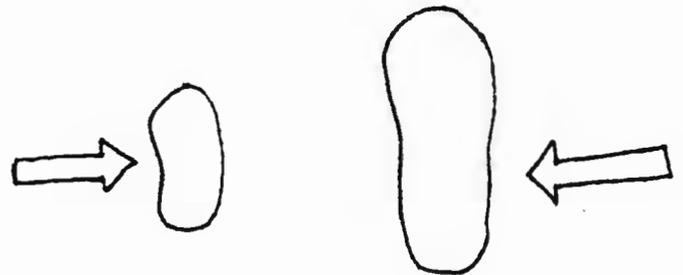
1. (Point below.)

    HERE ARE THREE GIRLS.
    THEY WANT TO GO HOME.   I'LL SHOW YOU THE WAY.

2. (Move your finger along the first line.)

    I'M MOVING MY FINGER ALONG THE PATH, FROM THE GIRL TO HER HOUSE.

3. NOW YOU MOVE YOUR FINGER ALONG EACH PATH.
    START AT THE GIRL AND GO ALONG THE PATH TO HER HOUSE.

4. (Take a crayon.)

    LOOK. I'LL DRAW ON THE PATH WITH MY CRAYON,
    FROM THE GIRL TO HER HOUSE.

5. (Give the child a crayon.)

    NOW YOU DRAW ON THE OTHER PATHS — FROM EACH GIRL TO HER HOUSE.

301

HIPPY USA

1.   (Point to the boys.)

THESE BOYS ARE GOING TO SCHOOL. PUT YOUR FINGER ON A BOY.
MOVE YOUR FINGER ALONG THE PATH EACH BOY TAKES.

2.   (After the child has done this, say:)

TAKE A CRAYON AND DRAW ON THE PATH EACH BOY TAKES TO SCHOOL.
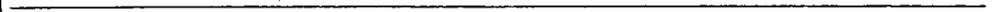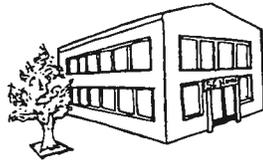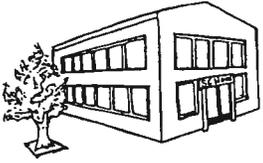
3.   (Point to the girls.)

THE GIRLS WANT TO PICK FLOWERS. PUT YOUR FINGER ON A GIRL.
MOVE YOUR FINGER ALONG THE PATH EACH GIRL TAKES TO HER FLOWER.

4.   (After the child has done this, say:)

DRAW ON THE PATHS FROM THE GIRLS TO THE FLOWERS.

302

HIPPY USA
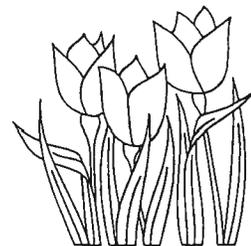
1. (Open the book Sounds I Hear to pages 4-5.
    Read the text. Point to the puppy dog.)

    WHAT IS THIS?
    — a puppy dog

    WHAT SOUND DOES IT MAKE?
    — bow-wow

2. **HIS NOSE IS COLD AND BLACK.**
    SHOW ME HIS NOSE.

    HIS TAIL IS WAGGING.
    SHOW ME HIS TAIL.

3. (Point to the boy on page 4.)

    THE LITTLE BOY IS PRETENDING HE'S A PUPPY DOG.
    CAN YOU PRETEND TO BE A PUPPY DOG?
    MAKE SOUNDS LIKE A PUPPY DOG AND RUN TO ME.
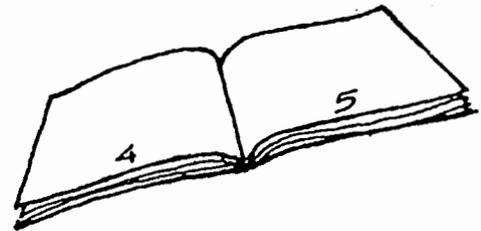
4. (Show Activity Sheet 3 to the child.)

    SHOW ME WHICH ANIMAL GOES BOW-WOW-WOW.

    WHAT IS IT CALLED?
    — a puppy dog

"HIPPY" — Age 4 (2000)

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HIPPY USA

1. (Turn to pages 10 and 11.
Read the text. Point to the sheep.)

   WHAT IS THIS?
   – a sheep

   DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT SOUNDS THE SHEEP MAKES?
   – baa-aa, baa-aa
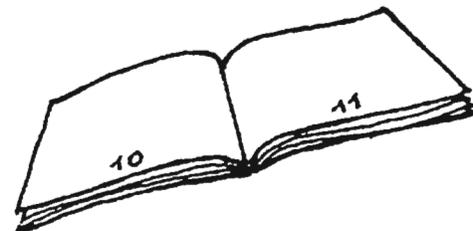
2. **WHAT DOES THE SHEEP EAT?**
   – grass

   LOOK AT THE SHEEP'S COAT.
   (Point to it.)

   IT IS SOFT AND CURLY.   **SHOW ME THE CURLS.**
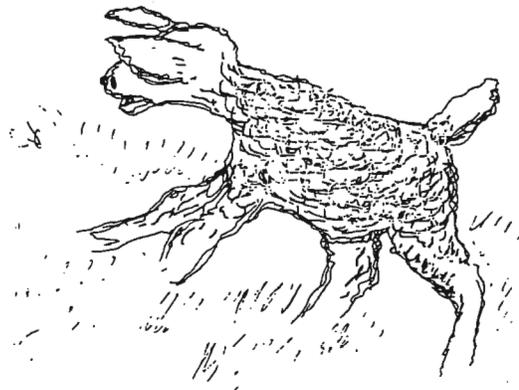
3. **LET'S PRETEND YOU ARE A SHEEP.**

   MAKE SOUNDS LIKE A SHEEP AND JUMP LIKE A SHEEP.
   (If necessary, show the child how to jump.)

4. (Show the child Activity Sheet 3.)

   SHOW ME WHICH OF THESE ANIMALS SAYS BAA-AA, BAA-AA.

   WHAT IS IT CALLED?
   – a sheep

304
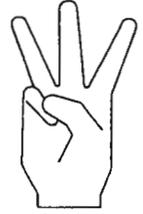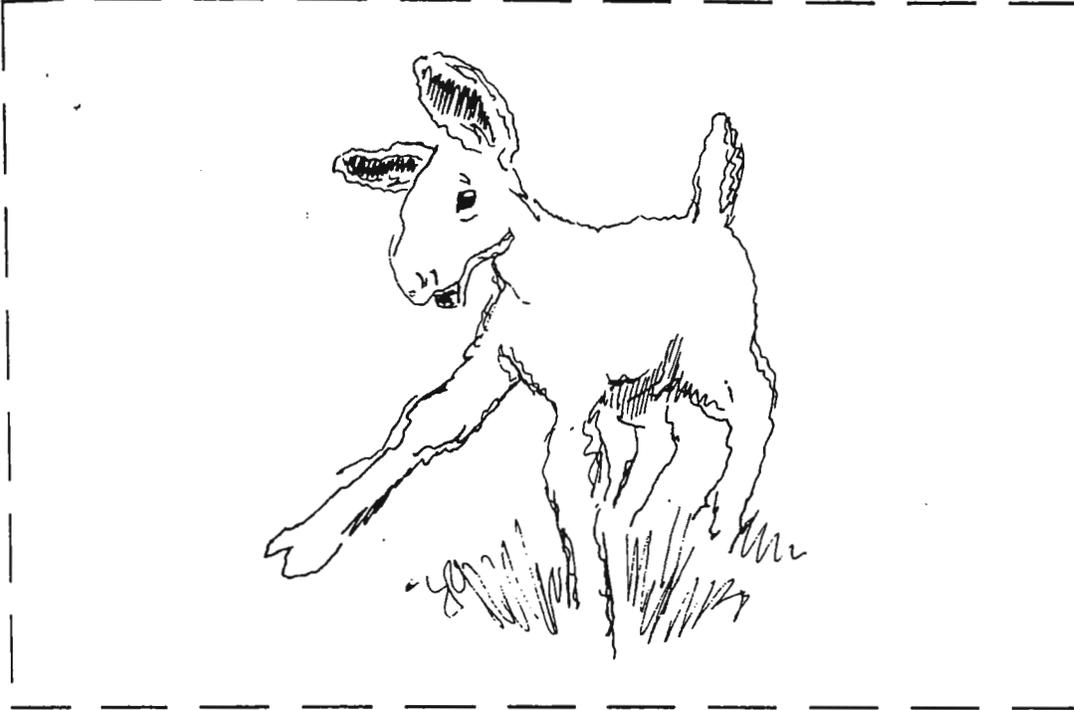
**HERE ARE PICTURES OF THE SHEEP AND THE PUPPY DOG,
JUST LIKE IN THE BOOK. COLOR THEM.**
(Cut them out, put them in an envelope, and save them for later.)

"HIPPY" — Age 4 (2000)

11

305

HIPPY USA
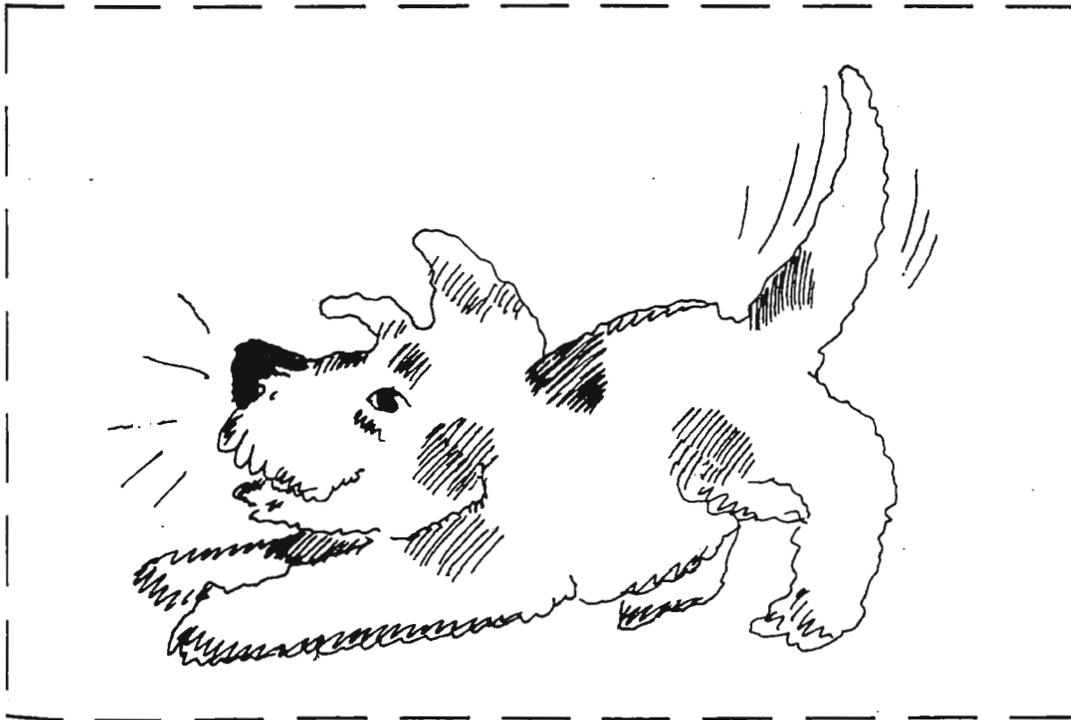
(Place a crayon and a penny on the squares.)
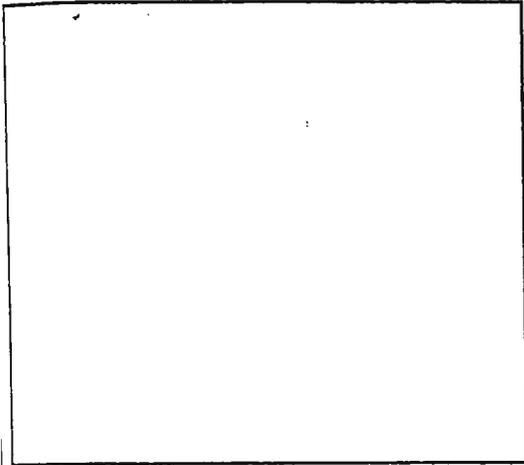
1. **WHAT IS THIS?**
   - a crayon

2. **ARE THESE OBJECTS THE SAME?**
   - No, the objects are not the same.
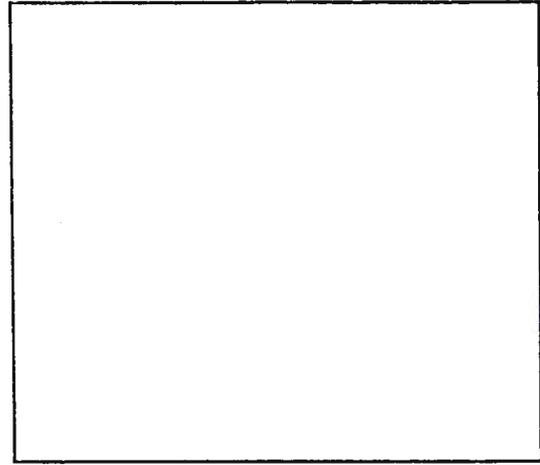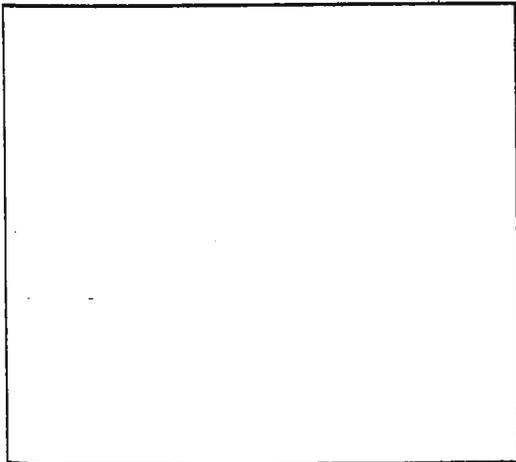
WHAT IS THIS?
   - a penny

(Place two same forks, one on each square and point to them.)

3. **WHAT IS THIS?**
   - a fork

4. **ARE THESE OBJECTS THE SAME?**
   - Yes, they are the same.

WHAT IS THIS?
   - a fork

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HIPPY USA

HOME INSTRUCTION PROGRAM FOR PRESCHOOL YOUNGSTERS
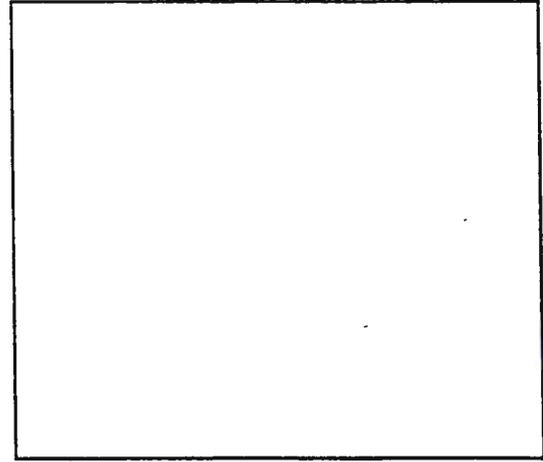
(Place one penny on each square.)
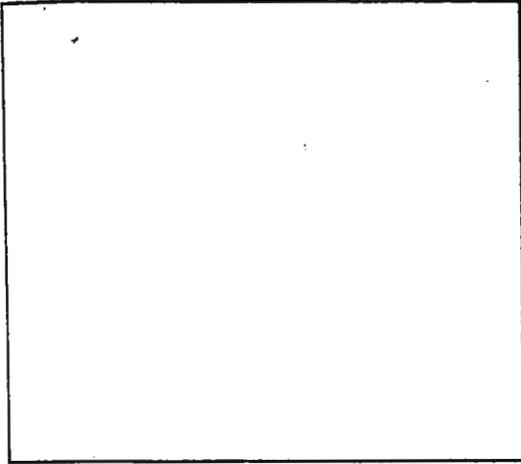
1. WHAT IS THIS?
   – a penny

2. ARE THE OBJECTS THE SAME?
   – Yes, the pennies are the same.

WHAT IS THIS?
– a penny
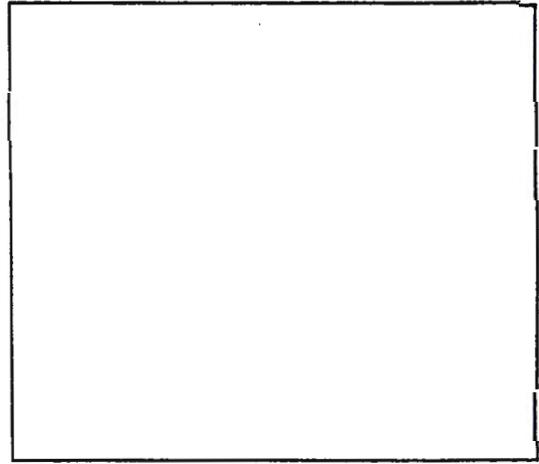
(Place a penny and a piece of fruit or a cracker on each square. Point to each one and say:)
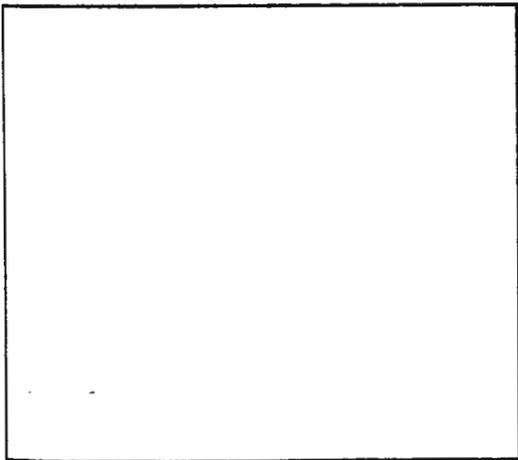
3. WHAT IS THIS?
   – a penny

4. ARE THESE OBJECTS THE SAME?
   – No, these objects are not the same.

5. OBJECTS THAT ARE NOT THE SAME ARE CALLED DIFFERENT.
   NOW YOU SAY IT:
   – Objects that are not the same are called different.
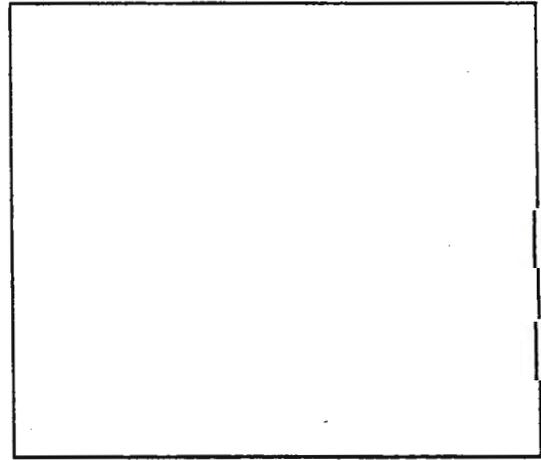
WHAT IS THIS?
– an apple (or whatever it is)

307

HOME INSTRUCTION PROGRAM FOR PRESCHOOL YOUNGSTERS

HIPPY USA

1. (Point to the lines below.)

    ALL THESE BOYS WANT TO SLIDE DOWN THE ROPES TO THE GROUND.
    CAN YOU HELP THEM? SLIDE DOWN EACH ROPE WITH YOUR FINGER.

2. (Point to the boy on the left.)

    MOVE YOUR FINGER ALONG THE ROPE FROM THIS BOY TO THE GROUND.
    THEN DRAW OVER IT WITH YOUR CRAYON.

3. DRAW ON THE ROPES FROM EACH BOY TO THE GROUND.
    TRY TO KEEP THE CRAYON ON THE LINE.

"HIPPY" — Age 4 (2000)

14

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HIPPY USA

HOME INSTRUCTION PROGRAM FOR PRESCHOOL YOUNGSTERS
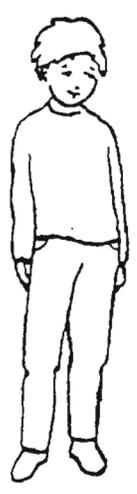
1. (Point to the bees.)

    THE BEES WANT TO REACH THE FLOWERS.
    MOVE YOUR FINGER ALONG THE PATHS FROM EACH BEE TO ITS FLOWER.

2. NOW TAKE A CRAYON.
    DRAW ON THE PATHS — FROM EACH BEE TO ITS FLOWER.

309

HOME INSTRUCTION PROGRAM FOR PRESCHOOL YOUNGSTERS

HIPPY USA
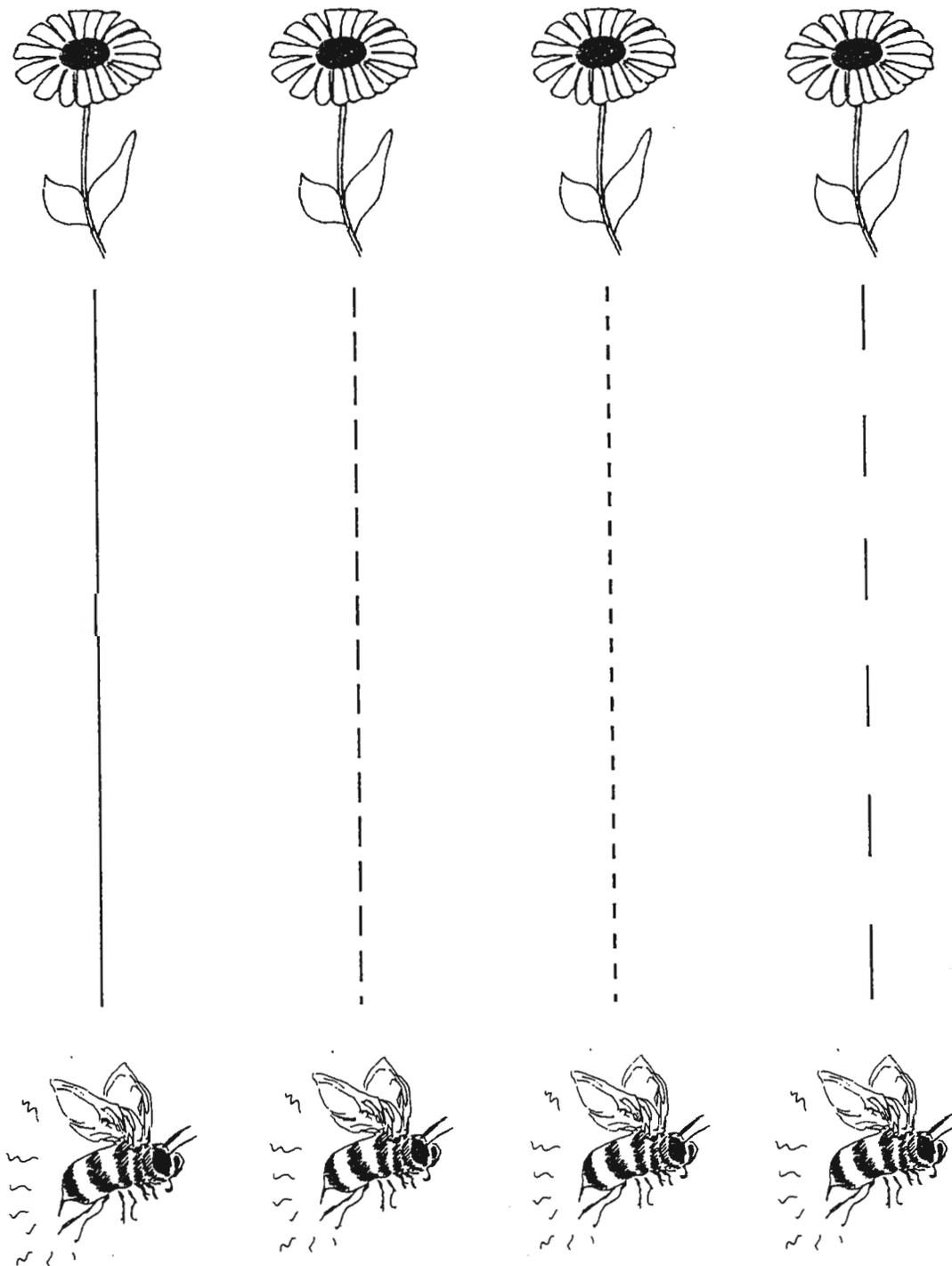
1. THE BEARS WANT TO REACH THE JARS OF HONEY.
   THEY HAVE TO CLIMB UP OR DOWN THE ROPES.
   MOVE YOUR FINGER ALONG THE ROPES,
   FROM EACH BEAR TO EACH JAR OF HONEY.

2. (When the child has finished, say:)

   TAKE A CRAYON AND DRAW OVER THE ROPES — FROM THE BEARS TO THE JARS OF HONEY.
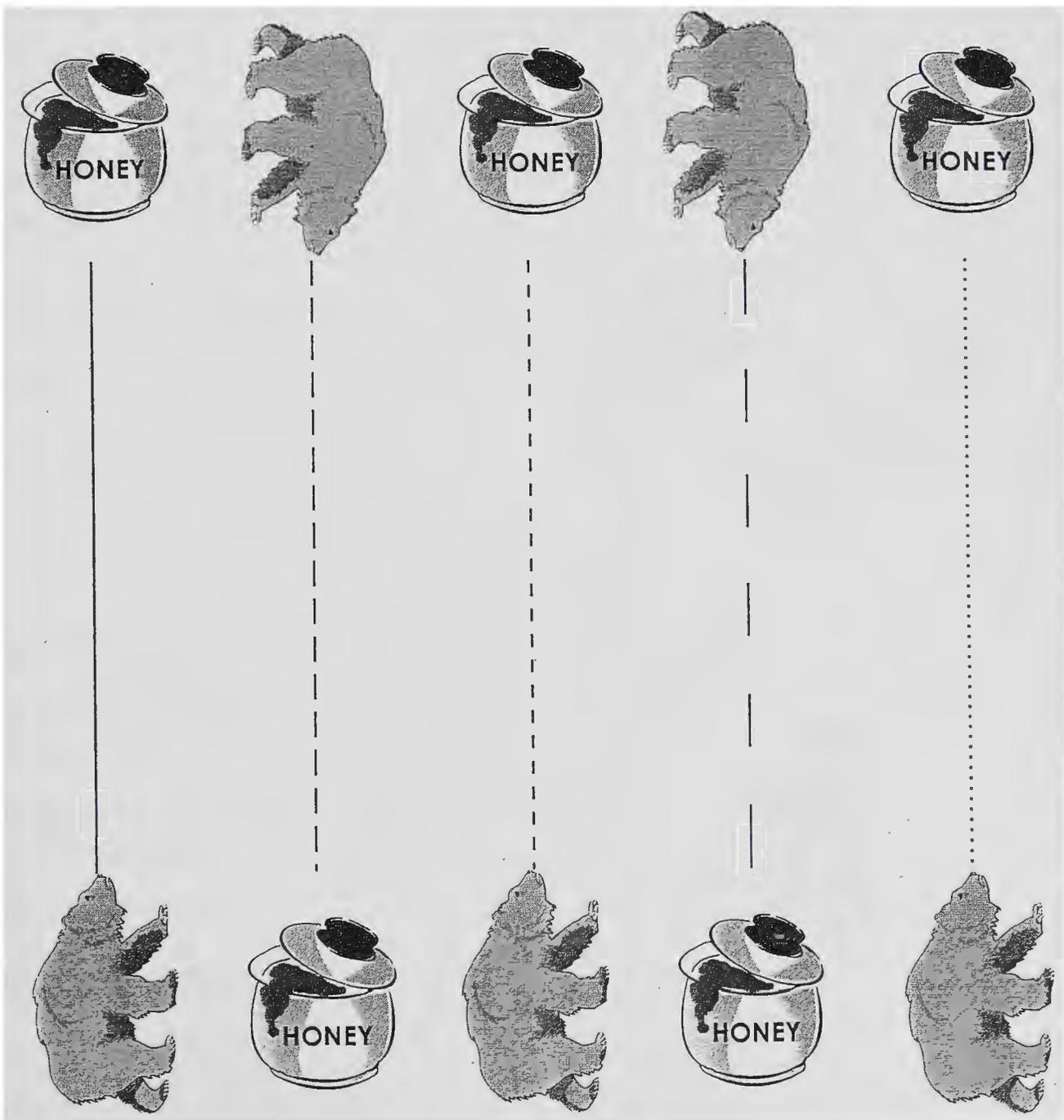
(Materials: a child's (or baby's) pair of socks and shoes, an adult pair of socks and shoes.)

1. (Put your foot next to the child's foot.)

   MY FOOT IS BIG. YOUR FOOT IS SMALL.

   SHOW ME A BIG FOOT.

   SHOW ME A SMALL FOOT.
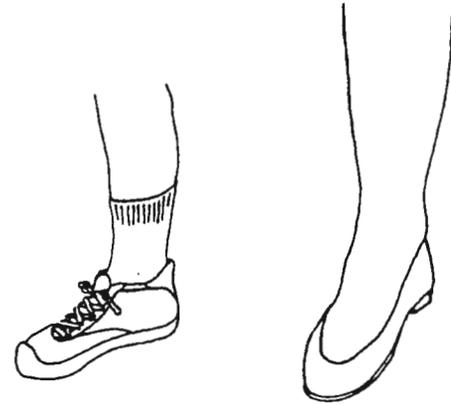
2. (Place all the socks flat on the table. Point to the big socks.)

   THESE ARE BIG SOCKS.

   (Point to the small socks.)

   THESE ARE SMALL SOCKS.

   SHOW ME WHICH SOCKS ARE SMALL.

   SHOW ME WHICH SOCKS ARE BIG.
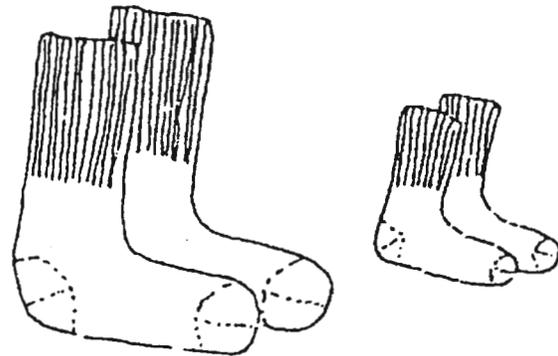
3. TAKE OFF YOUR SHOES AND SOCKS.

   (Give the child one big sock.)

   PUT ON THIS SOCK.

   (Give the child a small sock and, if necessary, help him.)

   PUT ON THIS SOCK.

   WHICH SOCK IS BIG?

   WHICH SOCK IS SMALL?

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HIPPY USA

1. (Place a pair of big shoes next to the child's shoes.)

   ARE THESE SHOES BIG OR SMALL?
   – big

   (Point to the child's shoes.)

   ARE THESE SHOES BIG OR SMALL?
   – small

   (Mix the shoes together.)

   FIND A BIG SHOE.

   FIND A SMALL SHOE.

   PUT THE BIG SHOES TOGETHER.

   PUT THE SMALL SHOES TOGETHER.
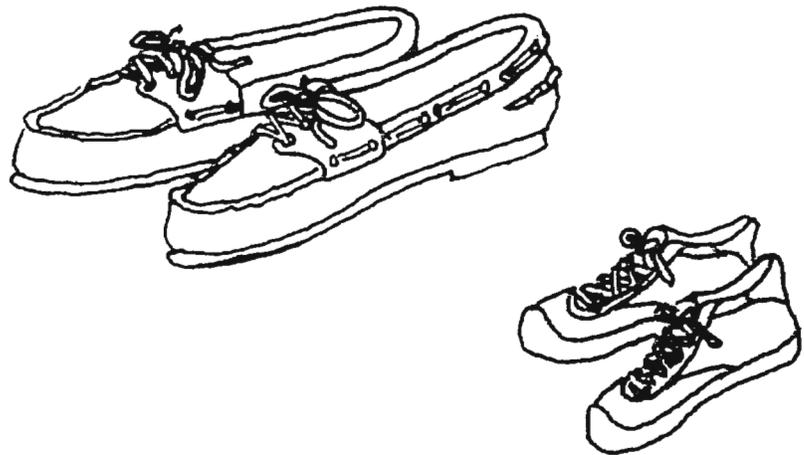
2. (Place the small and big socks on the floor near the shoes.)

   FIND A SMALL SOCK. PUT IT IN A SMALL SHOE.

   FIND A BIG SOCK. PUT IT IN A BIG SHOE.

   PUT THE OTHER BIG SOCK IN THE BIG SHOE.

   PUT THE OTHER SMALL SOCK IN THE SMALL SHOE.

312
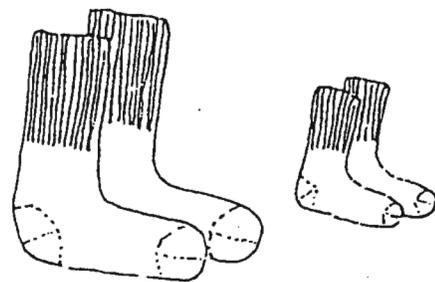
1. (Point to the picture of the hand.)

   PUT YOUR HAND NEXT TO THIS HAND.
   WHICH IS BIGGER, YOUR HAND OR THE PICTURE OF THIS HAND?
   – my hand (the child's)

   PUT YOUR HAND ON MINE.
   WHICH HAND IS BIGGER, YOURS OR MINE?
   – yours (parent's)
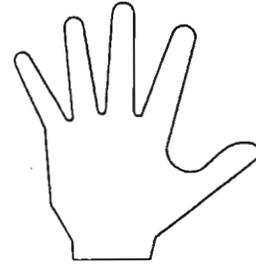
2. (Point to the picture of the foot.)

   WHICH FOOT IS BIGGER, YOURS OR THE PICTURE OF THIS ONE?
   – mine (the child's)

3. (Point to the picture of the shoe.)

   WHICH SHOE IS BIGGER,
   YOUR SHOE OR THIS ONE?
   – mine (child's)

   PUT YOUR SHOE NEXT TO MINE.

   WHICH SHOE IS BIGGER?
   – yours (parent's)
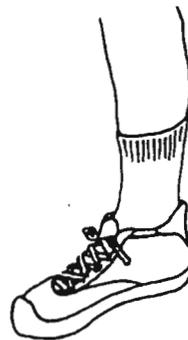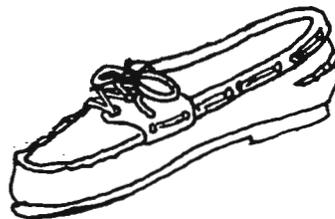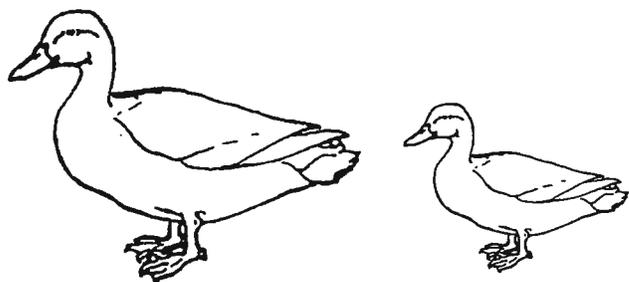
1. SHOW ME WHICH DUCK IS BIGGER.

    MARK THE BIGGER ONE.
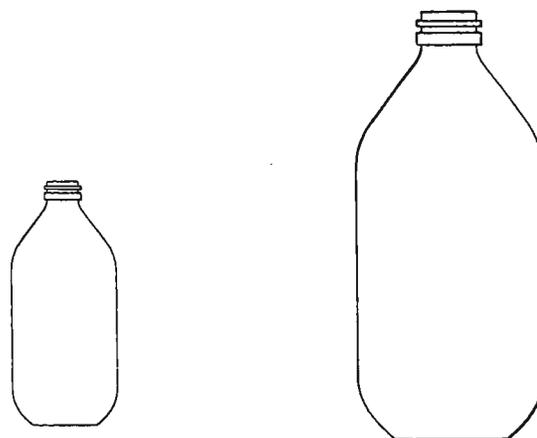
2. SHOW ME WHICH BOTTLE IS BIGGER.

    MARK THE BIGGER ONE.
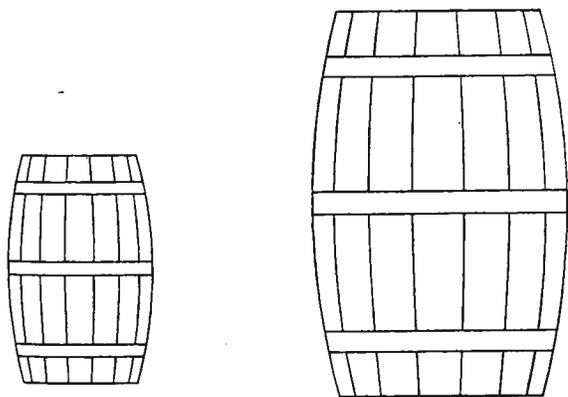
3. WHICH BARREL IS BIGGER?

    MARK IT.
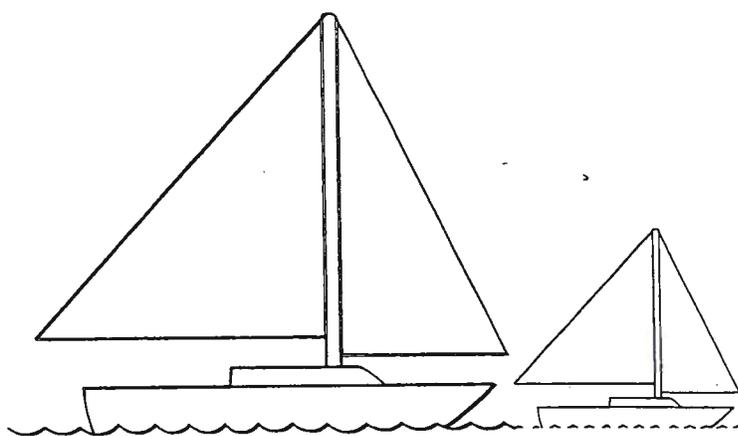
4. WHICH SAILBOAT IS BIGGER?

    MARK IT.

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HIPPY USA

1. (Place Activity Sheet 2 in front of your child. Point to the first set of pictures.)

    LOOK AT THESE PICTURES. THEY TELL A STORY.
    THIS STORY IS ABOUT EATING AN APPLE.
    LISTEN WHILE I TELL THE STORY.
    ONE DAY I WAS HUNGRY. SO I TOOK A BITE FROM AN APPLE. THEN I ATE THE WHOLE APPLE.

2. IF YOU WERE TELLING THE STORY, WHICH PICTURE WOULD COME FIRST? POINT TO IT. WHY?
    — first is the whole apple

3. WHICH PICTURE COMES SECOND?
    — second is the one with some apple eaten, the apple with the bite

    WHICH PICTURE COMES LAST?
    — the apples that is all eaten, the apple core.

4. (Cut the pictures of the apple apart and place them randomly on the table in front of your child.)

    NOW PLACE THE PICTURES IN THE ORDER OF THE STORY.

5. NOW TELL ME THE WHOLE STORY BEGINNING WITH THE FIRST PICTURE.

6. (Point to the second set of pictures.)

    LOOK AT THESE PICTURES. THEY TELL A STORY.
    THIS IS THE STORY ABOUT A TREE.
    IF YOU WERE TELLING THE STORY, WHICH PICTURE WOULD COME FIRST?
    WHY?

7. (Continue as before with question 2. Ask the same questions. The answer in order is: the standing tree, the tree falling down, the tree that fell down or the tree on the ground.)

    (Cut the pictures of the tree apart and place them randomly on the table in front of your child.)

    NOW PLACE THE PICTURES IN THE ORDER OF THE STORY.

8. TELL ME THE WHOLE STORY BEGINNING WITH THE FIRST PICTURE.

    (Give your child crayons and let her color the pictures if she would like. Save the pictures in an envelope so your child can play with them again.)
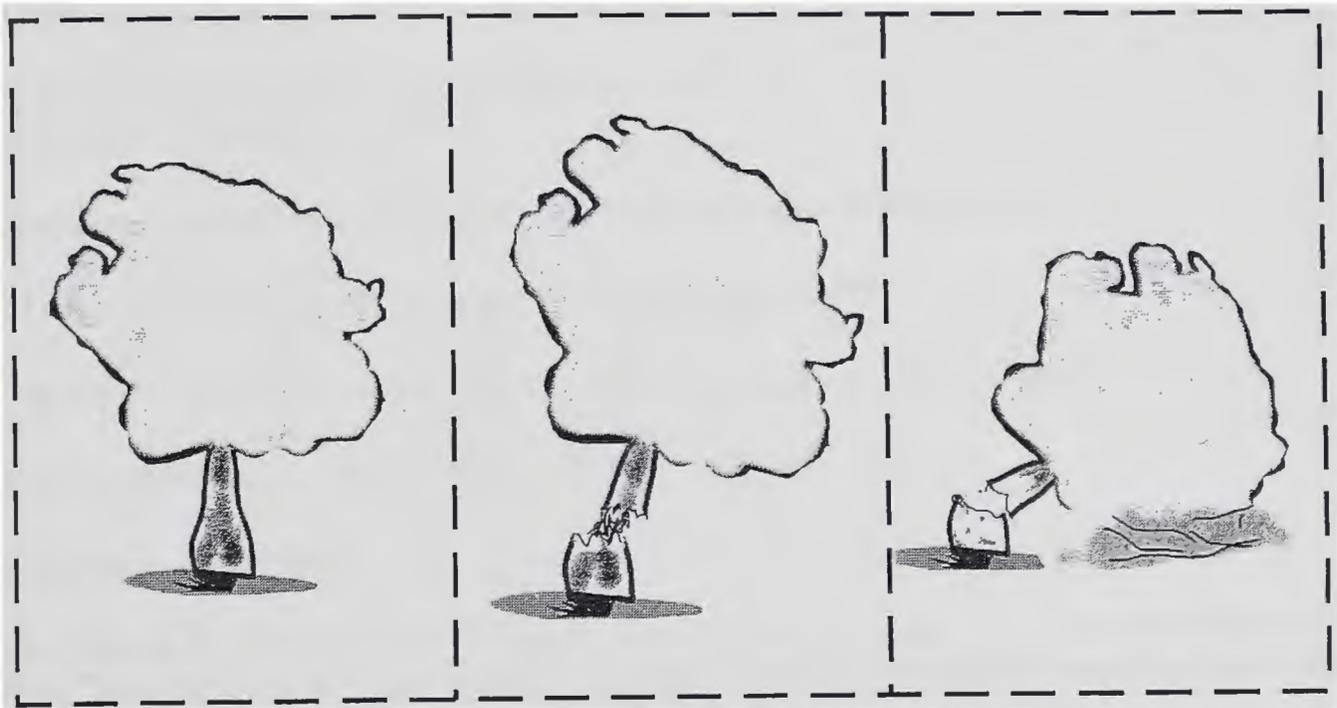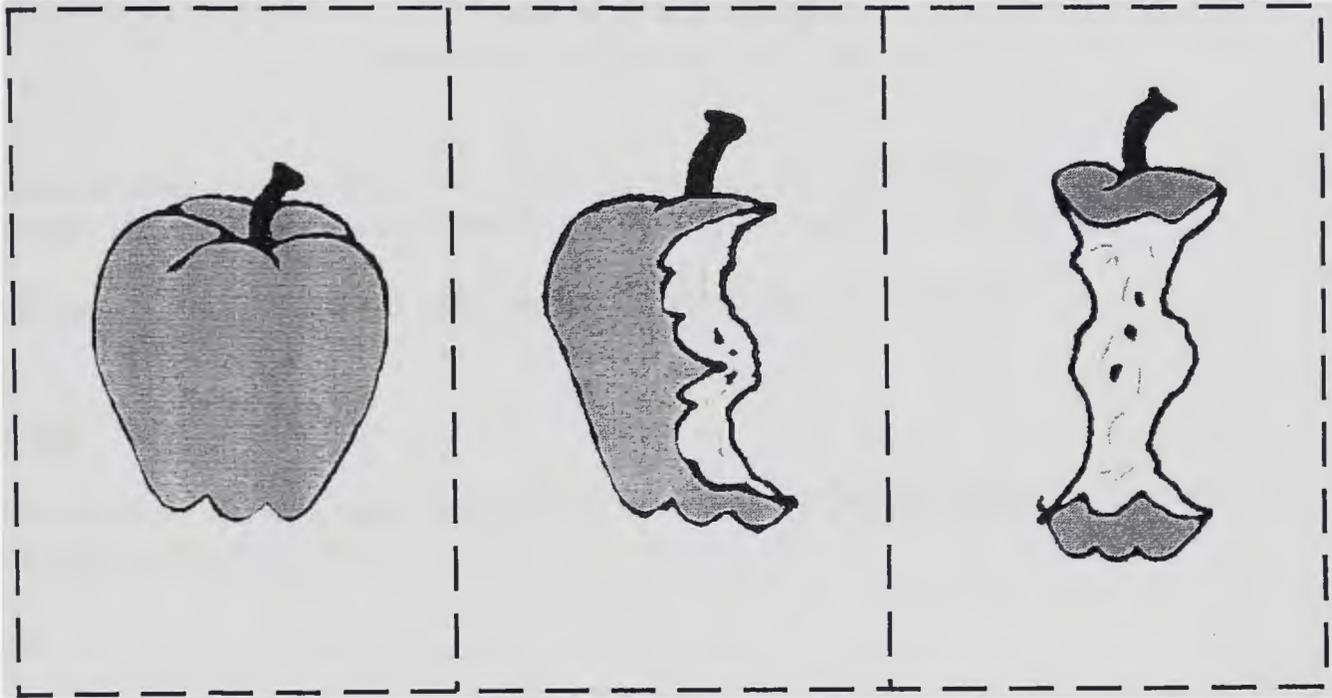
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HOME INSTRUCTION PROGRAM FOR PRESCHOOL YOUNGSTERS

HIPPY USA

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VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

HIPPY PROCESS EVAUATION INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

To be used with **Parents**
at each stage of process data collection

This protocol is semi-structured in form. Each guide question can be followed up by probe questions of clarification as necessary for the researcher to fully understand the interviewee's response.

LENGTH OF INTERVIEW WILL BE ABOUT 20 MINUTES MAXIMUM.

Introduction

• "I'd like to ask you some questions about how you see the program going at this point? Your own opinion is what is important here."

Questions

For first interview only:
• "First of all, what expectations do you have of HIPPY?"

• "What has been your experience of HIPPY so far?"
  Probe re child's experience also

• "In your view , what aspects of the program itself have worked well so far?"

• "What aspects of the program have not worked so well so far?"

• Can you suggest any changes that could improve the program at this point?"

• "Is there anything more you would like to add?"

End and bridge to next activity

• "Good. Thanks for all that. Now I'd like to go on to ask you about   and how you see him/her developing. To do this I'm going to use a questionairre called the Vineland Social-Emotional Early Childhood Scales"

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

HIPPY PROCESS EVAUATION INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

To be used with HIPPY Staff
at each stage of process data collection

This protocol is semi-structured in form. Each guide question can be followed up by probe questions of clarification as necessary for the researcher to fully understand the interviewee's response.

LENGTH OF INTERVIEW WILL BE 45 to 60 MINUTES.

Introduction

• "I'd like to ask you some questions about how you see the program going at this point? Your own opinion is what is important here."

Questions

For first interview only:
• "First of all, what expectations do you have of HIPPY 3, the program commencing this year?"

• "What has been your experience of HIPPY 3 so far?"

• "In your view , what aspects of the program itself have worked well so far?"

• "What aspects of HIPPY 3 have not worked so well so far?"

• Can you suggest any changes that could improve HIPPY 3 at this point?"

• "Is there anything more you would like to add?"

End of session
• "That brings us to the end for today. We're really grateful for all your help - it makes a big difference. Thankyou."

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL re FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS
To be used with Parents

This protocol is semi-structured in form. Each guide question can be followed up by probe questions of clarification as necessary for the researcher to fully understand the interviewee's response. LENGTH OF INTERVIEW WILL BE ABOUT 15 MINUTES MAXIMUM.

Bridge from VINELAND and introduction to last part of session

- "Well thankyou very much for all that information.
  So far I've been asking about how   is developing as his/her own person.
  Now I'd like to ask you a little about how he/she fits in with family relationships. Of course, you've already told me a fair bit about this."

Questions

- "First of all, who is living here at home at present?"
A
B
C
D
E
- For each family member in turn:-

"Thinking about……………..and A…………
      "Do they usually spend much time together?

      "Who gets things going usually?"

      "What sort of things do they do together?"

      "How would you describe their usual/typical interaction together?"

      "What happens if there's a difference of opinion between them?"

      "What happens when it's time to draw things to a close?"

- "Just to finish, then, is there anything else important about……………'s relationships in the family you'd like to tell me?"

End of session

- "That brings us to the end for today. We're really grateful for all your help- it makes a big difference. Thankyou.

- Now before I go, we better make a time for me to come back and see ………………"

BEFORE LEAVING, MAKE AN APPOINTMENT ON ONE HOUR WITH CHILD

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL re HOME TUTOR EXPERIENCE

Stage 3

This protocol is semi-structured in form. Each guide question can be followed up by probe questions or clarification for the researcher to fully understand the interviewee's response.

Questions

<u>1</u>   Do you think your work in HIPPY has benefited you in any way?

<u>2</u>   Is there anything in your life now that you believe has been as a result of your work in HIPPY?

<u>3</u>   Looking back, were there any costs or difficulties for you that resulted from your work in HIPPY?

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT
and
GLASTONBURY CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

INVITATION TO YOU TO JOIN IN WITH AN EARLY CHILDHOOD
RESEARCH PROJECT:
Evaluating HIPPY in Geelong

The research is an evaluation of an early childhood intervention program, the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) which is being trialed in Geelong. HIPPY involves helping parents provide educational enrichment for their children aged 4 and 5 years. The HIPPY program is used in a number of overseas counties where it has been found to help children make a more successful start in school. The program is currently being tested out in Geelong by Glastonbury Child and Family Services, in the Corio district.

To see whether the program is able to assist preschool children in Geelong make a successful start at school, we need to compare a group of children enrolled in HIPPY with a group of children not currently enrolled in the program.

We are inviting families with a preschool child, living in the Geelong and Colac regions and not currently enrolled in the program, to take part in the research.

What is involved for you? Our researcher would spend time with you and your child at a time and place convenient to you for about an hour on three occasions. This would be once this year, once next year (2003) and once the following year (2004). We would also wish to speak to your child's teacher on two occasions, in Grade Prep and at the beginning of Grade 1.

In the sessions, our researcher would ask you about your child's development, as well as ask you to complete a questionairre about your relationship with your child. With your child, our researcher will be presenting some age-appropriate tasks. Teachers will be asked to complete some brief questionairres about your child settling in at school.
Each family will be offered $20 at each meeting in appreciation of their assistance.

Please rest assured that your confidentiality would be strictly protected, as names will not be used in any report. We will not give to anyone else your name in connection with any information given by you or your child.

You would be free to withdraw from the research at any time, for any reason of your own. In the unlikely event that you, or your child, becomes upset by the research, I would bring things to a halt. We could then discuss how best to address the concern and perhaps organise other assistance if this was what you wanted.

I am conducting this research as part of my studies towards a doctorate in Psychology. My Research Supervisors and I are keen to answer any questions you have about this research. For further information, phone me on 52 445294 / 0416219495 or Associate Professor Suzie Dean at the Psychology Department (who is supervising the research) on 03 9365 2336. You can also call Vic Coull, Director of Glastonbury Child and Family Services on 5222 6911 about any aspect of the research.

THANKYOU FOR CONSIDERING THIS INVITATION

JENNI GREEN

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT
and
GLASTONBURY CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

CONSENT BY PARENT TO PARTICIPATE

I hereby freely consent to my child and myself participating in the research project "Evaluating HIPPY in Geelong".

The aim and nature of the project has been explained to me and I have had the chance to have any questions answered. I have been given a copy of the Invitation to Participate which sets out details of the project.

I know that what I say will remain confidential and that my name will not appear in any report. I also know that I can withdraw from the research at any time without this affecting my family's part in HIPPY.

I also consent/do not consent to our interview being audio taped.

MY CHILD'S NAME:......................................

MY NAME:.......................................

SIGNED:...................................

DATE: /   /

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the research Supervisor (Name: Suzie Dean ph. 03-9365 2336). If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Technology, PO Box 14428 MCMC, Melbourne, 8001 (telephone no: 03-96884710).

We are looking for families in Colac to take part in some valuable research being conducted by Victoria University and Glastonbury Child and Family Services

WHAT IS THE RESEARCH ABOUT?

The research is an evaluation of the HIPPY program. HIPPY stands for Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters and involves helping parents provide educational enrichment for their children aged 4 and 5 years.

HIPPY was originally developed in Israel and is currently being used in a number of overseas countries where it has been found to help children make a more successful start in school. The program is currently being trialed in Geelong by Glastonbury Child and Family Services, in the Corio district.

To see whether the program is able to assist preschool children in Geelong make a successful start at school, we need to compare a group of children enrolled in HIPPY with a group of children not currently enrolled in the program

THIS IS WHERE YOU CAN HELP US......

WHO CAN PARTICPATE IN THIS RESEARCH?

Families living in Colac:

- including a child turning 4 by April 30th 2002

- including parents with up to Year 12 education

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH INVOLVE?

- Three meetings with the researcher, one in 2002, one in 2003 and one in 2004

- During the meeting parents will be asked to complete some questionnaires and children some age-appropriate tasks

- Meetings will take about one and a quarter hours

- Meetings can take place at your home

- Families will be offered $20 at each meeting in appreciation of their assistance

- Confidentiality is assured and people's names will not appear in any report

AN EARLY CHILDHOOD RESEARCH PROJECT

Victoria University, and Glastonbury Child and Family Services

FAMILIES WITH A PRE-SCHOOL CHILD

Can You Assist?

THANK YOU

PLEASE CONTACT ME:

My name is Jenni Green and I am conducting this research as part of psychology studies

If you are interested in finding out more about participating in the research I will be available to answer questions at the end of your child's next kinder session.

Alternatively, you may phone me,

Home: 52 445294

Mobile: 0416 219495 (please leave a message and I will call you back)

OR

Please fill in this section and return it to your child's kinder teacher tomorrow.

NAME:..

PHONE ....

Preferred day/time to contact:..................

Jenni Green

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT
and
GLASTONBURY CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

CONSENT BY HIPPY STAFF MEMBER TO PARTICIPATE

I hereby freely consent to participating in the research project "Evaluating HIPPY in Geelong".

The aim and nature of the project has been explained to me and I have had the chance to have any questions answered. I have been given a copy of the Invitation to Participate which sets out details of the project as well as a copy of the Agreement between Victoria University and Glastonbury Child and Family Services concerning the research.

I also consent/do not consent to our interview being audio taped.

NAME:...

SIGNED:...

DATE: /   /

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the research Supervisor (Name: Suzie Dean ph. 03-9365 2336). If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University of Technology, PO Box 14428 MCMC, Melbourne, 8001 (telephone no: 03-96884710).

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Ms)-
Principal
St. Mary's School
Calvert Street,
COLAC. 3250

20th October, 2003

Dear Ms

**Re: Invitation to participate in the Evaluation of the Home Instruction
Program for Preschool Youngsters in Geelong.**

I am writing to seek your assistance with the evaluation of the Home Instruction Program for
Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) which is being run in Geelong by Glastonbury Child and Family
Services. Evaluation is being conducted by Victoria University, and it forms the basis of my thesis
for the Doctor of Philosophy (Psychology)Degree. This research has the approval of the Victoria
University Ethics Committee, the Department of Education and Training, and the Catholic Education
Office, and is being supervised by Associate Professor Suzanne Dean in the Department of
Psychology.

HIPPY is an internationally recognised program and was developed to prepare children for school by
enhancing the home literacy environment, the quality of parent-child verbal interaction, and parents'
ability to help their children learn. This evaluation of HIPPY, which began in 2002 involves 56
children who are now in Grade Prep. One of these children, ~~~~~~~~, attends St Mary's
Primary School. We would like to invite~~~~~~s teacher to complete a brief assessment of her
school readiness using three short rating scales – the Gumpel Readiness Inventory, the Vineland
Adaptive Behaviour Communication Domain Scale, and the Behavioral Academic Self-esteem scale.
This task is expected to take teachers approximately 20 minutes per student, and the assessment
would be repeated in 12 months' time. I have enclosed copies of the teacher assessments for your
information. Teachers would be asked to sign a consent form prior to their participation in the
research. Informed consent from parents for all elements of the research has been obtained by the
researcher during recent parent interviews.

In addition, I request permission to conduct individual psychological testing of ~~~~~~~~ in
Term 4 2003 while she is at school. I would require approximately 30 minutes to administer the
Early Screening Profile and the Who Am I? Test, both of which are standardised and commonly-
used assessments of early childhood development. We have already obtained one set of this data for
each child in 2002, and I would like to repeat these measures in 12 months' time.

I would be very grateful if you would consider my request. Please find attached copies of Catholic
Education Office letter of approval, Victoria University Ethics Committee letter of approval,
Criminal Record check, research proposal and teachers assessments. If you require any further
information you can contact me on (03) 5224-1990, or my research supervisor Associate Professor
Suzanne Dean in the Department of Psychology. I will be in contact with you by telephone in the
next few weeks.

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

Yours sincerely

Jenni Green

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
and
GLASTONBURY CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

INVITATION TO TEACHERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROJECT:

"Evaluating HIPPY in Geelong"

The Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is an internationally-recognised program first developed in Israel in 1969. It is based on the idea that children from disadvantaged backgrounds often reach school without some of the basic skills and learning that children from more resourced backgrounds typically have. HIPPY was developed to prepare children for school by enhancing the home literacy environment, the quality of parent-child verbal interaction, and parents' ability to help their children learn. The third intake of the HIPPY program – HIPPY 3 - was begun by Glastonbury Child and Family Services in 2002.

The evaluation of HIPPY 3 is currently being conducted by Victoria University in collaboration with Glastonbury Child and Family Services. This research focuses on the social, psychological, and educational development of participating children in comparison to a group of children not doing the program. This is partly measured by individual psychological testing of the children, and partly using parents' and teachers' assessment of children. The first phase of data collection commenced in 2002, and the evaluation is now moving into its third and final phase.

As the teacher of one of the participating children, we invite you to contribute to the evaluation of this important program by agreeing to complete three brief questionnaires about the child. These questionnaires – The Gumpel Readiness Inventory, The Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scales - Communication Domain, and the Behavioral Academic Self-esteem Scale - should take you approximately 20 minutes to complete. Parental consent for the research has been obtained, as has approval from the Department of Education and Training, and the Catholic Education Office.

Confidentiality is a high priority for the families helping with the research, and also for teachers. Neither teachers' nor families' names will appear in any report, written or verbal.

While, from the researchers' perspective, it is strongly hoped that you will be able to participate in the research, you would be free to withdraw from the research at any time.

The researcher, Ms Jenni Green is a student at Victoria University and this research is the focus of her thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Psychology). The thesis and the overall evaluation of the HIPPY program at Glastonbury Child and Family Services is being supervised by Associate Professor Suzanne Dean. Approval for all aspects of the research has been obtained from the Victoria University Ethics Committee. For further information you can telephone Jenni on 5224-1990 – 0416219495, or Suzanne Dean at the Psychology Department on (03) 9365-2336.

THANK YOU

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
and
GLASTONBURY CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

"Evaluating HIPPY in Geelong"

CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHERS PARTICIPATING IN THE PROJECT:

I hereby freely consent to participating in the research project "Evaluating HIPPY in Geelong".

The aim and nature of the project has been explained to me and I have had the chance to have any questions answered. I have been given a copy of the Invitation to Participate which sets out the details of what the project involves.

I know that my assessment of the participating child will remain confidential, and my name will not appear in any report. I also know that I can withdraw from the research at any time.

NAME: ....

SCHOOL:....

SIGNED:....

DATE: /   /

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the researcher Jenni Green on 5224-1990 or the research Supervisor Associate Professor Suzanne Dean at the Victoria University Psychology Department on (03) 9365-2336. If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated you may contact the Secretary, University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University, PO Box 14428 MCMC, Melbourne 8001 (telephone: (03) 9688-4710).

CODNG SHEET FOR FAMILY ATTACHMENT INTERVIEW

1 = Time 1
2 = Time 2
3 = Time 3

X = reported behaviour of child
Y = reported behaviour of other

FAMILY NO: _____

	INITIATES					DOES NOT INITIATE			
	CONFIDENT	NON-CONFIDENT		NOT KNOWN		PASSIVE	SELF SUFFICIENT	FEARFUL	NOT KNOWN
		Insistent	Tentative						
INITIATION X									
Y									

	MEDIATING ENGAGEMENT					MEDIATING NON-ENGAGEMENT			
	WILLING			NOT WILLING	NOT KNOWN	POSTPONED	REJECTED	IGNORED	NOT KNOWN
	Time negotiated	Ready	Overly ready						
RESPONSE TO INITIATION X									
Y									

	PARTICIPATION				AFFIRMATION				AFFECT						ACCOMMODATION DIFFERENCES						
	COOP-ERATION	NONCOOPERATION		NON PARTICIP ATION	N/K	VALID-ATION	INVALID-ATION	NEITH ER	N/K	POSITIVE		NEGATIVE		NO AFFECT SHOWN	N/K	DIFFERENCES RESOLVED			DIFFERENCES NOT RESOLVED		DIFFS AVOID ED	N/K
		Too much input	Too little input							Special closeness	Friendli-ness	Hostility	Ambiv-alence			Focus on resolving	Fitting in	Approp yielding	Fight → submit	Fight → flight		
ENGAGEMENT X																						
Y																						

	MUTUALITY						AFFECT						
	MUTUAL CLOSE	INITIATES		ACCEPTANCE		NOT KNOWN	SATIS-FACTION	NON-SATISFACTION					NOT KNOWN
		Acknowledged	Not acknowledged	Resists	Accepts			Sadness	Worry	Anger	Relief	Indiff erence	
DISENGAGEMENT X													
Y													