

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is a home visiting program for parents of three-, four-, and five-year-olds that involves training parents to be their children's first teachers.¹ The program targets school readiness and parent involvement and is the largest of the 11 HIPPY programs in Texas.² In 2019-20, HIPPY Dallas Independent School District (ISD) had a total budget of \$2,152,979, including \$799,400 from the Dallas ISD general operating funds, \$1,020,611 from Title I funds, and \$332,968 from external sources.³ This was a decrease from 2018-19 (\$2,408,737). In response to the COVID-19 pandemic in spring 2020, Dallas ISD HIPPY staff members switched to virtual visits with families.

PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of this evaluation was to evaluate and report outcomes of the HIPPY program.⁴ Specifically, this evaluation reports (1) characteristic data for participants and families, (2) *Ages and Stages Questionnaire, Third Edition* (ASQ-3) data as a measure of development, and (3) kindergarten (K) readiness assessment outcomes.⁵

EVALUATION QUESTIONS/OUTCOMES

What were the HIPPY program and student characteristics in 2019-20?

Methodology

HIPPY Dallas ISD program implementation information primarily came from an interview with the HIPPY Dallas ISD program director and data files from the Texas HIPPY office. The evaluator conducted frequency analyses to summarize participant characteristics.

Results⁶

In 2019-20, HIPPY Dallas ISD served 884 children and 735 parents. Enrollment was highest in HIPPY Year 2 (30%).⁷ Most children (87%) and parents (88%) in the program were

Hispanic. Just over half of the children were female (55%) and most participated with a biological parent (96%). A majority of the parents were married (62%); completed a high school education, GED, or less (73%); and/or participated using the Spanish curriculum (76%).

Fewer children participated in HIPPY Dallas ISD this year ($N = 884$) compared to 2018-19 ($N = 1,253$).⁸ While the number of students who completed the curriculum years decreased from 1,060 in 2018-19 (85%) to 760 in 2019-20 (86%), the percentage of completers remained comparable.

What were the retention rates of HIPPY participants from 2018-19 to 2019-20?

Methodology

The evaluator used frequency analyses to determine the number of HIPPY children who remained enrolled in the program from 2018-19 to 2019-20.

Results

Of the 562 2018-19 HIPPY Year 1 children, 223 (40%) remained enrolled in 2019-20 as HIPPY Year 2 children.⁹ Of the 394 2018-19 HIPPY Year 2 children, 247 (63%) remained enrolled in 2019-20 as HIPPY Year 3 children.¹⁰

What percentage of HIPPY participants scored at or above developmental benchmarks?

Methodology

Texas HIPPY provided the evaluator with ASQ-3 data for Dallas ISD HIPPY students on July 7, 2020.¹¹ The ASQ-3 contains five domains (Communication, Gross Motor, Fine Motor, Problem Solving, and Personal-Social). Each domain score has an associated cut off indicating on-schedule development. Both the assessment questions and the cut offs for each domain vary by the age of the child at the time of assessment.¹² The evaluator examined the EOY (assessments given between May 18, and

¹In 2019-20, HIPPY Dallas ISD began including some two-year olds in their program to target children for earlier intervention; however, the curriculum was not yet widely disseminated.

²As reported by the Dallas ISD HIPPY Director on 01/29/20.

³As reported by the Early Learning department on 01/21/20. The grants office reported \$974,258 in Title I funds for HIPPY as of 02/28/20.

⁴Portions of this evaluation were adapted from Rowles and Hinkley (2019).

⁵Typically, this report examines *Bracken School Readiness Assessment 3rd Edition* scores (Bracken, 2002) and other long-term data including *TerraNova*, *SUPERA*, and *State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness*. However, these assessments were cancelled in 2020 because of the district transition to at-home learning due to COVID-19.

⁶Texas HIPPY data files received 06/25/20 (characteristics) and 07/07/20 (ASQ-3).

⁷The HIPPY curriculum consists of three years: Year 1 (first year) through Year 3 (last year). HIPPY Dallas ISD also engaged with a two-year-old curriculum in 2019-20.

⁸The decrease in participants was attributed to a decrease in the overall caseloads of HIPPY staff members. The smaller caseloads followed best practices set forth by HIPPY USA.

⁹Fifty-eight percent did not return, two percent repeated Year 1, and 0.2 percent completed Year 3.

¹⁰Thirty-seven percent did not return and 0.3 percent repeated Year 2.

¹¹See Squires and Bricker (2009) for more information on ASQ-3.

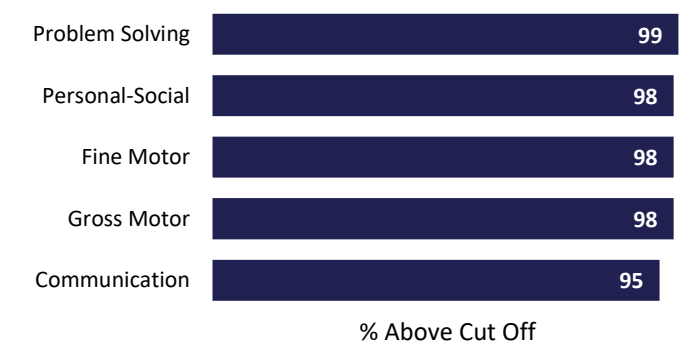
¹²Cut scores were available for children aged one month to 66 months old at the time of assessment. Children older than 66 months at the time of assessment were excluded from analyses ($n = 27$).

June 09, 2020) ASQ-3 data to determine the percentage of students who scored at or above the cut off for each domain.

Results

EOY data were available for 446 2019-20 HIPPY participants (50% of enrolled participants). Across domains, the vast majority of participants scored at or above ASQ-3 cut scores (Figure 1).

Figure 1: 2019-20 Percentage of HIPPY Participants that Met ASQ-3 Cut Scores



Source: Provided by Texas HIPPY on 07/07/20.
Note: Tested n = 446.

What percentage of students were kindergarten ready in 2019-20?

Methodology

The evaluator examined the *Texas Kindergarten Early Assessment (TX-KEA)* to measure K readiness. TX-KEA is a multidimensional assessment; however, the evaluator used beginning-of-year (BOY) TX-KEA Emergent Literacy: Reading (the domain equated with K readiness) data to examine the K-readiness rates of former HIPPY students and a matched non-HIPPY control group.¹³ The matched control group was created using propensity score matching to identify students who took the same exam but did not participate in the HIPPY program.¹⁴ The evaluator used *chi-square* analyses and Cohen’s *w*¹⁵ to test the differences in K-readiness rates between the two groups.

Results

A slightly greater percentage of former HIPPY participants (83%) were K ready as measured by BOY TX-KEA when compared to matched non-HIPPY participants (80%; Figure 2). This difference was neither statistically nor practically significant, $\chi^2 (1) = .16, p = .67, w = .03$.

¹³ For the analysis, the English and Spanish administrations were combined into one file to allow for examination of overall student performance. The percentage of students *On Track* was used. The BOY TX-KEA data file was dated 10/29/19.
¹⁴ Non-HIPPY matched controls included students who took BOY TX-KEA in kindergarten who did not participate in HIPPY but had the same

Although the HIPPY students were not statistically tested in comparison to the district (72%), the HIPPY students also outperformed the district on BOY TX-KEA.

Figure 2: 2019-20 Percentage of Kindergarten-Ready Students on BOY TX-KEA Literacy Reading for Former HIPPY Participants, Matched Non-HIPPY Comparisons, and the District



Source: TX-KEA data file dated 10/29/19.
Note: HIPPY n = 80; Non-HIPPY n = 80; district n = 8,857.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue to seek areas for improvements in effectiveness. The program has enjoyed pre/post gains in developmental skills in every previous year (Rowles & Hinkley, 2019). This year, at least 95 percent of HIPPY students met ASQ-3 thresholds across domains. HIPPY leadership should continue to nurture its staff and review processes to maintain these strong results.

Include HIPPY in the evaluation of other major Dallas ISD early childhood programs. Many children in the Dallas ISD attend more than one prekindergarten program. Thus, it has become more difficult to evaluate the efficacy of any one early childhood program exclusively, particularly for long term outcomes. Evaluation and program managers should consider program participation and dosage as a variable in future evaluations of early childhood education. Data structures and systems should be carefully reviewed and enhanced to support this goal.

REFERENCES

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probability of HIPPY enrollment. This methodology allows for group comparisons with reduced concern about systematic differences that may confound the effects of the treatment. For a detailed methodology on propensity score matching see Palladino (2016).
¹⁵ Cohen’s *w* values of 0.1, 0.3, and 0.5 are considered small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively (Cohen, 1988).

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