



HIPPYUSA
Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters



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FORMER PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON CONGRATULATES MARVIN SCHWARTZ, NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF HIPPY USA

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Photo of then Governor Bill Clinton and HIPPY participants during the program's early days in Arkansas.

A Love of Learning Begins at Home

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is a parent involvement, school readiness program that helps parents prepare their three, four, and five year old children for success in school and beyond.

HIPPY helps parents empower themselves as their children's first teacher by giving them the tools, skills and confidence they need to work with their children in the home. The program was designed to bring families, organizations and communities together and remove any barriers to participation that may include limited financial resources or lack of education.

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IN THE NEWS

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Marvin's Message

A weekly email update from the HIPPY USA National Executive Director

Updates for April 22, 2010

The 2010 National Conference was a fantastic event, with attendance by nearly 500 HIPPY staff and guests from across the country. Among many highlights of the four-day program was the presentation of the Avima Lombard Award to National Program Director Gayle Hart and the keynote address by U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Regina Benjamin. And preceding the conference, the HIPPY Champion event also brought together a large number of HIPPY supporters to honor two extraordinary Arkansans.

We're planning a special edition of the HIPPY Times on these events, including lots of photos. In the meantime, I'll share some remarks from the HIPPY Champions, President Bill Clinton (who sent a video statement of his congratulations), and Dr. Benjamin. I've also asked the national office staff to each write a paragraph on their impressions of these events. Here's what they said:

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March 5, 2010 

March 12, 2010 

March 19, 2010 

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HIPPY Photo Contest Winner



Hundreds of photos were submitted for the HIPPY USA Photo Contest. Thanks to you, we have many images to utilize to "show" the face of HIPPY! Featured above is the winning photo, sent in by Evelyn Page, HIPPY Coordinator with the Southwest AR Educational Cooperative in Hope, AR. Mrs. Page and her program received a digital camera for this wonderful first place photo.

HIPPY Champion Ann Kamps

"HIPPY is the singular most perfect preschool program ever. The

problems our children face...if those children had HIPPY, they would not have those problems. HIPPY is the answer."

HIPPY Champion Dr. Chad Rogers

"The people who are set up for failure and then succeed, they really inspire us. I see that daily in the lives of children coping with poverty. I came across HIPPY in 2001 when wanted doctors to become more aware of literacy, to get books to children get books, and to help parents learn how to prepare their kids for school. HIPPY parents motivated to help children prepare for school. HIPPY provides that opportunity for parents, and children's lives are better for it."

Erica McMahan, HIPPY Alumni

"I was a HIPPY child in 1990. I loved the weekly visits. They were so important in my life and they made learning fun. HIPPY taught me the importance of education, dedication, and that all children could learn. Education became a priority in my family. I was my family's first high school graduate. And I've now graduated college. Because of HIPPY, as an elementary teacher today, I have confidence to face the challenges of educating children."

President Bill Clinton

"I can't tell you how pleased I am that HIPPY calls Arkansas home. For nearly a quarter century, HIPPY programs have improved lives of children and families in Arkansas and all across America.

I'm glad to join you in saluting two Arkansans as HIPPY champions. We wouldn't be here celebrating HIPPY's success if it hadn't been for the relentless work of Ann Kamps, who Hillary asked twenty five years ago to help bring HIPPY to Arkansas. Also congratulations to Dr Chad Rodgers, a pediatrician who supports literacy. He represents a combination of health, education and HIPPY's future. Thanks to these two individuals, the work begun long ago in Israel by Dr. Avima Lombard has never lost its urgency or value.

Thanks to all of you, HIPPY will continue its good work to benefit children and families in the years to come. Families are the heart of our communities and our great state. Thank you for supporting them and for building a great future for us all.

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And a special thanks from Hillary. She may be prouder of bringing HIPPY to Arkansas than almost anything she did in all the years when we were there. She'd be happy to be with you today, too. And we wish you well."

Keynote speaker at the Avima Lombard Gala was U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Regina Benjamin, who received a spirited introduction by Dr. Joycelyn Elders, a former Surgeon General and Little Rock resident. Dr. Elders spoke of Dr. Benjamin's tenacity in maintaining health services in her rural community of Bayou La Batre. Undaunted by hurricanes and fires that destroyed the south Alabama community health clinic she had built, Dr. Benjamin made house calls by boat during flood times and spread soaked patient records on the lawn to dry in the sun.

For her part, Dr. Benjamin strongly commended HIPPY programs and staff for the assistance they provided to low income and disadvantaged children and families. She spoke of families she had assisted and the impact poverty had on their lives. She told of a girl, taken on a college tour, who thought her best option one day might be to work as a janitor in the campus buildings. Dr. Benjamin also spoke of a public school employee whose personal dignity and dedication to her work persevered despite a painful medical condition.

Overall, Dr. Benjamin's intelligence and commitment to public health shone through her comments like the beacon of a lighthouse. Her participation in the HIPPY USA conference was a strong message that she recognized the importance of our early childhood education work in supporting healthy children and families.

If any of you wish to send Dr. Benjamin a personal note regarding her conference appearance, you may contact her through her Communications Director, Damon Thompson. Email: Damon.Thompson@hhs.gov.

Observations from the National Office staff:

Gayle Hart

"My best highlight is a very personal one. I was humbled to receive the Avima D. Lombard Award, presented by my daughter and in the presence of my HIPPY family! I was encouraged by the number of HIPPY coordinators, home visitors and trainers who congratulated me for the duration of the conference. Also very high on the list was the ability to share with, and obtain input from, the field the HIPPY Model project. This is an exciting time for HIPPY and the proposed document has the potential to bring HIPPY the credibility and acclaim that it rightly deserves!"

Pauline Muthoni

"I want to thank all of our HIPPY family members for showing your HIPPY pride - supporting our HIPPY Store by buying our specialized merchandise. Special thanks to Arkansas HIPPY Staff - Kristy, Jackie and Alta, for stepping in when I was so overwhelmed. And from my heart, thanks to Kelly Moore for sticking with me through the busiest spells. You are all much appreciated."

Teri Todd

"It was wonderful for the participants to actually "seek out" HIPPY USA staff to put a face with a name! Comments like, "It's so good to meet you in person," or "I had to make sure that I met you to thank you for all your help," really makes all the hard work and effort worthwhile."

Angela Johnson-Jones

"It was a pleasure to finally meet Vianey Rodriguez (Early Learning Coalition of FL). I have worked with Vianey regarding MIS and trying to get her caught up to speed on how to properly input data into MIS considering she took on the role as being a home visitor to coordinator nearly 4 months ago. It was great to see the MS PIRC group. I went on my first site visit to Lexington, MS and met Lula Friar, Lubertha Banks, and Henry Lockett; a great group of people working hard in MS. I would like to say to Alice Greenwood, THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR EVERYTHING! Alice was a pleasure to work with and you provided a lot of insight. Thank you all for allowing me the opportunity to meet you, to put a face with the name and voice and allowing me to personally say thank you for all that you do."

Letha Todd

"My hum drum life as a bean counter was interrupted with the hustle and bustle of conference life. So many new faces but many so familiar. Angel Ash was a new face and personality for

me this conference. There was a bit of confusion surrounding who was attending from her organization but quickly straightened out by her. She stopped by the registration to put a name with a face. As we began to talk, it was like so many HIPPY relationships that I have formed, it was like talking to a friend that I have known from childhood. I love my HIPPY family!

Advocacy

- In many states, activity is underway in response to the new national health reform agenda and the directives for home visitation contained in the new law. First steps involve the creation of state home visiting coalitions and state inventories of home visiting services. The inventories are intended to identify the scope of home visiting services within each state, specifically showing underserved areas. HIPPY program staff is attending these meeting. The national office can provide handouts and information to assure state agencies and officials are aware of and understand the value of HIPPY.
- A letter is being prepared and will be sent to federal HHS officials showing how HIPPY USA responds to the new national health reform laws and the opportunities for home visiting services. This is part of a larger request by HHS for comment on the new law by home visiting agencies. HIPPY is already a co-signer in a similar letter from the national Home Visiting Coalition.
- The US House of Representatives is planning to recognize the 1st Anniversary of Serve America Act. This week, the service sector is celebrating the one-year anniversary of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act bill signing. To commemorate the anniversary, Chairman George Miller (D-CA) will introduce a resolution recognizing the critical importance of volunteerism and national service in helping to meet our nation's most pressing challenges. Click [here](#) to learn how to ask your Representative to co-sponsor the Miller resolution on the importance of service and volunteering

Curriculum

- Revision continues on the Age 4 curriculum, with updates completed for the first ten activity packets. At this point, the changes are being applied to the additional materials used by HIPPY staff and parents during the home visits. Next steps include translation of the revised materials into Spanish and a limited printing of all the new materials. The new materials will be field tested this fall in a pilot program involving some 200 families.

National Office

- Social Solutions Group is the firm selected to develop the new on-line MIS. At this time, the contract presented by SSG is under review by HIPPY attorneys. We expect this highly anticipated project to be underway in the near future.
- The HIPPY Model Project is another large initiative underway. The project will create a single manual to guide program operations and provide an on-site review system to identify how local programs are meeting those guidelines. This project will incorporate the current SAFE and Stellar evaluation systems. The development work is scheduled for completion this summer and project implementation is planned for the fall.
- All evaluation reports and commentary from the National Conference are being processed. The information will identify attendee impressions of workshops, speakers, and overall conference operations. Thank you again to all who shared their views in those evaluation forms. This input will be extremely helpful in planning for the 2012 conference. At this time, the site for the 2012 program has not yet been determined.
- Preliminary drafts of the 2010-2011 HIPPY USA budget are being created. This complex process requires a thorough review of current and projected program operations and the finances related to them. The new budget will be approved by the HIPPY USA board and put into action for the start of the new fiscal year in July.
- The article for Zero-to-Three Magazine on the history of the national Home Visiting Coalition has been submitted. The article was co-authored by HIPPY and four other home visiting organizations. I served as lead editor in the project, and Melissa Kelley, Colorado state director, wrote a section. The magazine article will be published in the summer.

Please continue to let me know how the national office can best support your work.

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