

Overview:

In collaboration with HIPPY International and Friends of Liberia, a site visit was conducted to the WE CARE HIPPY program in Monrovia, Liberia. The visit took place from 11/10/17 – 11/17/17. The site visit was intended to support pre-service training for home visitors, plan and review curriculum adaptations, visit communities served by HIPPY and review Bracken data with the WE CARE team. Prior to the visit, planning took place with Gbima Bahtokpah, Miriam Westheimer, Stephanie Vickers, Don Drach, Ron Mertz and Mary Gemignani.

Activities:

The following activities occurred during the visit.

- 11/11/17-11/12/17 – Review of curriculum adaptations and book substitutes with Yvonne, Gbima, David and three home visitors. Together, we reviewed most of the activities as well as the books to discuss possible adaptations, songs, themes and activities. We also did some final planning for the training scheduled for the week.



- 11/13/17 – 11/17/17 – Pre-service training occurred for all home visitors and home visitor candidates. The training agenda included:
 - The HIPPY Model & HIPPY in Liberia
 - Home Visits and Role Play
 - 12 Keys to Successful Role Play
 - Home Visitor Weekly Guidance
 - Educational Terms and Skills
 - Scope and Sequence for Years 1 & 2
 - Role Play of Weeks 1-3 for Years 1, 2 & 3
 - Guided Discussion for Year 3
 - Dialogic Reading
 - Professional Development – Professionalism
 - Retention of Families and Relationship Building
 - Report Writing
 - Group Meetings



- 11/17/17 – On the final day, the following activities occurred:
 - Visiting local HIPPY sites and meeting families in Caldwell and Duazohn.
 - Meeting with Michael Weah and Yvonne regarding curriculum revisions and the possibility of a new book with a rainy day theme to replace The Snowy Day book.
 - Meeting with Gbima, Yvonne and David to engage in a data dialogue regarding the Bracken results.





Feedback and Actions for Continuous Improvement:

- Continue to train on topics that are related to HIPPY, early childhood educational concepts, terms and skills as well as supporting families in the program.
- Review the data dialogue document for action items related to the Bracken assessment and plan. Consider which actions the program will follow through on to enhance the assessment process and further understand the data results.
- Use the Dialogic Reading Training presentation and Trainers' Guide provided to in turn train families and community members.
- Continue to plan and review curriculum revisions to correspond to the following books:
 - Time to Bathe (to substitute - Corduroy)
 - Atata (to substitute - Ten Black Dots)
 - On the Farm (to substitute - The Cow's Backyard)
 - The Farmers and the Rice Birds (to substitute - Is Your Mama a Llama)
- Send lyrics to Michelle for any Liberian songs or rhymes to consider for curriculum adaptations.
- Send the manuscript for a new book with a rainy day theme.

Highlights:

- The team at WE CARE HIPPY seem to be highly effective at implementing HIPPY with fidelity and are committed to excellence. Yvonne and the HIPPY coordinators, Gbima and David provide leadership to their team of home visitors and families. During the training, both demonstrated their leadership and knowledge of HIPPY and early childhood education. They were well organized and prepared for the week ahead. They also seemed to value the contributions and feedback from the team of home visitors.

- The home visitors and training participants were highly engaged in the training. They all seemed very interested in the subject matter and shared their learning with their colleagues. Gbima and David reviewed evaluations at the end of each day and responded to concerns, questions or provided additional information based upon feedback.
- Visiting families is always a highlight of a HIPPY site visit. The families we visited in Caldwell were eager to demonstrate reading story books and HIPPY activities. The families each had a large plastic tub to store their books and HIPPY materials. The tub doubled as a table to use for activities. It was evident that the families visited are working regularly with their children on HIPPY activities. Children were familiar with the materials and the books. They would “read” the book along with the adult. The families had not met with their home visitors since September as the program ended the previous program year then. The families were clearly continuing to read and complete activities as the children were very familiar with the stories and activities.
- During the visit, families reported that HIPPY was supportive in the following ways:
 - Learning activities for their child
 - Support from their home visitors to help them (the adults) with own their reading and literacy
 - Literacy activities helped their children appreciate books and understand stories
 - Literacy activities helped both the adult and child learn new words
 - Doing HIPPY activities with their children helped them develop a closer relationship with their families.
 - HIPPY helped them understand (domain) areas that their children enjoyed
- Overall, the entire trip was a highlight. It was wonderful to see HIPPY in action in another country and especially in Liberia. It seems to be flourishing and providing needed supports for families.

