

The Impact of HIPPY on Maternal Self-Efficacy

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Highlights

- HIPPY predicted mothers' **confidence** in their ability teach their child new skills.
- HIPPY adds to the strengths already present in families to build their confidence in teaching tasks!

For More Information

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Overview

The purpose of this study was **to determine the effectiveness of HIPPY in building mothers' confidence in their parenting skills** (termed maternal self-efficacy). It also explored the impact of HIPPY on positive parenting skills that are needed for the preschool age group. The study involved families in the Dallas HIPPY program. The study looked at 138 HIPPY mothers and 76 comparison group mothers of preschoolers who did not participate in the program. HIPPY data was obtained during the spring of 2013, and comparison group data was obtained during the spring and summer of 2013. This time frame enabled the researchers to determine the effectiveness of HIPPY after families had experienced at least six months of HIPPY intervention.

The study looked at **three different types of confidence in parenting**. The first type of confidence in parenting explored in the study was general maternal self-efficacy. This type of confidence involves generally **how confident a mother is in being able to be a good parent**. The second type of parenting confidence examined in the study was task-specific maternal self-efficacy for teaching tasks. This type of confidence measures **how confident a mother is in her ability to teach her child new skills**. The third type of confidence measured in this study was task-specific maternal self-efficacy for nurturing tasks. This type of confidence reflects **how confident a mother is in being able to emotionally support and take care of her child**.

The study also looked at **three types of parenting behaviors**. The first type of parenting behavior was *Supporting Good Behavior*, which refers to the **parent's ability to teach the child new skills and provide rewards for the child**. The second type of parenting behavior was *Setting Limits*, which involves **setting and reinforcing rules**. The third type of parenting behavior explored was *Proactive Parenting*, which reflects the parent's **ability to give the child choices and structure situations for the child** before the child is in the situation.

The study involved 88% Hispanic and 12% African American mothers. Of the Hispanic mothers, 92% were from Mexico. The **study looked at how the maternal confidence and parenting skill variables were predicted by family variables**, such as how close-knit the family is, how much conflict is in the family, how much emotion is shared in the family, and how organized and controlling the family is. Lastly, it **explored how the overall quality of the neighborhood** (its dangerousness, closeness to neighbors, ability of neighbors to work towards goals, etc.) **predicted the types of confidence and parenting variables**. The study aimed to find out if HIPPY predicted parenting confidence and skills over and above the family and neighborhood variables.

Improved Task-Specific Maternal Self-Efficacy for Teaching Tasks

Across several statistical analyses, **HIPPY predicted mothers' confidence in their ability to be their child's first teacher and teach their child new skills** – the very goal of HIPPY! This finding showed up in several ways:

- **Scores for HIPPY on the task-specific maternal self-efficacy for teaching tasks score were significantly higher** than scores on this scale for the comparison group.
- HIPPY was a significant predictor in addition to family closeness and family emotional expressiveness in predicting this scale. Thus, **HIPPY adds to the picture of strengths already present in families to build their confidence in teaching tasks**.
- In multiple complex analyses in which the researchers explored if relationships between HIPPY and this variable were different with different amounts of family and neighborhood strengths, HIPPY came out as a predictor for mothers' confidence in their teaching abilities across all six analyses as a separate predictor. What this means is that **HIPPY by itself, over and above any family characteristic or neighborhood quality, is a completely independent force in shaping mothers' confidence in their parenting**.

Improved Supporting Good Behavior

Several results showed that HIPPY improved *Supporting Good Behavior*, meaning teaching new skills and giving rewards to the child – the very skills that HIPPY home visitors aim to teach!

- Scores for HIPPY on the ***Supporting Good Behavior* subscale were marginally significantly higher** than those for the comparison group on this scale.
- HIPPY was a significant predictor in addition to family closeness in predicting this scale. Thus, once again, HIPPY adds to the picture of strength already present in families to enable mothers to teach and reward their preschoolers.
- In multiple complex analyses explored by researchers, if relationships between HIPPY and *Supporting Good Behavior* were different with various amounts of family and neighborhood strengths, HIPPY came out as predicting mothers' *Supporting Good Behavior* in analyses where family emotional expressiveness and neighborhood quality were included. What this means is that **HIPPY by itself, over and above family emotional expressiveness or the quality of the neighborhood, is a completely independent force in shaping mothers' parenting of their preschoolers!**

Relationship between Maternal Self-Efficacy and Parenting Variables

- If a mother participates in HIPPY, **all three types of confidence are related to all three types of positive parenting skill for preschoolers – that is 9 significant relationships!** For example, higher scores on task-specific maternal self-efficacy for teaching are related to higher scores on *Supporting Good Behavior*, *Setting Limits*, and *Proactive Parenting*. The same is true for the other two types of maternal confidence in parenting (confidence in nurturing behaviors and general parenting confidence).
- However, **if a mother is not in HIPPY, only 4 out of 9 of these relationships exist!** So – being in HIPPY gives you confidence in parenting that enables you to be a better parent in multiple ways that you don't get if you're not in HIPPY!