

HIPPY Longitudinal Study (HLS): Initial findings

What is the HIPPY Longitudinal Study (HLS)?

The HLS is a major national study examining family experiences of the program and family and child outcomes. Key aspects of the study are:

- Data is collected over two cohorts (2016–17 and 2017–18) for a total sample of 667 families
- It involves face-to-face interviews with families and researcher assessments of children's learning
- Data is collected at three points of time: at close to entry to the program, at the end of the first year and at the end of the second year.
- Case controlled studies using AEDC 2018 data and, at a later stage, Grade 3 NAPLAN data are planned.

What is HIPPY in Australia?

- It is a two-year early learning program.
- It empowers carers as their child's first teacher, when their children are 4 and 5 years of age.
- It helps children make a successful transition to school and beyond.

Where does HIPPY operate?

- HIPPY operates across Australia in 100 sites. See map.
- The first program in Australia was established in inner Melbourne in 1998.

Where is HIPPY internationally?

- HIPPY was developed in the late 1960s in Israel.
- It was designed as a preschool program to improve the school achievement of Israeli-born children of immigrants from North African and Asian countries.

HIPPY programs are established in:

- Argentina - Canada - Italy
- Australia - Germany - New Zealand.
- Austria - Israel

HIPPY-inspired programs are established in:

- Denmark - Holland
- Finland - Turkey.

What does 5 decades of research on HIPPY internationally show?:

Source: Goldstein 2017, p.7

- Improvements in children's reading and language skills, math skills and relations with peers
- Longer term gains in higher rates of school attendance, college attendance, and transfer of program benefits to younger siblings
- Improved parent outcomes soon after intervention in parent-child relationships, parents' relations with the school, other family members and the community and parents' self-esteem, knowledge, and confidence in parenting.

Sources

<https://www.dss.gov.au/grants/grant-programmes/families-and-communities-programme>

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<https://hippyaustralia.bsl.org.au/hippy-sites/>

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Vygotsky, L. (1962). Thought and language. Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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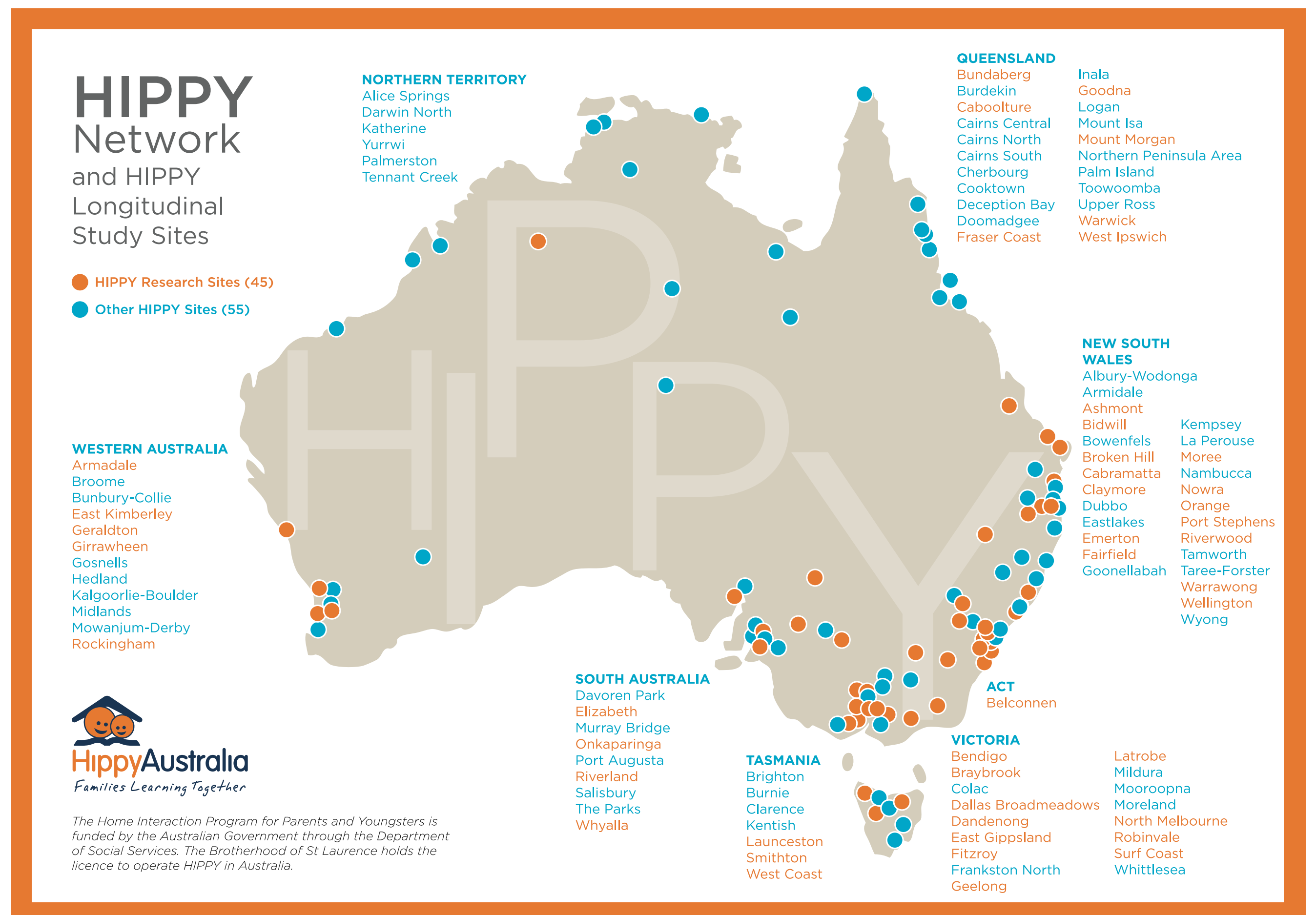
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Go to www.dss.gov.au for more information.



For further information contact tim.gilley@bsl.org.au

What are the main research question areas and measures used in the HLS?

| Research question areas | Measures used in the study |
|--|--|
| Factors influencing participation | Health Care Card status, family income, education level, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, non-English speaking background and children's social and emotional difficulties |
| Goals and expectations | What parents wanted from the program and whether these expectations were met |
| Home environment | Home learning environment Shared home activities Out of home activities Physical and environmental resources (books, toys) Use of 'everywhere learning' and Contain Control and Correct strategies Parenting styles Warmth, hostility, consistency, inductive reasoning Family dynamics General family functioning scale |
| Child outcomes | Who am I? assessment Strengths and difficulties questionnaire (social and emotional outcomes) AEDC data linkage on child vulnerabilities NAPLAN data linkage on cognitive development/achievement |

What are the initial research findings?

Initial research findings analysing responses from the first cohort, involving less than one-third of the total sample (n=179), are consistent with a well-run HIPPY program. This includes:

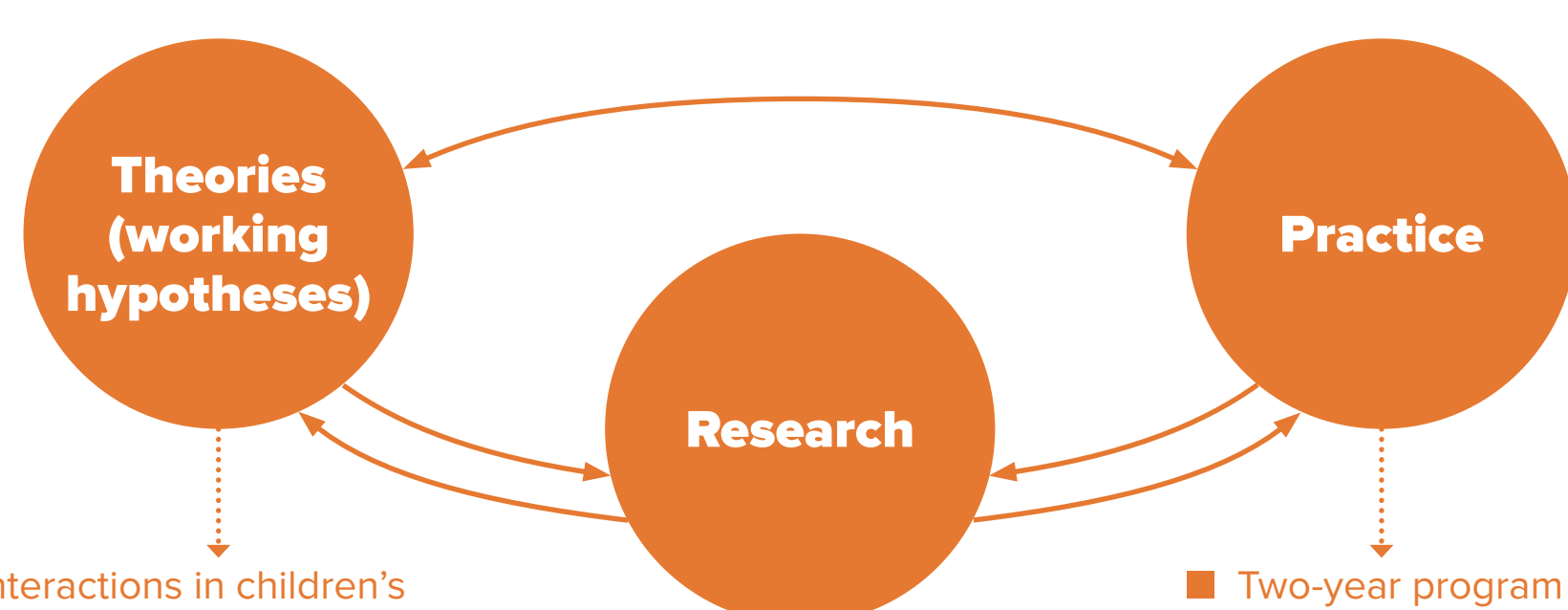
- Program recruits predominately disadvantaged families
- Families report they are highly engaged in HIPPY and that their home learning environment improves
- Children's learning outcomes demonstrate improvement related to Australian age-graded normative scores.

Note: The final research report on full sample (n=667) is planned for completion in June 2019.

How does research intersect with program practices and the theoretical and policy context?

Policy, institutional and population contexts

- Funded by Department of Social Services as an early intervention program
- The Brotherhood of St Laurence holds the licence for HIPPY in Australia and in turn licenses more than 60 community-based organisations to run 100 local programs



- Primacy of adult-child interactions in children's learning (Vygotsky's social cultural theory)
- Quality and dosage of adult-child interactions determine learning outcomes (E4Kids study)

- HIPPY Longitudinal Study assesses child and family outcomes of 667 children and their families in 45 HIPPY sites.

- Two-year program with 4 & 5 year old children using a structured curriculum over 60 weeks
- Program focus on creating regular high quality parent-child learning interactions
- Delivery methods include role play, home visiting and parent group meetings