

APPLICANT FEEDBACK - Program Design

2011 AmeriCorps State and National Grant Competition

Legal Applicant: Arkansas Children's Hospital - AR HIPPY	Application ID: 11AC123459
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Below are the comments from each External Peer Reviewer that read and evaluated the application. While Reviewers did engage in discussion about their evaluations, consensus was not required as part of their review. Therefore, there may be differing views in their feedback on the quality of the proposal.

COMMENTS: The application contains a significant case that the lack of access to quality preschool in Arkansas for children residing in poverty is a major problem. AmeriCorps members will be recruited to train caregivers (parents, grandparents, guardians) on the HIPPY curriculum. This process appears appropriate in that parents will be trained to facilitate activities of a thirty-week curriculum with their children within a reasonable timeframe to develop children skills for school. Additionally, specific outcome measurements were provided for all service activities which will assess the impact on the identified problem. Upon assessing the overall program design, a clear linkage between the problem, viable solutions and projected outcomes is apparent.

COMMENTS: Applicant states the problem is that there is not access to good quality preschool programs for at least 20,000 children across the state. Other factors include poverty, parental involvement and education. These all lead to children who are less likely to succeed without some extra help. Solutions to the problem lie in using the HIPPY program to do a 30 parent component with families. This will include going into parent homes to do role play and conducting parents groups. Ultimately they hope to work with the parents and children for up to two years. Current group is well suited to deliver the program because they are established statewide. They have been successful in securing funding through different organizations and have also helped in creating self-sustained locations. Anticipated outcomes would be the national pilot performance measures. This would also include serving 500 children, with the hopes that 468 remained through the full course. Also, 60 volunteers for 120 hours of service.

COMMENTS: The applicant provides an excellent presentation of relevant statistics documenting the need for early childhood home visiting program. The problems are high poverty rates, limited resources, low literacy, lack of parental involvement and dispersed, rural communities. These issues are all addressed by bringing AmeriCorps members (23 years old + High School diploma) to those underserved communities. The proven curriculum ensures success in working with young children, using HIPPY guidelines and those of the state child care agency. Consistent ongoing training and supervision is provided by highly qualified

professional staff (HIPPIY and Children's Hospital, and State Child Care Agency).

The program design addresses the whole range of family caregivers (parents, grandparents, and guardians) so that the program benefits can be shared by the entire family structure. The home visiting program addresses directly in a concrete way the lack of parental involvement by engaging, modeling and role playing appropriate behaviors in gaining trust of preschool children and their families to help them gain pre-literacy and social skills. The program design recognizes the unique features of AmeriCorps, in addition to the HIPPIY program, by promoting meetings, by requiring service projects of each member, and participation in significant days of service (MLK etc.)

The program includes an excellent use of reflection on service by requiring that AmeriCorps members submit monthly success stories. AmeriCorps members bring additional resources and training to underserved areas of the state, as documented by their comprehensive statewide data collection system. Members bring new knowledge to rural communities, and training additional volunteers to continue the work of the program.

Their history of sustainability has allowed them to expand their program to new communities and to continue to serve those where the model has been integrated into the community. Collaboration with other community partners, including Senior Corps and Foster Grandparents, provides additional leverage for this training to reach even more families.