

# 1. Executive Summary

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How to Read Your Baby (HTRYB) is a nonprofit organization that offers experiential curricula and training for professionals who work with parents and caregivers of young children.

## What HTRYB Does

HTRYB provides training to parent educators and childcare supervisors to use a hands-on, interactive curriculum that teaches parenting concepts to caregivers and allows them to apply it with a child in a monitored setting. Research shows that supervised practice and coaching are critical to the effective integration of new parenting skills.

## How HTRYB Does It

HTRYB's curricula are designed to support infant mental health by increasing the emotional availability of those caring for children. Research has shown that children who have emotionally available caregivers develop:

- Secure attachments
- Healthy emotional development
- Strong problem-solving skills
- Emotional regulation
- School readiness

How to Read Your Baby is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that's been in business for more than 25 years. The organization has a strong reputation for developing healthy relationships between parents/caregivers and children. The organization uses evidence-informed models created by professionals in the fields of child development and child psychology.

## The Team

How to Ready Your Baby is headquartered near Denver, Colo., but provides training for professionals across the nation and around the world. The organization has two full-time staff members that are advised by a four-person board. Its primary sources of funding include sales revenue from its two curriculum and training programs and grants.

## The Plan for the Future

How to Ready Your Baby would like to update and expand its curriculum models, add more staff and increase its operating budget. This business plan documents HTRYB's plans for growth and sustainability through 2022.

## 2. Organization Summary

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How to Read Your Baby was founded in 1992 by Dr. Joseph Butterfield, a renowned neonatal specialist, to support research on premature birth and how to support the baby's health. When the founder became ill, the organization changed direction to focus on parenting education.

The organization's first curriculum, Partners in Parenting Education (PIPE), was designed for teen parents of infants. It has expanded over time to address parent-child relationships for all parents and caregivers and their children from infancy to age 3 with an aspiration to expand to 5-year-olds by 2020 HTRYB's second curriculum, Emotional Beginnings, was an adaptation of the PIPE program and is designed to support childcare providers.

HTRYB currently supplies training—both PIPE and Emotional Beginnings—to more than 200 clients (See Appendix B) across the nation and around the world, including locations in:

Australia	New Zealand
Bulgaria	Nicaragua
Canada	Norway
China	United Kingdom
Germany	United States
Mexico	Venezuela

### 2.1 Mission & Values

How to Read Your Baby's mission is to empower, educate and support professionals who promote positive relationships between primary caregivers and children. The organization does this by providing a relationship-based curriculum and training sessions designed to enhance the quality of the emotional connection between the parent or caregiver and the child.

#### Our Values

HTRYB believes:

1. Every parenting educator and childcare provider is doing the best they can with the tools they have.
2. Parenting educators can become more emotionally available to parents with the proper training and tools.
3. Childcare providers and parents can become more emotionally available to their children with the support of a caring educator.
4. When a parent is able to partner with a parenting educator they become more confident in their parenting.

5. Shared positive emotion can build strong relationships, support learning and regulate behavior.
6. In providing the highest quality product and training possible.
7. In integrity, such as following through on promises.

## 2.2 Goals

To maintain relevance, HTRYB has set the following goals:

1. Expand current offers with a focus on growth:
  - a. eTraining program
  - b. Curriculum expansion targeting 0-5 years
  - c. Behavioral /emotional management component for children and parents
2. Diversify funding sources
3. Cultivate new audiences for existing curricula
4. Create a low-cost, targeted marketing program
5. Increase personnel, focusing on talent specific to training and business management
6. Forge strategic alliances with organizations that work with parents/caregivers and their children, such as:
  - a. State-level child services programs
  - b. For-profit childcare centers (corporate level)
  - c. Healthy Families of America
  - d. Public health departments
  - e. Early Head Start programs

How to Read Your Baby believes parents can become more emotionally available to their children when they have the right information, the opportunity to practice and the support of a knowledgeable and caring educator. This sharing with caring can lead to a new and enduring model of parenting, which is the vision of the HTRYB organization.

## 2.3 Personnel

### Staff

HTRYB has two full-time staff members who work out of the company's headquarters in Brighton, CO:



Richelle "Shellee" Knox, A.A. B.S., executive director, manages all aspects of HTRYB's activities and operations, including the development of new training materials and curriculum. She was co-author of the Partners in Parenting Education (PIPE), was a trainer for about 15 years and is currently working to develop an e-training program to support the curriculum. She has nearly 30 years of working as a childcare and parenting educator and was a foster parent for more than 10 years.



Joanna “Jody” Perkins, MSW, director of training and curriculum development, manages training for Partners in Parenting Education and Emotional Beginnings. She was editor in chief for the second edition of PIPE and continues to develop new products and curriculum for How to Read Your Baby. Jody has more than 20 years of experience working with children and families, first as an elementary school teacher and then as a caseworker for children and family services before joining HTRYB. She has been a trainer for more than 20 years.

## Board of Directors/Advisors

HTRYB is supported by a four-member advisory board that provides expert guidance for the organization. The board, which includes the following members, assists with setting the strategic direction of the organization while the full-time staff maintains full operating control:

- Lisa Cart, M.Ed., president, brings more than 40 years of experience to the board, working as a family case manager for government programs and nonprofit organizations in Grant County, Ind. She is a Certified Master PIPE Trainer, and certified to teach other parent education curricula to support new parents during home visitations.
- Mary Ashworth, MACP, secretary, has nearly 20 years of experience helping prevent child abuse by supporting children and families through case management, children’s ministry and individual counseling. She is a Certified Master PIPE Trainer and has her own counseling practice.
- Susan Crawley, CNA, is a certified navigator and SHIP counselor. She helps families navigate healthcare and health insurance as a Covering Kids and Families (CKF) Coordinator for the Area Five Agency on Aging and Community Services in Logansport, IN. She spent 18 years as a home visitor, as well as six years as a supervisor for Healthy Families of Indiana. She is also a Certified PIPE.
- Shannon Bekman, Ph.D., IMH-E (IV), is associate director of child and family outpatient services for the Mental Health Center of Denver. She is an expert in childhood development and psychology and has spent more than 10 years working directly with children and families. She is the newest member of the board.

Board members serve three-year terms; however, some board members have maintained their involvement for more than a decade.

## Personnel Needs

HTRYB would benefit from the addition of another trainer to assist with education opportunities for new clients. This will allow the organization to expand programming to new clientele and will allow the director of training and curriculum development to focus on the expansion of curricula.

HTRYB would also benefit from the hiring of an administrative professional who can support the business end of the organization. This will allow the principles to focus on the development of new curriculum and strategic direction of the organization.



## 4. Market Analysis Summary

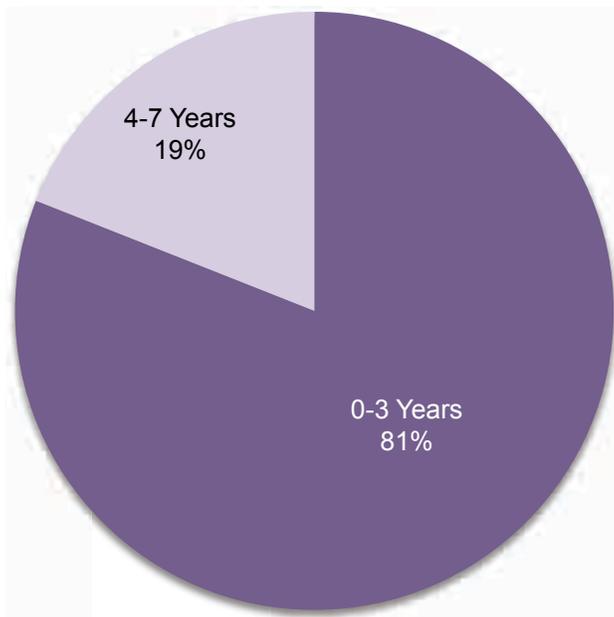
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### Current Challenges with Parenting Education

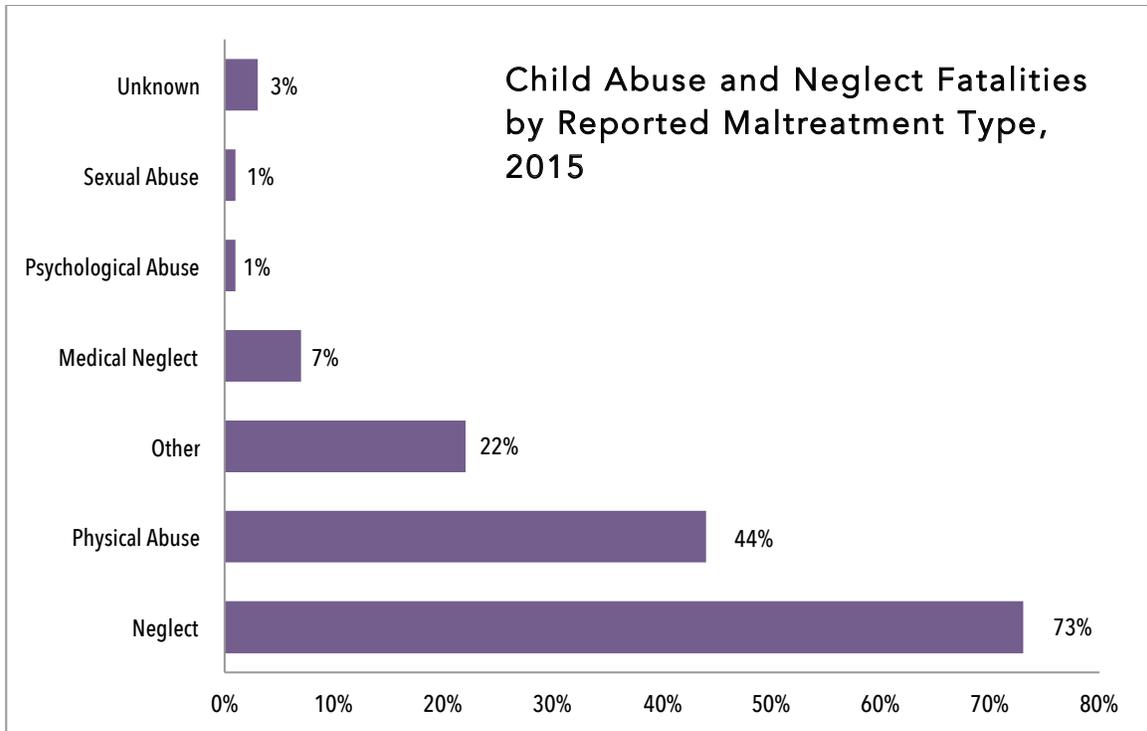
Parenting education programs like those created by HTRYB are considered a core service in the prevention of child abuse and neglect, which has been on the rise in recent years.

An average of 10 children per 1,000 are subject to maltreatment each year, including physical, sexual and psychological abuse, as well as neglect. Maltreatment is generally associated with lower school achievement, juvenile delinquency, substance abuse and mental health problems. This maltreatment can result in long-term physical, social and emotional problems and even death.

Child deaths from maltreatment have increased by more than 5 percent since 2011. An average of five children die everyday from abuse and neglect, which has the potential to be at least partially mitigated through parenting education program.



**Child Abuse and Neglect Fatality Victims by Age, 2015**



## The Solution

Parenting education is a respected, well-researched and clinically tested approach for working with a variety of childhood problems. It helps strengthen families and communities by providing practical knowledge and skills that help create lasting relationships between children and their caregivers. It's also believed to reduce costs for long-term child welfare services, alcohol and drug treatment and remedial education.

Research shows that effective parent training can change parent attitudes and behaviors toward parenting and promote protective factors for children, including secure attachments, school readiness, healthy emotional development, strong problem-solving skills and emotional regulation. These factors have been shown to help children grow into stronger, more resilient adults.

It is our belief that more resources need to be made available to caregivers and parents to help them better understand how to raise and guide their children. This can be done through schools, churches or other organizations interested in supporting families. However, home-based interventions have been shown to be particularly effective because it allows for one-on-one training with the parent and child.

Parenting education is most effective when it uses interactive training techniques, including roleplaying, active modeling and hands-on practice with children. This model is central to the evidence-informed curriculum HTRYB uses to encourage positive parent/caregiver relationships with children.

**Sources:**

Parent Education to Strengthen Families and Reduce the Risk of Maltreatment Issue Brief, September 2013, Child Welfare Information Gateway: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/issue-briefs/parented/>

Does Parent Education Work? by Michael P. Hardin, M.Ed. & Miriam Mulsow, Ph.D., University of Northern Texas Office of Family Science Education, Research and Policy: <http://parenteducation.unt.edu/resources/publication-university-north-texas-center-parent-education-partnership-texas-council-fam-4>

America's Children in Brief: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2016, Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics: [https://www.childstats.gov/pdf/ac2016/ac\\_16.pdf](https://www.childstats.gov/pdf/ac2016/ac_16.pdf)

Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities 2015: Statistics and Interventions, April 2017, Child Welfare Information Gateway: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/fatality.pdf>

## 4.1 Market Segmentation

HTRYB does not provide direct services to parents but rather trains professionals who work with parents, guardians and other caregivers and their children. These professionals include:

- Nurses
- Family support professionals
- Parenting educators
- Social workers
- Family therapists
- Mental health counselors
- Childcare providers and teachers

HTRYB's customers include individual providers as well as large government, school and nonprofit organizations. (See Appendix B) They are generally committed to providing effective parent education to their clients in order to strengthen the family bond.

One of the largest single providers of HTRYB's PIPE curricula is the Nurse-Family Partnership, a maternal and early childhood health program that helps first-time mothers succeed as parents. The group purchases the PIPE curriculum from HTRYB and uses it as part of their parenting intervention program.

By actively training educators and childcare providers to implement the HTRYB curriculum, the organization can impact proportionally more parent/caregiver-child relationships than through direct services alone.

Parents and caregivers are the most consistent pervasive force in the life of children. However, some parents need additional support in acquiring parenting skills. Caring parents educators, like those trained by HTRYB, can be effective in creating stronger, healthier and more resilient children and families.

HTRYB's curricula provide parents with in-home skills trainings in parenting, problem solving and communication skills, which can decrease the number of children at risk for abuse or neglect.

## 4.2 Market Potential

There is plenty of room for growth in the marketplace for parenting education curriculum provided by How to Read Your Baby and its competitors. There are a number of factors that contribute to this need, including:

- Lack of parenting classes for community members
- Organizations that need evidence-informed programs to support parents
- Direct service needs of at-risk parents
- Specific population needs, including single parents and grandparents as parents
- Breakdown of family structure (single-parent homes) and risk factors such as poverty, teen parents, high divorce rates)

The biggest challenge remains how to pay for it. A large percentage of those who need parenting education programs cannot afford them. Plus, they may not have access to programs unless they receive a referral from a social service provider, and by then risk factors may already exist.

# SWOT Analysis

How to Read Your Baby has the potential to capitalize on potential industry growth by embracing the following strengths and opportunities and working to mitigate the following threats and weaknesses:

## Strengths

- Reputation in the business
- Continued customer desire for program
- Loyal customer base
- Expertise of primaries and board
- Additional training resources
- Face-to-face training opportunities

## Opportunities

- Continued need for parenting education – for all parents
- Lack of parenting classes for most community members
- Organizations that need evidence-informed programs to support parents
- Direct service needs of at-risk parents
- Specific population needs, including single parents, grandparents as parents
- Breakdown of family structure (single-parent homes) and risk factors such as poverty, teen parents, high divorce rates)
- Establishing evidence-based efficacy of the program and potential registration opportunities
- Partnership with college or other research entity
- Room for growth in the marketplace
- Partnerships with other educational programs that need emotional development piece
- Need for earlier intervention before risk factors exist

## Weaknesses

- Size and limited resources
- Lack of research arm
- Lack of research and evaluation of the programs
- Lack of e-training (addressing currently)
- Reliance on face-to-face training

## Threats

- Large number of competitors
- Potential for infringement by trained organizations
- Limited funding sources and opportunities – especially for organizations that don't provide direct service
- Lack of translation to other languages (have Spanish and French)

# 5. Growth Strategy, Implementation & Needs

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## Growth Opportunities & Focus Areas

How to Read Your Baby's largest opportunities for growth include:

- Establishing a clear plan for growth projects:
  - eTraining program
  - Curriculum expansion targeting 0-5 years
  - Behavioral/emotional management component for children and parents
- Diversifying funding sources
- Cultivating new audiences for existing curricula through a low-cost, targeted marketing program
- Expanding personnel for training and business management
- Forging strategic alliances with organizations that work with parents/caregivers and their children

## Implementation & Progress to Date

HTRYB began work on the first initiative, the creation of an eTraining program for PIPE, during summer 2017. Current staff members are taking on the project using an online learning management system, which will allow potential parent educators to learn the curriculum from their home or office.

The e-training option, expected to ready for sale in second quarter 2018, will increase opportunities for potential customers who cannot afford in-person training in the Denver area or on-site training in their own community. E-training will provide the same level of quality and expertise as the on-site trainings. However, it will be more flexible and less costly than the alternative.

Revenues generated with the addition of the e-training program will infuse capital into the HTRYB organization, which will help fund additional initiatives including the curriculum expansion for PIPE and Emotional Beginnings. Pending successes, it may also fund a more robust marketing program (See Appendix C) to draw new clients, and for new part-time or full-time staff members.

## Needs

How to Read Your Baby is committed to maintaining a balanced operating budget, which means that growth may be slow from 2017-2018 while the organization updates its current curricula and introduces new curriculum components on emotional regulation and mindfulness. However, work can begin quickly on fundraising efforts, including the identification of potential

funding sources and new opportunities for partnerships with agencies needing parenting education programs.

How to Read Your Baby can also use its limited marketing budget to cultivate new clients and nurture existing providers through targeted email marketing campaigns. This low-cost marketing strategy (See Appendix C) will:

- Emphasize the benefits of parenting education for community providers
- Identify needs of the marketplace and communicate how HTRYB meets these needs
- Communicate the unique value of HTRYB's curricula