

## Just For Parents Newsletter

*By the WSA Parent Ambassadors*

Volume 2, Issue 3

October 6, 2010

### Key WA STATE Advocacy Contacts

*State Legislative Hotline*  
**1-800-562-6000**

Not sure of your **state** Legisla-  
tive District? Go to:  
**[apps.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder)**

### Key FEDERAL Advocacy Contacts

**[www.supportheadstart.org](http://www.supportheadstart.org)**

**Senator Patty Murray**  
1-866-481-9186

**Senator Maria Cantwell**  
1-888-648-7328

**Baird, Brian**, (D, 3rd Dist)  
360-695-6292

**Dicks, Norman D.**, (D, 6th) 360-  
479-4011

**Hastings, Doc**, (R, 4th)  
509-545-1972

**Inslee, Jay**, (D, 1st)  
206-361-0233

**Larsen, Rick**, (D, 9th)  
800-562-1385

**McDermott, Jim**, (D, 7th)  
206-553-7170

**McMorris-Rodgers, Cathy**, (R,  
5th) 509-353-2374

**Reichert, Dave.**, (R, 8th)  
877-920-9208

**Smith, Adam**, (D, 9th)  
253-593-6600

### Contact Us

**WSA Website**—sign up for  
updates!  
**[www.wsaheadstarteceap.com](http://www.wsaheadstarteceap.com)**

**WSA Phone/email:**  
425.453.1227  
**[katy@wsaheadstarteceap.com](mailto:katy@wsaheadstarteceap.com)**

## Funding in Jeopardy for Both Head Start and ECEAP

### Head Start Expansion Slots May Not Be Funded

Head Start may not receive enough money in the budget to avoid having to cut more than 1,000 kids in Washington State that are being served by stimulus dollars. Congress must support a \$1 billion increase if we are not to lose any children. Head Start Parents **MUST** get involved! You can email Senator Murray and Senator Cantwell at

**[www.supportheadstart.org](http://www.supportheadstart.org)**

### State Budget in Disarray— ECEAP & Child Care Cuts Proposed

The Governor is going to cut all government agencies by 6.3% across the board in order to balance our state budget. This includes every education and human services program; i.e. our state preschool program ECEAP, and Working Connections Child Care subsidy. DEL could cut 139 children from ECEAP this fall or could end the program year about 1 month early.

WCCC has already reduced eligibility to 175% of the federal poverty level (\$2671/month for a family of 3), and may see even more drastic cuts, making the subsidy unavailable to anyone not on TANF.

We want to make sure that low income families aren't the ones who suffer most with these cuts. You can call the Governor's office at 360-902-4111 or email the Governor's early learning advisor at [Lelie.Goldstein@gov.wa.gov](mailto:Lelie.Goldstein@gov.wa.gov)

## Parent Ambassadors go to Washington DC



Parents meet with Sen. Patty Murray, September 2010

*By Cecily Jenkins, Parent Ambassador co-coordinator*

The 2010 Parent Ambassador Trip to DC was nothing short of amazing. On Capitol Hill we all had scheduled meetings with Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell as well as our representative from each of our districts. At both of the meetings with our Senators, April Ritter, Elizabeth Grillet, Tiffany Simkins, James McBride, Robb Atherton, myself and Kylee Allen were able to testify about our experiences with

Head Start, Early Head Start, and Working Connections Child Care. Sharing our stories not only touched the senators and their staff; it also inspired ambassadors to do more.

Another great visit we had was with the Office of Head Start. If we hadn't already caused an emotional uproar at the Capitol with our individual heart-felt trials, we did at OHS. So much so we were asked to videotape them for distribution! The Office of Head Start also gave us an hour of their time to listen to and share with us. We spoke on the new Head start Regulations, in particular the Policy Council, parent involvement and empowerment. They heard us loud and clear! All in all this entire trip was a huge success.

We still have work to do, so stay tuned for more advocacy alerts and ways to speak out on issues important to parents.

## Focus on Success—Heather Lindal



Heather Lindal at her 2009 College Graduation

*Submitted by Heather Lindal, 2009 Parent Ambassador, Camano Island -*  
I am a WWU Human Services graduate and a mother of 2 who is struggling as I move off of state assistance. My oldest daughter Jessy attended the Skagit/ Island Head Start Program in Concrete, WA where she and I both found our passions, hers in learning and attending school, and mine in Family Support. Now my

youngest Zoe is attending her second year at Josephine's Sunset Home ECEAP center in Stanwood, where she is learning the skills that will help her as she moves into Kindergarten and developing a love of learning also. These programs have not only provided my children with the strong foundation that prepares them for school, but also helps them to develop the most powerful tool that they can pos-

sess- the love of learning! These programs have also provided me the skills, tools, and knowledge that I need to become a professional Family Support Provider within the Early Childhood Education field. I would like to thank you for your support and future support in these VERY IMPORTANT PROGRAMS that provide more than just daycare for low income parent - but a strong future for low income children!

*“Early Head Start didn't just benefit my daughter; Early Head Start has benefited our whole family and has provided me with amazing opportunities. “*

## Early Head Start Success Story—Elizabeth Grillett

*Submitted by Elizabeth Grillett, Tacoma Head Start/EHS, 2010 Parent Ambassador -*  
When my two-and-a-half year old entered Early Head

Start I didn't even know what it was, let alone what to expect. She had no social skills, spoke only six words and would not interact with anyone outside of myself or her sister. She was enrolled in a home based Early Head Start program with weekly home visits and socialization groups twice a month.

After a couple of months I saw a change in my daughter – she was interacting well with the teacher and she was talking more, and at the socialization groups she was taking an interest in what the other children were doing.

Early Head Start didn't just benefit my daughter; Early Head Start has benefited our whole family and has provided me with amazing

opportunities. At one of the family events held at our center, they were talking about how our center needed a parent representative from the home based families to represent us at Policy Council. I never really thought about being involved with anything like that, but attending a meeting wouldn't hurt. That was almost two years ago, and that one meeting has changed the direction of my life. I am now the Vice Chair of Policy Council for 2009-2010 and a WSA Parent Ambassador.

We have been involved in Early Head Start for almost two years now and I can say without a doubt that it is the best thing that could have happened to my daughter and my family.



Elizabeth Grillett, Tacoma Early Head Start, meets with Senator Maria Cantwell, September 2010