

Charting the Course for Parent and Family Engagement in Head Start Forum, Washington, DC: Parent Interview:  
Dwayne Drummond

(links for viewing and download at end of transcript)

Dwayne Drummond: My name is Dwayne Drummond. I'm from Philadelphia, PA in the Mantua section. I was raised by my mother, who was 17-year-old single parent female, and that kind of did something to me. It gave me a push. It made me try to be a stronger male and be more involved in my children's life. At the school district of Philadelphia Head Start program, I was introduced to a program called FAMILY, Father's Advocating Male Involvement in the Lives of the Youth. And when I first went to this meeting, I just got hooked on it and I have been there every since.

And they -- these guys is a bunch of mentors, and they show you, if you never had a father in your life, how to be a father and how to be a effective father. And I appreciate that group. I appreciate a whole lot of people. I appreciate even the women who are also in the group, and they give that whole family-oriented feeling. They kind of -- actually helped me out when I was going through the grieving process of my grandmother that occurred December 13, 2009, and it pushed me not to give up.

It actually pushed me -- it drove me so -- gave me adrenalin and to just keep on flowin' and to also pursue more of my dreams, such as being in the Democratic Party, become the chairman, also becoming the chairman of the Policy Council. And I like to thank the FAMILY group. I'd like to thank the whole Head Start organization. I'd like to thank Mr. Lyndon Johnson for actually passing this Head Start Act. And I'm very appreciative over how the Head Start made a impact into my life.

And I can remember some of my teachers -- my two teacher, Miss Mamie and Miss Sherry. They were so influential in my life, not only my life, my sister, who was a Head Start student, and also my brother, Dwight, who was a Head Start student. And I have a whole lot of memories from Head Start, and sometimes I could just walk down the street and start imagining me being at Head Start, drawing Santa Claus around Christmas holiday time and stuff like that. I have a whole lot of Head Start experience, and I could go on and on for days.

One thing I also -- okay -- the center that I -- my daughter attended was called Penn Alexander. It was located on 43rd and Spruce Street in Philadelphia. And there at the center committee level, we had a whole lot of activities. Actually, one activity we had -- we was on Good Morning America, and they showed clips of the diversity of the center. We had a lot of students from all around the world -- some Bangladesh, some people was from -- students was from Iraq, some was called Cajun, some was African-American.

And that cultural diversity made me a better person dealing with parents, and also made my child a better person by giving her that experience that she might not be given in my neighborhood. It's so much stuff I could say about Head Start. If I only had the words and the time to keep on going, I would say it. But Head Start is what it says, it will give you a head start long as you know how to just stay in your lane and just ride and reach your destiny and that prize.  
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-- Premalink for viewing (requires Flash and javascript)

<http://videos.sorensonmedia.com/HEAD+START/000082-DeWayne+Drummond+Parent+Interview-2010/e9bfd76a141cbY43b5Cabc95a99c79e38347>