

(links for viewing and download at end of transcript)

Jarma Wrihten: Hi, Ava. Welcome and -- happy to have you here at the Parent's Place at the ECLKC. I am so excited, because I know that you have a lot to share with us. And I just want to hear about all the wonderful things that you are doing in Head Start, and that you've done. And tell us a little bit about your child.

Ava Vargas: Okay. First of all, I'm a parent, and I have -- this is going to be my third year at Head Start. I got involved just -- at first, I just heard about it, you know, and I was like, "What is Head Start?" You know, I didn't know.

Well, I just went in -- I walked in and went in and I got -- [Inaudible] -- took, you know, my information. And a couple of weeks later they called me, "Your son was elected," and I, "Wow." When, you know, started to get my child in, then I started seeing a lot of change my son was doing. And it was like a wonderful experience, you know, things that you don't really see at a regular school, so...

Jarma: So that meant a whole lot to you, once you saw the different things that Head Start was doing. So you became involved -- you're on Policy Council now? Ava: I am. I'm in Policy Council; I'm a chairperson at my center. I try to help parents get involved volunteering -- lots of volunteering -- and most of the time I'm there with the kids.

Jarma: So what are some of the things that you and your child do as a together-time activity? What are some of the fun things you do?

Ava: Well, we play together. There's this little game that they teach them at school, and we're -- we're on a car, and we're over here playing peek-a-boo. He loves that, and it's a fun activity because we do the ABC with it. We hide and, "I'm letter A, Mom," and then "I'm letter B," you know, things like that. It's pretty -- it's -- he loves it, and I love it too, 'cause we do it all the time.

Jarma: So you've -- you seem like you really enjoy spending the quality time with your child -- or your son, I should say. How has Head Start influenced you in your role to be a better teacher for your child? Ava: Well, first, you know, like I said, you know, I was like a regular -- say, a regular parent, you know. Once you get involved, you're just not a parent, you're a friend, you know, you're a teacher. You're more than that because your child -- it's not just your child learning, but it's you -- you're learning with him, too. So...

Jarma: Has Head Start helped you in any way in terms of developing your personal goals? Ava: Oh, yes, a lot. Jarma: Okay -- a little bit about that.

Ava: Okay. First, I didn't finish my education. They're helping me getting ready for my GED. I'm trying to get my CDA, too, you know, for my kids, you know, And it's -- they've helping me a lot on educations, you know, everything.

Jarma: So what advice would you give to other parents who will either be coming into Head Start, or those who have an interest in being on Policy Council? What kind of advice would you give to them?

Ava: Oh, well, it's -- if you have the opportunity, go for it. It's there, you know. Your kids get a lot from it, you too, as well. They learn, you learn, and there you step forward on your goals. You know, it's you -- you're taking a step at a step, and you're doing it, and you feel good of yourself. --

-- End of Video ----

-- Premalink for viewing (requires Flash and javascript)

SD360p/44759d50c43f8s490cLb9a2Fb4f27cf0d28d