

## Head Start A to Z Program Governance: Why good governance matter...

[Opening Credits]

Edgiton Farquharson: I'd like to have a motion to approve the report for hiring. Hirings are approved.

Polly Greenberg: A very, very important element of Head Start was the concept of maximum feasible participation of parents. People have to be involved in determining what programs they need and in running them. You don't do things for people. You don't do things to people. If you do, they're still disempowered.

Edgiton: At first, I could not speak in front of anyone. You need a strong father beside these children. It got rid of my shyness. I can advocate for someone just like I advocate for the kids.

Yvette Rodriguez: Our dream is that whatever we help them develop while they are here, in Head Start, it's skills and activities that they could carry on through the life of the children, through their education and their career.

Female Speaker: Those of us who are steeped in Head Start history still reference a policy manual released in 1970 titled, "The Parents." This document is commonly referred to as 70.2. An excerpt from that manual reads, "Project Head Start must continue to discover new ways for parents to become deeply involved in decision-making about the program and in the development of activities that they deem helpful in meeting their particular needs and conditions. Every Head Start program is obligated to provide the channels through which such participation and involvement can be provided for and enriched."

Edith Grotberg: Look, we want parents to have some say in how the money is spend how the program is developed, what is happening to the children, get them involved in activities. That was a major, major shift in any program the government had ever supported.

Beryl Clark: It's the wisdom of the founders of Head Start to recognize that parents, along with the community, can work very well together, and can make a really important difference in the lives of children, no matter who they are.

Parent: OK, next on our agenda is our treasurer's report.

Narrator: A Head Start Policy Council is basically a group of parents and other people from the community working together to make decisions about the overall design and operation of a Head Start program's services. Doing this means joining with the governing body and Head Start staff to form a partnership that encourages openness and trust.

Female participant: The parent resource center wants to encourage low-income parents to come in.

Narrator: The Policy Council is a way to make sure parents are heard.

Terry White: One thing about Policy Council, it teaches parents what they should know all the time, that the parent is the primary educator of his children. And there's nobody that has a better connection of teaching their children than the parent himself.

Gil Jackson: Sometimes, the director can view the Policy Council as being a threat. That's an issue that directors have to really look at. I've recognized they have the ability to help me design a program that truly meets the needs of their own children. And it's been a truly wonderful partnership.

Maria Guajardo: We know that governance can work well, when it operates with a common purpose across governing entities. We also know that when it works well, Head Start governing entities are making the best decision to benefit the program, children, and families.

[CHIMES]

[Closing quote]