

Nurturing the Promise

[Music]

Narrator: They live in worlds of hope and possibility, each life a precious gift. Each day, a new door opening to discoveries, dreams, and opportunities. Over the years, Head Start has served more than fifteen million children and families nationwide. Each child has born the promise of the future, and within each child has grown a small seed of success. [Music]

Victor's Mom: Victor really enjoys being here and the program's been great. He's blossomed. I mean, looking back to September, and now, it's like totally different. He's a totally different child.

Gloria: How about a number nine?

Victor: I got it!

Gloria: Victor is a very aware child. He's in on everything. Every day, he tries almost every activity there is for him to do. It's just always a joy for me to work with each individual child, and figure out what they really enjoy, what sort of turns the lights on, and then to try to tap into that and to encourage them to grow.

Gloria: Look at that, number five!

Victor's Mom: Gloria is just great. It's just a really neat relationship - not teacher and parent but friends at the same time. I know he loves the computer.

Gloria: What I really enjoy about Head Start is we not only work with the children, we do work with the parents and it's like a team effort.

Victor's Mom: It's a lot of feedback and a lot of communication between parent and teacher, and that's important. Julie, the social worker. She's been great. My dreams right now are just finishing my school so I can provide a much better home for my child.

Victor: When I grow up I want to be a baseball player and a policeman.

Gloria: Someone was speeding and she didn't get out of the way? What are you going to tell her? You said you were the cop. What are you going to tell her?

Victor: She's getting a ticket!

Gloria: Oh, she's getting a ticket! [Music]

Paris' Mom: Show me where it says Paris. I personally gained a lot from Head Start. Head Start makes it really really comfortable where you want to be involved. It's not like you sitting back and saying, "I can't change this, I can't change that." They're telling you you can!

Paris' Teacher: Parents need to be involved in every aspect of that, from the beginning to the end. It is very important for parents to feel like they're being heard, which means that we have to implement their ideas.

Paris' Mom: When they do transition to kindergarten, and they're able to speak up and advocate for their child --

Paris' Mom: Being in our Policy Council, and these other groups, that has helped me grow a lot - I'm not the same person I used to be!

Paris' Dad: Head Start has done a great deal for my daughter Paris, and the people at Head Start saw a potential in me that I didn't see. Four years ago, I was a heroin addict. I had to have heroin every day to

function, or what I thought to function. And, I made a commitment to myself and to my family at first -- that I was going to make a change in my life. But I had the support of the men's group behind me. They all kept pushing me. It was like, you can really do it if you want to do it.

Man in Men's Group: I just want to bring it to the group, some congratulations to one of our brothers, pulled out a new position this morning. [Applause]

Man in Men's Group: It means making sure everybody has somebody, and you can always count on somebody. You can always pick up the phone or stop by and get somebody you can count on.

Paris' Dad: They just channel my energies in directions I had never even thought of. I never thought a year ago that I'd have my own business, with an office, and that I would even want to work with children. We've got a lot of the single moms in my class come to me and say, "I'm so glad they put a man in this class because at least he has one man in his life doing things the right way," you know, and that made me feel great! I saw a black cat --

All Together Looking at me!

Paris' Dad: It makes me go home and sleep easy at night that I'm doing what I think I was put here to do. And it just makes me feel great. And what color cat, Calvin?

Children: Black cat!

Paris' Dad: Great job! [Music] Home

Teacher: Good morning! How are you guys today?

Mother: Good morning. Home

Teacher: Good. Hi Bailey! I do family child care because I think it's important for children to have a safe, loving environment, and that the parents know that their child is going to be loved and cared for while they're gone. Play on the swings? Yeah, that's your favorite, isn't it? just feel like I've been blessed to be able to do this kind of work. Great job, Mary!

Mother: We really like the family child care in that the children stay in one setting all day long with the same caregiver. They receive Head Start services at the home. Home

Teacher: Good job, Dayrell! You took a step, didn't you?

Mother: It's nice that Head Start children interact and go to family child care with non-Head Start kids.

Child: Lettuce? Home

Teacher: No.

Child: Vegetables? Home

Teacher: It's a vegetable. The training that I've received through Head Start has changed my day care a hundred percent. I've gone to school and a lot of workshops and learned how to arrange my environment to promote learning. The monthly meetings are real important; just to be able to interact with other providers is really good. Head Start's philosophy across the board is that we really believe in supporting education staff and all Head Start staff in furthering their education and becoming better providers. I love to put a smile on the childrens' faces, and I let them know that they're very important to me. [Music]

Advisor: You certainly came out with some good goals and some good ideas about what it is you wanted to get involved in.

Woman: I decided I want to be a librarian. I love books, so...

Man: In developing our Head Start program, we've learned to listen to parents. And, one of the main things they tell us is that they want to get off of welfare and get jobs, so we have parents helping other parents with job readiness, work experience, and mostly how to access the resources in the community.

Librarian: And, you might also be checking some things in to the library at this computer here.

Woman: Head Start has really helped me to define who I am today. I had dropped out of high school when I was seventeen, so for my family it was a lot of stress that I wasn't doing anything, wasn't going anywhere, and when I showed up at the Head Start center, it was like, you can do this!

Teacher: And how about you?

Adult Student: Answer is three hundred and twenty.

Teacher: Well, now, let's see who's right!

Woman: So I signed up for the G.E.D. program; I went to school every day for a whole year. I did not miss a single day because I didn't want to miss anything because it was so much fun in learning. And I decided to go to college for my associate's degree in Early Childhood Education.

Head Start Staff Member: The real thing is about empowerment -- enable people to go out and use the resources that are available within the community. And, our role in that is to show you how.

Woman: My Mother's getting ready to go to Catonsville now. Woman 2: She's going to college? That's wonderful!

Woman: I had no idea when I signed up for that G.E.D. program that I was going to be where I am today. Now, I'm a child care development specialist, and we have a program that we work with teenage mothers and their children. My attitude has changed from this self-doubting attitude to "I know I can today," and the confidence that I have in myself today because I'm through the Head Start program. I know I'm a good teacher, I know I'm a good person, and I know I love children.

Narrator: Together, we can create new hope and opportunity. All of us, nurturing the promise of the future.

Head Start Staff Member: People will say that the children are our future. And I do believe that, but, I think also we are the children's future, because we have to create that. Whatever we do right now will decide what their future will be.

[Music]