

Success Stories

- When I came to Head Start with my daughter, I was separated from my husband. My mom had just entered a drug rehabilitation program and was literally participating day to day. Through Head Start support I continued with my program and have been drug free for almost a year. My two older children began attending public school regularly. Head Start has assisted me with setting up counseling and helping me register for a GED study program. I hope to continue with classes and become a C.P.A. Our family also found a church that was very supportive and now my children's father has moved back into our home. Our family is working to become a unit again, thanks to support from our church and Head Start. Janice
- Stanfield's most successful dad took courses in computers and now has a better job. He participates actively in the program, is our LPC representative, and knows he has been a role model for other fathers in the program.
- Hello I am Becky. I am a single mom and have been with the Head Start program for two years. I started out living at home, with no child support, or cash assistance, or health care, and I wanted to go back to school. Throughout the program year, with the assistance of Head Start, I have enrolled at Central Arizona College, applied for, and received a work/study scholarship. I now has cash assistance through the Department of Economic Security and enrolled my children in the state medical care program (AHCCCS). I am also approved to receive section-8 housing assistance, am pregnant with my second child and almost done with my schooling. I have a job lined up in a nearby town. Without Head Start, I would not have known what resources were available. Becky
- When my daughter started with Head Start, I was a single mother and didn't want to get involved at all. It was difficult to get me motivated. Through the Family Service home visits, Staff encouraged me to take GED classes. Finally I enrolled, and now actually enjoy going to class. I started stopping in the office when I dropped my daughter off at school to tell how it was going. Then I asked for help in completing job applications. I got a job working on the Indian Reservation and will soon be moving into a home on the reservation and out of the projects where we currently live. Head Start helped me by talking to me and encouraging me to get a better life for myself and my daughter. I made the decision to start working, take GED classes, and move into a new home. I come into the office to talk about how happy I am to be working and going to school. I have a lot to look forward to in the future.
- My son Adam started Head Start with the dubious record of having been kicked out of 11 previous day care centers. As his parent I told the Casa Grande Head Start staff that he had become physical with the teachers and would run around the classroom throughout the day. Adam displayed many other inappropriate behaviors. Once enrolled in Head Start, an Individual Discipline Plan was developed with the staff and the parents. A reward system was implemented at the site as a method of recognizing appropriate behavior and

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making sure those successes were communicated to us, the parents. The Special Education Aide worked individually with Johnny and discussed his progress with us on a daily basis. Adam now functions appropriately in the classroom about 80 percent of the time. We have realized that he needs behavior health services and are currently seeking counseling. Recognizing us as my son's primary educator, and validating our desire for our son to have an appropriate preschool experience, is how the Head Start staff was able to make a difference in Adam's life. Adam's parents

- At the beginning of the year, I came to Head Start and asked for assistance. I was a single mother with two children. The children's father had recently been sent to prison due to a history of domestic violence. I was unaware of what services were available in the community. My first concern was child care; I stated it had been very difficult to find affordable child care. The staff asked me if I had ever applied for assistance, but again I said that I had no idea what was available. With a referral to the Department of Economic Security, I called that same day and got an appointment. I applied and qualified for child care assistance; this was such a relief for me. Staff also gave me information about other DES programs, as well as, programs offered through the health department. All of these services were offered during the first 45 days of enrollment. During my first home visit, medical plans were discussed. I had insurance for myself through my work, but it was too expensive for me to put my girls on the plan. Head Start staff gave me information about the state funded medical health program (Kids Care) and helped me with the application process. Through this program the children qualify not only for medical health care, but also counseling to help them deal with the past domestic violence issues. I think the Head Start program has helped me to be self-determined. I feel I am a very good role model to my children. Obviously I understand the benefits of a good education; my daughter hardly ever misses school.
- I came to Head Start with three young children and a part time job. I was living in my parent's home. Although I had started attending classes to become a respiratory therapist, I was about to drop out because I couldn't afford child care for the increasing demand on my time. The family staff gave me information about a Child Care Subsidy program offered through the Department of Economic Security. I qualified for subsidized care for school and study time. My family worker also encouraged me to follow through with getting certified. At the end of the year, I had moved into my own three-bedroom home. With assistance from DES, I am able to work full time and study to take the certification test. Throughout the year, I have volunteered regularly in and out of the Head Start classroom. Margaret
- I am a single mother with three children. At the beginning of the year, I came to Head Start very depressed. My niece had just come to live with me; Child Protective Services had removed my niece from her home. Head Start helped me get counseling and helped my sister get into counseling also. They were able to help me get on anti-depressant medication by identifying a local resource to assist with the cost. I have started taking parenting classes through a local resource, Pinal Hispanic Council. I think the Head Start staff has noticed a big difference in the attitude of my child. She now comes to school

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happy and separates easily from me. I have taken an active role in volunteering in the Head Start classroom. I am looking forward to starting classes to help me get my GED. Head Start staff has been helpful and talked to me about how to go through the process of getting child support. It has been a very busy, rewarding year for me and my family. Lynn

- I am a single mom with seven children. I started getting involved with Head Start by volunteering in the classroom. I came in almost every day. I had never worked and was afraid to start. When a position opened at Head Start, I decided to apply. I got hired as a janitor and started working part time. At first I felt scared not really knowing if I wanted the job or not due to all my obligations at home. The staff talked to me a lot, trying to make me feel confident. I am doing great now, enjoying work and trying my best. I have been offered another job in the area, but I have decided to remain with Head Start. I like being able to work while my children are in school. I met my goal of getting a job; now I hope to buy a car. Linda
- Our family of four came to Head Start as unemployed workers. My husband only speaks Spanish, is undocumented, and unable to obtain legal work in the United States. This continues to be a challenge for my family. I just completed a Nursing Assistant Program while working part-time. During the clinical portion of my training, I was offered a position. I passed the State Boards, and then stopped training to accept a position in a nearby town. This job offers an increase of \$3 per hour, if considered full time at 36 hours per week and will have full benefits after 90 days. Our infant son has been diagnosed with a head deformity. I have consulted with a pediatrician and will obtain services as soon as health care can be arranged. Our little girl was almost dropped from the program for having such poor attendance, but the staff worked with me and now my child has come to school almost every day. We have also gotten a good used car with payments within our means, which has given us a major boost towards independence, and the likelihood that I will be able to keep my new job. Our whole family is very grateful for the assistance we have received through the Head Start program.
- Sarah came to Head Start ready to learn. During the school year, she enrolled in Parenting, English as a Second Language, and Spanish GED classes. She volunteers regularly in and out of the classroom and is a very good role model for her child.
- We were enrolled in Head Start last year. During that time I passed and obtained my GED and got a job. Through Head Start, I received the support necessary for obtaining child support. Once the child support was ordered, my child's father started becoming more involved in his child's life. We have just started mediation. Head Start definitely had a role in pulling my family back together.
- Our family of four live in Coolidge, my husband and I have two children. I work in a neighboring town about 45 minutes away. My husband, Tom is going to school and hopes to graduate next year. Through Head Start, we were able to look at the strengths and

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concerns of our family. A primary concern was the minimal amount of time we had to spend together. As a team Head Start Staff and us were able to recognize that by purchasing a washing machine, the laundry could be done at home instead of requiring either myself or Tom to go to the Laundromat. By putting a little money away each week, and checking the advertisements in the newspaper, we were able to purchase a used washing machine. Both Tom and I are involved in the Local Parent Committee. We have used the resources at the local Family Resource Center and give back with donations and volunteering. We recently purchased a second car, which enables Tom to get to school in a reliable manner. Now we are working on our third goal – to save enough money to go on a family vacation. Head Start helped our family put our goals and successes down on paper and make them come true. Megan and Tom

- Early in the program year, we lost our home to a fire. The morning of the fire, my husband had left for work, but the children and I were in the home. A utility pole popped and a spark set our home on fire. We lost everything, even our family pet, in the fire. I had just had a miscarriage and had an appointment for surgery the following day. Recognizing the importance of keeping this appointment, I managed to pull things together enough to make the appointment. In November, the Community Service Aide (CSA) was able to get a group of high school students to come and help our family clean up the mess left over from the fire. The CSA also helped us get legal assistance to replace our home. In December, The new home was moved onto the existing lot. Other Head Start families donated household items and we received a referral to the local Project Help program to get the remaining items needed to set up our household. We remain in the program for the rest of the year. We can't express our thanks enough to the staff for all the assistance given. The Smith family
- We have three girls, and this is our second year in the Head Start program. With assistance from Head Start, all three girls have been enrolled in the Kids Care health program. I have a daughter from a previous message, and she has come to live with us for this school year. This time, my wife knew how to apply for Kids Care without help from Head Start. We both attend the monthly parent meetings. My wife is also on the Policy Council as a representative. She also enrolled in a training program at the center for unlicensed child care providers. Towards the end of the year, she accepted a position at Head Start as a Special Education Aide. She works with children in two different classrooms. We are very involved in the Head Start program. And have taken what we have learned about the importance of parent involvement to the public schools. We are both active in all of our daughters' classrooms. Keith and May

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- We are married and have two young children, a boy, Mike, and a girl, Beth. This is Mike's second year in the Head Start program. During the first year, I was very active and frequently volunteered in the classroom. I openly discussed concerns with my children and quickly felt comfortable confiding in the staff. Through Head Start, Mike received a referral to the local child find and this year is receiving services through both the LEA and Head Start. Beth is now in the second grade, but attended Head Start when she was younger. Over the summer, a family member sexually assaulted one of the children. I came to talk with the Community Service Assistant. I was very upset. Through discussions, I shared I had also been abused as a child. Head Start referred us to family counseling; however, it was difficult to get husband involved. Then an angry family member called in a report to Child Protective Services about what had happened over the summer. CPS did an investigation and offered parenting classes to both of us. The CSA strongly encouraged us to take the parenting classes. Arrangements were made for the classes to be held in our home. We both completed the classes and the case with CPS has been closed. After completing the classes, I decided I wanted to return to work. A position opened in the public school for a special needs aide. I got the position and was very excited. This is the first job, I have ever held. Through a scholarship, I am taking Child Development Associate classes; I have also gotten a car, and have taken classes to learn to drive. The parenting classes and counseling have helped my marriage relationship. And the extra money has helped, too. Head Start staff continues to support us through our ongoing court battle against the family member. My family has threatened me and the Head Start staff. But our decision to not tolerate abuse is strong and not negotiable. Amy and Peter

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