

So You Want To Be An IL Head Start Association Parent Ambassador? Here's What You Need To Do!

- Position:** Parent Ambassador
- Closing Date:** Wednesday, April 1, 2015 at 5:00 pm
- How to Apply:** Talk with Your Head Start or Early Head Start Director. Send a one page cover letter and answers to the questions below to Lauri Morrison-Frichtl at lfrichtl@ilheadstart.org. Include a letter of support from your Director. Decisions will be made and announced on Wednesday, April 15, 2015.
- Questions:** Please call Lauri Morrison-Frichtl at (217) 241-3511 or via e-mail at lfrichtl@ilheadstart.org

Program Overview

IHSA was fortunate enough to receive a small advocacy grant from the Region V Head Start Association to support the HS/EHS parent advocacy training program called the **IHSA Parent Ambassadors Program**. The Parent Ambassadors Program is a year long peer to peer training program for Head Start and Early Head Start parents. Parent Ambassadors will go through an extensive year long high-quality advocacy training program. Parents will be expected to learn the basics of government, about specific pieces of legislation, how to contact their lawmakers, how to provide effective testimony, and how to effectively engage parents in their community.

After trainings, Ambassadors will be expected to take what they have learned and educate, train, and mobilize parents back at their local programs and in their communities. Ambassadors will be the crucial link to their communities. IHSA will host a Parent Ambassadors Neighborhood on the IHSA website to communicate the latest legislative information and updates. Ambassadors will be expected to provide grassroots trainings at parent policy council meetings in their area and will teach parents about pending legislation. They will provide frequent updates to parents in their local programs about legislative issues directly affecting their families and strategic opportunities to weigh in with federal elected officials. Ambassadors will also serve as lead organizers for IHSA advocacy campaign activities and have access to a flip video camera to capture "on the ground" success stories. These success stories will be edited by IHSA and then streamed on the IHSA website. Each selected Parent Ambassador will have a Parent Ambassador Coach. This Coach will be someone who provides ongoing support and regular communication with their assigned Parent Ambassador.

Position Description

IHSA is seeking 18 Head Start/Early Head Start parents to serve as **Parent Ambassadors** for 2015. Parent Ambassadors will receive year-long advocacy training and be required to provide training, information, and resources to parents at their local program and in their communities. Ambassadors will serve on the front line of our advocacy campaigns including attending hearings, testifying, contacting lawmakers, setting up events and activities, and organizing Head Start/Early Head Start parents. All expenses for travel to IHSA conferences and training venues will be subsidized by IHSA. We are looking for parents that are committed to advocating for

their children and communities, serve in a leadership role at a local program either through policy council or in another area, and have the desire and demonstrated skills to complete the year-long project.

1. Why are you interested in being a Parent Ambassador?
2. Do you serve or have served on your policy council or in another leadership position at your local program?
3. Please describe any previous experience in politics and/or grassroots advocacy.
4. What special talents or skills would you bring to the parent ambassadors program?
5. Are you able to make the time commitment to the ambassadors program?
6. Is your director willing to support your participation in the ambassadors program? You must have your directors support prior to submitting an application and a letter of support from your Director.
7. Are you able to commit to a minimum of one conference call each month on Mondays at 8:30 pm?
8. Do you have daily access to internet and email?
9. Do you have a cell phone with the ability to send and receive text messages?
10. Are you able to attend the two required Face to Face meetings in Springfield? The meetings are tentatively scheduled for:
 - May 7 - 8, 2015
 - September 17 – 18, 2015
 - March Annual Conference (March 2016)
11. Will you have a child enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start for the 2015 – 2016 program year?

All interested applicants must submit complete answers to the above ten questions by Wednesday, April 1, 2015.