Telling Your Story

For Alumni and Families

By Olivia Burlingame Goumbri
Manager, Alumni and Grassroots Advocacy
Effective Storytelling …

- gives voice to an issue
- is interactive
- uses compelling words and actions
- has a clear beginning, middle, and end
- delivers an important message
- utilizes a respected messenger
A powerful story is always...

- short
- emotional
- gets to the point
- connects to your core values
Who are we?

Head Start Alumni and Families

Why are we here?

Our core values
Core Values. We believe...

- Change Agent - Head Start Works!
- Every child can succeed
- Everyone should reach their full potential
- Access to quality early education transforms
- All children need opportunity
- Children and families matter
- Head Start impacts children & families
- Low-income communities matter
- Children & families need opportunity
Key Elements of a powerful public story must include…

• **Self:** Explanation of why you care about Head Start and how it impacted your life and that of your family’s. Explain how it helped you overcome a challenge, hurdle or obstacle and how it has affected you in a positive way. Explain how overcoming and finding Head Start made you feel. Remember, you are the expert!

• **Us:** How you connect to your audience, what do you have in common, connect over core values. (ex. I know that as an American just like me, you believe that every child should have access to quality early childhood learning and be given the opportunity to succeed in life…)

• **Now:** Why it is urgent to act now, how would not acting go against your audience’s core values/beliefs. (ex. If we don’t act now, thousands of children may not have access to Head Start programs and will miss out on being put on the pathway to success in school and life.)

*Adapted from Marshall Ganz’ worksheet on Self, Us, Now, Kennedy School of Government, 2007.*
A successful public story

• Can you identify the key elements of this powerful public story?

• Use this as a guide when you craft your own public story testimony about Head Start.