MY NAME IS NATASHA CARR-KOKER & I’M HERE TO TELL YOU HOW HEAD START HELPED ME BECOME A R.A.D. MOM!
I MARRIED MY HUSBAND IN 2014. SHORTLY AFTER THAT WE RECEIVED FULL CUSTODY OF HIS THEN 4 AND 6 MONTH OLD. THEY WERE TRAUMA SURVIVORS.

GAVYN AND ELIJAH HAVE ALWAYS BEEN MY CHILDREN & IT WAS ESSENTIAL FOR OUR FAMILY THAT I STAY HOME.

WE FELT ISOLATED AND UNSURE OF OUR FUTURE UNTIL HEAD START

IT WAS A SANCTUARY FOR US. MY KIDS FELT SAFE WITH THEIR HOME VISITORS & SAM AND I GOT TO BE A PART OF THE JOURNEY AT EVERY STEP.
R: RESOURCE FOR YOUR CHILD
A: ADVOCATE
D: DISCOVER YOUR VOICE

HOW DID HEAD START HELP ME BECOME A RAD PARENT?
GET YOUR FAMILY INVOLVED WITH HEAD START!

HEAD START IS AN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM THAT OFFERS A VARIETY OF SERVICES TO GET YOUR CHILDREN READY FOR LIFE. IT OFFERS:
- COMPREHENSIVE TESTING
- OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT
- COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL HEALTH
- HTTP://ILHEADSTART.ORG/

HOW TO BE A RESOURCE FOR YOUR CHILD
WHAT IS ADVOCACY:
BUILDING SUPPORT FOR AN ISSUE AMONG AUDIENCES.

WAYS TO ADVOCATE:
LOCAL LEVEL- ATTEND PUBLIC FORUMS LIKE TOWN HALLS OR PTO MEETINGS
STATE LEVEL- OFFICE VISITS
FEDERAL LEVEL- HTTPS://RESIST.BOT/

YOU CAN VOTE AT EVERY LEVEL!!!!

HOW TO ADVOCATE FOR YOUR CHILD
DISCOVERING YOUR VOICE
WITH HEAD START
Natasha Carr-Koker

I had always known I wanted to be a mom. When I married my husband in June 2014, he had two children from a previous marriage that I was excited to begin co-parenting. Gavyn was four at the time and Elijah was six months. From the moment I met them I just felt it, I was their mother.

In October 2014, four months after Sam and I were married, our world was permanently altered. DCFS removed our kids from their biological mom’s home after she and her husband were found for willful neglect and sexual abuse. This finding came at the same time my husband lost his job and I had our first of three miscarriages. We felt completely isolated and that the odds would be forever stacked against us. DCFS had recommended that we should enroll our kids into Head Start. Sam and I couldn’t understand how education could help our family, but once we had met with the organization and our home-based teachers, we were quick to realize that Head Start was more than education. It was an opportunity to give my kids a second chance.

Head Start helped us obtain the mental care that my kids so desperately needed. They taught us ways to calm Gavyn when he felt triggered by his PTSD and continues to help us foster a positive and supportive environment while Elijah navigated through his traumas.

Head Start changed our lives for the better. It has become a sanctuary where my kids feel safe to reclaim their space and learn. Our local facility has become like our family, and why I feel so passionate about Head Start. My hope is to share our story and how Head Start’s core values of focusing on a family’s well-being on top of preparing the children for their future is a necessity. When passionate people care about you it changes you for the good.

Parent Ambassador Head Start Stories