

# NEHSA Parent Training: What is Advocacy?



**PRESENTED BY  
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# Agenda - Morning



- **Introductions**
- **What is Advocacy?**
- **Federal/State Government**
- **Name Your Elected Officials**
- **Head Start Background**
  - Federal
  - State
- **Write a Letter to Congress**
- **Break**

# Agenda - Afternoon



- **Share some Letters**
- **Talking with Elected Officials – “The Elevator Speech”**
- **Brainstorm an Advocacy Activity**

# Introductions - Who am I?



- Represent the Maine Head Start Directors Association before the Maine Legislature
- Employed by Eaton Peabody Consulting Group
- Serve as Senior Advisor to the Maine Community Action Association (brings together Maine's 10 CAP agencies)
- Provide government relations assistance to a variety of clients in social services, housing, government, solid waste, and energy
- 11 years working for the Maine Senate President's Office, including 6 as Chief of Staff

# Who Are You?



- **Please provide:**
  - Name
  - State
  - Children
  - Why are you here?

# Goals for Today



- **Each of you leaves here knowing:**
  - Elected Officials (state legislators, Governors, member of Congress) are human beings just like you
  - They want to hear from you and will treat you with respect
  - **YOUR EFFORTS WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**
    - ✦ Rep. Fredette and Head Start Funding
    - ✦ Head Start Goes to Augusta and Vote on Head Start Bill

# What is Advocacy?



- **Advocate**
  - **Verb:** to publicly recommend or support
  - **Noun:** a person who publicly recommends or supports a particular cause or policy

*Source: Google*

# Federal Government



- **Executive Branch Headed by the President**
  - DHHS, Administration for Children & Families, Office of Head Start
- **100 Member Senate**
  - 2 per state
- **435 Member House of Representatives**
  - Connecticut - 5 Representatives
  - Maine – 2 Representatives
  - Massachusetts – 9 Representatives
  - New Hampshire - 2 Representatives
  - Rhode Island - 2 Representatives
  - Vermont – 1 Representative



# State Government Organization



- **Governor**
  - Department of Health and Human Services
  - Department of Education
- **House of Representatives**
  - Speaker of the House and other Leaders
  - Committees
- **Senate**
  - Lt. Governor or Senate President and other Leaders
  - Committees

# Name Your Elected Officials



- **Governors**
- **U.S. Senators**

# New England Governors



- Connecticut - Dannel Malloy
- Maine - Paul LePage
- Massachusetts - Deval Patrick/Charlie Baker
- New Hampshire - Maggie Hassan
- Rhode Island - Lincoln Chafee/Gina Raimondo
- Vermont - Peter Shumlin

# New England U.S. Senators



- **Connecticut - Richard Blumenthal and Christopher Murphy**
- **Maine – Susan Collins and Angus King**
- **Massachusetts – Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey**
- **New Hampshire – Jeanne Shaheen and Kelly Ayotte**
- **Rhode Island – Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse**
- **Vermont – Patrick Leahy and Bernie Sanders**

# Brief History of Head Start



- Created in 1965 as part of the War on Poverty
- Sargent Shriver and others developed Head Start as a comprehensive program to help low-income children and their families
- Re-authorized in 2007
- Head Start has served 30 million children since 1965

# Federal Head Start Funding in New England



<b><u>State</u></b>	<b><u>Children</u></b>	<b><u>Funding</u></b>
Connecticut	6,729	\$55,700,000
Maine	3,007	\$29,900,000
Massachusetts	11,631	\$116,300,000
New Hampshire	1,618	\$14,700,000
Rhode Island	2,561	\$23,700,000
Vermont	1,368	\$14,400,000

*Source: 2013 Fact Sheet, U.S. Head Start Office*

# Potential Federal Issues



- **Republican Control of New Congress – What will that mean?**
- **Potential Sequestration in Federal Fiscal Year 2016**
- **Potential Head Start Reauthorization in 2015 or 2016**
- **Rep. Paul Ryan's Poverty Plan recommended converting Head Start into a block grant to the states.**

# State Head Start Funding in New England



<b><u>State</u></b>	<b><u>Children</u></b>	<b><u>Total Funding</u></b>
Connecticut	383	\$5,300,000
Maine	150	\$1,700,000
Massachusetts	214	\$8,000,000
New Hampshire	0	\$ 0
Rhode Island	80	\$740,000
Vermont	---	\$ 0*

\* Vermont has an ambitious state funded pre-K program and is a national leader in access to pre-K.

Source: *The State of Preschool 2013*, National Institute for Early Education Research, and Maine State Budget



# Examples of Advocacy



- **Call Elected Officials (Members of Congress and State Legislators)**
- **Write to Elected Officials**
- **Letter to the Editor in local paper**
- **Visit the Statehouse/Washington, DC**
- **Testify on Legislation**
- **Invite Elected Officials to Visit Your Head Start facility**

# What do You Say to Elected Officials?



- **Introduction - Who you are**
  - Constituent and voter
  - Head Start parent
- **Head Start is important to me because**
  - It allows me to work/go to school
  - I can see my child's growth and development
  - The Policy Council is helping me grow
  - Other
- **Request for Action**
  - More Funding for Head Start
  - Support expanded Early Learning programs
  - Please come visit my Head Start program
  - Other

# Prepare a Letter to Your Congressional Delegation



- **Remember ...**
  - **Identify yourself**
  - **Why Head Start is Important to You and Your Family**
  - **Request for Action (examples)**
    - ✦ **Support for Early Learning**
    - ✦ **Honor Head Start's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and expand it!**
    - ✦ **Visit our Head Start facility**

# Speaking to Legislators in Person



- Whether on the phone, in the community, or at the Statehouse/Washington D.C.
- They are people, just like you
- They will treat you with respect (you're a voter – you elect them)
- Their time is short - you've got a minute. What 3 or 4 points will you make?
- We call this an “Elevator Speech”
- Write your “elevator speech”


# Brainstorming an Advocacy Activity



- Please break into groups of 8-10.
- Each group will develop an Advocacy Activity that will identify:
  - Location (the Statehouse, Head Start agency, other)
  - Who will attend? (Elected officials, Head Start staff and/or parents, the press, children, community supporters of Head Start, other)
  - The structure of the event. If there are speaker's, who will they be?
  - What's the Goal? (educate about Head Start, call for passage of a bill, develop legislative allies, other)
- Choose a spokesman to report back to the full group.

# Wrap up/Questions

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- **Request for Action**
  - More Funding for Head Start
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