

My name is **Raquel Guzman**. I am from the Dominican Republic. I have two children. The first one is Gabriel. He is eight years old. The other one is Sarah. She is three years old.

I grew up without a lot of opportunities, so I decided to come to United States one year ago to try to provide my children with better choices. When I came to Boston, I didn't know how to begin my new life here. I found the ABCD ESL program in Roslindale and everything was better for me and my family. My daughter is in ABCD.

South Side Head Start now, I am in the adult ESL program there, and my son is at the Charles Sumner School.

We are all learning English.

My English class is helping me help my children and give back. In my English class, I have learned about ways to read to my young daughter that will help her to be a better reader. I've also learned how to read my son's report card, and now know what the MCAS is that my son took for the first time this year. Now I can help my son with his homework. He won a medal at school because he is good in math and does all his homework and helps the other children in the class. We participate in all community activities because ABCD motivates us to do it. I joined the Sumner School Parent Council, and now I am the Treasurer. I encourage the other Sumner parents to attend Parent Council meetings and we talk to each other about our children's education. We support activities at the School. I also help out in my daughter's classroom at HeadStart, where I helped update a Family Resource Guide. Now, I am training to become a Parent Ambassador to talk to other parents in the community about opportunities for helping their young children with their learning and education.

I worked hard and I finished my Bachelor's degree in my country. I worked for 10 years in human resources. ABCD is preparing me to find a good job here. Now, I have new goals and I can dream because ABCD gave me the opportunity to understand that I can use my knowledge and skills to continue developing my life.

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Raquel Guzman with Gabriel, Sarah , and her niece.

Speech given by Raquel Guzman, a student at the ESOL for Parents and Caregivers class at the ABCD SouthSide HeadStart ESOL program in Roslindale, MA, in 2012 .