

Meet **Kenia Garcia**, a brave immigrant from El Salvador and the mom of three children. Kenia made the life-altering decision to come to America to escape the gangs in her homeland. She did not know any English or have a high school degree but was determined to find a better future for her family.

The English language was a huge obstacle that drive and motivation alone couldn't overcome. Her lack of English skills left Kenia isolated and shy. She was unable to help her children with their schoolwork. ***"When I arrived in this country everything was difficult because I did not know English...When I started working in a restaurant I did not understand what they told me and I could not communicate with my children's teachers."***

But Kenia was lucky enough to land a spot in an **ESOL for Parents** class at ABCD Southside HeadStart Adult ESOL Program in Roslindale. ENB funding supports three levels of ESOL for Parents classes at ABCD. The curriculum was designed by ENB for **parents** like Kenia.

"When I started to come to ABCD I did not know anything. Through the help of the teacher I learned to read, to write and to pronounce the words better. I overcame my shyness and learned to be independent. I can read the papers sent by my children's teacher."

Recently, Kenia completed the program and was recognized for her achievement at a legislative breakfast. She gave a speech in English to a crowd of enthusiastic students, immigrants, teachers, and elected officials.

English has opened doors for Kenia and it has thrown open the gates of the future for her children.

"I'm thankful for the program ABCD and how it has helped me... I can help my young son with his homework! [And] the career service advisor helps to prepare me for my future job." Kenia wants to continue her education then work as a seamstress again, or train as a hairdresser.