

Head Start today...

College tomorrow!



“Head Start promotes a better world all the way around, and I want to give back in some way.”

Kirsten, 31
C.S.U. Sacramento, B.A.
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Head Start
CALIFORNIA

Kirsten’s Story

Kirsten is poised to embark on a public relations career in May, with a bachelor’s degree. Her road to graduation began with Head Start, the federally funded program that promotes school readiness for children under age 5 from low-income families.

Kirsten and her mom, Erika, are nothing short of Head Start success stories. Almost 30 years ago, Erika was suddenly a single parent without a job. Luckily, she had parents who helped her and her two preschool daughters. But Erika didn’t want to rely on them, so when she learned of Head Start, she jumped at the opportunity to better her life and that of her children.

The Head Start program afforded Kirsten and her younger sister, Jessica, a safe, loving environment so that Erika could finish her bachelor’s degree in business administration and human resources. Upon graduation, she worked in accounting for the preschool and now is the office manager for a masonry company.

Marvin Marshall was “such a caring atmosphere for my girls,” Erika recalls, “and the teachers were very supportive of the parents. As a single mother, I wanted to make sure my kids were safe, and this was a good place for them. It gave them the social interaction they needed.”

“Head Start really opened me up to making friends and being more creative”

Kirsten had been shy, but “Head Start really opened me up to making friends and being more creative,” she says. “The social aspect of Head Start was huge.”

The program at Marvin Marshall was what Kirsten calls “old-school fun”—circle time with a lot of reading, a playhouse with dress-up clothes, and no TV. “Head Start kept my sister and me on track. It helped me to understand early in life that there are consequences for making bad choices.”

The lasting impact of Head Start is evident in her choice of careers: “Head Start promotes a better world all the way around, and I want to give back in some way. I plan to enter health communications, focusing on helping people and bettering the community.”

Know a family that could use a Head Start?