

Duckworth Emphasizes Her Support For Early Childhood Education, Working Families With Illinois Parents & Head Start Leaders

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BENSENVILLE, Ill. - – U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) today met with Metropolitan Family Services of DuPage Head Start providers and families to reiterate her support to early childhood education and hear from working families on the struggles they face in accessing childcare services. As Congress once again approaches a government funding deadline that could threaten these critical services at the beginning of next month, Duckworth highlighted the importance of continuing full funding for Head Start programs to ensure families throughout Illinois can continue

accessing these programs. [Photos from today's visit are available on the Senator's website.](#)

“Early Head Start and Head Start programs are critical for kids throughout Illinois to have the tools they need to succeed both inside and outside of the classroom,” Duckworth said. “I appreciated this chance to listen to the experiences of West Suburban parents who depend on Head Start and talk with the leadership about my continued efforts to help ensure all children have a fair opportunity to reach their full potential. Investments in early childhood education and parental support programs are investments in a better future.”

“Head Start has been essential to preparing children, especially those from Black and Brown communities, for future success in school and life,” said Ric Estrada, President & CEO of Metropolitan Family Services. “That said, newly proposed funding cuts threaten to eliminate Head Start services for more than 2,500 children in Illinois. We urge Congress to support full funding for Head Start, to help ensure students can access these needed services, and teachers are fairly compensated to provide them.”

“MFS has empowered me to be a better parent by providing me with community, tools, resources, and education to parent in a positive and conscientious way that has allowed me to truly support and enjoy watching my beautiful boys grow and learn,” said Head Start parent Katrina Blase. “I truly believe that this program should be available to all families since it has the ability to greatly influence the next generation in a positive light which will have lasting benefits on each family as well as our world. This program has changed our lives and helped set up my boys for a bright future in ways I could have never accomplished alone.”

Last year, Duckworth, along with U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL), announced more than \$25 million in federal support for Head Start programs in Illinois, [including](#) \$5.9 million to Metropolitan Family Services.

Duckworth, the first person to give birth while serving in the U.S. Senate, is a strong advocate to providing more support for working families. Duckworth is a cosponsor of the [Child Care for Working Families Act](#), comprehensive legislation to tackle the child care crisis and help ensure families across America can find and afford the high-quality child care they need. Across the country, too many families cannot find—or afford—the high-quality childcare they need so parents can go to work and children can thrive, and the worsening child care crisis is holding families, child care workers, businesses and our entire economy back.

Metropolitan Family Services provides quality services to families throughout Chicago, DuPage County, Evanston/Skokie and the southwest suburbs. Metropolitan serves more

than 136,600 families and individuals. Metropolitan Head Start and Early Head Start programs serve children ages 6 weeks to 5 years of age.