

---

Stephanie Fowler <skfowlermd@gmail.com>  
Thursday, February 21, 2013 1:55 PM  
Kane, Brittany  
Fwd: Even Start

Would you please forward this to the Education Subcommittee on Appropriations and see that it becomes testimony and part of public record.

Thank you,  
Stephanie Fowler

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Stephanie Fowler" <skfowlermd@gmail.com>  
Date: Feb 21, 2013 9:36 AM  
Subject: Even Start  
To: "Rep. Michelle Cook" <Michelle.Cook@cga.ct.gov>, "Rep. Willis" <Roberta.Willis@cga.ct.gov>, "Senator Witkos" <kevin.witkos@cga.ct.gov>, "Sen. Clark Chapin" <Clark.Chapin@cga.ct.gov>, <j.case@housegop.ct.gov>

Dear Legislators,

I apologize for not writing you each a letter. However, I'm afraid if I don't send this today, it will be too late. I am a family doctor, temporarily not practicing in order to care for my family. While my kids have been in school, I have spent the last six years volunteering for the Torrington Early Childhood Collaborative. I am the chair of the Child Growth and Development subcommittee. I have also presented Tar Wars, a national evidenced based tobacco prevention program to every Torrington fifth grader for the past six years. Currently I am also chairing the Community Relations Committee of the Charlotte Hungerford Hospital Board of Governors. Through my involvement, I have realized that the children of NW CT have benefited from our local politicians involvement; so I'd like to thank you all.

I'm writing to you today to ask for your continued support of the Even Start program. I have been teaching health literacy to the Even Start Hispanic moms for 3 years and to the Even Start teen moms for 2 years. My involvement with the program has been very rewarding in that I continually see the benefits each aspect of the program brings to the moms, their families and our community. For many of these families, the program is the only source of support in their lives. How children are cared for early in life affects them and their future generations in so many ways: medically, socially and economically. In 3 years, I have seen the program develop and become enriched by others in the community. Torrington Public Schools, Charlotte Hungerford Hospital, the Fit Together Program, the Susan B. Anthony project, the YMCA, Torrington Public Library, Brooker Memorial, Education Connection, Family Strides, the Torrington Early Childhood Collaborative, the Community Health and Wellness Center, several local daycares, and many others have added to the program, helping to educate and empower these families who have the least in our community. We as a community are giving these families an "even start" in order to have children who are healthy and ready to learn to the best of their ability. We are helping parents, who weren't shown proper examples of how to parent, to parent effectively and therefore minimize the behavioral disorders that disrupt our schools. The

parents have learned to help each other and work together. Children raised in such an environment are on the right start to becoming responsible citizens and community leaders. The benefits of this program are immeasurable.

My health literacy class teaches parents how to best utilize the healthcare system to keep their families healthy. In addition, when families use the system correctly and focus on preventative care, the healthcare costs are lower. My lesson plans are designed to empower the parent to know where to find reliable answers to her medical questions. I have also designed lessons on specific preventative medicine topics such as: having a primary medical provider, vaccines, nutrition, fitness, tobacco, alcohol and drugs, sexual health, depression, stress management, cancer screening, diabetes, asthma, fever, viruses, and lead poisoning. I also reinforce other areas of the Even Start program such as child development, behavior, discipline, and injury prevention.

For the past six years, I have been impressed with how our community agencies, businesses, leaders and citizens have made healthy children a priority. The Even Start program has been a way towards realizing this, but we need your support to continue. Please continue to support Even Start. I firmly believe that by continuing the program in Torrington, we can be a model for other Connecticut communities. Not only will we have healthier, happier, productive citizens, we will be saving healthcare, education, welfare, legal/criminal and other financial burdens to our state.

Thank you again for your efforts supporting our childrens' futures,

Stephanie Fowler, M.D.