



Rene Guernsey, Floyd County Head Start Birth – 5, Health Assistant with a CNA license

I have been a Health Assistant for 7 of the 8 years I have worked at Floyd County Head Start. My first position was working in the kitchen. There I learned the basics of Head Start and began my passion for the program. I became the health Assistant a year later where my true heart was for the program and the families we served. Since then, I received my CNA and then my certificate of completion for the Health Service Essentials through the Academy at NHSA.

I have become one of the cornerstones of assisting our Head Start program in becoming a program of greatness and growing from a Head start program 3-5 years of age program to include the EHS program of birth to 3. During our growing pains I have been the interim Kitchen supervisor along with my Health Assistant duties. So, my duties and responsibilities are very diversified.

As a health assistant, I help take care of the children's little scrapes, illnesses and accidents. I am responsible for assisting families in getting a medical and dental home along with their well child and dental exams, their vaccinations up to date and insurance. I get true joy in helping families in this way along with learning new ways and using my knowledge in which to keep the families engaged with their children's health, hygiene and dental.

My personal story in short is as follows. When my daughter was of age to start the program in another county in which her great aunt was a teacher of, I told them no. I didn't want a program to tell me how I was doing things wrong, and they were too nosey in how I was bringing my child up. Who were they to tell me to get a well child exam or get my baby's teeth looked at and they needed a report of it. I took the kitchen position when my daughter was a teenager, and I needed a better job. Once I seen where the program's heart was for the families, I knew I could use my past prejudices of the program in helping the families, and love for children and wanting to see them and their families succeed. I am a huge advocate for our program, and I want to gain more knowledge so that I can help as many families as I can to overcome life's obstacles and be an advocate for the program themselves.