



## State Association Recognizes Children First Parent of the Year

For Immediate Release

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**TALLAHASSEE, FL – December 1, 2024—Renee Sensenbrenner**, a mom of three, receives the Florida Head Start Association (FHSA) Parent of the Year award. This recognition is a testament to her unwavering commitment to serving as her children's first advocate and positively impacting her community.

Ms. Sensenbrenner, an inspiration of resilience, understands the challenges of raising children with special needs. She knows firsthand the journey of securing intervention services and being her children's first advocate in obtaining early diagnoses and support services, which can seem daunting.

Having worked for the Children First programs as their Special Needs Coordinator for over four years, her early care and education career journey started as a Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten teacher. After a few years in this role, she aspired to use her degree in psychology, which led her to become a Case Manager and, ultimately, a Special Needs Coordinator. Unfortunately, she resigned from the position at Children First when learning of her third pregnancy, making the difficult decision to leave her career to care for her children due to the rising cost of childcare. With a child in Head Start, she lends her time and talents to Children First, serving as Policy Council Chair for two consecutive years. In this role, she has been able to volunteer many hours to Children First, helped develop the agency's Quality Improvement Plan, and participated in revising the Parent Code of Conduct. She has had the pleasure of serving as the keynote speaker for their Galaxy Awards for two years and their fundraising event, Rockin Lobster Beach party, sharing her Head Start experience while raising awareness about the benefits of Head Start to support the agency's ability to provide comprehensive services to children and families from the most disadvantaged backgrounds to succeed in school and in life. She also served on the First 1,000 Days Suncoast Parent Advisory Committee to empower parents in the community.

Kathleen Sullivan, Children First Vice President of Programs and Head Start/Early Head Start Director, stated that Renee is an inspirational leader who manages personal challenges with grace. Despite the daily life with two children needing multiple therapies, Renee's perseverance is truly inspiring. She ensures her children receive the services they need and continues to engage meaningfully in leadership.

The FHSA annual awards luncheon, where Ms. Sensenbrenner will be honored, will occur on December 11, 2024, at the DoubleTree by Hilton at the Entrance to Universal Orlando as part of the association's 25th Anniversary Celebration and Annual Conference. We invite you to join us in celebrating her achievements. Complete details are available at [www.FLHeadStart.org](http://www.FLHeadStart.org).

### About FHSA

*The Florida Head Start Association (FHSA) is a nonprofit organization that empowers its members to advocate for and enhance education, health, and social services for 45,000 children and families in Florida. Head Start is a key player in the early childhood education landscape, providing critical services, including school readiness and comprehensive health support, guided by the Head Start Program Performance*

*Standards. Since 1999, FHSA has organized impactful events and training sessions to elevate discussions within the Head Start community. FHSA's dedication to this cause is unwavering, striving to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the most at-risk children and families.*

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