



“I decided I wasn’t going to let my past ruin my future. You can do anything you put your mind to.”

- Latanya Christopher

## Single mother goes from no high school diploma to Master’s Degree

### **SHORE UP!, Inc.**

SHORE UP operates Early Head Start in four counties and Head Start in seven counties on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Early Head Start programs provide family-centered services for low-income families with very young children. These programs promote the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of infants and toddlers.

Head Start and Early Head Start programs support parents in their role as primary caregivers and teachers of their children. Programs assist families in meeting their own personal goals and achieving self-sufficiency across a wide variety of domains, such as housing stability, continued education, and financial security.

When single mother Latanya Christopher came to SHORE UP’s Early Head Start Program, she was struggling to carve out a life for herself and her three children. Her youngest had been born with a disability, her two older children were a teenager and pre-teen, she was attending classes at her local community college, and she could not afford daycare for her special needs infant.

Because Early Head Start gave her the time and resources she needed to care for her young son, as well as valuable insights and encouragement from program staff, Latanya was able to continue pursuing an education. And pursue it she did! Latanya received her high school diploma, Associate’s Degree in Chemical Dependency Counseling, and a Bachelor’s Degree in Social Work... but she did not stop there. She went on to earn a Master’s Degree in Administration of Human Services.

Best of all, Latanya is still involved with the Head Start and Early Head Start programs, even though her baby is now 13 years old! She has been hired as a Family Engagement Specialist at SHORE UP, and she looks forward to inspiring other mothers to follow in her footsteps and plan a future of economic security and long-term independence.

For more information about SHORE UP’s Head Start and Early Head Start Programs and the other services provided by SHORE UP, please call 410-749-1142 or visit us on the web at [shoreup.org](http://shoreup.org)

