

Maria and her children, Lizbeth (2015 graduate) and David, have been enrolled at SSP since 2013. Maria says that Lizbeth's time at SSP made her more confident, independent, and so prepared for Pre-K that she was noticeably more advanced than her peers. David is currently in his second year at SSP and Maria is pleased with language development and especially impressed by his English vocabulary. Maria has two favorite services at SSP – her English classes that have helped her tremendously in her new job, especially when communicating with her “patron”. Her next favorite part is the parent-child Mommy & Me class. She enjoys the sense of family Mommy & Me gives, especially during group conversations about life and personal experiences. She also enjoys the weekly review by staff of the children's weekly lesson. She says, “It makes you feel like you are sharing the same experiences that your child had all week... and that is very special...”

### **How has your time at SSP impacted your family?**

M: My daughter began school much more prepared than if we had not enrolled at SSP. My daughter was very attached to me and once she started classes at SSP, she became more independent. When she would come home she was always excited to share all that she had learned. I was pregnant with my son when my daughter first enrolled, so she enrolled with her Godmother. My son really enjoys classes here. Every morning he wakes up excited and looks forward to getting to school, and especially since being promoted from Classroom 1 (2yo) to Classroom 2 (older 3s and 4s). Since starting here I am surprised at how much he speaks, the new words, and the amount of English he knows.

### **Do you believe that your time at SSP has helped you with your new job?**

I started working in November. My time here has helped me in speaking with my boss and understanding him. I even practice my English with one of my supervisors. I still need more practice and that is why I decided to remain in classes and work part-time. My manager sometimes says we need more employees but no more students because we already have three and I say, “It doesn't bother me, I will not leave my English classes...” I told her I would like to finish my classes at SSP, and then volunteer here, and then maybe one day work here, too.

### **How has Mommy & Me helped you?**

I have learned a lot from Mommy & Me. When I first started Mommy & Me, I liked sharing that time with my children. I love learning about what they studied during the week. I always thought “Wow!” I just really liked it. More than anything, I understand now that I need to take the time to sit and interact with my children. I have also learned that it could be ten minutes or an hour and it is not enough. The children really love that time. My husband has also benefited from our time at SSP. I share with him about what I learn, including how to talk to the kids, parenting tips, etc. Sometimes my husband gets on the floor and plays with us and we laugh until our bellies hurt. We spend more quality time together, which makes us a stronger family.

**What would you tell others about SSP**

I would tell them to register their children here. I recently told a man I know that if he wants a future for his children, he needs to enroll them at SSP because it is good for children and adults alike. It helps you as a parent, it helps you learn English, and we benefit a lot from all of the outside services you bring in, too!