



Enhancing Interactions with Young Dual Language Learners Partnering with Families to Enhance Interactions with Young Dual Language Learners

LEARN FROM FAMILIES

Families know their child better than anyone else and have valuable information to share with you.

- Talk to families about what language(s) they speak at home. Ask family members how comfortable their child is in speaking and understanding their home language. If the home language is not English, ask if the child has had any exposure to English.
- Discuss with family members their language learning goals for their child.

SHARE WITH FAMILIES

Sharing information with families helps them become actively involved in their children's development and learning.

- Encourage families to continue talking to their child and actively support language and literacy skills in the home language. Share specific ideas for how families can have extended conversations with their child during everyday activities, such as grocery shopping or walking to the park.
- Provide ways for family members who are not literate to participate in early literacy experiences. Share wordless picture books or encourage families to make up their own stories. Teach families how to make these storytelling experiences interactive by asking their child to guess what will happen next or how he or she thinks the character feels.

COLLABORATE WITH FAMILIES

Remember, families are your partners in supporting children's development and learning.

- Invite families to record themselves reading a story or singing a song in their home language, to add to the book or music area.
- Send families information about key vocabulary, songs, and books for upcoming learning experiences. Encourage families to introduce the new words and concepts in the home language before the child hears them in the early childhood program.

For more ideas and tips about how to engage families with dual language learning children, check out the following resources:

- Head Start—National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness: [Language at Home and in the Community](http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/fcp/docs/language-at-home-teachers-8-25.pdf)
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/fcp/docs/language-at-home-teachers-8-25.pdf>
- National Association for the Education of Young Children: [Engaging and Celebrating Families: Resources for Dual Language Learners](http://www.naeyc.org/content/engaging-and-celebrating-families-resources-dual-language-learners)
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Enhancing Interactions with Young Dual Language Learners

Taking It Home—Important Strategies to Support Your Child’s Language Development

As families, you play an important role in supporting your child’s language development, whether you speak English or another language at home.

Learn about the importance of talking, reading, and singing with your child for early brain development. Click on the link below from the First 5 California Parent Education website for some ideas on when and how to talk, read, and sing with your child:

<http://www.first5california.com/parents/learning-center.aspx?id=9&sub=112>.

Here are some ideas for you to try at home:

TALK WITH YOUR CHILD

- Find time throughout the day to have conversations with your child in whatever language feels most comfortable: during routines, while playing, driving in the car, or taking a walk. Talk about what you’re doing together or things you observe around you.
- Encourage your child to talk by asking questions and giving the child enough time to express his/her own thoughts and ideas.

No matter what language you speak, talking with children frequently helps them learn new vocabulary and develop language skills.

READ TO YOUR CHILD

- Read books or tell stories to your child in your home language. Read slowly and expressively. Use your finger to point to the words as you read them.
- Point out written words in your everyday environment, such as grocery lists, restaurant menus, magazines, street signs, or store signs. Say the words in English and in your home language.

Reading helps your child start to understand that written words have meaning and start to build some of the basics of reading (for example, groups of letters form words).

SING WITH YOUR CHILD

- Teach your child songs and nursery rhymes that you learned growing up. These songs might be in English or in another language your family speaks.
- Sing songs together that you hear on the radio.

Singing is a fun way to share language with your child. You can connect with your child by singing songs you learned as a child or your current favorite songs.

Want More? Read about more ideas to help your child learn your home language and develop early literacy skills on Head Start’s website:

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/fcp/docs/language-at-home-families-v2.pdf>.