

Systems That Support Dual Language Learners:

*How System Structures Support Dual Language Learners*

Use these ideas and questions to build on what you've learned and extend your practice.

### THINK ABOUT IT!

#### ■ Self-Reflection

Use these questions to think about your own practice.

#### ■ Reflect with Others

Supervisors, directors, coaches, and teachers/providers can be reflective partners.

#### ■ The Power of Practice

Invite a colleague to join you; observe or record each other and share ideas.

### REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

- What opportunities do I provide for small-group conversations and peer-to-peer interactions as part of my daily routines? How does the structure of my environment support these types of interactions?
- How do I include the children's home languages in the physical environment and routines?
- What are some ways I can connect with families of dual language learners to learn new words in their home languages?
- What structures can I build into my routines to encourage inclusion of children's home languages and family participation?
- What small changes can I make to my environment and routines that will encourage more peer-to-peer interactions, more teacher/child interactions, and more opportunities to connect with dual language learners and their families?

### TRY IT OUT!

Think of a young dual language learner in your setting. Choose from the following list one adjustment that you can make to your physical environment and/or routines to foster supportive interactions with this child.

- Incorporate the child's home language by placing labels in the environment in the home language and in English.
- Provide books and other materials in the child's home language.
- Represent the daily routines visually, using pictures, and include words labeled in English and the child's home language.
- Collaborate with the child's family in learning activities that include the child's home language (for example, make books in the child's home language that include favorite songs, stories, and pictures).
- Provide interest areas that encourage small groups, allowing for more peer-to-peer interactions. Consider also including some quiet spaces for children to take a break from using a relatively new language or for quiet one-on-one communication.

### How Did It Go?

How did the change you made impact your interactions with this child? How can you continue to strengthen the connection with the family?

### What Next?

Choose another adjustment from the list to incorporate into your setting or come up with your own idea for a change to your environment and/or routine that will lead to supportive interactions with young dual language learners in your program. Continue to check in with the children and their families to see how these changes support each child's growth and development. Check out the next pack in this bundle, *Dual Language Learners: Developing a Deeper Understanding*, to see how using the "iceberg," a systems thinking tool, can help with identifying underlying influences in the child's system.