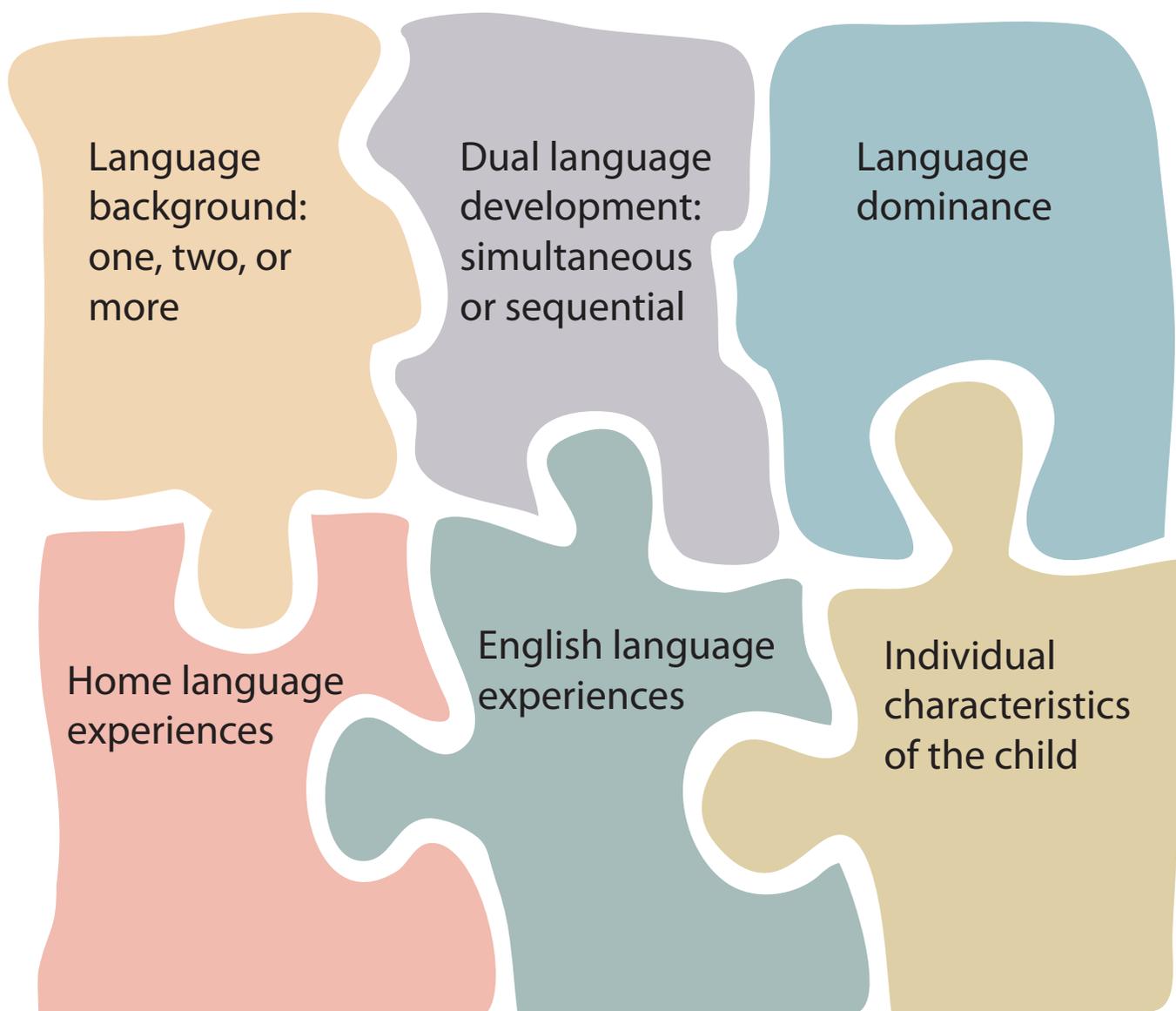


Young Dual Language Learners: Gathering Background Information

Child & Family Language Background & Experiences

In order to support learning and development for children who are Dual Language Learners (DLLs), early childhood staff need to understand children's backgrounds and experiences with more than one language. Staff should gather information from each child's parents and family. By gathering enough information to get the full picture of a child's overall language background, practitioners can "put together the puzzle" of his/her languages and use this information for curriculum planning, individualizing and supporting continued progress.

Considerations for Each Child:



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Considerations	Possible Questions to Ask Parents and Families
 <p>Language background: one, two, or more</p>	<p>What language(s) does your family speak? How much experience (exposure) has your child had with the(se) languages?</p> <p>Is your child growing up with two languages? If so, what are the languages?</p> <p>Can you tell me about your child's use of English (if at all)?</p>
 <p>Dual language development: simultaneous or sequential</p>	<p>Did your child grow up with two language from birth (simultaneous)?</p> <p>Did your child grow up with one language from birth, and then learn a second language after the age of two (sequential)?</p> <p>How old was s/he when the second language was introduced?</p> <p>About how much time does your child spend using the home language (speaking, listening, comprehending)?</p> <p>About how much time does your child spend using English (speaking, listening, comprehending)?</p>
 <p>Language dominance</p>	<p>Does your child use one of his/her languages more often than the other?</p> <p>When your child wants to communicate, which language does he/she use?</p>
 <p>Home language experiences</p>	<p>Who are the people in your child's life who speak the home language to him/her?</p> <p>What are some experiences or activities your child has using language? (E.g., cooking with grandmother each evening in Chinese; doing weekend chores with father in Spanish)</p> <p>What experiences with early reading and writing has your child had in his/her home language?</p>
 <p>English language experiences</p>	<p>Who are the people in your child's life who speak English to him/her? (E.g., cooking with grandmother once a week; doing weekend chores with father)</p> <p>What experiences with early reading and writing has your child had in English?</p>
 <p>Individual characteristics of the child</p>	<p>What are your child's interests and favorite activities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there toys or things that your child especially likes to play with? • Are there pretend play activities that your child likes? • What does your child like to talk about? • What does your child like to learn about? • Can you give examples of experiences from the past that your child can recall and talk about?