



## Building Skills in Two Languages

### Learning Activity

#### *Talking with Families*

#### Objective

To practice having conversations about language development with parents of children learning more than one language

#### Instructions

1. Find a partner.
2. Brainstorm questions to ask families about home language use and goals for their children related to language. It might be helpful to read the articles *Gathering and Using Language that Families Share* and *Strategies for Supporting All Dual Language Learners* to gather ideas about questions for conversations with families. The latter also has descriptions of dual language learners you could use as a basis for the child and family in your discussion. See the full description of these resources below. A few example questions are: *How does your child use language at home? What experiences does your child have with English?*
3. Develop possible messages to share with families about the importance of continuing to use their home language with their children. Draw on the information from this module to present this information. If you need more ideas, consult one of the Office of Head Start resources below.
4. Role play with your partner. Have each person take turns playing the role of the teacher and playing a parent of a child learning a second language. You will need to imagine that the parent speaks English well enough to have a conversation in English. This conversation will give you practice describing the benefits of continuing to use home languages and using questions that gather information from families and build relationships.

#### Resources

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. *The Benefits of Being Bilingual*. Washington, D.C. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/docs/benefits-of-being-bilingual.pdf>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. *Gathering and Using Language that Families Share*. Washington, D.C. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/planned-language-approach/docs/hl-gathering-using-language-information.pdf>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. *The Gift of Language*. Washington, D.C. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/docs/gift-of-language.pdf>

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. *Strategies for Supporting All Dual Language Learners*. Washington, D.C. <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/fcp/docs/dll-strategies.pdf>