

Language at Home and in the Community

For Teachers

Ideas to share with families

Encourage families to use their language with children from birth

The easiest, most important thing is for parents and family members to use their home language every day. Many families worry that using their home language will confuse their children or make it more difficult for them to learn English. Help parents understand that children can learn more than one language at the same time. In fact, children will have an easier time learning English if they have a strong foundation in their first language.



Keep in mind:

Share your view that each family's language and culture is a source of pride and strength. Remind them how home language supports their children's growth in many ways and helps them learn English too!

Share books and stories

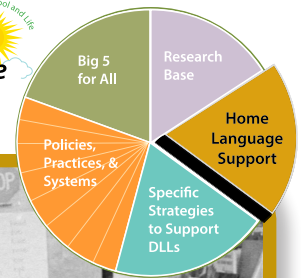
Many families worry that reading and telling their stories in their home language will make it harder for their children to read in English—but the opposite is true! Encourage families to read and tell stories in their home language. Explain that telling stories and reading in their home language teaches children words and ideas they will easily transfer into English.

Encourage families to talk about their traditions and culture

Provide opportunities for families to visit your classroom and talk about their language, traditions, culture, and heritage. Ask them to share family stories and songs. Constantly be on the lookout for ways children can share their heritage regularly in the classroom.

Planned Language Approach (PLA)

Success in School and Life



Tell stories and sing songs

All families have a rich heritage to pass on to their children. Stories, chants, rhymes, poems, sayings, and songs are an important part of each family's culture. Encourage families to share these with their children and to have fun doing it!



Keep in mind:

Families help their young children develop reading and vocabulary skills when they look at books together and talk about the pictures. It is not necessary to be a good reader to share books and stories with young children.

