

What You Can Do at Home

Sing, talk, read, and encourage your child every day!

When children are young, they learn by listening and talking with their parents, relatives, babysitters, and others. If you and your child are more comfortable with Spanish, then sing, talk, and **read with your child** in Spanish. This will build your child's speaking, listening, and understanding skills. These skills will later help him or her speak and read English.

The gift of two languages

Knowing two languages is a gift you can give your child. Many children lose the ability to speak and read in Spanish when growing up in the United States. With encouragement from you, though, your child can become fluent in not just one language, but two!

As your child gets older...

Once your child goes to school, you still have a great influence on how well he or she will do. For example, you can:

encourage **learning at home**

keep track to **make sure your child is not falling behind**

learn the many ways to help your child by **talking with his or her teacher**

understand what to do **if your child needs extra help**

"But what if I don't know English?"

If your Spanish is a lot better than your English, then speak, read, and sing to your child in Spanish. Whether in English or Spanish, you can spend time reading, singing, and talking to your child every day. Doing so will increase your child's ability to use language.

Get your child ready to read

Even when your child is still a baby, there are things you can do to help him learn! The first three years of life are very important in developing your child's mind and abilities.

Here are some ways to give your child an early and strong start:

Talk to your child all the time

Beginning with the day your child is born, talk to him or her whenever you're together. When you're making dinner, cleaning, or going somewhere, let your child hear you talk about what you're seeing, doing, or thinking. As your child gets older, ask questions and engage him or her in conversation.

Say rhymes

Rhymes are fun to listen to and they help your child hear the different sounds in words. Say rhymes like this one:

Bate, bate, chocolate,
tu nariz de cacahuete.
Uno, dos, tres, CHO!
Uno, dos, tres, CO!
Uno, dos, tres, LA!
Uno, dos, tres, TE!
Chocolate, chocolate!
Bate, bate, chocolate!
Bate, bate, bate, bate,
Bate, bate, CHOCOLATE!

Sing songs

Children love to hear people sing. Songs have rhymes and rhythms that help them learn. Here is one lullaby:

Duérmete, mi niño
Duérmete, mi niño,
duérmete solito,
que cuando despiertes
te daré atolito.

Duérmete, mi niña,
duérmete, mi sol,
duérmete pedazo
de mi corazón.

Tell stories

Tell your child a story you already know – or just make one up! It could be a folk tale, stories about your family, funny stories, or any story you both like.

Give everything a name

Tell your child what different things are called and explain what they do. Say things like "This is a phone. We use it to call grandmother." Or "This is a clock. We use it to tell the time." When talking to your child, use the names of things instead of words like "it" and "that."

You can also put labels on things in your home — the labels would say "Chair" or "Table" or "Doll." You can also play games that involve naming things. Ask your child, "Where's your nose?" and then, "Where's Mommy's nose?" Then touch your child's nose and say, "What's this?"

Point out words in the world

Show your child all the words you see while driving, walking, or taking the bus. Point out the word "stop" on a stop sign, for example. Ask your child to find a new word every time you go out. This helps your child notice words and letters.

Read together every day

Once your child is six months old, read to him or her for at least 15 minutes each day. Experts say this is one of the most important things you can do! Make reading together a warm and loving time.

Listen to your child, too

Pay attention to what your child says, even if he or she is just a baby. Look your child in the eyes and show that you've heard him or her. This encourages children to keep trying to use words.

Videos

<http://www.colorincolorado.org/podcasts/bilingual/>

Books

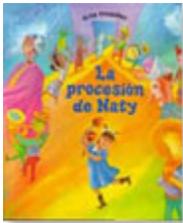
Celebrate Books in 2 languages!



De Colores



Books about Celebrations



Books without words

