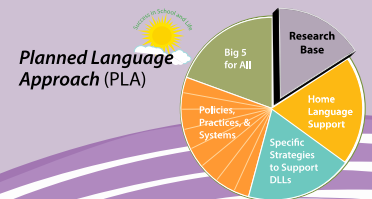


IMPORTANT TO KNOW

DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNER FACTS, FIGURES, AND FINDINGS



OFFICE OF HEAD START DEFINITION OF DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS:

- **Children who**
 - Acquire two or more languages simultaneously (i.e., from birth)
 - OR
 - Learn a second language while continuing to develop their first language
- **For more information:** eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic

The cultural and linguistic diversity in Head Start communities across America has increased dramatically in the twenty-first century. One third of children enrolled in Head Start and Early Head Start are growing up with more than one language.

Dual Language Learners: What the Research Says

Children's Capacity for Dual Language Competence

"Research data from prenatal and pre-verbal infants suggests that they have innate capacities that allow them to learn two languages without significant costs to the development of either language, provided that they receive consistent and adequate exposure to both languages on a continuous basis" (Paradis, Genesee, and Crago, 2011).

Value of Supporting Home Language

"Research increasingly shows that most young children are capable of learning two languages and that bilingualism confers cognitive, cultural, and economic advantages" (Bialystok, 2001; Genesee et al., 2004; Hakuta & Pease-Alvarez, 1992).

Dual Language Learners: What the Research Says

Home Language and Identity Formation	"Culture and linguistic identity provide a strong and important sense of self and family belonging, which in turn supports a wide range of learning capabilities, not the least of which is learning a second language" (Garcia, 1991).
Home Language and Cognitive Capacity	"The key to understanding the role of first language in...second language is to understand the function of uninterrupted cognitive development...when parents and children speak the language that they know best, they are working at their actual level of cognitive maturity" (Collier, 1995).
Home Language and Later School Success	"In fact, the findings suggest that the continued development of the child's home language—with an explicit emphasis upon the development of strong oral language skills—is a direct source of support for the child's acquisition of English, and particularly for successful reading in English later on" (OHS Multi-Cultural Principle 6). "Findings suggest that the provision of instruction in Spanish in high-quality pre-kindergarten programs appears to enhance acquisition of academic skills for Spanish-speaking children who enter pre-kindergarten with limited English" (Burchinal, Field, López, Howes, and Pianta, 2012).



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