Helping Young Children Learn Two Languages

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How can parents help young children learn two languages?
Many parents today are raising young children who are growing up learning two languages at the same time. It is important for parents and family members to understand that the early language skills children learn in their own home language help their children learn and understand English.

From birth, many children in the United States are learning two languages at the same time—the language of their family and English. All babies are born with the potential to learn language. Parents may fear that raising a child to learn more than one language might confuse the child. Research, however, has found that being raised bilingual gives children many advantages. Children gain a deeper understanding of two cultures, acquire stronger thinking skills and have a greater general sense of language. Families can help their young children who are dual language learners build the skills they will need to become successful learners and readers once they start school.

First, Let’s Talk
Start talking right away! Talk in Spanish. Talk in English. Talk in Somali. Talk in the language that is most comfortable for you. From birth to age three, a child’s brain is growing more quickly than at any other time. Just talking to children during these years is the most important thing parents can do to make the most of the brain-building early years. It doesn’t matter what language parents use to talk to their children. Simply by talking and listening to their child, parents make a difference that lasts a lifetime.

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Relationships – More than Just a Cup of Coffee

By Leslie M. Leslie, Coordinator - MassPAC at FCSN

I heard on the radio that a famous coffee shop was designing a business model around building relationships. The corporate world saw the value of personal engagement.

Parents should also value relationships, especially with their child’s school. Teachers, specialists, counselors and administrators all play an important role in the education of their children. Families of children with special needs rely on the delivery of an individualized education plan for their children which are formed by teamwork. The Team Meeting works best when both sides really listen and build trust through mutual respect.

Relationships take work. Before a trusting rapport is formed, both parties must learn to appreciate and understand one another. Just as your local barista might develop a system to remember your name or favorite coffee combo, families need to develop a system of communication to better connect with school personnel. Connections can lead to new places and ideas. Relationships should always allow for growth and change.

Special Education Parent Advisory Councils (SEPACs) also need to value and grow relationships. Opinions from a trusted colleague are more easily heard and accepted. SEPACs looking to bring effective change to their school districts under their advisory role need to build a level of trust so their message is heard.

SEPAC officers need to focus on issues which affect the district-wide population and push for an open exchange of ideas on tough issues. But change will only come when there is transparent give and take on an issue and both parties have a strong level of trust to hear the dialogue. A lot more work than pouring a cup of coffee, but so much more valuable.
Annually, a small group mostly of special education administrators in Massachusetts celebrates the anniversary of the signing of the first federal special education law. This event is known as “Special Education Day”. I was invited to participate in a panel discussion at this celebration. The panel was asked to “dream” about improving the future of special education. I want to share some of my dream thoughts: Special education will improve if we . . .

**Practice Empathy:** Let’s remember the importance of the impact that parent’s feel and the challenges they face when confronted with their child’s ongoing disabling condition or a new diagnosis. Parents seeking services for their child are often facing complex issues and feelings, a type of grief. When we suffer loss or experience grief, we need support, care and respect.

**Build Trust:** For too long, schools and parents have functioned as adversaries while negotiating the need for and quality of services their student will require in order to “make effective progress” in school. This type of environment can prevent us from creative problem solving and finding innovative solutions to supporting students who face challenges and barriers in school. Trust doesn’t just happen. It has to be deliberately built with integrity. Trust is the foundation for building success.

**Work for Justice:** The disability rights movement in the U.S. emerged directly out of the Civil Rights movement – as have so many “equality” movements in our culture. Special education consists of services and supports to “level the playing field” for students who need accommodations and modifications to fully participate in the life of the school with their non-disabled peers and make academic progress. School professionals must work for justice for all students and not tolerate inappropriate exclusion, bullying, violence or mistreatment toward any student – especially students with disabilities.

**Model Leadership:** School professionals in positions of power have the duty and opportunity to model these critical characteristics for their peers and workers. Administrators and school leaders can be life transforming when they demonstrate the joys of embracing all students and experiencing the richness of the diversity these students can bring to any community.

Some are calling for a significant reform of the federal special education law. It seems to me the problem is not so much that the special education law is broken – but rather the stigmatizing of students with differences remains a critical problem. **People stigmatize, the law protects.**

We will require less focus on the law to protect students with differences when the culture in which we live embraces the uniqueness of each child without fear. Rosemary Dybwad, a pioneer in the world of disability rights frequently commented during her presentations in the 1970’s & 80’s, “It’s normal to be different”. We are still dreaming of such a future.
Removing One Hurdle to Civil Rights Claims of Children with Special Needs

By Daniel T.S. Heffernan, Esquire - Kotin, Crabtree & Strong

A sad reality is that our children with special needs are sometimes the victims of physical, mental, or emotional abuse at school. The perpetrators of this abuse are the occasional bad actors amongst the many caring, professional teachers who dedicate their days to educating our children. There are also instances in which our children’s fellow students are the perpetrators, harming peers through bullying, hazing, or other types of abuse. There are civil claims that may be made to recover monetary damages for the child’s injuries. Among these claims are state-based negligence or “tort” claims; (2) state-based claims for intentional actions, such as intentional infliction of emotional distress or violation of the Massachusetts Civil Rights Act; and (3) federal claims, such as those under 42 USC § 1983, the Americans with Disabilities Act, or Title IX.

There are numerous protections accorded school districts and their personnel in these claims and numerous hurdles that must be overcome to successfully pursue a claim. These were discussed in detail in Sherry Rajaniemi-Gregg and my 2013 article Of Civil Rights and Children Newsline, Volume 33, No. 3.

One additional hurdle for civil rights claims for children on IEPs or 504 Plans is an administrative proceeding that must be pursued and completed before proceeding to court. Some courts have held that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) prohibits filing suit in state or federal court against a school district for injuries a child on an IEP or 504 plan receives as a result of the actions of its personnel, until administrative remedies have been “exhausted.” Courts have stated that the rationale for this prerequisite is the administrative body’s expertise in special education that courts lack.

This simply means that, prior to filing any lawsuit in court, one must first file a request for a due process hearing in order to determine if the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) has any authority over deciding the claims, and if so, what findings they might make and relief they may order. For example, when our firm has represented students abused, assaulted, or illegally restrained by special education teachers, we have litigated the matter first in the BSEA, even when we are asking only for money damages and not for relief related to the student’s special education program. Otherwise, there is a risk that a court will dismiss the civil rights claim and leave the family with no avenue for relief. For example, the court in Frazier v. Fairhaven School Committee, 276 F.3d 52 (1st Cir. 2002), upheld the dismissal of such a civil rights suit because it had not been first litigated in the BSEA. See also Bowden v. Dever, 2002 WL 472293 (D. Mass. 2002) (“Any aspect of the school’s treatment [of students] that interferes with the provision of free, appropriate public education is within the scope of the IDEA’s administrative procedures.”). Once parents have “exhausted” the administrative process, they may proceed to file a complaint in the state or federal court.

Proceeding through the BSEA before filing in court is problematic for civil rights claimants for several reasons. First, since the BSEA is not authorized to award money damages, litigating at the BSEA is a futile exercise. Second, it is costly in terms of time and resources of everyone involved – families, school districts and the BSEA. Third, the BSEA does not have the expertise to decide civil rights and tort claims. Fourth, since the only defendant in a BSEA proceeding is a school district, and not the individual school employees who may have perpetrated the abuse, the BSEA decision only applies to the school district. Lastly, and most significantly, it is simply unfair and discriminatory to require children with special needs to jump through a hoop that typical children need not in bringing civil rights claims.

The BSEA has begun to dismiss civil rights claims seeking only monetary damages. See, e.g., In Re: Springfield Public Schools, 20 MSER 37 (February 2014); Springfield Public Schools and Xylia, 18 MSER 373 (November 2012). However, no federal court in this jurisdiction has held that exhaustion is no longer required.

Recently, the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, which has jurisdiction over federal cases in Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Tennessee, held in F.H. v. Memphis City Schools, 2014 Fed. App. 0223P (6th Cir. 2014), that exhaustion was not a prerequisite for these types of civil rights claims. The student in that case had significant special needs and was allegedly physically, sexually and verbally abused by his school aides. When the lower courts dismissed his lawsuit for failing to exhaust, the Court of Appeals reversed, and held that exhaustion of the administrative remedies was unnecessary. The court held that the injuries were “non-educational in nature and cannot be remedied through the administrative process.” Id. at *7.

Hopefully, courts in our jurisdiction will follow this reasoning and remove this additional hurdle for children for special needs seeking compensation for civil rights violations.

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The Recruitment, Training and Support Center (RTSC) once again brought the Commonwealth’s Special Education Surrogate Parents together to acknowledge the extraordinary service they provide to students in the custody of the Department of Children and Families. On September 30th in Marlborough, MA over 150 people gathered to listen to the morning’s inspiring keynote presentation by Dr. Renee Boynton-Jarrett, a pediatrician and social epidemiologist at Boston Medical Center and the founding director of the Vital Village Community Engagement Network. The audience rose to their feet in appreciation of her powerful words about the impact of childhood trauma on the developing brain and the correlation between adverse health outcomes and childhood maltreatment. She hit a poignant note when she shared the experience of Maya Angelou’s traumatic childhood and how Angelou overcame her adversity, including five years of voluntary muteness, to become a beloved and distinctive voice of our nation.

This year for the first time, foster, adoptive, and kinship parents were invited to the Conference. These families are DCF’s most valuable community assets and the RTSC welcomed them at trainings this year. Exhibitors also shared their services and expertise at tables displaying valuable information and handouts.

The four workshops held concurrently in morning and afternoon sessions included a review by Jerry Mogul, Executive Director and attorney Amanda Klemas from Mass Advocates for Children, of new laws and what they mean for parents, teachers, and others involved with youth at risk. Among the issues discussed were Chapter 222, the new discipline regulations for all students; the Safe and Supportive Schools Act, key portions of which were adopted as part of the MA Reduction in Gun Violence Law; and the Autism Omnibus Bill.

Laura Malloy, Director of Yoga Programs and Co-Director for the Education Initiative at the Benson Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine at Mass General Hospital also presented a session on stress management. In addition to teaching the Relaxation Response, Malloy explained how learning to change negative thoughts to more adaptive ways of thinking can build resiliency and help us and our students face stressful situations with more confidence. Participants were noticed exiting the session in a significantly relaxed and happy state!

Dr. Stuart Ablon, Director of Think:Kids at Mass General Hospital and Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, presented a workshop on the struggles to treat, teach and parent children with challenging behavior. Dr. Ablon introduced an approach to remodel discipline for these children called Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS), which provides a practical evidence-based process for trauma-informed care that everyone at school and home can follow.

Christine Riley, an educational advocate in the community, and Jane Crecco of the RTSC, provided many SESPs and foster and adoptive parents the opportunity to examine Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) for students with challenging behaviors in various levels of state care. After determining the strengths of the student, participants listened to ways in which they could use those “islands of competency” to provide meaningful supports and services through the IEP process.

During the lunchtime break, the audience listened to a panel discussion of education professionals from across the state discuss challenges and opportunities for collaboration in the IEP process. Susan Stelk, the Education Director at DCF, was able to round out the discussion with some helpful insights and the offer to disseminate several documents to clarify some difficult issues. These documents are now available for everyone on the RTSC website, www.fcsn.org/rtsc.
The Guild Serves

- Students with Intellectual Disabilities (ID),
- Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders,
- Students with Down syndrome and other genetic disorders,
- Students with dual diagnosis (ID and mental health or behavioral challenges).

TRANSFORMING LIVES, REALIZING POTENTIAL.

The Guild for Human Services is a day and residential school for students with intellectual disabilities and behavioral challenges. Open 365 days a year, The Guild serves male and female students from age 6 until their 22nd birthday.

Residential students live in family-style homes in nearby neighborhoods.

The Guild for Human Services is able to continue assisting students after turning 22 within our new Adult Residential Program.

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), educational services, residential services, therapeutic services, vocational services and routine community experiences ensure consistent, effective progress and generalization of newly learned skills to students’ daily lives.
Forty years ago, it took the initiative of parents who sought equal access to education to gain fuller inclusion of children who primarily had mobility-related special health needs in their local schools. Today, thanks to medical advances and access to excellent medical care, some students may come to school with a wide variety of medical technology. How do parents and school districts work together, to ensure the health and safety of this vulnerable population during the school day?

The term “children with special health needs” encompasses a wide spectrum of medical concerns. It includes children who have allergies of any kind (food, latex, environmental, bee stings, etc.), asthma (which, according to CDC 2008 data, affected 136,267 children or 13.8% in Massachusetts), ADHD and other behavioral concerns, and emotional health issues. But in the year 2014, that’s not all.

Children born prematurely, living with complex genetic or medical conditions, having endured serious injury or life-threatening illnesses like cancer also go to school. Often, it just a part of their everyday life experience to rely on medical equipment to maintain their health needs. This may include a power wheelchair with an oxygen tank or ventilator mounted to supply oxygen to the child’s tracheostomy, an implanted insulin pump for Diabetes or a baclofen pump to address spasticity, or tube feedings or intermittent catheterization. Consider the incredible effort that went into planning to ensure that these children have full and safe access to school for its educational and social benefits.

The Individualized Health Care Plan is a tool first created by Project School Care at Boston Children’s Hospital over 20 years ago, with the goal of making certain that the school’s medical and educational team is fully aware of a child with complex medical needs, and has a fully articulated plan on managing everyday needs, emergency situations, and unknown triggers to a child’s well-being. Districts may have a form of their own, or be willing to create a unique tool to address all of the concerns of a specific student. Today, MASSTART (Massachusetts Technology Resource Team), funded through the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), Division for Children & Youth with Special Health Needs, provides free technical assistance to schools that are preparing for the arrival of a student with complex medical needs. Its team of highly

students with special health needs go to school too

by mary castro summers, project director - family ties of massachusetts at fcsn

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Tips for Talking

- **Talk about everyday events.** Talking helps babies and young children connect words to their experiences. When dressing, name and describe everything you are putting on your child—from diaper, jacket, pants, shoes and socks, to colors, buttons and zippers. When riding on the bus, in the car or taking a walk, talk about what you see and feel. Read signs, point out certain numbers, letters or colors.

- **Baby talk is good.** At first, use words and touch to respond to your child’s cries. Once your child starts babbling, keep responding with words, gestures, sounds. Children who are responded to gain confidence and delight in language.

- **Talk in real sentences.** Use big words, too, even though you know your child won’t understand them. Use simpler words to help your child understand. Speak slowly, use gestures. Hearing new words helps your child’s vocabulary grow.

- **Tell stories.** Stories introduce words that may not arise in everyday life.

- **Ask questions and have conversations.** As your children get older, ask them to tell you a story or to repeat a familiar story. Encourage preschool children to talk with you about their friends, experiences, ideas.

- **Have fun.** Rhyming, tongue twisters and other forms of word play in your home language will help your children learn about sounds.

A large study found that, by age three, children whose families frequently talked to them had a vocabulary twice as large as children whose families rarely spoke to them. The more words parents use when speaking to their infant and the more often they talk, the bigger the child’s vocabulary will be at age 3. The bigger the child’s vocabulary is at age 3, the bigger the vocabulary will be in 5th grade. These differences last through all the child’s school years.

Just putting a child in front of a T.V. doesn’t do the job. Children need to interact with others about what is happening so they can connect the words they hear to their own experiences. Sensitive interactions with adults do much more to help brains develop than any toy, TV or DVD.

Read to Expand your Child’s World

When you give your children words, you give them the world. One of the best ways to expand a child’s vocabulary is through books. Children who are read to from birth, regardless of the language, are more successful at learning to read. Remember, early reading skills that are learned in one language can transfer to another language. The stronger a child’s language and reading skills are in his or her home language, the stronger they will be in the second language.

Your child’s early years pass quickly, but their impact lasts a lifetime. When you create an everyday environment rich in language through conversations, stories, word games, rhymes, song, and reading, you prepare your children for a future of learning and success. So, go ahead, have fun—talk, read, smile, sing, and play with your children. Talking and reading to and with them is the best preparation you can give children for beginning school ready and eager to learn.

Reading Tips

- **Begin reading right away when your child is an infant.** Read every day. Read with expression and use different voices. Carry books to read wherever you go.

- **Don’t read? Don’t Worry!** You do not have to read to help children learn about reading and to have fun with books. Talk about pictures and the story they tell. Invite your child to point to pictures and turn the pages. Talk with your child about what you see on the pages.

- **Read with your child.** Use lots of ways for your child to take part in the action. Encourage children to “read” or tell you the story. Ask them to point to a picture you name or ask them to name it. Ask them to guess what comes next in the story. If you can, help them recognize letters and connect them to the sounds you both make.

**Sources/Resources for Helping Young Children Two Languages:**

Get Ready to Read! This website aims to help Spanish-speaking parents build their preschool and kindergarten children’s early literacy and learning skills. To learn more, visit [http://getreadytoread.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=98&Itemid=107](http://getreadytoread.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=98&Itemid=107)

¡Colorín Colorado! This bilingual website provides parents and families with the information they can use to help their children become good readers and successful students. For more, visit [www.colorincolorado.org/families](http://www.colorincolorado.org/families)
The Federation is pleased to announce its annual statewide conference “Visions of Community, a Conference for Parents of Children with Special Needs and the Professionals Who Serve Them” will be held on Saturday, March 7, 2015 at the Seaport World Trade Center in Boston.

This year’s keynote presentation will feature Dr. Joseph Petner and Dr. William Henderson. Well-known for their innovative approaches to creating whole school inclusive communities, the two not so retiring former principals will use music, anecdotes, and data to share their experiences and perspectives for improving opportunities and outcomes for students with disabilities. They will take a look back to the early days of Special Education laws and the how those laws played out to current practical strategies for teaching and including students with disabilities both in school and in the community setting. The presenters have a combined 90 years of experience as educators and will inspire conference participants with their shared vision of community.

Dr. Petner has worked in public education for 47 years. He began his career in teaching in 1967 in the Philadelphia Public Schools. He earned a doctorate from the University of North Dakota’s Center for Teaching and Learning in 1974. That same year, Joe joined the Cambridge Public Schools as a staff and program developer for its Follow Through Program, a sequel to Head Start, under the instructional sponsorship of Bank Street College in New York. He was director of the Cambridge Follow Through Program from 1979-1989. In 1989 he became Principal of the Haggerty Elementary School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, a position he retired from in July 2007. Joe currently is working for MADESE’s District and School Assistance Center serving the Greater Boston Region. Dr. Petner has been recognized by and received awards from many educational and disability organizations for his outstanding work as an educator and administrator. Joe has collaborated with Dan Habib, filmmaker, on his award winning documentary, Including Samuel.

Dr. William Henderson began his career in education as a middle school teacher in the Boston Public Schools in 1973 and later became an assistant principal at a two-way, bilingual school. In 1989, Bill was appointed principal of the O’Hearn Elementary School with a mandate to include students with significant disabilities. The school gained widespread recognition for inclusion, academic progress, arts, and family involvement. Upon his retirement in 2009, the O’Hearn was renamed the Dr. William W. Henderson Inclusion School, and it now serves students in 2 campuses from early childhood through grade 11. Bill continues to advocate for inclusion through consulting and by presenting at universities and conferences. His book, The Blind Advantage, describes challenges and offers practical strategies for developing successful inclusive schools.

After a morning of inspirational and energetic presentations, including the annual recognition of individuals receiving the 2015 Community Partnership Awards, participants can attend breakout workshops which will include topics on special education advocacy, managing challenging behaviors, transition to adulthood for students with disabilities, inclusion, policy initiatives, assistive technology, healthcare, bullying, parent leadership opportunities, early childhood, autism and more. In addition to the more than 30 sessions in English, a full conference strand of many of these topics will be offered in Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Somali, and Vietnamese.

The Visions of Community Exhibit Hall typically features over 75 vendors and resources for families. The conference is a wonderful opportunity for families and professionals to network and learn about important resources.

Free bus transportation from 5 locations across the state, a limited number of childcare slots, and interpreting services will be available for the conference. Registration opens on January 5th with an early bird registration fee of $75. A limited number of partial scholarships for families of children with special needs will be available and can be applied for when registration begins. Please check the conference website, www.fcsn.org/voc2015 for further details.
Pathways Academy
Where Academic and Clinical Services Come Together

A year-round therapeutic day school, specializing in social pragmatic training and sensory integration, for youth ages 6 to 22, who have autism spectrum disorders, including Asperger's syndrome and related non-verbal learning and sensory processing disabilities.

Ask About our 45-Day Placement Program

Belmont, MA www.mcleanhospital.org 617.855.2847

Transition Experts
Easter Seals offers comprehensive transition assessments and individualized coaching to support youth with disabilities and their families.

We view each student as a unique individual as we identify barriers, create personalized transition plans, and work hand-in-hand with students to provide action steps and community-based experiences to increase overall independence.

Easter Seals Transition Consultants and Coaches work with students, families and educators to develop a plan and carry it out.

Contact Lisa Sirois, LICSW, Ed D at 508-751-6390 or lsirosi@eastersealsma.org to learn how Easter Seals can assist every step of the way.

Education for All Abilities
Seven Hills Academy at Groton is a DESF-approved, private special education day program for children with complex medical and developmental disabilities whose learning needs can best be met within a person-centered, multidisciplinary environment. Classes follow the MA Curriculum Frameworks with integrated arts and adaptive technology to encourage a multisensory, experiential appreciation for learning. Our highly qualified staff provides comprehensive allied health, medical, nursing, speech pathology, and individualized therapies. Assistive technology, wheelchairs, braces, and hand splints are all customized to fit as the children grow.
Have your child grow with Seven Hills Academy at Groton! Call today, 978.732.5253.

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Students with Special Health Needs Go To School Too (continued from page 7)

qualified nurses helps to bridge the transition to school with parents and their medical providers, ensuring an accurate understanding of a child’s medical needs. To learn more about MASSTART, contact the DPH Community Support Line: 800-882-1435.

Additionally, the 3rd Edition of Supporting Students with Special Health Care Needs: Guidelines and Procedures for Schools was published in 2014 (Paul H. Brookes Publishing, ISBN-13:978-1-59857-063-2) and offers a comprehensive and thorough review of supporting children with a wide range of medical needs, the legal issues related to their education, health care transitions for youth and young adults, transportation, and infection control. Two excellent resource chapters address disaster planning and working with families and students from diverse cultures. Specific guidelines are outlined in 18 areas of medical care. Authors include members of the Project School Care Team. This book is a must-have for parents, school and home care nurses, and anyone who is keenly involved with the daily support and care of a child with complex medical needs.

Family TIES of Massachusetts is a parent-led program that offers information and referral services through its six Regional Parent Coordinators. We are parents, too, and take into account our own experiences as we listen and support your needs. Our Parent-to-Parent Program brings together families sharing similar life experiences, in raising a child with special needs. To find community-based programs and resources or learn about Parent-to-Parent, contact our toll-free line, 800-905-TIES (8437), or visit our website, www.massfamilyties.org.

Cómo ayudar a los niños pequeños a aprender dos idiomas

Reproducido de Datos Familiares en Educación - Una publicación del Centro de Massachusetts para la Familia y la Comunidad en FCSN

¿Cómo pueden ayudar los padres a que sus hijos pequeños aprendan dos idiomas?

Hoy en día, muchos padres crían a hijos pequeños que aprenden dos idiomas al mismo tiempo. Es importante que los padres y familiares que no hablan inglés comprendan que las habilidades lingüísticas tempranas que se aprenden en el idioma hablado en el hogar, ayudan a los niños a aprender y a comprender el inglés.

En los Estados Unidos muchos niños aprenden dos idiomas simultáneamente desde que nacen, el de su familia y el inglés. Todos los bebés nacen con el potencial de aprender idiomas. Algunos padres creen que criar a un hijo en más de un idioma puede confundirlo. Sin embargo, la investigación ha demostrado que la crianza bilingüe tiene muchas ventajas para los pequeños. Comprenden mejor dos culturas, desarrollan la capacidad de razonamiento y tienen una notación general más amplia de qué es el lenguaje. Las familias pueden ayudar a los aprendices de dos idiomas a desarrollar las habilidades que necesitarán para aprender y leer con éxito cuando comiencen la escuela.

En primer lugar, ¡converse!

¡Empiece a hablar del principio! Hable en español, en inglés o en somali. Hable en el idioma que le resulte más natural a usted. Del nacimiento a los tres años, el cerebro de un niño crece más rápidamente que en cualquier otra etapa de la vida. Hablarle durante estos años es lo más importante que los padres pueden hacer para aprovechar al máximo este periodo de desarrollo cerebral temprano. El idioma en que los padres hablen con sus niños no importa. Con sólo hablarle y escuchar a un hijo, los padres marcan una diferencia que dura toda la vida.

Un estudio de gran alcance encontró que para los tres años de edad, los niños de familias que les hablaban a menudo tenían el doble de vocabulario que los de familias que les hablaban poco. Cuantas más palabras usen los padres al hablar con el bebé y cuanto más a menudo le hablen, mayor será el vocabulario del niño para la edad de tres años. Y cuanto más vocabulario tenga a los 3 años, más vocabulario tendrá en 5º grado. Estas diferencias persisten durante todos los años escolares.

Poner a un hijo delante del televisor no sirve. El niño tiene que interactuar con otros en torno a lo que ocurre en el momento para relacionar las palabras. continúa en la página siguiente
Cómo ayudar a los niños pequeños a aprender dos idiomas (continuación de la página anterior)

que oye con sus experiencias. Las interacciones sensibles con adultos contribuyen mucho más al desarrollo cerebral que cualquier juguete, programa de televisión o DVD.

Consejos para hablar

- Hable de las cosas de todos los días. Conversar ayuda a los bebés y a los niños pequeños a relacionar las palabras con sus experiencias.
- Al vestir a su hija o hijo, nombre y describa todo lo que le pone —pañal, chaqueta, pantalones, zapatos y calcetines— así como colores, botones y cremalleras.
- Al viajar en autobús, en coche o al caminar, hable de lo que ven y cómo se sienten. Lea los carteles, señale los números, letras y colores.
- El parloteo de los bebés es bueno. Desde un principio, responda al llanto de su niño con palabras y caricias. Cuando empiece a balbucear, siga contestándole con palabras, gestos y sonidos. Los niños a los que se les responde adquieren confianza y disfrutan del lenguaje.
- Hable en oraciones de verdad. Use palabras difíciles también, aunque sepá que su niño no las comprenderá. Y use palabras más simples para ayudar a su niño a entender. Hable despacio y use gestos. Ofír palabras nuevas enriquece el vocabulario del niño.
- Cuéntele cuentos. Los cuentos introducen palabras que tal vez no surjan en la vida cotidiana.
- Haga preguntas y converse. A medida que sus niños crezcan, pidales que le cuenten un cuento o que le repitan una historia conocida. Anime a sus niños de edad preescolar a hablar con usted de sus amigos, experiencias e ideas.
- ¡Diviértanse! Las rimas, los trabalenguas y otros juegos de palabras en el idioma hablado en su casa ayudarán a sus hijos a aprender sonidos.

Consejos de lectura

- Empiece a leer cuando su niño todavía sea bebé. Léale cada día. Lea en forma expresiva y use diferentes voces. Lleve libros para leer adondequiera que vaya.
- ¿Usted no lee? ¡No se preocupe! No hace falta leer para ayudar a un hijo a aprender sobre la lectura y divertirse con libros. Hable de las ilustraciones y de la historia que narran. Invite a su niño a señalar dibujos y a dar vuelta las páginas. Hable con él o ella de lo que ven en las páginas.
- Lea con su niño. Haga que participe en la trama de diferentes maneras. Anime a su hijo a “leer” o contarle el cuento. Nombre un dibujo y pidale que lo señale, o señálelo y pidale que lo nombre. Pidale que adivine lo que va a suceder. Si puede, ayúdele a reconocer letras y a conectarlas con los sonidos y hagan estos sonidos juntos.

Lea para expandir el mundo de su niño

Al darle palabras a un hijo, le abre las puertas al mundo. Los libros son una de las mejores maneras de aumentar su vocabulario. Los niños a quienes se les lee desde que nacen, sea cual sea el idioma, aprenden a leer con más facilidad. Recuerde, las habilidades de lectura temprana que se aprenden en un idioma pueden transferirse a otro. Cuanto más fuertes sean las habilidades de lenguaje y lectura de un niño en el idioma del hogar, más fuertes serán en el segundo idioma. Los años tempranos de un hijo pasan rápido, pero su impacto dura toda la vida. Cuando usted crea un ambiente diario rico en lenguaje mediante conversaciones, cuentos, juegos de palabras, rimas, canciones y lecturas, prepara a su hijo para un futuro de aprendizaje y éxito. Así que, ¡adelante! Diviértase, converse, lea, sonría, cante y juegue con sus niños. Hablarles, leerles y leer con ellos es la mejor manera de ayudarlos a empezar la escuela preparados y deseosos de aprender.

Fuentes y recursos para ayudar a niños pequeños que hablan dos idiomas

Get Ready to Read! El objetivo de este sitio web es ayudar a padres hispanohablantes de niños de jardín de infantes a edad preescolar a desarrollar sus habilidades de alfabetismo temprano y aprendizaje. Para obtener más información, visite http://getreadytoread.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=98&Itemid=107

¡Colorín Colorado! Este sitio web bilingüe ofrece información a los padres y las familias para ayudar a sus hijos a ser buenos lectores y estudiantes exitosos. Para obtener más información, visite www.colorincolorado.org/families
Announcing “Communication Matters: a guide for sharing information about a child’s care”

By Bonnie Thompson, CHIPRA Grant Family Leader - Massachusetts Family Voices at FCSN

Good communication means sharing the right information with the right people at the right time, while always respecting privacy. It takes trust, work, and strong relationships.

The goal of this Guide is to improve child health care through better communication between:

• children, youth, and families
• primary care providers
• behavioral health provider and
• school teams

The Guide gives tips for building and maintaining trusting relationships, tools and ideas for sharing information, a systematic approach to identifying everyone who takes part in caring for a child and an overview of privacy laws and how to use them.

“Communication Matters: a guide for sharing information about a child’s care” is a product of the of the Massachusetts Child Health Quality Coalition (CHQC) supporting statewide child health quality improvement initiatives and providing resources for families, advocates and professional partners who are caring for and about children. The Guide was created by the CHQC Communication and Confidentiality Task Force which included families, youth, providers, school staff, lawyers, and family support groups such as Mass Family Voices at the Federation.

The CHQC is funded by the CHIPRA (Children’s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act) Quality Demonstration Grant award. The CHQC also actively supports other CHIPRA funded work, specifically the efforts to advance family/patient centered medical homes.
FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Let It Go: My Goals Never Bothered Me Anyway

By Becky Rizoli, self-advocate - The LINK Center at FCSN

When I first heard the song “Let It Go,” from Frozen, I was struck at how the lyrics could have been about me.

I was diagnosed with ADHD when I was eight. I was put on medication and received counseling. By the time I reached adolescence, I had developed a stutter. Bullies in my class cruelly mocked me and picked on me because I was in special education. I withdrew socially and avoided speaking except when I absolutely had to.

“Conceal, don’t feel
Don’t let them know”

I was fortunate to have a mentor in my speech therapist, who told me that I could succeed if I tried hard and believed in myself. Thanks to her encouragement, I tried out for the school play. The theater teacher initially was hesitant to cast me, but when he heard me read from the script, he discovered that when I was playing the role of someone who spoke fluently, I spoke fluently as well.

He cast me in a speaking part, and patiently took the time to work with me as I became comfortable with my role. At one rehearsal, I was able to break through my inhibitions, and perform with the passion I had been lacking before. He came up to me after rehearsal, and told me how impressed he was at the progress I had made. I was elated.

“It’s time to see what I can do
To test the limits and break through”

On the night of the play, the audience was astounded at my performance and couldn’t believe this was the same girl who used to stutter every time she opened her mouth. As a result, I became a more confident person, and was more comfortable expressing myself. I was through hiding behind my difference.

“I’m never going back
The past is in the past!”

This was a major turning point in my life. It was a dream come true for me, and all because someone believed in me. Because others believed in me, I came to believe in myself. My goals never bothered me anyway.

Lyrics from “Let It Go,” by Kristen Anderson Lopez and Robert Lopez

Ajudando as Crianças no Aprendizado de Dois Idiomas

Reproduzido dos Fatos das Famílias em Educação - Uma publicação do Centro de Massachusetts para o Engajamento da Família e Comunidade na FCSN

Como os pais podem ajudar as crianças pequenas no aprendizado de dois idiomas?

Hoje em dia, muitos pais estão criando as crianças pequenas, durante o seu crescimento, a aprenderem dois idiomas ao mesmo tempo. É importante para os pais e os membros familiares que não falam inglês, entenderem que a aquisição precoce de competências no idioma que as crianças aprendem em suas próprias casas, ajuda as suas crianças a aprenderem e entenderem inglês.

Desde o nascimento, muitas crianças nos Estados Unidos estão aprendendo dois idiomas ao mesmo tempo—o idioma de sua família e o inglês. Todos os bebês nascem com potencial para aprender um idioma. Os pais podem ter o receio de achar que uma criança se confundirá se aprender mais de um idioma. A pesquisa, entretanto, descobriu que ser criado bilingue oferece às crianças muitas vantagens. As crianças ganham uma compreensão mais profunda das duas culturas, adquirem mais habilidade de raciocínio e têm em geral um sentido muito maior da linguagem. As famílias podem ajudar as suas crianças pequenas, que sejam aprendizes de duplo idioma, a construírem as competências que necessitam para tornarem-se aprendizes e leitores logo que começarem a frequentar a escola.

Primeiro, Vamos Falar

Comece a falar imediatamente! Fale em espanhol. Fale em inglês. Fale em somali. Fale no idioma que é mais confortável para você. Do nascimento aos três anos de idade, o cérebro da criança está crescendo mais rapidamente do que em qualquer outro momento. Somente falar com as crianças durante estes anos, é coisa o mais importante que os pais podem fazer para tirar o máximo proveito na construção-do-cérebro durante estes primeiros anos. Não importa que idioma os pais usam para falar com seus filhos. Simplesmente por falar e ouvir o seu filho, os pais fazem uma diferença que dura por uma vida inteira.

continuação da próxima página
Ajudando as Crianças no Aprendizado de Dois Idiomas

Um amplo estudo descobriu que, por volta dos três anos de idade, as crianças cujas famílias conversavam frequentemente com elas, tinham um vocabulário duas vezes maior do que aquelas crianças cujas famílias falavam raramente com elas. Quanto maior a quantidade de palavras que os pais usam enquanto falam com a sua criança pequena e quanto mais frequente falarem, maior será o vocabulário da criança aos três anos de idade. Quanto maior for o vocabulário da criança aos três anos de idade, maior será o vocabulário da criança quando estiver na 3ª série. Estas diferenças duram através de todos os anos da criança na escola.

O fato de colocar a criança em frente de uma TV, não resolve o problema. As crianças precisam interagir com outras pessoas sobre o que está acontecendo para desta forma conectar as palavras que elas ouvem com as suas próprias experiências. A interação sensível com os adultos traz muito mais ajuda no desenvolvimento dos cérebro do que qualquer experiência. A interação sensível com os adultos traz muito mais ajuda no desenvolvimento dos cérebro do que qualquer brinquedo, TV ou DVD.

Dicas para Falar

- Fale sobre os acontecimentos do dia-a-dia. Falar ajuda os bebês e as crianças pequenas a conectar as palavras com as suas experiências.
- Quando estiver vestindo, dê nome e descreva tudo que você está colocando no seu filho—da fralda, calça, camisa, sapato e meias, até as cores, botões e os zíperes.
- Quando estiver andando de ônibus, no carro ou passeando, fale sobre o que você está vendo e como se sente. Leia as letras, aponte para certos números, letras ou cores.
- Fala de bebê é bom. A princípio, use as palavras e o tato para responder quando o seu filho chorar. Uma vez que seu filho comece a balbuciar fique respondendo com palavras, gestos e sons. As crianças que recebem respostas ganham confiança e prazer na linguagem.
- Fale com frases reais. Use também palavras importantes, mesmo sabendo que seu filho não irá entender-las. Use palavras mais simples para ajudar o seu filho a entender. Fale devagar, use os gestos. Ouvir palavras novas ajuda a crescer o vocabulário do seu filho.
- Conte histórias. As histórias introduzem palavras que talvez não apareçam, na vida do dia-a-dia.
- Faça perguntas e tenha conversas. Tão logo seus filhos fiquem mais velhos, peça-lhes que lhes conte uma história ou que repitam uma história familiar. Incentive as crianças a conversar com você sobre os seus amigos, suas experiências e ideias.
- Divirta-se. A rima, travia-linguas e outras formas de jogos de palavras em seu idioma de origem ajudará seus filhos a aprender sobre os sons.

Leia para Expandir o Mundo da sua Criança

Quando você dá palavras aos seus filhos, você está lhes oferecendo o mundo. Uma das melhores maneiras de expandir o vocabulário de uma criança é através dos livros. As crianças que têm alguém lendo para elas a partir do nascimento, independentemente de que idioma, são mais bem sucedidas no aprendizado da leitura. Lembre-se, as habilidades de leitura que forem aprendidas precocemente em um idioma podem ser transferidas para um outro idioma. Quanto maior as capacidades de linguagem e leitura de uma criança no seu idioma nativo, mais forte elas serão em um segundo idioma.

Os primeiros anos de seu filho passam rapidamente, mas o impacto que causam perduram por toda uma vida. Quando você cria um ambiente dia-a-dia rico em linguagem através de conversas, histórias, jogos de palavras, rimas e leitura, você prepara para os seus filhos um futuro de aprendizado e de sucesso. Então, vá em frente, divirta-se—fale, leia, sorria, cante e brinque com seus filhos. Falar com eles e ler para eles é a melhor preparação que você pode dar para que as crianças cheguem a escola prontas e ansiosas para aprender.

Dicas de Leitura

- Comece a ler imediatamente enquanto seu filho é um bebê. Leia todos os dias. Leia com expressão e use vozes diferentes. Carregue livros para que possa ler onde quer que vá.
- Não ler? Não se Preocupe! Você não tem que ler para ajudar as crianças a aprender sobre a leitura e para se divertir com os livros. Converse sobre os desenhos e a história que contam. Convide o seu filho para apontar para as figuras e virar as páginas. converse com seu filho sobre o que você vê nas páginas.
- Leia com o seu filho. Use várias maneiras para o seu filho se tornar parte na ação. Incentive as crianças para “ler” ou comece a história. Peça-lhes que aponte para a figura que você quer que o nome ou pergunte-lhes para dizer o nome da figura. Peça-lhes para adivinhar o que vem a seguir na história. Se você puder, ajude-as a reconhecer as letras e a conectá-las aos sons que fazem juntos.

Prepare-se Para Ler! Tem como objetivo ajudar os pais de língua-hispana a construir cedo competências de aprendizado e alfabetização para suas crianças que estão na pré-escola e no jardim-de-infância. Para saber mais, visite http://getreadytoread.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=98&Itemid=107

¡Colorín Colorado! Este website bilíngue fornece informação para os pais e familiares que podem usar para ajudar as suas crianças a se tornarem bons leitores e estudantes bem sucedidos. Para obter mais informação, visite http://www.colorincolorado.org/families

Fontes/Recursos para Ajudar Crianças Pequenas a Aprenderem Dois Idiomas

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