what works?

Promising Practices for Improving the School Readiness of English Language Learners
what works?
executive summary

Many children are beginning school without the skills necessary to succeed, especially children from low socio-economic backgrounds whose native language is not English.

This doesn’t have to be the case. We have the potential to positively impact English language learners. We can:

- Better support parents to be their child’s first teacher.
- Improve the learning environments of English language learners, whether at home, in early care and education settings, pre-K and K programs, or in the broader community.
- Build community support.
- Advocate for state and/or local action.

Organizations throughout the nation are implementing these Promising Practices or “things that work.” All of these Promising Practices embody common principles that are critical to their success:

- Culturally Competent
- Parent-Focused
- Data-driven
- Outcome-oriented
- Quality-oriented
- Collaborative
- Communication-focused
- Replicable

The result? Improved school readiness and a decrease in the achievement gap between English Language Learners (ELL) and native English speakers.

This compendium, *What Works? Promising Practices for Improving the School Readiness of English Language Learners*, is a framework for moving forward; it provides insight for states, jurisdictions, programs and parents on how to help children succeed. By outlining the Promising Practices and providing “Snap Shots” of programs at work—programs throughout the nation that are implementing the Promising Practices—the compendium has the potential to significantly shift current policies for working with ELL children and ignite programmatic, community, jurisdictional, and statewide action. While the Promising Practices and the Snap Shots focus on work that is being done with the Hispanic community (Spanish-speakers represent the largest numbers of English language learners in Maryland), the findings can be applied to working with all young children and families learning to speak English, regardless of their native language.
Ready At Five is firmly committed to improving the school readiness of all Maryland's children. To this end, Ready At Five embarked on a two-year initiative—a unique combination of research, promising practices and direct service—targeting ELL.

As a first step and with funding from The Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Maryland State Department of Education, and The Harry and Jeannette Weinberg Foundation, Ready At Five launched a small-scale research initiative to identify Promising Practices or practices that will improve the school readiness of ELL children.

Spearheaded by Gilda Martinez, Associate Professor, Johns Hopkins University Center for Reading Excellence, Ready At Five conducted in-depth interviews with scores of early educators and community leaders throughout the nation, including California, Florida, Illinois, Maryland (Baltimore City; Montgomery, Prince George's, Howard and Eastern Shore Counties), New Jersey, New York, and Texas, as well as other states with large populations learning to speak English, in an effort to identify policies and practices that are improving the school readiness of English language learners.

Working with a Panel of Experts, comprised of organizations with national knowledge of early education and ELL issues, Ready At Five reviewed the research and identified several Promising Practices. While the Promising Practices focus on work that is being done with the Hispanic community (Spanish-speakers represent the largest numbers of English language learners in Maryland), the findings can be applied to working with all young children and families learning to speak English, regardless of the native language.

Upon further reflection, the Panel of Experts identified eight critical elements from the pool of Promising Practices, which Ready At Five contends will foster success.

This compendium, What Works? Promising Practices for Improving the School Readiness of English Language Learners, culls the research, outlines the Promising Practices, and showcases programs at work. It is the result of the six-month research initiative.

Implications for Action
What Works? is a framework for moving forward, providing insight for states, jurisdictions, programs and parents on how to help children succeed. It has the potential to significantly shift current policies for working with ELL children and ignite programmatic, community, jurisdictional, and statewide action.

Learning Laboratory
As a result of this work, Ready At Five was “called to action.” From the practices outlined in this compendium, Ready At Five and a Community Workgroup will select several Promising Practices. Through extensive technical assistance to Baltimore City's eastside—the General Wolfe Elementary School and Highlandtown Elementary School communities, which have growing populations of Hispanic and/or ELL young children—Ready At Five will implement the selected Promising Practices and monitor the lessons learned using state-of-the-art evaluation software. Ready At Five will highlight the results of this Learning Laboratory in future publications and at statewide events.
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a portrait of change
Five and half million children in America speak nearly 400 languages other than English . . . Some would note that many of these children have limited English skills. But, in truth, they are not limited. Rather, they are blessed with the opportunity to learn multiple languages. At a time when most Americans speak just one language, these children are a bridge between two cultures. Helping them learn English while at the same time providing a quality education is the single most important thing we can do to help them achieve the American Dream.

Rod Paige, Secretary of Education, US Department of Education
a diversifying nation

According to Census 2000 released by the US Census Bureau, the nation is more ethnically, racially, and culturally diverse than ever before. Since 1990, diverse racial and ethnic groups have increased from approximately one-fourth to one-third of the US population. The Census Bureau projects that in 2030, diverse racial and ethnic groups will comprise 40 percent (or two-fifths) of the total population.

<table>
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</table>

Figure 1: US Population by Race

Today, Hispanics are the largest minority population with 39.9 million people (13 percent); one in eight Americans is Hispanic. And this population continues to grow at a much faster rate than the population as a whole. By July 2003, 39 months after Census 2000, the nation’s population had grown by 9.4 million people, about half of which were Hispanic. This growth rate of the Hispanic population of 13.0 percent is almost four times that of the total population (3.3 percent).

Sixty-seven percent of the Hispanic-origin population is of Mexican background. Of the remainder, 14 percent are of Central and South American backgrounds, 9 percent Puerto Rican, 4 percent Cuban and 7 percent other Hispanic origins. Three-in-four Hispanics reside in seven states: Arizona, California, Florida, Illinois, Nevada, New Jersey, and Texas (each with populations of 1 million or more). The majority (50 percent) of the Hispanic-origin population lives in California (11.9 million) or Texas (7.3 million).
The Hispanic population continues to rise in Maryland as well. According to the Census data from 1990, Hispanics represented just over 2 percent (or 119,984 individuals) of the total population. By 2000, the number of Hispanics nearly doubled, representing 4.3 percent (or 227,916 individuals) of the total population. Concentrated primarily in Montgomery and Prince George's counties, growth of Maryland's Hispanic-origin population rose substantially in the following jurisdictions:

- Montgomery County experienced a 15.4 percent population growth between 1990-2000, with an 80.7 percent growth in the Hispanic population. (The increase in the Latino and Asian populations account for 70.5 percent of all growth).
- Prince George's County experienced a 15.4 percent population growth between 1990-2000, with a 90.3 percent growth in the Hispanic population.
- Howard County experienced a 20 percent population growth between 1990-2000, with a 102.5 percent increase in the Latino population.
- Baltimore County experienced a 9 percent population growth between 1990-2000, with a 69.4 percent growth of the Hispanic population.

Baltimore City and the Eastern Shore counties also saw dramatic increases in their Hispanic population. In Baltimore City, the numbers of Hispanic families grew over 35 percent since 1997. In these jurisdictions, the Hispanic population is relatively new and has few, if any, community-based services designed to specifically address the social and economic challenges of the Hispanic population: higher than average illiteracy, poverty, unemployment, mobility, crime, and health concerns.

It is important to note that the median family income for Hispanics is $32,997 (down 2.6 percent from 2002), nearly $15,000 less than their non-Hispanic, white peers. Twenty-one percent of those living in poverty in the United States are Hispanic (28 percent of Hispanic children were living in poverty). One-quarter of Hispanic children under 18 had no public or private health insurance. And, one-quarter of Hispanic children ages 19 to 35 months had not received immunizations.
implications for educators

As communities and neighborhoods grow more diverse, so do the nation’s school systems and early education programs. Between 1973 and 2000, Hispanic student enrollment increased by 11 percentage points, whereas African-Americans increased by only 2 percentage points. In 2000, 39 percent of public school students in kindergarten through 12th grade were minorities, and of those 44 percent were Hispanic. More than 10 percent (or 4.2 million) of the nation’s 19.8 million preschoolers (under age 5) are Hispanic. In Maryland, Census 2000 data indicates that the number of Hispanic children (under age 18) in Maryland grew by nearly 98 percent or 40,000 children since 1990, rising from 36,311 children to 72,096 children.

The nation’s demographic shifts, namely the increasing numbers of people of Hispanic-origin, have implications for the education system. Hispanic students in grades 4, 8, and 12 have lower reading, mathematics, and science scores on the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) than non-Hispanic White students. Hispanic students also have higher high school dropout rates (43 percent); lower high school completion rates (57 percent); and only about two-in-five Hispanic adults participate in adult education.

Many of these students come from homes where Spanish, not English, is the only language spoken. Nearly one-in-ten US residents (29 million people) speak Spanish at home, of which more than one-half say they speak English “very well.” Many more students, however, are not proficient in the English language; they are English Language Learners (ELL).

Between 1992 and 2002, the ELL student population increased 72 percent. In 2002, there were 3,977,819 public school students (grades K-12) throughout the nation who were learning the English language. This represents nearly 8.4 percent of all students in grades K-12, of which nearly 70 percent are elementary school students. An overwhelming 77 percent of ELL students come from low-income backgrounds.

It is important to note that States report more than 460 languages are spoken by ELL students nationwide. However, nearly 76.9 percent of all ELL students speak a dialect of Spanish—indicating that Spanish is the native language of the great majority of ELLs. In Maryland, Spanish-speakers account for 80 percent of ELL children.

School systems have the option to provide additional educational supports for students learning the English language. The criteria for defining ELL status are determined by districts based on state and district policies. The majority of these students receive ELL services all in English (49.7 percent), while some garnish significant support in their native language (17.0 percent); still others struggle in mainstream instruction without ELL services (11.7 percent). Nationally, 35 percent of children receiving ESOL services were born in the United States.

ELL students experience similar achievement gaps to the Hispanic population. In the Development Associates study conducted in cooperation with the Center for Equity and Excellence in Education (CEEE) and with the National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO), coordinators reported that current ELL students score below grade level in English reading and mathematics: 76.0 percent reported third-grade ELL students were below or well below grade level in reading; 52.9 percent reported eighth grade ELL students were below or well below grade level in mathematics.
young children: ready at five or already behind?

Neuroscientific research indicates that early experiences—both good and bad—have a significant effect on the brain’s development. Researchers confirm that the way parents and caregivers interact with and the experiences provided for a young child impact the child’s emotional development, learning abilities, and ultimately, success in school and later in life.

To do well in school, children need to be well rounded, with a variety of abilities, skills, knowledge and experiences. According to many experts, children must be supported and nurtured in the following areas, or Domains of Learning:

- Physical development: Children’s muscle control and coordination, as well as health and safety.
- Social and emotional development: Children’s ability to get along with others, handle emotions, and express themselves.
- Language and literacy: Children learning to talk, listen, read, and write.
- Mathematical thinking: Children’s use of patterns, counting, and relationships, as well as figuring out how to solve problems.
- Scientific thinking: Children finding answers by collecting information and asking questions.
- Social studies: Children understanding how people live, work, get along together, and follow rules.
- The arts: Children appreciating and participating in dance, drama, music and art.

Many children are in stimulating learning environments—at home or in the care of others—where they can develop the skills and abilities in each Domain of Learning that they need to be successful in kindergarten. These children enter school “ready to learn.”

Unfortunately, not all children have this foundation for success. This is especially true among the ELL and Hispanic-origin populations.

Nationally, 2.2 million of the nation’s nearly 4 million kindergartners (56 percent) lagged behind in one or more areas of child development.

In Maryland, the Maryland State Department of Education’s (MSDE) School Readiness Baseline Information Report for school year 2003-04 indicates that while 55 percent of children entering kindergarten in Maryland were fully ready—up from 2001, 39 percent of children entering kindergarten scored in the “Approaching School Readiness” level and 6 percent scored in the “Developing” level. While the percent of children fully ready for school has increased since 2001/02, nearly half of Maryland children entering kindergarten were not "school ready" in 2003/04. (See Figures 2 and 3.)

Academically, Hispanic children—especially those learning to speak English—lag behind their peers when they enter school. According to the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study—a study of approximately 22,000 children enrolled in nearly 1,000 kindergarten programs (public and private kindergartens and full/part day programs)—Hispanic children entering kindergarten in the United States scored lower in reading, mathematics, and general knowledge than non-Hispanic White children.
In Maryland, the State Department of Education’s (MSDE) *School Readiness Baseline Information Report* for school year 2003-04 confirms that only 41 percent of Hispanic kindergarten children were fully ready for school. This means that 59 percent of Hispanic kindergartners needed targeted or considerable support to do kindergarten work. (See Figure 4.) Of the nearly 3,000 children with limited English proficiency who entered Maryland’s kindergarten classrooms, only 40 percent possessed the skills and abilities needed to do kindergarten work successfully, compared with 57 percent of their English-speaking peers. This means that 60 percent of ELL students need targeted or considerable assistance. This 17-point gap is not closing; in fact, it is getting larger, up from a 14-point gap in 2001-02. (See Figure 5.)

In Baltimore City, where there are few supports and community services for the growing Hispanic and ELL populations, few Hispanic (14%) or ELL (19%) children are fully ready for school; eighty-six percent of Hispanic children needed targeted or considerable support to do kindergarten work and 81 percent of English language learners needed targeted or considerable support. (See Figures 4 and 5.)

When children are not fully ready to succeed when they enter school, they continue to lag behind their peers throughout their school career. *Status and Trends in the Education of Hispanics* examined the educational status of Hispanics and found that although they had made some gains over the past 20 years, there is still a significant gap between Hispanics and non-Hispanic White students.

![Figure 2: Children entering school ready to learn](image1)

![Figure 3: Children entering school, ready to succeed, by school year](image2)

![Figure 4: Children entering school, ready to succeed, by race/ethnicity](image3)

![Figure 5: Children entering school, ready to succeed, by English proficiency](image4)
promising practices
prom·is·ing (präm´is ing) adj. Showing promise of success, excellence; an indication of a successful prospect or future expectation.

prac·tice (prak´tis) v. To acquire proficiency by doing an action repeatedly; to use or apply one’s knowledge. n. To act.

Webster’s New World Dictionary
critical elements. hallmarks of success.

The realities of the nation’s changing diversity and the lagging academic achievement of minority and non-English proficient populations, require action. Throughout the nation, educators, service providers and community coalitions are doing effective and exciting work. They are adapting and replicating Promising Practices.

Promising Practices have distinct characteristics. They embody a set of common principals that are critical to success. Promising Practices are:

- **Culturally Competent.** Accept and respect diverse cultures and values; commit to building cultural capacity; hold dynamic differences in high esteem; and continuously seek knowledge for improving and expanding cultural knowledge.
- **Parent-focused.** Support, engage and involve parents in their child’s growth, development, and education.
- **Data-driven.** Data informs all decision-making and continuous improvement strategies. Address and support the changing demands, unique needs, and challenges of the ELL population.
- **Outcome-oriented.** Identify clear, measurable indicators of success, namely improving the school readiness of young children who are English language learners.
- **Quality-oriented.** Focus on quality. Operate in a new and dynamic way, maximizing opportunities. Continuously improve.
- **Collaborative.** Create and use partnerships to augment own efforts, resources, and services, as well as the initiatives of the broader community.
- **Communication-focused.** Communicate effectively, using multi-lingual and multi–modal methods, to build support and engagement.
- **Replicable.** Have the ability to be adapted and replicated in another location.

When organizations implement practices that embody these common principles they are more likely to succeed.

This compendium highlights Promising Practices in three categories:

- Supporting Parents, Children’s First Teachers
- Creating Quality Early Education Opportunities
- Building Community Collaborations

In addition to descriptions of each Promising Practice, the compendium includes Snap Shots or “Promising Practices at Work,” demonstrating the successful use and implementation of the practices at a specific location.

The Promising Practices and the Snap Shots provide a framework for moving forward. They provide insight for states, jurisdictions, programs and parents on how to help all children, especially those struggling with the English language, succeed.
supporting parents

children’s first teachers
In early care and education settings, family involvement is key to promoting school readiness skills in young children.

Kathy Seitzinger Hepburn, Senior Policy Associate, Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development
All parents want their children to do well in school. Children whose parents support their academic growth are far more likely to succeed and have positive school experiences.

Parents need to know how their children are doing, how they are progressing, and what they can do to help their children prepare for and succeed in school. They also need to know that they are an important part of their children’s academic success; parents can provide experiences at home that prepare their children for school. Therefore, it is critical for programs, service providers, and early educators to learn how to engage, support, and involve parents in their child’s development.

However, this is not always an easy task. Many parents, especially those who are of different cultures, may feel (or have learned in their native country) that educating children is a teacher’s job, not theirs. And, for parents who do not have a strong grasp of the English language, it becomes even more difficult to effectively communicate with early educators and be involved in their child’s education.

There are several strategies for increasing parental involvement and engagement:

- **Commit.** The organization must make family or parent involvement a goal, with all activities devoted and tied to achieving the goal.
- **Respect Cultures.** Staff should be aware of and respect cultural diversity. In addition, the organization’s curriculum and leadership (including staffing, planning teams and parent leadership roles) should reflect diverse cultures.
- **Establish Rapport.** Organizations, specifically the leadership and/or program staff must get to know the families and their specific achievements, goals, needs, and challenges. The organization’s interaction with parents, for example, meetings or child conferences, should be convenient to the parents, with times and locations mutually agreed upon.
- **Communicate.** Communication is the key. Organizations must listen to parents, know their needs, and respect their views. Communication should occur in various ways, such as through phone calls, progress reports, face-to-face interaction, and newsletters. Interpreters should be provided, if necessary, and written materials should be translated into the families’ native language.
- **Value Parents.** Parents must be seen as their child’s first and most important teacher. Parents must be encouraged and empowered to assume this role. They should be given every opportunity to improve their parenting and teaching skills, volunteer with the organization, and be in decision-making roles. To increase participation, organizations may use a variety of parental supports, such as assisting with transportation, providing child care, using entertainment, serving food, and implementing a variety of opportunities for parents to become engaged. Most important, parents should be referred, when needed, to community resources that can support the family’s growth and development.

More detailed strategies for improving parent engagement, including suggested questions for learning about values, beliefs and practices related to young children, tips for bringing families into the early care and classroom setting, supporting multicultural learning, developing language and literacy in two languages, and guidelines for selecting and working with interpreters, can be obtained in Kathy Seitzinger Hepburn’s book, *Building Culturally and Linguistically Competent Services to Support Young Children, Their Families, and School Readiness.*
The key to establishing rapport is to understand people, treating all with dignity and respect.

Andrea Hall-Bell, Rolling Terrace Judy Center, Takoma Park, Maryland

Despite having many similarities, English language learners—especially those of Hispanic origin—are unique in their country of origin, reason for immigration (economic, social, personal, or environmental), traditions, history, beliefs, and use of language. They represent a variety of different cultural groups, which have established bicultural, multicultural, or multiethnic characteristics. These cultural groups:

- Change and evolve constantly.
- Have different values, ideas, and ways of relating to one another.
- Have different cultures within the group, based on gender, age, occupation, and other factors.
- Represent more than merely differences in language, food, and clothing.

Organizations should not only gain understanding of different cultural groups, but also value and support them. While it can be a difficult task, organizations that focus on multiculturalism and make strong efforts to ensure cultural competence, improve relationships with families and foster strong parent engagement. Specifically, organizations can:

1) Establish trusting relationships with parents.
2) Create a positive environment and help parents feel welcome, supported, and comfortable when they enter the school or program, making sure they don’t feel threatened.
3) Find out about different cultures by asking parents and children questions about their unique traditions and backgrounds.
4) Incorporate different cultures, values, histories, and practices into the curriculum and organizational activities.
5) Inform all parents about what the organization has to offer.
6) Outline the school’s expectations of parents.
7) Partner with community- and culture-based organizations.
The Community Services Agency – Head Start Program has worked with the Northern Nevada Community for 32 years. With 11 Head Start sites and 20 classrooms, CSA serves a total of 568 children. The program is center-based and provides both full-time and part-time classroom options.

CSA Head Start in Reno has been very successful working with Hispanic families, which account for over 60 percent of enrolled families. The Head Start Program ensures that Hispanic families feel comfortable and respected. Bilingual classrooms are facilitated by at least one Spanish-speaking individual, and materials are multicultural and bilingual. The program has also instituted the “whisper system,” where parents can put on a headset to hear a Spanish translator as a workshop is provided in English. A newly instituted multicultural advisory board provides guidance on the integration of culture into the curriculum.

For more information, contact:
Community Services Agency—Head Start Program
1090 East 8th Street
Reno, Nevada 89512
Phone: (775) 786-6023
Fax: (775) 786-5443
Website: www.csareno.org
Linguistic competence is being able to communicate in the most effective manner. In an ideal scenario, people should gain information in their native language. (For English language learners,) the duality of language is important and every attempt should be made to ensure that it happens.

Kathy Seitzinger Hepburn, Senior Policy Associate, Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development, Washington, DC

Effective and open communication is essential when early educators and/or service providers work with parents of young children. However, communication can be stifled or nonexistent when parents are not proficient in the English language.

For parents who do not speak English, bilingual communication or communication in the native language is often the only way for parents to correspond and interact with their child’s early educators, service providers and community leaders. Bilingual communication:

- Imparts information accurately.
- Builds rapport.
- Empowers parents.
- Fosters confidence.
- Eases frustration.
- Enables parents to express interests, concerns and challenges.
- Improves the relationship between parents and their child’s educator or provider.
- Facilitates parent professional development and skill building.
- Allows programs to gather information about the child and family, as well as cultural knowledge and programmatic feedback.

Bilingual communication occurs with the assistance of interpreters and translators. Interpreters improve oral communication, restating what has been said in one language into another language. Translators, on the other hand, improve written communication—translating or converting written materials from one language into another.
Every attempt should be made to not only translate all written documents into a native language, but also ensure that the material is culturally and linguistically appropriate. For example, references in parent materials to books, materials, and well-known English songs and rhymes should be reviewed to ensure that they are culturally appropriate for and familiar to non-English speakers. Organizations can ensure that translated materials are culturally competent by engaging key community partners in the review process.

Interpreters should be available to non-English speaking parents at major events, such as parent workshops, parent-educator conferences, back-to-school nights, and community fairs. Providing adult (professional or community-based) interpreters is the best way to communicate with non-English speaking parents. A child—or other parents in the program—should never serve as interpreters; this limits communication rather than enhances it and reduces confidentiality. Interpreters must be proficient in the English language and the language (including dialect) of the family. Professional interpreters should be able to communicate with each party with accuracy and neutrality.

Parents for Public Schools (PPS) provides information in English, Spanish, and Chinese as often as possible (and is making an effort to do so more and more), to reach the non-native English speaking parents in their area.

The goals of this PPS are to inform parents about how to enroll their children in school, involve parents in schools, and teach parents what good schools look like and do through outreach and educational events. They emphasize the different types of schools children can attend and the programs offered, such as bilingual programs.

A parent handbook, bi-monthly email newsletters (about upcoming events, outreach, and school district news), ParentSpeak (their local chapter publication), Parent Press Quarterly (a National PBS publication on educational issues), Chapter Voting Rights, and parent training are some of the many resources available to parents. PPS decorative pins and bumper stickers enable parents to show their involvement in public schools and raise public awareness about the organization.

By participating with this unique organization, parents learning the English language have the opportunity to voice their ideas and concerns regarding school reform, learn about school issues, meet others sharing their concerns, and choose how they would like to be involved.

For more information, contact:
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San Francisco, CA 94134
Phone: (415) 468-7077
Fax: (415) 468-7277
Email: info@ppssf.org
Website: http://www.parents4publicschools.com/
empowering parents

The time I spend with my child, whether playing, reading, or talking, will help him be ready for school. Everything I do with my child will build his skills and abilities. I am my child’s teacher. I have the power to make a difference.

Dorothy Noble, Parent of a Young Child, Baltimore, Maryland

Kindergarten or formal early care and education programs are not the start of a child’s education. By that time, children have already been learning for years, since birth and most often from their parents.

Decades of research shows that when parents are actively involved with their children, the children have increased school readiness skills and abilities; higher grades, test scores, and graduation rates; better school attendance; increased motivation; better self-esteem; decreased use of drugs and alcohol; lower rates of suspension; fewer instances of violent behavior; and greater enrollment rates in post-secondary education.

It is clear that parents play a critical role in improving a child’s school readiness. In the absence of, or in partnership with early education programs and service providers, parents must be empowered to assume the role of parent teacher—the first and most important teacher. Parents can make a difference by:

- Providing a home that encourages learning;
- Playing a key role in language and literacy development, by reading and talking with their child. For ELL, the language used in the home does not matter—what matters is that children hear, use and understand a language.
- Supporting their child’s social and emotional development by having “play dates” with other children and encouraging curiosity and problem solving.
- Supporting their child’s physical development by letting their child run, jump, play ball, ride bikes, use scissors, and write.
- Supporting a child’s cognitive development (math, science, social studies and the arts) by helping their child sort objects by shape, color, or pattern; allowing their child to explore, make predictions, and observe; encouraging their child to learn about the family and the community; making and following rules; and providing their child the opportunity to paint, make music, color, or act.
- Seeking knowledge and learning what can improve their child’s school readiness from other parents and community-based organizations (including health care providers, the public libraries, early educators, and school officials).

No matter what parents and children do together, the child is learning. Organizations must respect parent efforts to be their child’s first and most important teacher. They can also support, value, and empower parents to take an active role in their child’s education at home.
Families In Schools (FIS)—a legacy organization of the highly successful Los Angeles Annenberg Metropolitan Project (LAAMP)—encourages the involvement of parents in the education of their children.

FIS programs and services are available to all parents, schools, districts, and community organizations. However, priority is given to school communities in Los Angeles County that are low performing and demonstrate a desire to collaborate with FIS. To the extent possible, program materials are available in the predominant language of the community served.

Read With Me/Lea Conmigo—one of FIS’s programs—is an early literacy/parental involvement program designed to enhance early learning and to promote literacy in children who enter the educational system at a disadvantage. The program provides weekly backpacks to children filled with six culturally and age-appropriate books to read with their parents. The backpacks are rotated weekly, giving children much needed access to print materials in the home. Parents are encouraged to set up regular reading routines with their children and to read at least four days each week for 15 to 30 minutes. Information and tips on helping their children develop literacy skills is included in the backpacks. Teachers supplement this information at two family literacy workshops. Training is provided to teachers on how to help parents work with their children at home. Through this program, parents are able to help their child’s language and literacy development at home; parents are valued as their child’s first teacher.

The Read With Me/Lea Conmigo program targets Head Start programs and school-affiliated preschool, kindergarten, and first grade classrooms that have the lowest standardized test scores, the highest number of low-income students, and the largest percentage of non-English speaking parents. And, Read With Me/Lea Conmigo is being piloted in a program for teenage mothers and their children (ages 0-2) in three high schools in Montebello Unified School District.

To date the program has served over 50,000 low-income and limited English speaking children and their families in Los Angeles, Long Beach, Montebello, and Pomona Unified School Districts. Two years of a comprehensive quasi-experimental and control group evaluation of Read With Me/Lea Conmigo has shown that the program has a significant influence on behaviors, knowledge, and skills associated with successful reading acquisition, such as frequency and duration of reading aloud, vocabulary, and print familiarity. For example, parents who participated in Read With Me/Lea Conmigo were more likely than families who did not participate in the program to read with their child five or more days per week; spend more than 25 minutes per day reading with their child; enjoy reading with their child; and observe that their child liked to talk about books. Children who participated made greater statistically significant gains as did non-participants on tests of expressive and receptive vocabulary, a common predictor of reading acquisition, and on tests measuring knowledge of concepts of print.

**For more information, contact:**
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Website: www.familiesinschools.org
providing opportunities

Children, whose parents are involved, are more successful. Therefore, it is essential that programs make every effort to support and engage parents. Ultimately, these supports will get parents involved in their child’s education.

Jill Basye-Featherstone, Coordinator, ESOL Pre-K Program, Baltimore City Public Schools, Maryland

promising practices at work

Snap Shot: San Francisco School Volunteers, San Francisco, California

Gretchen de Baubigny and Matilda Kunin, former school teachers, founded San Francisco School Volunteers (SFSV) in 1963. The organization uses Parent Volunteers to provide students with additional individualized attention, while teachers are busy teaching small groups or assisting other students. SFSV trains all parents and handles school placement, aligning student/school needs with volunteer skills.

Parent Volunteers work in schools throughout the San Francisco area tutoring students, reading to children, assisting during recess or helping in the library. They also support activities outside the classroom such as chaperoning field trips and initiating new programs such as art and music activities. Some Parent Volunteers even serve as translators. One Parent Volunteer began helping at SFSV four years ago. Now, he is also a part of the PTA, contributes supplies to the school, and regularly participates in school events.

Program evaluations show high levels of satisfaction and teachers feel the contributions made by the volunteers are valuable. And, student academic improvements have been noted.

Today, SFSV recruits and trains 3,000 people throughout the community and places them in over 100 schools.

For more information, contact:
San Francisco School Volunteers
601 McAllister Street
San Francisco, CA 94102
Phone: (415) 749-3700
Fax: (415) 749-3780
Website: http://www.sfsv.org/index.html
Parents often don’t know how to make the most of the early years—the steps or specific activities that promote, support and nurture a child’s development—or where to go to improve their skills.

Recognizing that all parents can benefit from support, early education programs and other community-based organizations can give parents an opportunity to improve their parenting and teaching skills. These opportunities can also encourage parents to volunteer with the organization and assume decision-making roles.

However, parents learning to speak English may not have these opportunities. ELL parents often have difficulty finding written information and tools in their native language, and when it is translated, it is often not culturally or linguistically appropriate. Parent development workshops or skill-building opportunities are often presented in English, rather than in the native language. ELL parents are often limited in the type of volunteer opportunities they can participate in, especially engaging in school decision-making roles, because they may not be bilingual. But, ELL parents are eager to learn how to make school a positive experience for their children and want to know how they can help.

Providing parents, in a bilingual atmosphere, a variety of opportunities can help. By having the opportunity to learn developmentally appropriate practices, how to stimulate their children, and work with other parents, ELL parents can improve their child’s school readiness.

1. **Volunteer Opportunities. Parent Volunteers.** Parents that volunteer to work with other parents are a great asset to organizations with large numbers of parents and children learning the English language. They have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of children and families. To do so, volunteers must understand and respect the parents they work with.

   Parent volunteer opportunities may involve assuming leadership or policy positions, serving as a parent liaison or translator, leading parent workshops, serving as a parent support group leader, chaperoning field trips, leading student activities (such as reading to students or practicing writing skills), or helping teachers with bulletin boards. Usually bilingual, these parent volunteers:
   - Establish rapport with parents.
   - Create a support system for parents.
   - Foster effective communication.
   - Help parents learn and use the English language.
   - Inform parents.
   - Build support for and promote school activities.
   - Relay comments, concerns, and suggestions to school officials.
   - Diversify school leadership.
   - Support a young child’s development.
2. **Parent Development Opportunities.** ELL parents should be given the opportunity to develop and grow as a parent in order to better support their child. Parent development opportunities should create an environment that is conducive to learning and build on parent strengths, rather than focusing on their weaknesses. Modeling, guided practice, and independent practice are key in helping parents gain information and learn new skills. In addition, bilingual settings enable all parents struggling with the English language to participate, especially those parents who may be illiterate and unable to read written materials, even in their native language.

Workshops, Learning Parties, Parent Clubs, or Social Hours are unique ways to expose parents to new ideas and improve their ability to provide stimulating early learning environments for their children. Learning about how to develop language and literacy skills, concepts about print, letter knowledge, reading comprehension skills, writing skills, how to identify successful pre-school programs and learning English are some of the areas where ELL parents may need assistance.

Regardless of the topic, parent development opportunities should incorporate a variety of learning strategies. Howard Gardner’s theory of Multiple Intelligences clearly indicates that different people learn through different modalities—showing strengths in some areas while not in others. For example, a "linguistic" person learns by hearing stories, books, and tapes. A "logical-mathematical" person thinks by reasoning and enjoys experimenting, questioning, and calculating. A "spatial" person needs movies, puzzles, illustrations, and field trips to learn best. A "bodily-kinesthetic" person learns through role-playing, physical games, and hands-on experiences. A "musical" person learns by singing and through music.

To improve parent participation, organizations may wish to consider implementing parent supports—offering convenient locations, transportation, child care, and entertainment. These supports can create a welcoming atmosphere and go a long way to establish and improve rapport with parents. And, if parents are in attendance, organizations can take advantage of the opportunity and offer parent workshops or conduct PTA meetings immediately following an event. Some supports include:

- **Location and Logistics.** Socializing in a non-threatening environment, encourage parents to feel welcome. The provision of entertainment, food—breakfast, lunch, dinner, or snacks, with menus that reflect cultural differences—or other incentives, such as gift bags or gift certificates, promote this type of atmosphere. To reduce costs, consider launching “Pot Luck Meetings,” where everyone brings a dish to share, utilizing small grant opportunities, or asking local business for funding support. Also, consider holding parent opportunities in convenient locations and times for ELL parents, including the local library, the school, apartment complexes, or community centers.

- **Transportation.** Many ELL families—of which nearly 77 percent are from low-socio economic backgrounds—do not have transportation. Consider providing transportation (or reimbursing transportation costs) to important parent events or school activities.

- **Child care.** Parents who do not have any regular formal care or dependable babysitters for their children find it difficult, if not impossible, to attend school activities during the day or at night. Consider inviting the entire family to school events. For example, host “play groups" where parents and children jointly attend workshops on improving specific school readiness skills, or allow children to participate in an educational activity at the school or facilitated by licensed care provider, while parents attend workshops to learn new parenting skills or school policies.
The AVANCE Parent/Child program is considered a pioneer in the field of parent education. The nine-month core program targets predominantly poor Latino parents in underserved communities with children from birth to three years of age.

Providing educational workshops on early childhood development, brain development, literacy, and school readiness, AVANCE operates in housing projects, community centers, and schools.

The organization also works with AVANCE graduates; graduates engage in parent mentoring opportunities and facilitate parent workshops. Through this type of employment, AVANCE builds motivation and fosters continuous parental growth and improvement.

To learn more about AVANCE contact:
AVANCE
2300 W. Commerce, Suite 304
San Antonio, Texas 78207
Phone: (210) 220-1788
Website: www.avancesa.org
Initiated by the Montgomery County Early Childhood Initiative, interactive Learning Parties—built on the idea that learning can be fun—enable parents and children to socialize while learning first-hand a wide range of activities that promote language and literacy development.

The ten-part Learning Party series involves networking, demonstration, practice and research-based theory. Each Learning Party in the series focuses on a different language and literacy concept, including building language and communication skills, choosing and reading books, developing comprehension, working with letters, discovering print, having fun with sounds, rhyming, storytelling, talking, and fostering writing skills.

Each party is one-and-a-half hours in length and held in a location in which parents are comfortable, (community centers, libraries, schools, or parent’s homes). Parents are encouraged to bring their children to all Learning Parties, where light-lunch or dinner is provided. After an initial parent networking and child play session, a state-licensed childcare provider engages the children in “directed child play,” which works to build the child’s skills and abilities. All directed child play aligns with the specific concept discussed at the Learning Party. While the children are engaged, a Lead Trainer demonstrates specific activities that promote learning and models positive parenting skills. Parents are then encouraged to practice the activity with their child, while trainers provide positive feedback and suggestions or modifications for the future. All parents participating in the Learning Parties receive materials for conducting similar activities with their child at home. Learning Parties are held in both English and Spanish (facilitated by bilingual trainers and with translated written materials).

The Learning Parties are lead by a team of trained professionals, specifically a Lead Trainer and an Assistant Trainer. The Children’s Resources International, Inc., creators of the Learning Party model, educate the trainers and assistants on the delivery, facilitation, and execution of the Learning Party model during a two-day training event. All trainers—most are parents of young children—receive the complete curriculum, including handouts, materials, and talking points. The entire team receives small stipends for their work.

For more information, contact:
Children, Youth, and Family Services—Learning Parties
Department of Health and Human Services, Montgomery County
7300 Calhoun Place, Suite 700
Rockville, Maryland
Phone: (240) 777-4661
Fax: (240) 777-1342
creating quality early education opportunities
Today many families have both parents in the workforce or are single parent families. As a result, many children are in the care of others. Research indicates that these experiences—both good and bad—can have a significant effect on the brain’s development. Researchers confirm that the way caregivers interact with and the experiences provided for a young child impact the child’s emotional development, learning abilities, and ultimately, success in school and later in life.

When a language barrier exists, it can be difficult to provide appropriate and stimulating learning environments for ELL. Stimulating learning environments—at home or in the care of others, where children can develop the skills and abilities in each Domain of Learning—for ELL children can be achieved by:

• Integrating Culture into the Curriculum
• Focusing on Language and Literacy Development
• Providing Professional Development
integrating culture into the curriculum

Within Latino cultures there are different cultures, values, and traditions. By knowing that there are differences—not necessarily all the details about the differences—valuing these differences, and supporting the differences we can better support and engage families.

Aurelio Montemayor, Lead Trainer, Intercultural Development Research Association, San Antonio, Texas

Despite having many similarities, English language learners—especially those of Hispanic origin—are unique in their country of origin, reason for immigration (economic, social, personal, or environmental), traditions, history, beliefs, and use of language. Organizations should not only gain understanding of different cultural groups, but also value and support them. While it can be a difficult task, organizations that focus on multiculturalism and make strong efforts to integrate cultural perspectives into the curriculum improve the quality of early education programs. Specifically, organizations can:

- Integrate cultural perspectives into everyday learning objectives, not as stand-alone curriculum.
- Continue to evolve curriculum to reflect student diversity.
- Display children’s and family pictures.
- Learn important phrases in the child’s native language.
- Use songs and stories from other cultures.
- Plan menus that account for student likes and desires, offering food that reflects the cultures of the students.
- Take fieldtrips to locations recommended by ELL or Hispanic parents.
- Launch a Multicultural Advisory Committee.
focusing on language and literacy skills

Promote language development, not language specific development. Parents should never limit language interaction with their children. For parents who do not speak English, they should speak to and with their child in the native language. When one language is developed well, whether English or Spanish, the literacy acquisition in the second language improves.

Nonie K. Lesaux, Assistant Professor of Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, Massachusetts

When children are supported in the area of language and literacy, they are more likely to do well when they start school. Children who easily learn to read and write have had many experiences with books and language before school begins. Developing essential language and literacy skills begins at birth. In the early years, children need to hear and experiment with a lot of language to develop foundational language and literacy skills: playing with letters, exploring sounds, listening, talking, and understanding print and its connection to language. These experiences are the prerequisites for learning to read.

Language and literacy development, and ultimately school readiness, is not contingent on the use of the English language. In fact, all children developing language and literacy skills, regardless of native language:  

- Should be exposed to rich language environments, both at home and in early educational settings. There is a strong correlation between vocabulary development and effective literacy instruction: vocabulary knowledge is a significant determinate of reading comprehension ability. Lessons and activities that promote vocabulary knowledge and other reading skills are critical.
- Benefit from early interventions that include phonological awareness training such as rhyming and sounding out letters to identify the different sounds that make words.
- Can simultaneously achieve English reading skills and language proficiency, but investments from the school district, including monitoring student progress and providing additional support for children identified with reading difficulties as early as kindergarten, is necessary to promote early literacy.

Knowing two languages, being able to communicate in two languages, and being fluent in two languages is of tremendous benefit. However, most ELL children are not bilingual when they enroll in early educational programs. They are monolingual or alingual (illiterate or severely delayed in their native language and the English language). Early identification and intervention for these children at-risk for delayed language development or reading failure is essential to building the child's language and literacy skills. Intervention includes, but is not limited to, explicit phonological awareness instruction, both in English and in the native language; bilingualism is not an impediment to the acquisition of literacy skills.
Parents, who may speak only Spanish, should be encouraged to speak, read, and have conversations with their children in Spanish. For example, if parents talk with their children while they are preparing dinner, children will begin to develop a strong oral vocabulary; if parents point out words on labels, their children will learn that letters represent words and if parents read a recipe and follow the directions, children will understand that you can learn how to perform different tasks by reading. In addition, parents can “read” picture books, sing songs, and offer writing tools (pencils, crayons, markers) to build writing and fine motor skills.

Once children develop a first language, it is easier to learn a second language. In fact, when children who are English language learners enter school, they can easily transfer the skills learned in the native language and apply these skills when learning a second language. If bilingual education is available for children at early education programs, children will have the opportunity to learn the English language. Programs can follow a quality curriculum used for developing language and literacy skills in English-speaking students with some additional considerations:

- Use language appropriate thematic literature; it stimulates content growth and academic learning. Select dual-language storybooks or bilingual editions of familiar books, such as *Goodnight Moon* or *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.
- Pre-read. Preview the story and discuss key words or concepts—even in the native language using bilingual staff or volunteers. Ask students to share related experiences.
- Read aloud, slowly and with expression. Read Alouds should include no more than 10 minutes of listening and bilingual staff can quietly reinforce the story and its concepts to ELL children. Be sure to discuss, review and extend the story, following up with literacy skill development (rhyming or repeating).
- Provide opportunities for ELL to talk and share, problem solve, ask questions.
- Reinforce oral discussions with visual clues.
- Teach greetings, numbers, and a few Spanish phrases to all children.
- Encourage parents to use native language at home.
- Allow the native language in the classroom, if needed.
- Use an English-Spanish classroom buddy system.
- Interact equally with all students; be conscious of the time spent with each child.
- Limit the amount of new material introduced at one time.
- Reinforce language and literacy skill-building in other work.

Additional information, including information on raising bilingual or monolingual children, can be found at the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), at [www.cal.org/resources](http://www.cal.org/resources).
Promising Practices at Work

Snap Shot: School #16, Passaic, New Jersey

Passaic Public School #16 is New Jersey’s newest facility specializing in early childhood education. There are 39 classrooms, consisting of 7 kindergarten classes, 4 self-contained pre-school classes for disabled children, and 28 in district pre-kindergarten classes, with certified early childhood teachers in all classrooms.

School #16 was selected to participate in a pilot of new pre-kindergarten curriculum in conjunction with Rutgers University. During the full-day preschool program for three- and four-year-olds, the “Tools of the Mind” curriculum allows children to learn language skills through play and center-based work, which promotes self-sufficiency. Teachers reinforce and expand learning by working with small groups of students targeting phonemic awareness and writing instruction.

This year, School #16 will add bilingual components to the curriculum. Through the new bilingual program, teachers will provide a unique language and literacy environment. All students will hear literature; sing songs; and learn colors, shapes, and numbers in English and Spanish. Bilingual paraprofessional and teachers will direct each learning opportunity.

Most importantly, School #16 is committed to involving parents. To do so, the school hosts parent workshops about the curriculum, the importance of reading to children in Spanish and/or English, and other parent requested topics. To facilitate communication, School #16 utilizes both languages for all written and oral communication.

For more information, contact:
Passaic School #16
657 Main Avenue
Passaic, New Jersey 07055
Phone: (973) 815-8516
Fax: (973) 574.2144
Website: www.passaic-city.k12.nj.us/num16.htm
promising practices at work

Snap Shot: Project Upgrade, Miami, Florida

Project Upgrade, a two-year study conducted by the Miami-Dade School Readiness Coalition (a nonprofit organization working to ensure the availability and affordability of high-quality, comprehensive early education services for the county’s 160,000 children, birth and age 5), introduces high-quality language and literacy curriculum to pre-kindergarten children.

Project Upgrade will test the effectiveness of three different language and literacy curricula in classrooms of 4 year olds, including: Building Early Language & Literacy (BELL), Ready, Set, Leap (RSL), and Breakthrough to Literacy (BtL). The three curricula are especially responsive to the needs of children for whom English is a second language, a very important issue for Miami-Dade—statistically the most diverse area in the United States (58% Hispanic, 21% non-Hispanic white, 21% black or African American, with more than half its residents born in another country). In each curriculum, ELL children will learn English by being taught in their native language and computer technology offers an additional level of intervention for children.

These interventions will be tested in a sample of subsidized child-care centers in Miami-Dade County. A total of 162 child care facilities will participate in Project Upgrade. Participating sites were randomly assigned to one of four groups: 3 groups of 36 centers each will implement one of the language interventions and the fourth group (54 centers) will continue its current programming. Data will also be collected on the expenses related to language interventions. This will help the Coalition assess the cost associated with achieving different levels of improvement in children’s school readiness.

For more information, contact:
Project Upgrade
Miami-Dade School Readiness Coalition
250 SW Third Avenue, 5th Floor
Miami, Florida 33129
Phone: (305) 646-7220
Fax: (305) 646-7222
Website: www.childreadiness.org
Professional development for administrators, early educators, and paraprofessionals improves the quality of early learning programs. Professional development opportunities focused on working with the ELL and Hispanic populations will support educators in their work to build a child’s skills and abilities. This is essential to closing the gap between ELL children and their counterparts.

In Montgomery County’s Latino community, few families use formal, state-regulated child care or enroll their children in public/private early education programs. In response, Centro Familia—a non-profit founded in 1998 to promote early child care and education as the primary means of breaking the cycle of immigrant and intergenerational poverty—launched En Familia.

En Familia is a comprehensive training program for Spanish-speaking childcare providers. Potential participants first attend a county-wide Information Session, learning the benefits and challenges of Family Child Care as a profession, as well as information on obtaining the Maryland Family Child Care license. After an application process, selected participants receive the 30-hour, Child Care Administration certified training in health and safety, early childhood development, business management, and English as a second language. Centro Familia conducts all training in Spanish. In addition, all participants receive personalized assistance (home visits, and telephone consultation) throughout Maryland’s Child Care Administration licensing process. Once the family childcare provider receives the CCA license and is a state-regulated provider, Centro Familia provides educational toys, equipment and other materials to those providers most in need. At the end of the program, a family graduation ceremony is held to celebrate their accomplishments.

Since the program’s inception in September, 2000, 107 participants have graduated from En Familia; 49 En Familia graduates with their 20 assistants have obtained the Maryland Family Child Care license; 9 En Familia graduates partner with the Family Child Care Network at the Gaithersburg Judy Center; and En Familia graduates now provide regulated, quality child care slots to more than 300 Latino children.

For more information, contact:
Centro Familia, Institute for Family Development
35 University Boulevard East, First Floor
Silver Spring, Maryland 20901
Phone: (301) 754-1801
Phone: (301) 754-1802 (for Spanish speakers)
Fax: (301) 754-1803
Website: www.centro-familia.org
Spearheaded by Zero to Three, the Literacy, Learning and Life Professional Development Project seeks to positively impact early literacy and learning in children birth to five who live in high-risk communities.

Over the course of the two-year project, directors participate in monthly meetings that focus on strategies to create teaching and care giving environments that support and extend staff learning. Teachers and family child-care providers participate in monthly seminars and intensive onsite mentoring, focusing on supporting early language and literacy development, creating literacy rich experiences and activities, and partnering with parents to support their child’s language and literacy development.

The unique training curriculum also has seminars that target family diversity and English Language Learners. The seminars and onsite mentoring are provided in English and Spanish and are linked to college credit.

For information on this project contact:
Zero to Three
2000 M Street, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202)638-1144 ext. 647
Website:www.zerotothree.org
The Miami-Dade School Readiness Coalition coordinates an Intensive Intervention for Quality Initiative (IIQI), which enhances the quality of care and services provided to children and their families throughout the county.

IIQI provides technical assistance, professional development and quality enhancement funds to participating early care and education programs. IIQI’s goal is to increase the number of early care and education (center-based, family child care homes and school-age) programs in preparing to receive the Gold Seal accreditation, which signifies programs of high quality.

When IIQI began this effort, there were 17 nationally accredited child care centers in Miami-Dade. Today there are more than 200 accredited child care centers in the country. They have made an impressive start toward improving the quality of child care.

For more information, contact:
Project Upgrade
Miami-Dade School Readiness Coalition
250 SW Third Avenue, 5th Floor
Miami, Florida 33129
Phone: (305) 646-7220
Fax: (305) 646-7222
Website: www.childreadiness.org
building community collaborations
We need to partner with people in the community. People have to feel that you are there to help them and support them. If we push collaboration, the community will embrace it.

Dennis Campa, Director, Department of Community Initiatives, San Antonio, Texas
While families and schools have significant responsibility for children’s school success, studies suggest that other organizations—early education programs, community-based organizations, public libraries, faith-based organizations, local businesses, and service providers—each play a unique role in improving school readiness.

These stakeholders are natural allies and share common goals regarding young children. Together, they can cultivate community-wide support for the early years, improve the quality and continuity of early educational experiences, and more effectively educate, empower and engage parents in their children’s early education.

The entire community gains when organizations jointly support one another and acknowledge the important role each organization plays in the life of a young child. In fact it:

- Builds strong connections between the first three teachers.
- Actively engages parents in their children’s learning.
- Aligns curriculum and activities for children birth to five.
- Improves the quality of early learning experiences.
- Eases transitions for children between the home, preschool and elementary school.
- Improves the educational achievements of young children.

It truly “takes a village” to help children develop, nurture and grow. The following organizations and programs have the potential to support and work with ELL families:

- **Early Care and Education Professionals and Programs.** Whether center-based or family childcare provider-based Early education programs have significant responsibility for ensuring that children enter school ready to succeed. Some specific federally funded (Head Start and Even Start) and/or state supported programs (Maryland’s Judy Centers) that serve ELL children, include:
  - **Judy P. Hoyer Early Child Care and Family Education Centers (Judy Centers).** Located throughout Maryland, Judy Centers offer pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and pre-school special education, local infants and toddlers programs, before- and after-school child care, health care (such as immunizations), professional family support, and early intervention programs. These centers for parents and children operate seven to twelve hours a day year round. The centers work on achieving school readiness by collaborating with other community organizations, including child-care providers, Head Start programs, the public schools, colleges/universities, parent involvement programs, family literacy programs, public libraries, health programs, and other service agencies. For more information visit: http://www.mdk12.org/instruction/ensure/readiness/judy_centers.html
• **Even Start Family Literacy Programs.** The Even Start program is designed to expand and enhance family literacy services through collaboration of education and human service providers as well as policy makers. Their goals are to improve reading and work preparedness of adult learners, increase the literacy proficiency of migrant families with ESOL needs, improve model family literacy programs, incorporate Even Start family literacy performance indicators, and increase the reading readiness skills of children. To participate, parents must have one or more children from birth through age seven, and at least one parent and one or more children must participate together in all components of the Even Start project, which include early childhood, parenting, and adult education. Even Start centers partner with adult education, extended early elementary programs, Head Start, the Department of Human Resources, Migrant Education, and other similar organizations to work together to enhance outcomes for low income families. For more information visit: www.evenstart.org

• **Head Start Programs.** Head Start programs provide education to low-income families with children from birth to five that is responsible and appropriate to each child’s heritage and experiences. Head Start encompasses all aspects of a child's development and learning. Head Start programs also provide professional development to their staff, as well as workshops for parents. Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs offer targeted education with bilingual staff and comprehensive services for children of migrant workers. For more information visit: www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb or www.nhsa.org

- **Public Libraries.** Public Libraries are one of the community’s key resources for building language and literacy skills. Libraries offer innovative programming for young children, which helps connect children with books, music, computer resources, programs, and other information. However, families who are learning the English language may not be familiar with the concept of “Public Libraries.” For many immigrants, public libraries did not exist in their native country; books, although available in limited quantities at bookstores, were very expensive. It is essential to cultivate ELL families’ use and appreciation of the public libraries.

- **Public Schools.** Young children are future students of the public schools. Elementary school staff, including principals, assistant principals, teachers, early childhood coordinators, pre-K and kindergarten teachers, reading specialists, ESOL teachers, family outreach staff, and/or members of the School Improvement Team have a vested interest in working with ELL children before they enter the public schools.

- **Health Providers.** Healthy children are children ready to succeed in school. Health and support services for ELL families are available from hospitals, clinics, well mobiles, and home visiting programs, school-based health clinics, and other community-based organizations.

- **Other Organizations.** Few ELL families work with formal early education programs. Instead, ELL families often choose to work with community-based organizations, including civic, social, and neighborhood groups; the faith community; local business; and community colleges. These community-based organizations are often the community support system for the ELL community, providing services, referrals, parent support, and educational opportunities, including English as a second language courses.
Because healthy children are children ready to succeed in school, Maryland’s local health departments are taking action to support the health and wellness of English language learners.

To ensure that ELL children are born healthy, the three Lower Shore County Health Departments (Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester) formed a unique partnership with other local organizations, including TLC, Inc and the health care facilities in 1997. This partnership, the Lower Shore Perinatal Council (LSPC), launched Baby Net which seeks to improve access of prenatal care for women who are ineligible for the Maryland Children’s Health Program (MCHP) due to residency. The majority of women served through this partnership are of Hispanic ethnicity. Over 460 undocumented women have received prenatal care since 1998 through the efforts of this partnership. Based on collection of outcome data from deliveries that occurred between fiscal year 2002 and 2004, 89 percent of these women received care by the second trimester and 95 percent delivered a baby weighing over 2500 grams (normal weight). Babies born healthy, those who have prenatal care and have an infant birth weight of at least 2,500 grams, are less likely to have physical and developmental problems, including mental retardation, developmental delays, visual and hearing deficits, chronic respiratory problems, and learning difficulties. Each of these health outcomes have implications for children entering school ready to learn.

Recognizing the great need for certified interpreters in the region, the Wicomico County Health Department initiated “Bridging the Gap: Basic Medical Training for Interpreters” through a grant from a local foundation. The training is an intensive 40 hour course of 24 lessons which outlines key medical terminology necessary to effectively and accurately restate information conveyed by the Healthcare Professional to the non-English speaking patient. Local interpreters interested in participating in the training were required to complete a language proficiency test and pass with a minimum score of 80 percent or higher before taking the entire course. After passing a final exam, participants received certification as a medical interpreter. To date, 29 interpreters (26 Spanish and 3 Haitian Creole) from the Delmarva Peninsula completed the training and are medically certified interpreters. These interpreters are available to any organization or agency in the region. Wicomico County also hosted a “cultural competency” training, which included information for health care providers on communicating with non-English speakers and working with medical interpreters. Lastly, the Wicomico County Health Department formed a Cultural Competency Committee which meets monthly to address translation of vital documents, assure orientation and training of new employees and monitor quality assurance.

Lower Shore County Health Departments also partner with the local Judy Centers at Pemberson Elementary and Snow Hill Elementary, to send the dual messages of health and school readiness and provide outreach, education and training on health and developmental issues for providers who work with ELL.

For more information, contact:
Lower Eastern Shore, Maryland County Health Departments
Maternal Child Health
108 East Main Street
Salisbury, Maryland
Phone: (410) 543-6942 Ext. 1658
Fax: (410) 543.6568
Email: Rose@dhmh.state.md.us

promising practices at work

Snap Shot: Lower Shore Health Departments, Lower Shore Counties, Maryland

Because healthy children are children ready to succeed in school, Maryland’s local health departments are taking action to support the health and wellness of English language learners.

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Recognizing the great need for certified interpreters in the region, the Wicomico County Health Department initiated “Bridging the Gap: Basic Medical Training for Interpreters” through a grant from a local foundation. The training is an intensive 40 hour course of 24 lessons which outlines key medical terminology necessary to effectively and accurately restate information conveyed by the Healthcare Professional to the non-English speaking patient. Local interpreters interested in participating in the training were required to complete a language proficiency test and pass with a minimum score of 80 percent or higher before taking the entire course. After passing a final exam, participants received certification as a medical interpreter. To date, 29 interpreters (26 Spanish and 3 Haitian Creole) from the Delmarva Peninsula completed the training and are medically certified interpreters. These interpreters are available to any organization or agency in the region. Wicomico County also hosted a “cultural competency” training, which included information for health care providers on communicating with non-English speakers and working with medical interpreters. Lastly, the Wicomico County Health Department formed a Cultural Competency Committee which meets monthly to address translation of vital documents, assure orientation and training of new employees and monitor quality assurance.

Lower Shore County Health Departments also partner with the local Judy Centers at Pemberson Elementary and Snow Hill Elementary, to send the dual messages of health and school readiness and provide outreach, education and training on health and developmental issues for providers who work with ELL.

For more information, contact:
Lower Eastern Shore, Maryland County Health Departments
Maternal Child Health
108 East Main Street
Salisbury, Maryland
Phone: (410) 543-6942 Ext. 1658
Fax: (410) 543.6568
Email: Rose@dhmh.state.md.us

promising practices at work

Snap Shot: Lower Shore Health Departments, Lower Shore Counties, Maryland

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promising practices at work

Snap Shot: Public Libraries, Maryland

In partnership with Johns Hopkins Center for Reading Excellence, MSDE’s Division of Library Development and Services, trained Maryland’s public librarians on the importance of the early years and school readiness, especially what Maryland’s teachers expect from children entering kindergarten.

The goals of the training were to (1) familiarize participants with the most current research on how to help young children start school ready to learn to read, (2) familiarize participants with the way readiness is assessed in Maryland’s schools, and (3) demonstrate how public libraries can become a vital partner in the goal of achieving school readiness for all children.

Librarians received an overview of current research for preparing children to learn to read, which involved information from the partnership of the National Institutes of Health and the Public Library Association. They also were informed about the language and literacy section of the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) and the Work Sampling System (WSS), which is the guide that kindergarten teachers in Maryland use to assess the skill levels of children entering kindergarten. In addition, workshop trainers used books to model how to develop reading readiness skills in young children and prepare them for kindergarten.

Since the launch of the first training program, Maryland public librarians have attended additional workshops on developing native language skills, incorporating Hispanic cultures, and preparing Spanish-speaking children for school.

“Graduates” of the library training programs are sharing this information with parents, community members, child-care facilities, and many other agencies and institutions. For example, during library story-times, librarians model “read aloud” techniques and explain to parents and caregivers how to use similar techniques in their work with young children.

For more information, contact:
Maryland State Department of Education
Division of Library Development & Services
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201-2595
Phone: (410) 767-0444
Fax: (410) 333-2507
Website: www.marylandpublicschools.org/msde/divisions/library
At the Rolling Terrace Judy Center in Montgomery County, Maryland almost 70% of the families attending are Spanish speakers. The program’s success can be attributed to the Judy Center's ability to meet the needs of the families served, using bilingual staff and forming unique partnerships with community-based organizations.

One such partnership is with CASA of Maryland—a nonprofit organization that provides job training, English classes, immigration and legal consultation, and health education. Through this partnership, the organizations are conducting a housing study, which involves having staff walk around neighborhoods knocking on doors, meeting families face-to-face, and talking to people about their living situations. The findings will be used to continuously improve program services.

To address the unique needs of its parents, the Judy Center launched Play and Learn—a drop-in, bilingual (Spanish and English) workshop held two times per week for parents. This workshop empowers parents to be their child’s first teacher. Rather than imparting school readiness activities, for example making play dough, to parents through a flyer where reading might limit a parent’s ability to conduct the activity, Play and Learn encourages parents to come into the center and make the play dough with their child. Parents learn that school readiness activities can be fun, easy, and inexpensive.

Utilizing weekly themes, such as colors, shapes, numbers, and patterns, Judy Center staff members model key parenting skills and provide parents with activities to improve their child’s school readiness. During the first hour of the session, children are encouraged to play, while parents have the opportunity to meet other parents and are introduced to toys and materials that may not be available in the home environment. Parents can also learn how to prepare their children for school by using materials such as, crayons, puzzles, blocks, glue, etc. Following this initial hour, staff model appropriate parent-child interactions through a structured activity and guide independent practice. Emphasis is placed on developing language skills and parents are encouraged to talk with their child. Songs and stories in English and Spanish are incorporated, making the learning experience fun. One component that makes Play and Learn successful is the Center's ability to build rapport with parents; for example, the staff who recruited the family for the program works with them during the workshop.

For more information, contact:
Rolling Terrace Judy Center at Rolling Terrace Elementary School
705 Bayfield Street
Takoma Park, MD 20912
Phone: (301) 431-7696
promising practices at work

Snap Shot: Early ON School Readiness Program, San Antonio, Texas

The Early ON School Readiness Program, sponsored by the City of San Antonio, targets 19 elementary school neighborhoods and encompasses 7 school districts and 10 City Council districts. Linkages are established between child care centers and elementary schools into which those centers feed. Local businesses lend support.

Neighborhood events promote awareness among families and generate interest in attending workshops (held in both English and Spanish) to help strengthen parents in their role as their child’s first teacher. The program also has an Early ON School Readiness Checklist (in English and Spanish), which is a brochure with a checklist of communication skills, problem solving skills, and life skills for use as a guide by parents and caregivers in identifying expectations for children entering kindergarten. Suggested activities and resources are included.

To get the message out, Taylor End, a childhood literacy program, holds neighborhood events every month. At the events, they distribute parent information, have a PBS character to make it fun, and always provide a homemade educational activity (for example, a sorting game). Some of the events take place in shopping malls. Each year, thousands of families and children participate in the Taylor End program. To showcase their efforts and build community support, the program invites City Council Members to select programs.

For more information, contact:
Department of Community Initiatives
1222 N. Main, Suite 400
San Antonio, Texas 78212
Phone: (210) 246-5223
Website: www.sanantonio.gov
promising practices at work

Snap Shot: Public Broadcasting System

The Public Broadcasting System (PBS) addresses the nations’ most urgent educational goal — ensuring that all children begin school ready to learn through creative educational television, free books, and parent/caregiver skill development opportunities.

Through the national Ready To Learn initiative, PBS reaches families traditionally not enrolled in formal early childhood programs. The core of Ready To Learn is a full day of non-violent, commercial-free, educational children’s television programming broadcast free of charge to every American household. This daily broadcast includes some of the most popular, award winning and engaging programming available today - Arthur, Dragon Tales, Clifford, Between the Lion, Reading Rainbow and Sesame Street. Ready To Learn complements this programming with extensive outreach services to parents, childcare providers and other early childhood professionals. Offered in English and Spanish, the Ready To Learn workshops provide parents and providers with information on using television wisely and complementing this programming with follow-up activities and discussion to improve a young child’s development.

In addition to the millions of children reached nationwide through broadcasting, 875,000 parents and early childhood professionals have participated in 21,000 community-based Ready To Learn workshops. Approximately 7 million children have benefited from their parents’ and teachers’ participation in Ready To Learn outreach services and nearly 2.5 million new books have been distributed to disadvantaged children. Each of the 139 participating PBS member stations broadcast at least 6.5 hours of educational children’s programming each weekday; conduct at least 20 workshops annually for parents and early childhood professionals; distribute at least 300 free books to children every month and widely distribute the PBS Families publication in English and Spanish, as well as other free resources on encouraging children to read and learn; and partner with local Head Start centers, Even Start programs, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, libraries, childcare providers, schools and other organizations.

The PBS member stations are also encouraged to tailor their services to meet the needs of their communities. In San Antonio, Texas, for example, local PBS station KLRN’s Early ON media campaign supports San Antonio’s school readiness program. Early ON prints messages and produces public service announcements that help focus parents’ attention on the importance of teaching a child early on in life. It also encourages citizens to call the 65-Smart information line for more information on school readiness. All materials are published and broadcast in both English and Spanish. It is estimated that through all participating media, 92% of the city has seen Early ON impressions.

For more information, contact:
Ready To Learn – National Public Broadcasting Service
1320 Braddock Place
Alexandria, VA 22314
Website: www.pbs.org/readytolearn/

KLRN-TV (local PBS station)—San Antonio, Texas
501 Broadway
San Antonio, Texas 78215-1820
Phone: (210) 270-9000
Email: info@klrn.org
Website: www.klrn.org
moving forward
There are many promising practices for improving the school readiness of children learning the English language. By establishing rapport, respecting cultures, effectively communicating in English and Spanish, providing parent development opportunities, building capacity to work with ELL, and collaborating with community organizations, we can work together and support families as they prepare their young children for school.
What Works? is a framework for moving forward. It provides insight for states, jurisdictions, programs and parents on how to help children succeed. The following questions will help your organization assess your current efforts in supporting the school readiness of ELL children. Your organization’s work could be a Promising Practice! The questions will also help your organization think through the steps needed to make other Promising Practices work in your community. Framed around the nine critical elements needed to successfully work with ELL young children, consider the following questions:

**Culturally Competent**
- Does the practice help your organization accept and respect diverse cultures and values? Does culture impact the way you work with children and families?
- How does the practice help your organization build knowledge about different cultures? Is your organization asking families about their traditions, cultures, values and backgrounds?
- How does the practice help your organization integrate cultural knowledge into its work to improve the school readiness of ELL children? Are you using this information to inform the program? The curriculum? Parent opportunities? Logistics, like menus and entertainment?

**Parent-focused**
- Does the practice help your organization foster relationships with parents? Are you creating positive environments for parents?
- How will the practice engage and involve parents? Are parents invited into your organization? Are parents asked for their opinions or encouraged to volunteer?
- Will the practice enable parents to grow and build their skills? Are you offering parent development opportunities and school readiness information?
- Will the practice support parents in their role as a child’s first and most important teacher? Are parents empowered and encouraged to be teachers at home?

**Data-driven**
- Does your organization review pertinent data? Are you reviewing Maryland’s school readiness data? Census data? Local data?
- How do you identify the changing demands of the ELL population? Are you asking parents about their needs? Are you assessing and observing children’s skills and abilities regularly?
- How will data inform or revise your practices?
- Does the practice help your organization address these needs?

**Outcome-oriented**
- How will the practice improve the school readiness of ELL children? Are the goals clear?
- How will your organization measure the achievements? How will you know if you’ve made an impact? How will you track your efforts?
- What are the results of the practice?
Quality-oriented

- How will the practice improve the quality of early learning activities? Will the practice alter curriculum? Will your organization focus on building the language and literacy skills (both in the native and English language) of ELL?
- How does the practice improve the quality of early educators or professionals? Will your organization offer professional development opportunities? Will you encourage staff to obtain additional credentials? Will your program become accredited and/or state licensed?
- How will the practice improve parents’ ability to be their child’s first and best teacher? Will your organization empower parents to be teachers at home? Will you provide parent development opportunities? Will you hold opportunities for parents to network with other parents?
- How will the practice help you continuously improve?

Collaborative

- Are community stakeholders aware of your organization’s efforts? Are you informing or working with early caregivers and educators, like Head Start, Early Head Start, Judy Centers, pre-K programs, family-childcare providers, and center-based providers? Health or service providers? Public libraries? Community-based organizations? Local business leaders? The faith-based community?
- What processes does your organization have for identifying and working with new community leaders/initiatives to improve school readiness for ELL children?
- How will the practice help your organization collaborate/partner with the community’s key stakeholders? Will you embark on joint efforts? Will you complement each other’s programs and successes? Will you encourage other organizations to join in your organization’s school readiness efforts?
- How will collaboration augment your efforts for ELL children? Resources? Services?

Communication-focused

- Will the practice foster effective communication with ELL families? Will your organization use bilingual communication? Will your organization use interpreters at parent conferences, workshops and/or events? Will your organization engage translators to make written communication more culturally and linguistically appropriate for parents of ELL?

Replication-oriented

- Can you adopt or replicate the practices in your organization?
What Works? Promising Practices for Improving the School Readiness of English Language Learners was developed by the Ready At Five Partnership and funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Harry & Jeannette Weinberg Foundation, and the Maryland State Department of Education. Ready At Five thanks them for their support but acknowledges that the findings and conclusions presented in this report are those of Ready At Five alone, and do not necessarily represent the policies or views of these organizations.

Ready At Five wishes to thank researcher and writer Gilda Martinez, Johns Hopkins University, Center for Reading Excellence and Ready At Five Consultant, as well as writer and editor Amanda McMahon, Associate Director, Ready At Five.

Special thanks to the following organizations and individuals for their assistance in the development of this publication:

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- Council of Chief State School Officers, Jana Martella, Director of Early Childhood Education
- Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development, Kathy Seitzinger Hepburn, Senior Policy Associate
- Harvard Graduate School of Education, Nonie K. Lesaux, Assistant Professor of Education and Catherine Snow, Professor of Education
- Intercultural Development Research Association, Aurelio Montemayor, Lead Trainer
- Maryland State Department of Education, Rolf Grafwallner, Coordinator, Early Learning Office
- National Council of La Raza, Antonia Lopez, Director
- National Governors Association, Anna Lovejoy, Senior Policy Analyst
- Zero to Three, Janice Im, Senior Early Associate, Early Head Start National Resource Center

**Snap Shots: Programs At Work**
- Ramona Santiago Anderson, San Francisco School Volunteers, California
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- Dennis Campa, San Antonio Department of Community Initiatives, Texas
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- Lisa Conlon, Rolling Terrace Judy Hoyer Center, Maryland
- Leanna Dyer, Head Start Center (Reno), Nevada
- Families in Schools, California
- Melissa Galvan, KLRN-TV (San Antonio PBS member station), Texas
- Andrea Hall-Bell, Rolling Terrace Judy Hoyer Center, Maryland
- Sandra Halladay, Parents for Public Schools—San Francisco Chapter, California
- Leslie Hamm, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, Maryland
- Rose Johnson, Wicomico County Health Department
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- Guimel Martinez, Miami-Dade School Readiness Coalition, Florida
- Lorretta Merritt, School #16 (Passaic), New Jersey
- Joy Peyton, Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence, Washington, DC
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- Stephanie Shauck, MSDE—Division of Library Development and Services, Maryland
- Pilar Torres, Centro Familia, Maryland
- Sandra Whelan, Even Start (Caroline County), Maryland
- Nancy Wooldridge, San Antonio, Department of Community Initiatives, Texas

Special Note: This report is far from exhaustive, and is viewed as a work in progress. Because this project was conducted as a small-scale review, Ready At Five recognizes that there are many more promising practices than are reported in this document. Please feel free to send us information about your efforts for future publications at ra5@mbrt.org
about Ready At Five

Founded in 1992 in response to the first national education goal, “all children will enter school ready to learn,” Ready At Five is a statewide, public/private, 501(c) 3 partnership committed to:

- Improving the educational experiences of children birth to age five;
- Assisting communities in providing support to families with children birth to five; and
- Educating a young child’s first three teachers—parents, early care and education professionals and elementary school staff.

To achieve these goals, Ready At Five develops unique multi-lingual tools to enhance parents’ ability to be the first and most important teacher; provides technical assistance to local communities; and heightens the dialogue among a young child’s first three teachers through workshops, training sessions, and forums.

As part of this work, Ready At Five is committed to helping children who are English language learners develop the skills and abilities needed to succeed in school.
1 All data and statistics included in this section were obtained from the Census 2000, reported by the US Census Bureau; the National Council of LaRaza, www.nclr.org; and Status and Trends in the Education of Hispanics and the Hispanic Education Fact Sheet, NCLR Census Information Center, February 1999.

2 All data and statistics included in this section were obtained from: Descriptive Study of Services to Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students with Disabilities by Development Associates, Inc., conducted for the US Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students; and Status and Trends in the Education of Hispanics and the Hispanic Education Fact Sheet, NCLR Census Information Center, February 1999.


5 School readiness is determined each year using a state-of-the-art assessment instrument, the Work Sampling System (WSS); every October, all kindergarten children in Maryland are assessed in each of the Domains of Learning. Specifically, kindergarten teachers look at what each child knows and is able to do.


7 Adopted from the parent engagement strategies developed by the Arizona Department of Education. To view more information on parent and family involvement, visit: http://www.ade.state.az.us/.


9 Adapted from the National PTA Website, www.pta.org.

10 Based on the key findings from an early intervention study of ESL students conducted by Nonie Lesaux, Harvard Graduate School of Education.

11 Adapted from Principles and Strategies to Facilitate Second Language Development in Early Childhood Education and Thematic Literature and Curriculum for English Language Learners in Early Childhood Education by Betty Ansins Smallwood, Center for Applied Linguistics.
annotated bibliography

The following annotated bibliography contains websites, books, and other resources that were recommended for helping to implement the Promising Practices. Many of the resources are downloadable or available for free. Where needed, the information on ordering materials has been provided.

Organizations

Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL)
www.cal.org or www.cal.org/schoolservices

CAL is a private, non-profit organization: a group of scholars and educators who use the findings of linguistics and related sciences in identifying and addressing language-related problems. CAL carries out a wide range of activities including research, teacher education, analysis and dissemination of information, design and development of instructional materials, technical assistance, conference planning, program evaluation, and policy analysis. The CAL website provides information about the National Literacy Panel on language minority children and youth, which complements the study by the National Reading Panel. It also shares interesting studies on transferring Spanish language skills to English, why/how reading can be challenging for English language learners, language testing, and many online and/or downloadable products on language and linguistics. Many publications are available through the online store. In addition, CAL can provide services to schools, states, and districts for its English language learners, on a contract basis.

Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA)
www.ciera.org/index.html

CIERA maintains a library of instructional research-based resources, such as “Every Child a Reader” and “Frequently Asked Questions about Teaching Children to Read”. The site also includes presentations from reading conferences, technical reports about CIERA’s latest information on early reading, and various helpful links on this topic.

Center for Social Organization of Schools – Johns Hopkins University (CSOS)
www.csos.jhu.edu/index.htm

The CSOS was established in 1966 as an educational research and development center at Johns Hopkins University. The Center maintains a staff of sociologists, psychologists, social psychologists, and educators who conduct programmatic research to improve the education system, developing curricula and providing technical assistance to help schools use the Center’s research.

Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)
www.ccsso.org/

The CCSSO is a nonpartisan, nationwide, non-profit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on major educational issues. The Council seeks member consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, Congress, and the public. This organization’s site has information on chief state school officers, projects, federal programs (i.e.; early childhood), publications, and upcoming events.

Center for Language Minority Education and Research (CLMER)
www.clmer.csulb.edu/

CLMER at California State University, Long Beach is a university-wide appointed entity, affiliated with the College of Education. CLMER engages in a wide range of services, projects, and research initiatives to promote equity, excellence, and justice in schools and society, with a focus on traditionally underserved and underrepresented children, families, and communities. Their services, projects, and research initiatives align with their vision for an inclusive, democratic society and promote evidence- and research-based approaches to relevant organizational and educational change.

Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE)
http://www.crede.ucsc.edu/index.html

CREDE is a Federally funded research and development program within the University of California, Santa Cruz, working to assist America's diverse student populations in achieving academic excellence. CREDE conducted 31 research projects around the country focused on improving the education of students whose ability to reach their potential is challenged by language or cultural barriers, race, geographic location, or poverty. This research was recently synthesized for publication and tested and refined in school settings.

Child Care and Early Education Research Connections (CCEERC)
www.childcareresearch.org

CCEERC promotes high quality research in child care and early education and the use of that research in policymaking. The CCEERC collection available on its website includes research reports and summaries, datasets and statistics, and data collection instruments. CCEERC also offers guidance about research methods and research quality, and provides information on public policies.
Early Childhood Equity Alliance (ECEA)
www.rootsforchange.net
ECEA nurtures and connects people engaged in racial and social justice education and action with and for young children, families and communities. It focuses on four areas of work: (1) to end isolation and strengthen ties by creating ways for individuals and groups to share resources, strategies, and lessons learned; (2) to support local education, leadership, and actions to strengthen communities and create places where all children belong, grow, and learn; (3) to expand the knowledge-base for change by initiating and supporting participatory action research; and (4) to support the first three goals by maintaining and strengthening ECEA's structures and capacity. A number of resources are available from their website for teachers working with linguistically and culturally diverse young children. The website is also available in Spanish.

Early Childhood Research Institute on Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (the CLAS Institute)
www.clas.uiuc.edu/
The CLAS Institute at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign identifies, evaluates, and promotes effective and appropriate early intervention practices and preschool practices that are sensitive to and respectful of children and families from culturally- and linguistically-diverse backgrounds. CLAS provides a number of publications that can be used by early childhood/special education practitioners to help them select culturally and linguistically-appropriate materials. The CLAS website also has a database of materials describing culturally and linguistically appropriate practices for early childhood/early intervention services. The website is also available in Spanish.

Harvard Family Research Project
www.gse.harvard.edu/~hfrp/
The Project has completed a study of programs from across the country which specifically serve Latino families through culturally and linguistically relevant child care and family support/family involvement activities. Their publication, Supporting Latino Families: Lessons from Exemplary Programs (1996), highlights family support programs serving Latino families that have developed parenting education programs as part of their overall efforts. These programs feature parenting courses, workshops, or classes on varying aspects of child growth and development and parenting, as well as training for parenting educators.

International Reading Association
http://www.reading.org/
International Reading Association is a professional organization that seeks to promote literacy for all students by improving reading instruction through research-based best practices. Resources for topics and issues in reading such as beginning readers, language and cultural diversity, and English language learners are available on the Association's website.

National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)
www.nabe.org
NABE is a professional organization that represents both English language learners and bilingual education professionals. NABE represents over 5,000 educators and parents and has affiliate organizations in 28 States. NABE supports the education of English language learners by providing professional development opportunities for their members; collaborating with other civil rights and education organizations to ensure that the needs of language minority students are met in every State; and by lobbying Congress for adequate funding of all programs that serve English language learners. The NABE website contains a number of products, publications and key links associated with bilingual education.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
www.naeyc.org
NAEYC is a nonprofit professional organization with more than 103,000 members dedicated to improving the quality of care and education provided to the nation's young children. NAEYC administers the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, a voluntary, national accreditation system for quality early childhood programs, and the National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development, which provides resources and services to improve professional preparation and development of early childhood educators. NAEYC publishes books and resources related to developmentally appropriate care and services for young children, including the promotion of emerging and early literacy skills. NAEYC's online catalog provides the latest news and research, details on new policy initiatives around the nation and ideas for best practices for families and teachers of children birth to age eight.

National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME)
www.nameorg.org
NAME was founded to bring together individuals from all academic levels and disciplines and diverse educational institutions, and other organizations, occupations, and communities who have an interest in multicultural education. NAME believes that multicultural education promotes equity for all regardless of culture, ethnicity, race, language, age, gender, sexual orientation, belief system or exceptionality, and that multicultural education enables the individual to believe in his/her own intrinsic worth and culture. The NAME website offers resources about culturally and linguistically responsive teaching for professionals working with children of diverse backgrounds and information about curriculum and teacher preparation.

National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI)
www.nbcdi.org
NBCDI is dedicated to improving the quality of life for African American children and youth. NBCDI houses the African American Early Childhood Resource Center, a clearinghouse and networking hub for enhancing the diversity of early care and
education leadership and improving the quality of early childhood education practices.

**National Center for Children in Poverty**
www.nccp.org
This non-profit organization is part of the Columbia University. Their mission and goals is for families to become economically secure, stable, nurturing—which lead to improved school readiness. The organization’s website includes research on this topic.

**National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC)**
www.georgetown.edu/research/gucdc/nccc/index.html
The mission of NCCC is to increase the capacity of health and mental health programs to design, implement, and evaluate culturally and linguistically competent service delivery systems. Housed within the Department of Pediatrics at the Georgetown University Medical Center, the NCCC provides useful information on children with special needs, curricula enhancement models, and promising practices. The NCCC website, available in Spanish and English, features a searchable research collection and a 50-state data tool to compare policies within and across states. The site is designed to serve researchers, policymakers, and practitioners and invites contributions of research, data, and other resources.

**National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)**
www.nces.ed.gov
NCES provides an online database of educational statistics and research. Search NCES by typing in “kindergarten” and find information about young children’s achievement and classroom experiences, knowledge and skills of children entering kindergarten, public school kindergarten teachers’ views on children’s readiness for school, and other similar analyses.

**National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL)**
www.famlit.org
The NCFL strives to create educational and economic opportunities for the most at-risk children and parents. NCFL’s provides professional development for practitioners who work in children’s education, adult education, English as a Second Language, and related literacy fields; model program development through our many ground-breaking initiatives; policy and advocacy support to sustain and expand literacy services for families; and the Family Literacy Alliance, a membership program. NCFL’s Hispanic Family Literacy Institute expands and enhances family literacy services for the educational, social and economic advancement of Hispanic and other immigrant families in need. The NCFL website shares information about working with ELL, resources in Spanish, such as “Helping Your Child Become a Reader”, as well as general resources about Hispanic Census Statistics, Hispanic organizations, and trends in Hispanic education.

**National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition & Language Instructional Educational Programs (NCELA)**
www.nceia.gwu.edu
NCELA supports the US Department of Education’s Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students (OELA) in its mission to respond to Title III educational needs, and implement No Child Left Behind (NCLB) as it applies to English language learners. NCELA is authorized to collect, analyze, synthesize, and disseminate information about language instruction educational programs for limited English proficient children and related programs.

**National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE)**
www.cal.org/ncle
NCLE is a national information center focusing on the language and literacy education of adults and out-of-school youth learning English. NCLE provides information on adult English as a second Language (ESL) and literacy education to teachers and tutors, program directors, researchers, and policy-makers interested in the education of refugees, immigrants, and other U.S. residents whose native language is other than English. NCLE is housed at the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), a nonprofit organization located in Washington, DC.

**National Council of La Raza**
www.nclr.org
This organization aims to reduce poverty and discrimination, and improve the quality of life for Hispanic Americans. Their key priorities revolve around education, assets/investments, economic mobility, health, media, and civil rights.

**National Head Start Association (NHSA)**
www.nhhsa.org
The NHSA is a private nonprofit membership organization dedicated exclusively to meeting the needs of Head Start children and their families. The Association provides support for the entire Head Start community by advocating for policies that strengthen services to Head Start children and their families; by providing extensive training and professional development to Head Start staff; and by developing and disseminating research, information, and resources that enrich Head Start program delivery.

**National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY)**
www.nichcy.org
The NICHCY serves as the nation’s central source for information on disabilities in infants, toddlers, children, and youth; IDEA, which is the law authorizing special education; No Child Left Behind (as it relates to children with disabilities); and research-based information on effective educational practices. The NICHCY website provides information on disabilities and disability-related issues for families, educators, and other professionals.
It also provides research-based information on education practices and is available in Spanish and English.

**National Governors' Association (NGA)**
[www.nga.org](http://www.nga.org)
The NGA's Center for Best Practices site contains information on state-level innovations, best practices, and emerging issues. Targeting early childhood issues, The Center helps states develop cutting-edge solutions specifically focused on young children, child literacy, learning, and development.

**National Latino Children's Institute (NLCI)**
[www.nlci.org](http://www.nlci.org)
NLCI develops materials to encourage expansion of child care and Head Start programs for Latino children and works for development of culturally and linguistically relevant materials and bilingual, bicultural professionals to work as teachers, translators, and childcare providers.

**The National Research Center on English Learning and Achievement (CELA)**
[http://cela.albany.edu](http://cela.albany.edu)
CELA provides classroom activities, information on home-school connections, and recent research findings about effective early literacy practices.

**Reading Is Fundamental**
[www.rif.org](http://www.rif.org)
RIF is the nation's largest nonprofit children's literacy organization. The RIF website provides information for educators and parents, including articles, book lists, professional development programs, and tips and activities to motivate children to read. Interactive bilingual activities, games, and tips are also available.

**Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)**
[www.tesol.org/index.html](http://www.tesol.org/index.html)
TESOL's mission is to ensure excellence in English language teaching to speakers of other languages. The website provides research-based periodicals, position statements, upcoming ELL events/conferences, and membership information. TESOL strives to make a difference in the lives of ELL students, teaching newcomers to the field to be the best they can be, and/or conducting research in the field of ELL. TESOL also connects to a global community of professionals teaching English as a second or other language.

**USC Center for Multilingual, Multicultural Research**
[www.usc.edu/dept/education/CMMR/](http://www.usc.edu/dept/education/CMMR/)
The Center is an organized research unit facilitating the research collaboration, dissemination, and professional development activities of faculty, students, and others in education and outside organizations. The Center provides a base for those interested in multilingual education, English as a second language and foreign language instruction, multicultural education and related areas, as well as the opportunity to come together for research and program collaboration.

**Zero to Three**
[www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)
Zero to Three's mission is to promote the healthy development of our nation's infants and toddlers by supporting and strengthening families, communities, and those who work on their behalf. Zero to Three, a national non-profit organization, is dedicated to advancing current knowledge; promoting beneficial policies and practices; communicating research and best practices to a wide variety of audiences; and providing training, technical assistance and leadership development. The organization's website has information for parents and educators, including conference information, journal articles, policies, and “parenting from A to Z.”

**Publications and Resources**

**Bilingual Children's Mother Tongue: Why Is It Important for Education?**
By: Jim Cummins
Discusses the positive effects of bilingualism on children's linguistic and educational development.

**Building Culturally and Linguistically Competent Services to Support Young Children, Their Families, and School Readiness**
By: Kathy Seitzinger Hepburn, M.S.
This book offers valuable information for planning and implementing services to promote school readiness in ELL. It demonstrates how to learn about families/community members, educational environments, early learning (language and literacy development), and communication strategies. Self-assessment checklists are provided as guides.

**Creating Highly Motivating Classrooms for All Students: A Schoolwide Approach to Powerful Teaching with Diverse Learners**
By Margery B. Ginsberg and Raymond J. Wlodkowski
This book is drawn from a synthesis of research and literature on learning theories, cultural studies, and teaching practices to describe the components of a culturally responsive school and pedagogy. It also outlines practical strategies for applying the
"Motivational Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching."

**Creative Curriculum**  
By: Diane Trister Dodge  
This book explains how to create a developmentally appropriate curriculum for preschoolers. It provides lists of books, ideas for setting up the classroom, center ideas, a template for planning, and other necessary components for setting up a preschool classroom.

"The Critical Importance of Cultural and Linguistic Continuity for Infants and Toddlers,"  
Zero To Three, October/November 1994  
By: Hedy Nai-Lin Chang and Dora Pulido  
This Zero To Three article explores various strategies that ensure a child's caregiving environment is culturally and linguistically appropriate to his/her needs. Strategies discussed include using childcare providers that share the child's cultural background, drawing on the cultural expertise of staff, developing cultural awareness and sensitivity, and rethinking the language of care. The article emphasizes the importance of continuity between the child's home and the caregiver's environment.

**Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice** (2000)  
By: Geneva Gay  
http://store.tcpress.com/0807739545.shtml  
This book explores why students from different racial backgrounds who are successful in many contexts outside school are unsuccessful in school and suggests ways in which minority student underachievement can be attenuated. The assertion is made that teaching needs to be responsive to a child's culture for it to be effective.

"Culture and Caregiving: Goals, Expectations, & Conflict,"  
Zero To Three, May 2003  
http://www.zerotothree.org/ztt_journal.html  
This issue of Zero To Three explores tensions that occur as individual and group (or family and program) assumptions about child development and existing child-rearing practices meet face to face. The articles provide insights about ways in which families and program staff influence each other's care-giving goals and practices.

**Developing the Young Bilingual Learner video** (Stock No. 801)  
By: Resource and Instruction in Staff Excellence (RISE).  
http://www.naeyc.org  
Produced for the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the video explores personal conversations with bilingual learners, researchers, and teachers to find answers to critical questions asked by all early childhood teachers on teaching children who are bilingual or learning English as a second language.

**Early Developments 2004: Diversity**  
Published by: Frank Porter Graham (FPG) Child Development Institute  
http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ncedl/pages/products.cfm  
This resource highlights some of the work developed at FPG regarding cultural diversity and early childhood education.

**Educating Language-Minority Children**  
Eds: Diane August and Kenji Hakuta, Committee on Developing a Research Agenda on the Education of Limited-English-Proficient and Bilingual Students, National Research Council and Institute of Medicine  
Contact: National Academy Press at (888) 624-8373  
This resource discusses a broad range of educational issues: how students learn a second language; how reading and writing skills develop in the first and second languages; how information on specific subjects is stored and learned and the implications for second language learners; how social and motivational factors affect learning for English language learners; how the English proficiency and subject matter knowledge of English language learners are assessed; and what is known about the attributes of effective schools and classrooms that serve English-language learners.

**The English Language Learner KnowledgeBase**  
www.helpforschools.com/ELLKBase/index.shtml  
The English Language Learner KnowledgeBase is an online resource supporting education professionals in the administration of programs for ELL students. It is organized around seven elements that assist administrators and program directors develop and maintain school and district wide programs, including: understanding the law, developing the alternative language program, notifying and involving parents, identifying and assessing students, implementing the alternative language program, exiting students/monitoring academic progress, and providing professional development. Each of the elements has valuable information about how to work with and teach ELL children.

**Foreign Translations**  
This link provides translations in Spanish and various other languages on information pertaining to pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, accommodations-documentation for ELL students, and testing in Maryland.

**The Framework for Curriculum Development**  
By: Beverly J. Armento  
This resource discusses the various challenges and principles involved in developing a culturally responsive curriculum.
Identifying Strategies to Support English Language Learners in Head Start and Early Head Start Programs: English Language Learners Focus Group Report
By: The National Head Start Child Development Institute
http://www.mhsqic.org/init/seclang/englishlanglearners.pdf
A report on a two-day focus group convened to obtain recommendations regarding effective approaches for addressing the opportunities and challenges presented by working with young children and families who are English language learners in all Head Start and Early Head Start programs nationwide. The report underscores the benefits of exposure to two languages as an asset that should be fostered.

"Language and Literacy for All Children," Head Start Bulletin
By Patton O. Tabors
http://www.headstartinfo.org/publications/hsbulletin74/hsb74_04.htm
This resource examines what researchers can recommend to teachers who are working in the early childhood classroom with children from diverse linguistic backgrounds to help the children develop language and literacy abilities. It discusses how home languages and literacies of the English-learning children can be incorporated into the classroom in ways that would be socially useful and cognitively challenging for all the children.

"Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children," Young Children
By: S.B. Neuman, C. Copple, and S. Bredenkamp
http://naeyc.org/resources/position_statements/psread0.htm
Published by NAEYC, this paper acknowledges and responds to the importance of a child’s home language and culture in the education setting

Literacy for English-Language Learners: Four Key Issues
By: Diane August
Presented at the US Department of Education’s First-Annual Summit on English Language Acquisition in Washington, DC, this PowerPoint presentation discusses the development of literacy in English language learners: the relationship between first and second language literacy; the relationship between English language proficiency and English literacy; and what constitutes optimal literacy instruction for second-language learners.

No Child Left Behind: A Parents Guide
This document (available in Spanish and English) outlines the goals of the No Child Left Behind Act and provides information for parents, including frequently asked questions and where to go for additional information.

One Child, Two Languages: A Guide for Preschool Educators of Children Learning English as a Second Language
By: P.O. Tabors
This seminal book offers specific techniques needed to facilitate the natural progression of second-language acquisition in young children. Teachers learn how to create a supportive classroom environment for children learning English as a second language, effectively measure progress, address individual differences, and work with parents. The importance of children's home languages and cultures is emphasized with strategies to support first-language acquisition.

Our Roots, Our Future: Affirming Culture and Language in After School and Youth Programs
By: Jhumpa Bhattacharya, Ann Jaramillo, Lisette Lopez, Laurie Olsen, Amy Scharf, and Mona Shah
http://www.californiatomorrow.org/
This resource contains inspiring stories of promising practices along with an exclusive set of practical tools and activities to support program reflection and development. Included are the moving voices of youth and an informative framework speaking to the importance of culture and language in the lives of young people. Find out about diversity trends in the field by reading the results of California Tomorrow’s national survey of after school programs. Learn effective strategies for working with English Language Learners, and expand your capacity to support youth of color and young people of all cultures.

Personalizing Culture through Anthropological and Educational Perspectives
By: Rosemary Henze, ARC Associates and Mary Hauser, Carroll College
This report assists teachers and teacher educators in learning about their students’ cultural differences/influences, and how their own cultural assumptions may affect their teaching.

A Place to Begin: Working With Parents on Issues of Diversity
By: Dora Pulido-Tobiassen and Janet Gonzalez-Mena
http://www.californiatomorrow.org/
The book suggests ways to recognize the differences within families, how they function, and their beliefs and expectations for their children. The principles and the core content of the book focus on responding to questions about how children see themselves within and outside their families.

Prepare My Child for School: Healthy Start, Grow Smart Series
Developed by the US Department of Education, this booklet series (available in English and Spanish) contains information about raising children from birth to one year.
Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children
By: C. Snow, M. Burns, and P. Griffin
http://books.nap.edu/books/030906418X/html/index.htm
This resource describes the conditions under which reading is most likely to develop easily. Identified conditions include stimulating preschool environments, excellent reading instruction, and the absence of any of a wide array of risk factors. The authors also provide recommendations for practice as well as recommendations for further research.

Responding to Linguistic and Cultural Diversity: Recommendations for Early Childhood Educations
By: National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
This joint position statement of the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) provides guidance to teachers of young children in schools and early childhood programs on young children's literacy development and outlines developmentally appropriate practices in early literacy.

School Readiness and Language Minority Students: Implications of the First National Education Goal
By: Cynthia D. Prince and Leslie A. Lawrence
http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/pubs/focus/focus7.htm
This document defines school readiness, assessing of young children-including language minority children, conditions affecting school success, and language learning during preschool years.

Second Language Issues in Early Literacy Instruction
By: Robert Rueda
A presentation at the third annual Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA) Summer Institute, this PowerPoint discusses personal, interpersonal, and community factors that impact early literacy instruction for English language learners in early elementary schools.

Skilled Dialogue Strategies for Responding to Cultural Diversity in Early Childhood
By: Isaura Barrera, Robert M. Corso, and Dianne Macpherson
http://www.brookespublishing.com
This resource presents a field-tested model for positive interaction called "Skilled Dialogue" that provides the social and linguistic tools for responding to cultural diversity.

Thematic Literature and Curriculum for English Language Learners in Early Childhood Education
By: Betty Ansin Smallwood
http://www.cal.org/resources/digest/0208smallwood.html
This digest provides early childhood educators with book selection criteria, literature-based teaching strategies, curricular topics, and book lists for representative topics appropriate for use with ELLs in early childhood settings.

"Two or More Languages in Early Childhood: Some General Points and Practical Recommendations" ERIC Digest, January 2003
By: Annick De Houwer
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/earlychild.html
This resource discusses some common myths about children growing up bilingual and offers suggestions that can help children to become fluent users of two or more languages.

By: Vivian J. Carlson and Robin L. Harwood
http://www.zerotothree.org/ztt_journal.html
This resource describes a staff development model that is designed to help practitioners who work with infants, young children, and their families build more collaborative and effective cross-cultural relationships.

"Understanding the Impact of Language Differences on Classroom Behavior" What Works Brief, No. 2
By: R.M. Santos and M.M. Ostrosky
http://csefel.uiuc.edu/briefs/wwb2.pdf
Published by the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, this brief highlights some of the typical challenges a young child whose first language is not English may exhibit in an English-speaking classroom.

What Teachers Need to Know about Language
By: L.W. Fillmore and C. Snow
This resource identifies what teachers need to know about language and suggests courses that teacher preparation programs should offer to teacher candidates. A discussion of how to work with children from diverse backgrounds and English Language Learners is included in the document.
Why, How, and When Should My Child Learn a Second Language?
By: Center for Applied Linguistics
http://www.cal.org/resources/brochures/whyhowwhen_brochure.pdf
This brochure explains the benefits of knowing a second language and the different types of programs that teach second languages, and gives references and readings for further information.

Working Together to Build a Multilingual Society
By: Center for Applied Linguistics
http://www.cal.org/resources/brochures/multilingual_brochure.pdf
This brochure offers reasons, suggestions and tips for parents, teachers, administrators, and policymakers interested in building and succeeding in a multilingual society. It also offers helpful references and contacts for further information.

"Young Bilingual Children and Early Literacy Development," Handbook of Early Literacy Research, 2001
By: P.O. Tabors and C.E. Snow
This resource summarizes what is known about early literacy development in young bilingual children. It notes that there are many pathways young children can take towards literacy. Recommendations include encouraging parents to maintain their first language at home and to use it for literacy activities; gathering information about each child's individual language and literacy background; and developing ways to assess bilingual children's language and literacy abilities.

The Young Child's Memory for Words: Developing First and Second Language and Literacy
By: Daniel R. Meier
http://www.teacherscollegepress.com/index.html
The Teachers College Press presents innovative strategies and practical guidelines for language and literacy development in multilingual and multicultural settings. Effective, research-based teaching practices will help early childhood and elementary teachers to develop children's skills and their love of reading. Proven strategies support English language learners and emphasize linking preschool and kindergarten language and literacy teaching.

Studies and Statistics
By Margaret Burchinal, Debby Cryer
This article presents data from two previous studies of child care experiences in the United States to determine whether standard measures of child care quality were less reliable or valid for African American and English-speaking Latino children than for white children. Data suggest that children from all three ethnic groups benefit from sensitive and stimulating care on child outcomes related to school success. The global dimension of quality may be reflected in very different types of practices that reflect cultural differences.

Early Childhood Longitudinal Study – Kindergarten Class of 1998-99
This study provides data at a national level on: children's status on school readiness, their transition into school, and their progression through fifth grade. It enables researchers to study family, school, community, and individual variables that affect school readiness.

Early Childhood Study of Language and Literacy Development of Spanish-Speaking Children: Theoretical Background and Preliminary Results
By: Patton O. Tabors, Mariela M. Páez, and Lisa M. López
Prepared for the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) Conference, this PowerPoint presentation describes an ongoing study of the language and literacy development of young children who come from Spanish-speaking homes in and around Boston; Montgomery County, Maryland; and Puerto Rico. The purpose of this longitudinal research is to identify different ways that parents and schools can help children be more successful in school.

The Hispanic Population in the United States
This report describes the Hispanic population in the United States in 2000. It shares demographic and socioeconomic information, such as the geographic distribution, age, education attainment, earnings, and poverty status of Hispanics.

National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES)
The NCES report "Status and Trends in the Education of Hispanics" examines the current condition and recent trends in the educational status of Hispanics in the United States. It draws on the many statistics published by NCES in a variety of reports and synthesizes these data in one compact volume. In addition to indicators drawn from existing government reports, some indicators were developed specifically for this report. This popular report now has many sections and tables for easy reference.

"The National Study of School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students' Long-Term Academic Achievement: Project 1.1"
http://www.crede.ucsc.edu/research/llaa/1.1_final.html
This 335 page document was developed by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE). It is a five year research study that took place from 1996 to 2001 on the effectiveness of various U.S. school programs provided for ELL in grades K-12.
Funded by The Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Maryland State Department of Education, and The Harry and Jeannette Weinberg Foundation