



Benefits of bilingualism and multilingualism

Enhances English literacy skills:

Developing literacy in their home language alongside English helps children learn how languages work and supports them to become better readers, listeners and communicators.

Having a solid foundation in a first language makes acquiring a new language easier.

Improves memory, concentration, and numeracy skills:

Speaking two or more languages strengthens and improves memory and concentration. It furthers logical thinking and increases visual and spatial awareness, as well as enhancing decision making.

Strengthens children's sense of identity:

Children who are literate in their home language find it easier to retain strong connections to their family, community, and culture. They also have increased employment opportunities.

Strategies for becoming bilingual or multilingual

Each parent speaks with the child in his or her own language.

Both parents speak their home language with their child all the time and Standard Australian English is learnt in other situations.

One parent uses two languages, for example, one at home and one outside the home.

In order to maintain your chosen strategy, you might need to explain to others why you use a given language, and be willing to translate for others, such as when children who do not speak the language come to play.



Ideas to Help your Child with Language Learning

Language development is a process that takes time and effort as well as commitment and encouragement.

Language will develop by providing many opportunities to hear, speak, read and write.

Only use a language that belongs to you or one you are very fluent in.

If you have started with more than one language from birth, keep going. Do not switch from your language to English because your child is starting school. Trust that your child will grasp Standard Australian English.

Accept your child's responses even when they are not in the language you want. Your child's communication is important.

Repair errors gently: find a way to carefully repeat and correct errors in **your language**, for example, child says, "*We are going on the park*", repair the error by saying, "*Oh! we're going to the park*".

Let teachers, other parents and children in your child's school know what languages your family speak.

Suggestions for activities to complete in your home language/ dialect

Discuss topics taught at school.

Read books and watch videos in your language so your child develops an extensive vocabulary.

Join groups where others speak your language/s or create your own language activity group for children: See Bilingual Families Perth <https://www.bilingualfamilies.org.au/>

Teach basic concepts to young children such as counting in your language, so concepts taught in English are grasped more easily at school.

Offer to read books and do other activities in your language in your child's class.

Help your child do bilingual projects and ask your child's teacher if they can present the project in two languages at school.

Read books in your language; where this is not possible use English books and write the story alongside in your language.

Play games in your first language to make learning fun.



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IMPORTANCE OF SPEAKING YOUR HOME LANGUAGE/ DIALECT

Lake Monger Primary School acknowledges the importance of home language and places great importance on supporting parents with developing our students' home language alongside the development of Standard Australian English which is taught at school.