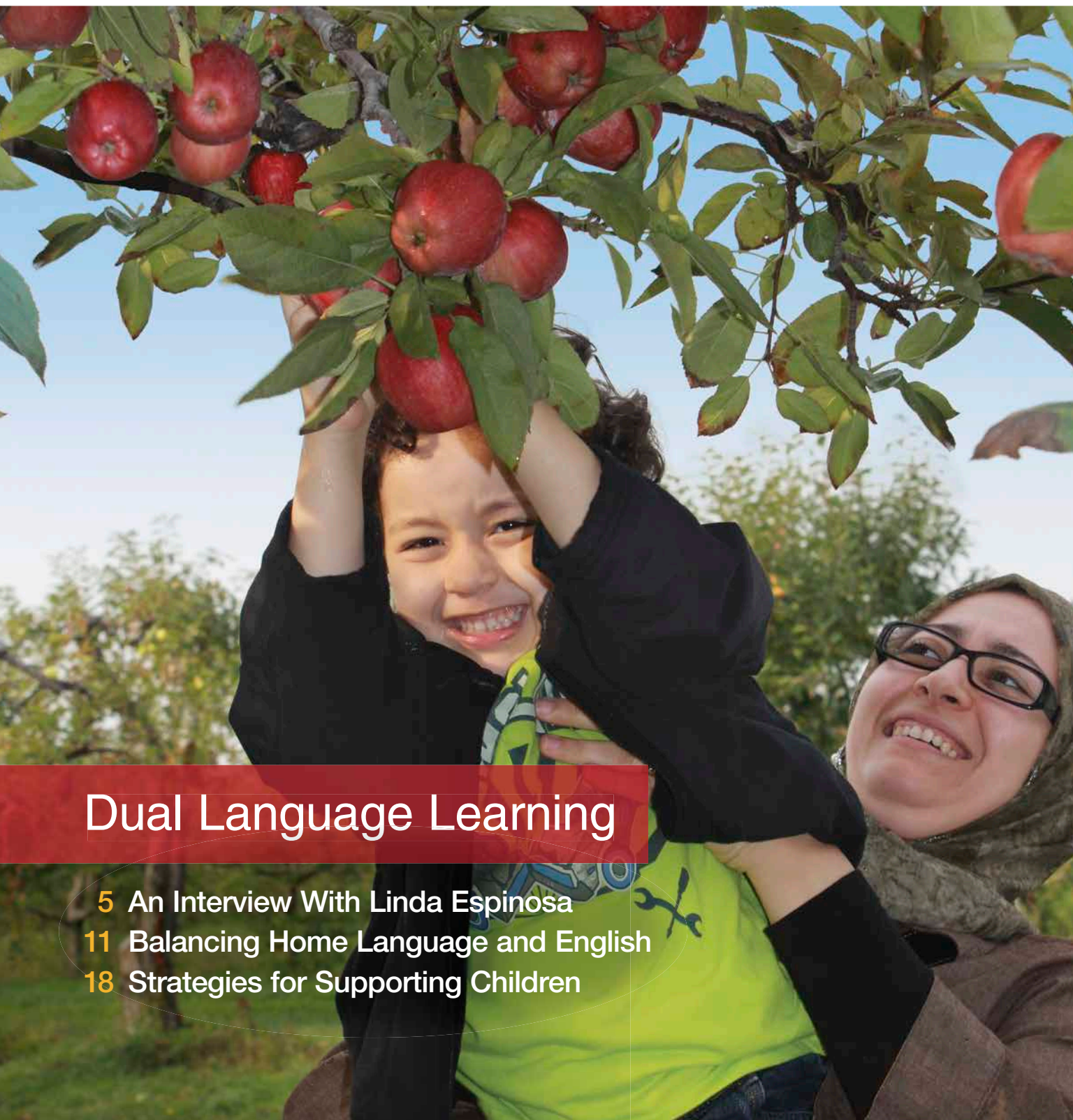


ReSource

 HIGHSCOPE®

F O R E D U C A T O R S

Fall 2016



Dual Language Learning

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Dual language learning used to be an afterthought in early childhood education. But with increasingly diverse classrooms and a growing body of research into the benefits of DLL for all children, things are changing dramatically. The surge in commentary on dual language learning at last recognizes the real-life experience of teachers in preschools and infant-toddler programs, who know that every day they are tasked with supporting a class of children, a quarter of whom, on average, don't speak the same first language that they do. Teachers know that, despite the long silence from curriculum writers and journalists, from pundits and politicians, the growth of dual language learning is not only rapid and irrevocable, but personal for millions of teachers, parents, and children in the US.

Dual language learners represent one of the fastest growing demographics in the country. For the millions of dual language learners in the US, the commitment to providing each individual

child with the highest quality early care and learning means strengthening our resolve to reach *every* child, regardless of linguistic or cultural background. It means recognizing this imperative and refining our practices to address the needs of this expanding population — one that will only continue to grow.

Recent research demonstrates that all children, from all different backgrounds and with a vast range of cognitive abilities, can benefit from dual language learning. The social, linguistic, and cognitive benefits of dual language learning are well documented — especially the positive effects on executive function. It's a measure of how far we've come that what once was considered an impediment to education might now be best characterized as an asset. As the data on the positive effects of dual language learning in early childhood continues to mount, we can use it as a springboard to achieve even more.

Because one thing that's clear is that the benefits that bilingualism confers are the result of careful tending on the part of parents and teachers. Dual language learning is at the same time a state of being for a growing number of children, and an intentional practice. One discouraging trend in dual language learning is a phenomenon sometimes

referred to as first language loss, or a *subtractive* language experience. In this case, not only are the benefits of dual language learning largely absent, but with time, English learning predominates and even replaces learning of the home language. It's important, then, to emphasize that the development of one language should not come at the expense of the other, and this is where educators and families can work as allies to promote the ideal of, as Dr. Linda Espinosa says, "mastering the linguistic features of two languages while also learning important concepts in more than one language."

The strategies and policies discussed in these pages can benefit dual language learners who depend on us to apply what we know to our classroom practices and engagement with families. Best wishes to all of you as we continue to change the trajectory of the world, one child at a time!

Sincerely,

Cheryl Polk, PhD
President

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THE HIGHSCOPE FOUNDATION is an independent, nonprofit organization founded by the late David Weikart in Ypsilanti, Michigan. HighScope's mission is big, but it is clear: to change the trajectory of the world, one child at a time.



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What's New

News on the Foundation's latest projects and products

@HighScope?

M&M Fisher Foundation Awards Evaluation Grant to HighScope

The HighScope Educational Research Foundation was awarded \$379,417 over three years by the Max M. and Marjorie

S. Fisher Foundation. This grant

continues HighScope's evaluation of the Fisher Foundation's early childhood investments in the Brightmoor neighborhood of Detroit. HighScope will provide evaluation support to Everybody Ready, which administers scholarships for Brightmoor families to obtain high-quality childcare, and Development Centers, Inc., which provides professional development for Brightmoor childcare providers. Additionally, HighScope will explore historical data and conduct interviews to document the impact of the Fisher Foundation's seven-year investment in raising the quality of early childhood services in Brightmoor.

The mission of the Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation is to enrich humanity by strengthening and empowering children and families in need. Learn more at mmfisher.org.

Summer Start to Kindergarten Program

School was in session this summer for children in HighScope's Summer Start to Kindergarten program that was made possible by a community grant from Washtenaw Coordinated Funders. This four-week program was designed for children who qualified for Head Start or Michigan's Great Start Readiness Program but who did not previously attend preschool, and will be entering kindergarten in the Fall of 2016. The goal of the program is to help children get a jump start to school with engaging, hands-on learning; socialization; large- and small-group activities; and a focus on school readiness.

New Products for the Early Years

Learn more about these new products at highscope.org!

- *Principios básicos del aprendizaje activo en preescolar*
- *Lesson Plans for a Strong Start: The First 30 Days for Infants*
- *Lesson Plans for a Strong Start: The First 30 Days for Toddlers*
- *Lesson Plans for the First 30 Days: Getting Started With HighScope*, 3rd edition
- Infant-Toddler Song Book
- Toddler Area Signs

Former Superintendent of Ypsilanti Public Schools Among Recipients of Honorary Awards at HighScope's 2016 International Conference

Former Superintendent of Ypsilanti Public Schools, Dr. James Hawkins, was honored on May 11, 2016 in front of a packed hall of preschool educators at the GM Renaissance Center in Detroit. The Charles E. Beatty Award, named after a renowned Ypsilanti educator, was given during the 2016 HighScope International Conference in honor of Dr. Hawkins' contributions to the field of early childhood education.

Dr. Hawkins, a long-time Ypsilanti, MI community and educational leader, received the award during the HighScope conference, which brought together early childhood educators and advocates from more than 30 states and a dozen countries.

Also presented during the event were the David and Phyllis Weikart awards, which recognize

outstanding leaders in the field of early childhood education. The Weikart awards, named for HighScope's founders, were presented to two other educators, preschool educator Carol Idol, from Knoxville, TN, and Sonja Griffin, Manager of the Quality Practice and Professional Development Unit in the Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning.

HighScope's annual conference, now in its 44th year, brought together more than 1,200 early childhood educators, advocates, and researchers from May 9–12. It included more than 100 workshops on a variety of topics, such as child assessment, dual language learners, and musical activities. The event was also host to renowned leaders in the field of early education, such as Evelyn K. Moore, Barbara Bowman, and keynote speaker Walter Gilliam, PhD. (See Joanne Tangorra's article on page 27.)

Find Us at These Fall Conferences!

- **National Black Child Development Institute 46th Annual Conference**, October 1–4, 2016, Orlando, FL
- **New Jersey Association for the Education of Young Children**, October 14–15, 2016, Meadowlands, NJ
- **Young Child Expo & Conference**, October 19–21, 2016, Spokane, WA Proud Platinum Sponsor! *Keynote:* "Changing the World One Child at a Time: Strategies for the Classroom, Home, and Community" presented by Brenda Leger, Chief Strategy Officer at HighScope
- **NAEYC Annual Conference and Expo**, November 2–5, 2016, Los Angeles, CA
- **Zero to Three Annual Conference**, December 7–9, 2016, New Orleans, LA



The Bilingual Advantage

AN INTERVIEW WITH
DR. LINDA ESPINOSA



Dr. Linda Espinosa's recent research work has focused on dual language learning in early childhood education.

Linda M. Espinosa is currently a co-principal investigator for the *Getting on Track for Early School Success: Effective Teaching in Preschool Classrooms* project at the University of Chicago, and a former co-principal investigator for the Center for Early Care and Education Research–Dual Language Learners (CECER-DLL) at Frank Porter Graham CDI at the University of North Carolina. She is a Professor Emeritus of Early Childhood Education at the University of Missouri, Columbia and has served as the co-director of the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) at Rutgers University and the Vice President at Bright Horizons Family Solutions.

Her recent research and policy work has focused on effective curriculum and assessment practices for young children from low-income families who are dual language learners. Dr. Espinosa also served on the Head Start National Reporting System (NRS) Technical Advisory Group as well as the Secretary's Advisory Committee

on Head Start Research and Evaluation and was recently appointed to the National Academies Committee on Fostering School Success for English Language Learners. She is the author of *Getting It Right for Young Children from Diverse Backgrounds: Applying Research to Improve Practice with a Focus on Dual Language Learners* (Pearson, 2015).

First of all, who are dual language learners? And why is it important for early childhood educators to understand their development?

Dual language learners (DLLs) are young children who speak and are learning a language other than English

in their homes while they are also learning English. These children are acquiring two or more languages simultaneously — from birth — or learning a second language while continuing to master their first language, which means they are both mastering the linguistic features of two languages while also learning important concepts in more than one language.

The growth of young dual language learners enrolled in our ECE (early childhood education) programs has tripled in the last several decades and, in some communities, it has grown almost 500 percent. More than 85 percent of Head Start and state prekindergarten programs serve young DLLs. In many communities, ECE programs serve children who represent multiple language backgrounds. One program I recently visited provided services to children from 12 different language backgrounds.

This rapid growth in the number of young DLLs means that most, if not all, ECE teachers need to be prepared to effectively teach children who are not native English speakers. Research has

confirmed the importance of the early childhood years for all future learning and development, especially for children from low socioeconomic status and nonnative-English-speaking households.

New scientific evidence shows that the early childhood years are the ideal time to learn additional languages.

Additionally, we know that DLLs often start kindergarten with weaker school readiness skills and struggle academically throughout their schooling. Therefore, it is urgent that young DLLs receive the highest quality early care and education that supports their school readiness and long-term academic and life success. To

be effective teachers of young DLLs, early childhood educators at all levels need to understand the developmental patterns and linguistic strengths and needs of children who are learning through more than one language.

One thing that brain research has demonstrated is a “critical period” for language development — it’s important for children to learn language at a young age. Why is it especially important to children who are learning more than one language?

Good question. There is current and compelling scientific evidence that all young DLLs, even those with special needs, are quite capable of learning multiple languages during the early childhood years. In fact, the data show that all children benefit socially, linguistically, and cognitively from the

language-processing skills inherent in acquiring two or more languages during the early childhood years.

The new scientific evidence also shows that the early childhood years are the ideal time to learn additional languages. In fact, the human brain is poised to learn language from birth, or even in utero! Very young children have the capacity and, indeed, are neurologically prepared to learn more than one language — and they gain cognitively from managing the linguistic processing required when becoming bilingual. The most amazing aspect of learning more than one language during the earliest years is the very rapid language learning that occurs during the first year of

Recent brain research demonstrates that very young children have the brain capacity to learn more than one language.





Children develop a strong sense of identity when they retain their home language.

life. From the moment of birth, babies are attuned to the sounds of all languages, and this auditory perceptual ability gradually declines starting at about 7–8 months. This is why it is often difficult for adolescents and adults to learn a new language after about 12 years of age.

Many parents, on the flip side, are reluctant to expose their children to a second language because they fear it will affect their English vocabulary and general cognition in negative ways. Is this a myth? What would you tell these parents?

Yes, this is a myth. Parents should understand that their children, indeed all children, are capable of learning multiple languages, and in fact experience many cognitive, linguistic, and social advantages when they have systematic exposure to more than one language. Bilingualism is an asset that should be encouraged by families and educators. In addition, strong skills in the home or first language help promote the acquisition of English. So, parents should be encouraged to continue to speak to, sing with, read to, and interact with

their children in their home language. Language begets language, and all languages contribute to cognitive growth.

Further, parents should be aware that there are cultural and social advantages to maintaining their home language. When young children continue to develop their home language while also acquiring English, they build a stronger sense of identity and connection to their family's cultural traditions and values. These psychological strengths then help older students navigate the challenging adolescent years.

But isn't it important for young children to focus on the language of the classroom, which, in most cases in the US, is English?

Yes, of course, all young children, and especially DLLs, need to become proficient in English. You are correct that in most ECE classrooms English is the language of instruction and few programs have the capacity to offer instruction in multiple languages. Recent research has shown that preschool DLLs

Strong skills in the home or first language help promote the acquisition of English.

experience rapid growth in English when they attend classrooms that have extensive and targeted English language development opportunities.

However, an explicit focus on English acquisition should not come at the expense of continuing support for home language development. Frequently, when very young children are exposed to English for significant amounts of time, they shift their dominant language to English. DLLs who attend English-dominant ECE programs often quickly start to demonstrate a preference for using English and become disinclined to continue to use their home language in preschool and in the home. This out-



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Family participation in lessons in the home language enhances the language learning of dual language learners.

come has been discussed by researchers as first language loss, or a subtractive language experience. In many ECE settings, young DLLs show first language loss as they become more proficient in English.

Thus, while recent research has shown that it is possible and beneficial for young DLLs to learn English, English language development should not come at the expense of continued first language development. Research highlights the importance of sufficient exposure to both languages in order to reap the benefits of becoming bilingual. Fortunately, there are many strategies that all ECE teachers — even English-speaking monolingual teachers — can learn that will help young DLLs become proficient in English while also maintaining their home language.

And still, the dual language learner is doing something more than learning two languages simultaneously. DLLs are required to switch back and forth, and that context is important in understanding how development differs for monolingual and bilingual students. How might ECE providers use that knowledge to better design programs to be responsive to DLLs' needs and emerging potentials?

The ongoing challenges of processing more than one language and frequently switching between languages result in a different set of language and cognitive strengths and needs than those of monolinguals. Young children who are learning through two languages ini-

It is important to remember that differences in DLLs' language skills are just that — differences and not delays!

tially make slower progress in each of their languages than monolinguals. In addition, they typically have smaller vocabularies in each of their languages than monolinguals, but their total vocabulary size — the sum of what children know in both their languages — is frequently similar to monolinguals. Young DLLs also take longer to recall words from memory and have lower scores on verbal fluency tasks, as their language processing is more complex than that of monolinguals. Most often these differences are temporary and disappear as

young DLLs become more proficient in both of their languages.

These are some of the more salient and well-documented differences between DLLs and monolinguals; however, it is clear that the experience of being systematically exposed to more than one language during the early years will influence many aspects of cognitive and linguistic development. It is important to remember that these documented differences in the language and early literacy skills of young DLLs are just that — *differences and not delays!* They are a by-product of the challenges of hearing, processing, and making meaning from multiple language systems during the early childhood years.

It is possible for all ECE educators to enhance the language learning of DLLs by adapting instruction to incorporate the home language and employing specific strategies that promote English language development. Some of these strategies include active engagement of family and community members to present and support lessons in the home language, making sure there are materials in each language, and incorporating stories and content that are culturally familiar to the children.

This approach of systematically promoting the acquisition of English during the early years while also attending to the maintenance of a child's first language is often described as an *additive* approach to second language acquisition. In this approach, English is not thought of as a replacement of the home language, but as an addition to a primary language that is important for DLLs' overall development and future success.

The research described previously fully supports an additive approach — almost all young children are capable of *adding* a second or third language during the preschool years and this multilingual ability confers long-term cognitive, cultural, and economic advantages. Finally, as mentioned earlier, the first six years of life are an ideal time for children to acquire a second language, as it is the critical period for language development; it is the period when all

young children are actively attending to the sounds, grammar, and meanings of language. Thus, there are many compelling reasons to give young DLLs

A preschooler's multilingual ability gives that child long-term cognitive, cultural, and economic advantages.

opportunities to develop high levels of proficiency in both of their languages, because the advantages are significant and lifelong.

Should dual language learning occur in all classrooms? What benefits does it have for children who speak only English at home?

Ideally, all children should have the opportunity to learn more than one language during the preschool years. However, most programs do not have the capacity to provide comprehensive bilingual approaches. I have noticed an increase in the number of preschools that offer foreign language instruction as knowledge of the bilingual advantages becomes more widely understood — which is a good thing. I would caution these programs to remember that in order to experience the cognitive bene-

fits of early bilingualism, children need to develop sufficient proficiency in both languages and 15–30 minutes a day of exposure to a second language is not sufficient. I would also remind ECE educators that young DLLs have no choice. They have a first language that is not English and they must learn English to be successful in US schools, thus they are and will always be dual language learners.

What are the advantages of bilingualism, though? And, short of dual language immersion in all classrooms, what are some of the ways we can leverage these advantages to promote school success?

Research indicates that all children are not only capable of learning a second language, but would benefit from the mental flexibility and enhanced executive function inherent in dual language learning.





Encouraging parental involvement on field trips is one way for early childhood educators to develop relationships with their children's families.

Recent scientific studies have found that bilingual infants as young as seven months of age demonstrate superior mental flexibility when presented with shifting learning tasks; when compared to monolinguals, bilinguals were able to quickly respond to a switch in learning conditions and change their responses. Many of the studies of this bilingual advantage have focused on infants' ability to process and discriminate different speech sounds, which suggests that young bilinguals may have enhanced attention during speech processing. This

particular skill, the ability to inhibit previous learning when conditions change, is usually considered one aspect of executive functioning and is an essential component of school readiness.

Early bilingualism has also been associated with other aspects of executive function abilities, for example, working memory, inhibitory control, attention to relevant (versus irrelevant) task cues, as well as improved language skills.

How can we ensure that early education programs are staffed by teachers who can support DLLs?

This is a very challenging goal. Most ECE staff have not been trained in the approaches described here, and these topics are not covered in any depth in teacher preparation programs. The good news is that we now have many more well-designed in-service training opportunities on best practices for young DLLs. There is also an increased awareness of the importance of specific preparation and support needed to effectively teach young DLLs. I would recommend that all ECE providers review their current strengths and professional needs in this area.

What are some ways that teachers can promote a climate of diversity in the classroom that respects the individual cultures, languages, and experiences that are represented?

I think the first thing ECE teachers need to do is get to know the families

and children they serve. This is best accomplished when teachers take the time early in the year to sit down and have an in-depth conversation with families. During this initial session, teachers can ask families about the languages they speak, their cultural practices, their preferences for language usage, their hobbies or special interests, as well as their availability for volunteering. When educators show an interest in and communicate respect for families' language and culture, they begin the process of establishing a collaborative relationship.

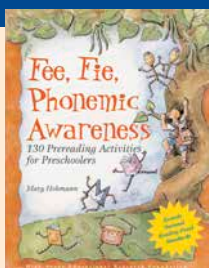
Next, it will be important to include examples of the children's families and backgrounds throughout their classroom. Having representations of home language print, culturally familiar literature, pictures of family traditions, and

To promote a climate of diversity in the classroom, early childhood educators need to know the families and teachers they serve.

culturally representative materials that can be found in local communities helps to bring home culture into classrooms. Parents can be tremendous resources in setting up the environment by bringing in materials from home and helping with the non-English print and family pictures.

Also, by learning a few key words and phrases from each child's home language, ECE teachers communicate a respect for and willingness to learn from families. It is easy and fun to learn phrases like *good morning, please, thank you, bathroom*, and so forth, in multiple languages. Parents, and the children themselves, can help you master the pronunciation of specific words. ■

ReSource editor Adam Robson conducted this interview.



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The Balance of Bilingualism

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT DLL CHILDREN

by Karen Nemeth

It is a common myth that early childhood educators should focus on teaching young dual language learners (DLLs) to speak. Too much time spent “teaching” English reduces the time children spend engaged in active learning. In reality, research shows that the most important task of early childhood educators is to pave the way for DLLs to understand the concepts and content they need to learn in the early years (Espinosa, 2013). The recent joint policy statement of the US Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education advises programs to foster the “cognitive, linguistic, social emotional, and physical development” of DLLs — just as is expected of English-only children in the classroom (US Departments of HHS and Education, 2016).



Active learning is essential in any child's development, whether or not that child is a dual language learner.

HighScope's key developmental indicators in English language learning

D. Language, Literacy, and Communication

30. English Language Learning:

(If applicable) Children use English and their home language(s) (including sign language).

Description: Children understand and use English and their home language(s). They adjust the language they use to the person with whom they are communicating. Children know there are different ways of speaking and different writing systems (alphabets).

Early educators are therefore intentional about creating language-rich environments that promote the holistic development of all young children. Meeting this responsibility, however, can be challenging when the teacher and child do not speak the same language. Welcoming children from diverse language backgrounds into the early childhood classroom requires simultaneously supporting both the home language and English learning, with cultural sensitivity.

To begin with, supports for the home language and culture make the curriculum concepts and content more accessible for DLLs. Often the most important factor for successful negotiation of a new culture for a DLL is a strong foundation in his or her home language and culture. Including the names of familiar foods in class books or even incorporating those foods into an activity is one way to connect with families and support the child's home culture. It is important to keep in mind that much of what the child has learned



To help children make connections between new words and words they already know, this teacher names her actions and the ingredients she is using.

before coming to school is mentally represented and understood in his or her home language. To build on each child's prior knowledge, connecting to those home-language words and concepts will be essential to effective early education.

In addition to support of the child's primary language and culture, explicit supports for learning English are also

The myth that the home language interferes with the learning process still persists, despite ample evidence to the contrary.

needed. Teachers need to take more time to explain and demonstrate the meanings of words for all children, and for DLLs that means making connections between new words and words they already know in the home language (Ackerman & Tazi, 2015). Here again, support of the home language is integral to the process of discovery in a new language.

Despite ample evidence to the contrary, the myth that the home language interferes with the learning process in the classroom persists. The fact is, finding the right balance is the key. Educators can use the following specific

strategies to achieve that balance by helping children maintain their primary language while learning in English.

Encourage children to communicate in whatever language they choose.

The more children know in their first language, the stronger the transfer to a second one. Therefore, it is important for them to speak and write in whatever language(s) they can. Placing children who speak the same language together

If possible, place children who speak the same language in the same small group so they can practice their home language.



in the same classroom or small group will facilitate their rich home language practice during play, even if the teacher doesn't understand what they say. Don't be concerned when children "code switch" (mix the two languages) because it's a sign they are learning to use all of the language resources at their disposal to communicate in more effective ways. Adults, however, should try to be consistent in speaking one language during a conversation or an interaction with a child (National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness, 2014). Begin by conversing as a partner with children — initiate with a comment or an observation about what children are doing. Eventually, it might be appropriate to ask questions. Learn to ask some key questions such as "What are you doing?" in the languages of the children to encourage them to answer in their home language so they may have more vocabulary at their disposal.

At the art easel during work time, Teresa is painting. The teacher approaches Teresa.

Teacher: Teresa, you are painting.

Teresa: I do [pause] *arboles*.

Teacher: *Arboles?* Trees?

Teresa: He go on tree. He climb.

Teacher: He is climbing the tree [with gesture].

Teresa: He fall off.

Teacher: Is he ok?

Teresa: *Si*, he put [long pause] *vendaje*.

Teacher: *Vendaje?*

Teresa: On feet.

Teacher: Oh, he hurt his feet?

Teresa: *Vendaje* [points to a mark on the paper].

Teacher: Band Aid!

Teresa: Yes [smiles broadly].

Teacher: It's a colorful Band Aid.

Teresa: *Gracias*, teacher!

Sing songs, read books, and tell stories in children's home languages as well as English. Invite children and

families to share songs, fairy tales, and rhymes from home, and encourage them to teach these to the class. Incorporating a range of music and stories celebrates cultural diversity while helping children

Choose songs and stories that build vocabulary that children can use in the classroom.

retain their home language as they learn English. Make an effort to select songs and stories that build vocabulary that children can use during the activities of the school day. A song that just includes greeting words in other languages is a nice introduction to world languages,

but it doesn't really add meaningful vocabulary children need for learning. Instead, try singing familiar English songs and substituting words from the children's home language — for example, sing "Old McDonald" and include animal names from other languages. Reading "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" in another language can build connections to words about comparisons, sizes, family members, and so on.

When reading the story "Ricitos de oro y los tres osos," Jennifer (the teacher) asked Dante if he liked soup or *sopa*. Dante smiled and said, "I eat *mucho sopa*." Jennifer responded, "Oh you eat *mucho sopa* — lots of soup? Where do you see soup? *¿Dónde se ve sopa?*" Dante happily pointed to the illustrations, saying "*Caliente, frío, perfecto!*"

Support conversations in English at some times and the child's language at other times. Using both languages helps DLLs achieve a balance, but *be selective* about when you do this (Nemeth, 2012). Using both languages mixed together disrupts the flow and meaning of a story or discussion. If you don't speak a child's home language, learn a few key phrases and supplement these with gestures and facial expressions "to bring your words to life" (Nemeth, 2012, p. 53). Focus your exploration of language on vocabulary — nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs — rather than grammar or sentence structure so DLL children can begin communicating with adults and peers quickly. Consider inviting volunteers from local colleges or organizations, or the family members of the children, to serve as play and conversation partners to support home language growth.

continued on page 16



These children substitute words such as vaca (cow) and caballo (horse) when singing "Old McDonald."

How Children Learn First and Second Languages

by Karen Nemeth

From birth, children progress through predictable stages of language development as they learn the language or languages present in their environment. (Of course, we know that the actual times of moving from one stage to the next vary greatly from child to child.) This sequence is the same for children learning one language or two or more languages.

0–6 months: Cooing

6–12 months: Babbling (practicing sounds and conventions of speech, and understanding many words before producing any real words)

12–20 months: Speaking one word at a time, rapidly increasing receptive vocabulary (the words children understand)

18–24 months: Producing utterances of two or more words (telegraphic speech — where two or three words represent the meaning of an entire sentence; for example, saying “truck go” to mean “The truck is going!”)

24–36 months: Speaking in sentences, having conversations, recounting simple stories.

Preschoolers learning English as a second language after they have begun learning a first one will also typically progress through several stages (Tabors, 2008). The variability of how and when these stages happen can be even greater for second language learners, depending on how well-developed their first language may be and how well their first language transfers to their second (Sandhoffer & Uchikoshi, 2013).

- In **Stage 1**, children keep using their home language at school but may begin to say less or even stop talking if the school environment does not support it.
- In **Stage 2**, children observe interactions and develop receptive language but may not yet be ready to express the language they have learned. At Stage 2, a child may go right to his seat at the table when he hears the teacher announce lunchtime, but is not ready to reply when asked what kind of sandwich he wants.

- In **Stage 3**, children understand the rhythms and intonations of English and begin to use some key phrases. You may hear “telegraphic speech” — for example, “Up!” can mean “Look up at the bird!” while “Up?” can mean “Will you reach up and get me that toy?” They also employ “formulaic speech” — using memorized phrases that serve a function when a gesture or word is added. For example, “I want” plus pointing might mean “I want an apple.”
- In **Stage 4**, children have informal fluency in the new language, including the ability to speak in full sentences and hold conversations. Even when they have progressed to the fourth stage, young DLLs still think and understand many things in their first language and will continue to need support and experiences in that language while developing their English.

In Stage 2 of second language acquisition, children observe and develop receptive language but may not be ready to use it.





Whether learning a first or second (or third) language, children go through the same stages of language development.

Many experts emphasize that the process of learning a second language does not, and should not, be a path to eliminating the first language. Some authors describe the process of “interlanguage” use (Cheatham & Ro, 2010), and others use the term “translanguaging” (Garcia & Wei, 2014) to describe the continuing use of elements of both languages that occurs naturally in bilingual children and adults. The importance of supporting the development of each child’s home language is also emphasized in the new joint report from the US Departments of Health and Human Services and Education that was released in June 2016. ■

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Michelle, a teacher in a preschool program, approached Diego at arrival time and said, “*Hola, Diego! Como estas?*” Diego replied, “*Bien.*” As she made eye contact with Diego and his dad, Michelle repeated, “*Bien. Bienvenida.*”

One preschool, located in a large, urban school district, offers dual language immersion (DLI). Several classes are set up so that half the four-year-olds in each class are native English speakers and the other half are native Spanish speakers. These DLI classes are taught by a pair of teachers so that the primary

Encourage children to share their plans or recall what they did in the form of a story, which enhances both listening and speaking skills.

language used changes every other day. One day, all activities and discussions are in English; the next day, the Spanish-speaking teacher leads everyone to talk and learn in Spanish. In this way, all of the children are developing bilingually. Each child gets clear support for his or her home language at some times, and has to work hard to learn the new language at other times, and all of the chil-



Even if you don't know a child's home language, you can supplement what you can say with gestures and facial expressions.

dren progress together in the learning experiences that form the essential foundation for future academic success.

Kyle, an English-speaking preschool teacher, learns and uses a short Spanish song entitled “Chocolate” during large-group time. Kyle tries to pronounce *tres* and the children giggle. He has difficulty with rolling the /r/, and the children show him and help him practice the word *tres*. Everyone enjoys the experience, and Kyle reports that the children often request this song.

Use narrative to enhance the fluency of DLLs. In addition to telling and reading stories in the conventional sense, use “storytelling” throughout the

daily routine. For example, think of the message board as a “story” about what will happen that day. Encourage children to share their plans or to recall what they did in the form of a story that teachers can also write down and read again, in English or in the children’s home language. At arrival and pickup times, children are often full of stories about something they saw on the way to school or what they and their families will do that evening or on the weekend. Broadly conceived, storytelling enhances listening and speaking skills — valuable traits for both native English speakers and DLLs.

At lunchtime, Angelique told her teacher Lori a story about how her little sister cried all night. Angelique said, “She cry and she cry and she cry. I no sleep!” Lori said, “You seem so upset and tired — did you fall asleep later?” Angelique replied, “I sleep in car.”

Avoid unnecessary praise. If you observe a teacher who peppers her interactions with empty praise words, you can usually see how this behavior interrupts the flow and meaning of conversations with a child. This is even more of an issue when young DLLs are involved. Use affirming strategies such as smiling, nodding, making specific



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comments about what children are doing, and showing that you are attending to and understanding their talk as they are practicing their new language. Making a commitment to partner in their play is

Dual language learners depend on hearing high-quality language models that they can imitate.

another affirming strategy. Remember that they depend on hearing high-quality language models that they can imitate and adopt. Adding empty praise words can disrupt this learning process.

Right before cleanup time, Anna said, "When happy music come on, we clean up!" Jeff, her teacher said, "Anna, you remembered what happens just before cleanup time. You are ready!"

Focus on developing relationships.

The key to working effectively with young children who are DLLs is to focus on communication, relationships, and content. All young children grow up using language for the purpose of communicating and building relationships. Supporting active learning and communication rather than passive learning of isolated skills will help those young brains develop as they should, whether in one language or two or more languages. All young children need to build their fund of content knowledge across all domains. They need to feel successful and often do if these strategies are applied in the context of supportive relationships. Providing engaging, hands-on activities that foster exploration, imagination, and discussion with peers and adults will offer the greatest potential for learning in two languages. Enhance that learning by offering explicit explanations, non-verbal cues, visual supports, and clear connections between the two languages. With a strong understanding of first-

and second-language development and these few strategies, every early childhood educator can be successful in a multilingual classroom. Building multiple languages can benefit every child now and for the future. ■

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Early childhood educators can enhance DLLs' language skills by supporting active learning in all the content areas.



Supporting Dual Language Learners: Teacher Plan-Do-Review in the Preschool Classroom

by Christine Boisvert Maier

The number and percentage of children who are growing up speaking two or more languages is steadily increasing in the United States. According to the most recent Federal statistics, the number of school-age dual language learners (DLLs) in the US has doubled in the last 30 years (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2015). Eighty-five percent of Head Start classrooms have at least one child who is a DLL (Office of Head Start, 2014). And there is a great likelihood that a growing number of early childhood educators will teach in classrooms with multiple children learning multiple different languages. With these facts in mind, early education teachers would be wise to enhance their skills and build up their store of intentional strategies in order to work effectively and compassionately with DLLs and their families.

Plan-do-review for success

Plan-do-review is an integral component of the HighScope Curriculum. The process of children engaging daily in planning, carrying out plans, and then recalling what they did often drives more complex play and learning over time. Teaching teams working with DLLs can benefit from this same cycle.

Consider the *plan* part of the plan-do-review process to be the preliminary work teachers do to learn more about each DLL in order to match their support to the strengths and needs of individual children. The *do* part of the process includes the specific teaching strategies used to support and scaffold DLLs. And the commitment to reviewing and analyzing data collected as

DLLs engage in classroom activities and routines is the *review* part. As with plan-do-review for children, the review component can drive more information gathering, generate plans that match children's development in a timely way, and encourage continuous reflection in an ongoing cycle.

Teaching teams should consider a variety of strategies for each part of

Teachers can use the plan-do-review cycle themselves when working with dual language learners.

the plan-do-review process to support DLLs in English language and home language skills, as well as other areas of learning and development. Using a variety of strategies ensures that teachers are attending to the specific needs of individual DLLs.

Plan: Understanding Children's Experiences, Strengths, and Needs

In the planning phase, teaching teams seek to optimize their understanding of background information and capitalize on the linguistic and cultural experiences of DLLs. They can begin to plan ways to support communication based on the strengths and needs of individual DLLs. The following strategies are useful in the *planning* phase:

- PLAN to establish ongoing partnerships with families. Find out the family's preferred communication

method (e.g., text, e-mail, phone call, written, face-to-face).

- PLAN to interview or survey family members (possibly with the help of an interpreter, if necessary) to establish a basic understanding of the child's past language experiences. (Sample questions: How many languages is your child growing up with? Tell me more about how English fits into your child's experiences. Has your child always been exposed to more than one language [simultaneous]; one language at an early age and then another later [sequential]? Which language does your child use more often? Tell me more about how and when your child uses English.)
- PLAN to interview or survey family members to learn specific information about each DLL. (Sample inquiries: What are your child's favorite activities, materials, toys, and interests? What are some past experiences your child might enjoy talking about at school? What books or stories does your child enjoy? What does your child sometimes worry about? What type of play does your child often enjoy?)
- PLAN to learn some basic words and phrases the child and family use to refer to routines, areas, materials, processes, and basic needs. (Sample inquiries: How does your child refer to bathroom; food or meals; sleep or nap; mom, dad, sister, brother; play, outside, blocks, doll, books, etc.?)
- PLAN regularly scheduled and consistent weekly/monthly communication protocols with each family. As issues, celebrations, and questions arise, regular communication helps

teams PLAN to calibrate their teaching to unique DLL needs and also strengthens school-family partnerships.

- PLAN specific strategies to both support and extend opportunities for DLLs in all areas of learning. Insert these strategies into lesson plan forms as reminders.
- PLAN to observe DLL students carefully, documenting language and action in order to support new and emerging skills in all areas of development.

Do: Scaffolding Early Dual Language Learning

The DO part of plan-do-review signifies the action teachers can take to support and extend learning opportunities for DLLs. The following are some strategies that teachers have successfully used by applying them to the developmental levels and needs of individual DLLs:

- DO encourage all forms of communication (verbal, nonverbal, sign language, home language, code-mixing, attempts at English, writing, and drawing).
- DO support DLLs in expressing their understandings by using questioning facial expressions and body language along with a few key

phrases, such as “Why did that happen?” and “I wonder...” in the child’s home language.

- DO accept nonverbal responses and responses in the home language, English, or a combination of both.

The DO part of plan-do-review signifies actions teachers can take to support and extend DLLs’ learning.

Record responses that you may not understand for later translation.

- DO employ the use of nonverbal cues, clear demonstrations, gestures, and visual supports to help DLLs understand what is communicated in English.
- DO provide artifacts and print examples throughout the environment that reflect the language and culture of individual DLLs.

- DO engage in team discussions based on observational data that target specific strategies to use with a particular DLL during various parts of the daily routine.
- DO promote and encourage peer-to-peer communication and interaction.
- DO provide opportunities for DLLs to write, and accept use of both languages in their writing.
- DO structure the daily routine to be consistent and predictable. Provide a posted daily routine with supporting, clear visual cues.
- DO speak clearly, and at a rate that matches the child’s ability to comprehend. Pair some words in the home language with the same word in English.
- DO concentrate on nouns and actions that can be concretely demonstrated. Use the actual word instead of pronouns (e.g., *Jake* rather than *him*; *pass the carrots* rather than *pass them to me*).
- DO partner English speakers with DLLs for activities and tasks.

Provide books and other print materials that reflect the language and culture of the children.



- DO provide books and other literacy materials in English and other languages.
- DO provide brief and explicit English language instruction based on the strengths, needs, and interests of individual children.

Review: Reflecting and Further Planning

Teaching teams often collect, discuss, and REVIEW observational data for individual children. Specific anecdotes and summary reports (as provided in COR Advantage 1.5) become a

Planning informs what you do and, in turn, your review of what you did informs further planning.

springboard for reflection and further planning as the cycle continues. The following strategies support the final part of the plan-do-review process:

- REVIEW anecdotes and reports for individual DLLs to determine developmental levels in English language learning and other areas.
- REVIEW and revise support and extension plans based on pertinent and timely observations.
- REVIEW observational data reports (e.g., COR Advantage Developmental Summaries) to determine gaps in



This teaching team uses specific anecdotes to determine how best to support the DLLs in their classroom.

data for each DLL. Then focus on using specific collection strategies to gain important information. Some strategies may include:

- Determine if a DLL could demonstrate understanding of a particular concept or skill in a nonverbal way. Decide which content-specific words you, as a teacher, might need to learn to recognize and speak in the child's language to determine understanding (e.g., numbers, names of shapes, colors, etc.).
- Define who, besides the teaching staff, might know more about a child's development in a particular area and reach out to that person.

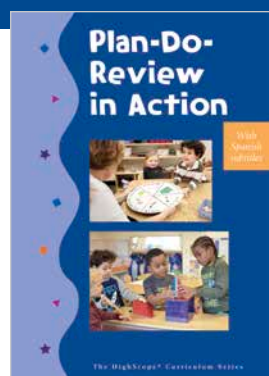
- Devise ways to use technology or a translator to support your understanding of what a child knows and can do.

- REVIEW your observations with families often. Their insights and knowledge can support a PLAN for your next move in scaffolding your DLL student.

Remember that each step is part of a cycle. The planning that your team does informs what you do — the actions that you take — and in turn, your review of those actions informs further planning. Just as the plan-do-review process provides a way for preschoolers to accomplish something important to them, the same process can be used by their teachers to problem solve and approach the learning of DLLs with a sense of purpose. ■

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Make play both fun and intentional! This DVD presents the three components that make up the plan-do-review process and how they encourage purposeful play. Explore more at highscope.org.

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Road to the Future

UNIVERSAL HIGH-QUALITY PRESCHOOL IN SEATTLE

by Marcella Fecteau Weiner

Over the past several years, there has been a renewed interest in research (such as the HighScope Perry Preschool Study) that shows that high-quality preschool narrows the achievement gap and improves the social and academic future of children, particularly those from low-income environments.

Despite the evidence in favor of high-quality preschool for all, in 2013, just under half of US three- and four-year-olds were attending a full-day preprimary program (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014). In Seattle, Washington, where preschool enrollment was already well above the national average, Mayor Ed Murray, along with City Council President Tim Burgess and other council members, took notice of the research findings and asked themselves what they could do to ensure that all young Seattle children get the best possible start on their way to elementary school, high school, and beyond. To this end, the city council unanimously passed a resolution in September 2013 with the goal to make



The goal of Seattle's preschool program is to provide high-quality preschool to all three- and four-year-olds.

voluntary, high-quality preschool available — and affordable — for **all** three- and four-year-olds in Seattle (Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning, 2016).

On the Path to Approval

In the Spring of 2014, with the support of the city council, Mayor Murray proposed a four-year, \$58 million property tax levy to fund the first part (a demonstration phase) of the Seattle preschool program (Murray, 2014). Under the Seattle preschool program (SPP), all three- and four-year-olds in Seattle will have access to high-quality preschool. The entire cost for preschool (approximately \$11,000 per child per

year) will be covered for families making up to three times the poverty level (Murray, 2014). In Seattle, this means that a family of four making less than \$80,000 can enroll their child in preschool — for free (Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning, 2016). For families with incomes greater than this, tuition is determined on a sliding scale. Seattle homeowners share the cost, which translates into about \$43 a year for the average homeowner (Halverson, 2015).

In the Summer of 2014, the city council unanimously agreed to send Murray's plan to the November 2014 ballot for voters to decide (Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning, 2016). Seattle residents overwhelmingly approved the SPP, with 69 percent of voters casting "yes" for the city's universal preK proposition (Halverson, 2015). With 14 classrooms in already functioning preschools, including three in Seattle Public Schools, the SPP got off to an auspicious start in September 2015 (Kroman, 2015).

Focus on Quality

Murray's first goal for the SPP is to improve the quality of existing programs and then increase enrollment "that will build toward serving 2,000 children in 100 classrooms by 2018" (Murray, 2014, p. 7). The SPP is provided through a mixed-delivery system that offers preschool classes in public schools, child care centers, homes, city parks, and church basements that have been evaluated and certified by Seattle's Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL). To ensure the quality of the preschool classes participating, the SPP pays its preschool teachers a K-12 wage and requires that they have a bachelor's degree and attend trainings to meet competency requirements (Kroman, 2015). (Teachers who don't have a bachelor's degree can apply for waivers if they have 10 years of combined education/experience and will receive some tuition assistance to achieve education requirements.) In addition, all SPP pro-

viders need to use "curricula that reflect evidence-based practices, which are likely to include purposeful play-based learning and social-emotional development that lay a lasting foundation for strong future academic and life achievement" (Seattle City Council, 2013).

To ensure the quality of the preschool programs participating, the SPP pays its preschool teachers a K-12 wage.

Currently, SPP providers must use either the HighScope Preschool Curriculum or Creative Curriculum, but, in the next few years of the program, potential providers will be able to apply for a curriculum waiver. To date, 60 percent of SPP providers use the HighScope Preschool Curriculum.

High-Quality Training for High-Quality Preschool Programs

While Mayor Murray and city council representatives worked on garnering support for the SPP and its subsequent implementation, Sonja Griffin, manager of the Quality Practice and Professional Development Unit in the Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning, works on the ground with early childhood educators to give them the training they need so they can provide the high-quality programs that Murray believes are so important. The HighScope Preschool Curriculum is their curriculum of choice, because, as Griffin explains, "it is a constructivist approach based on evidence that supports young children's development."

Griffin thinks HighScope has an advantage over some of the other early childhood curricula because it trains teachers on how to share power in the classroom with young children. "And I think for the children in our communi-

To ensure high-quality instruction to Seattle's preschoolers, the SPP provides early childhood educators with the necessary training.



HighScope's PCC, TOT, and FCC Training



The Early Learning Academy delivers its training to prospective early childhood educators in Seattle through specific courses designed by HighScope to prepare teachers for implementing the HighScope Curriculum in the classroom.

The four-week Preschool Curriculum Course (PCC) is designed to prepare teachers and caregivers to implement the HighScope educational approach in their early childhood programs. Using carefully selected training materials, participants focus on child development, developmentally appropriate practice, and their own educational development. Those who complete the program are qualified to implement the HighScope educational approach in their programs and assess its enhancement of children's development.

Teachers who have completed the PCC are eligible to take additional course work and become Certified HighScope Trainers. Agencies that make this investment in training ensure the integrity of the HighScope Curriculum within their programs. In addition, Certified Trainers can help agencies save time and money by training new staff to implement the HighScope Curriculum and by providing curriculum updates to senior staff. Those who participate in the Training of Trainers (TOT) Course are asked to demonstrate their proficiency in leading and supporting other teachers as they implement the HighScope Curriculum.

HighScope's Family Child Care (FCC) training series is intended for providers working in licensed family child care homes. The workshops offer providers an opportunity to learn, share, grow, and support one another as part of a learning community. Through active participation in workshops and interaction with other family child care providers and the trainer, trainees build a strong network of confident child care providers who demonstrate their new learning in their child care centers with the help of an on-site coach.

This delivery system ensures that the integrity of HighScope Curriculum content and training is maintained from one cohort of trainees to the next, and for all classrooms where the HighScope Curriculum is used.

ty, especially children who are coming from low-income communities who might not have had that opportunity to be in a position of shared power, HighScope is an opportunity for them to now experience having a voice in the classroom and having that sense of power," says Griffin.

In the Fall of 2013, what was then Seattle's Office for Education (now part of DEEL) launched its Early Learning Academy to provide HighScope training through its Preschool Curriculum Course (PCC), Training of Trainers (TOT), and Family Child Care (FCC) training series. The academy also provides on-site coaching to help providers implement the curriculum after their initial training and offers three annual institutes where participants can further advance their knowledge about developmentally appropriate practices for young children.

The Early Learning Academy is committed to providing PCC training to a different cohort of 40 teachers

There was an overwhelming response to the Family Child Care training — the first two groups were filled after just two outreach meetings.

each year until 2018. Additionally, teachers who have completed the PCC can apply to become trainers; so far, 16 educators have completed the TOT program and 12 will finish the program this year. In August 2016, two cohorts of family child care providers (for a total of 60 providers) completed their HighScope FCC training.

Family Child Care (FCC) Training

It's been nearly three years since the Early Learning Academy introduced the FCC training program and the response has been overwhelming — the first two cohorts were filled after just two out-

reach meetings. The demand for training is particularly strong for the Somali family child care providers, who represent approximately 50 percent of the participants in the FCC training and are a large percentage of the family child care providers in Seattle. All of the FCC trainings are attended by a Somali interpreter who simultaneously translates what the HighScope trainer teaches.

Griffin, who has attended most of these Saturday trainings, has been most impressed by the eagerness and responsiveness of these care providers. "The Somali family child care providers are very excited about this training. For many of them, they have not had a lot of training," she said. "You can see they are so eager for the knowledge and information." In addition to learning about the HighScope approach and developmentally appropriate practices, providers who complete this training meet specific portions of their licensing requirements as well.

The commitment of these FCC providers to their training is unwavering. For two years, these teachers have attended sessions on two Saturdays a month; as of August 2016, they have completed 30 sessions of training. Griffin has marveled at the transformation she has seen in these teachers — in how they view themselves as professionals and also in how they have transformed their learning environments in their homes to better support the needs of young children. In the Fall of 2017, the SPP will launch a family child care pilot program to see how family child care can fit into its overall goals.

Challenges and Successes

Providing a wide range of training to a diverse group of early childhood professionals is not without its challenges. In Seattle's PCC training, for example, not all teachers from a particular center attend training at the same time, which has made it difficult for the few teachers who received training when they return to their center. These teachers sometimes find it hard to implement new ideas they learned from the PCC when

Sonja Griffin Presented With Weikart Award

During the 2016 HighScope International Conference, the HighScope Educational Research Foundation presented the David and Phyllis Weikart Achievement Award to Sonja Griffin. The award is given annually to people outside of the HighScope staff who the Foundation feels have demonstrated exemplary dedication to HighScope's vision and mission.

Griffin, manager of the Quality Practice and Professional Development Unit in the Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning, was presented with this award for her outstanding leadership in fostering exceptional training programs for early childhood teachers in the Seattle community.



their colleagues don't have the same understanding. To better support teachers who have completed the PCC training, HighScope field consultants now work closely with teachers who have completed the training by joining them in the classroom and providing them with coaching to help them implement the HighScope Curriculum. Field consultants also work side by side with these teachers to complete HighScope's Preschool Program Quality Assessment

Teachers realized that being culturally relevant means really knowing your children, families, and their communities.

(PQA), a rating instrument designed to evaluate quality and identify staff training needs. Griffin feels that this coaching has helped teachers become much more intentional in implementing the HighScope Curriculum.

Another challenge encountered by Griffin and her colleagues was the perception that some teachers in the PCC training had that the HighScope Curriculum was not culturally relevant to the children they serve. As teachers progressed through the training, however, they learned more about the HighScope Curriculum and what it promotes: using the children's interests to develop activities; adding real items that represent the children's homes into the learning environment; and talking with the children about their interests, their families, and their community. They began to realize that this was what it meant to be culturally relevant: to really know your children, your families, and your community and apply what you see there to the strategies that the HighScope Curriculum provides.

In general, the teachers' overwhelming response to the HighScope training has been very positive. Griffin says, "I see so much excitement when I'm there [at the PCC and FCC trainings] visiting.

The teachers love plan-do-review, the small-group times, and the fact that this curriculum enables them to be more intentional when working with children."

For many of the teachers, participating in the HighScope training has been their "aha" moment, and Griffin has been particularly impressed with how the teachers in the Seattle Public Schools have embraced the HighScope Curriculum. Griffin recalls seeing very skeptical looks on the faces of Seattle Public School teachers at their first training session. At the end of the training, Griffin notes, one of those "skeptical" teachers told her, "Now I get it. I wish I would have known three years ago when I was teaching kindergarten about the importance of early learning and why we do the things we do." In the Fall of 2015, the Seattle Public School system had three SPP preschools; this year it will open up five more.

The Future of the Seattle Preschool Program

The SPP continues to work toward its goal for universal pre-K for all Seattle families: It plans to expand to 70 classrooms in 2017 and 100 by the following year, building toward serving 2,000 children by its fourth year of implementation (Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning, 2016). The SPP will inevitably run across challenges, whether that be considerations with training, spacing issues, or continuity of care. Whatever the challenges, though, the SPP has won the support of Mayor Murray and the city council, and the teachers and voters who realize the importance of early childhood education in improving the lives of Seattle's children and families. ■

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Through training, these teachers learn how to use the children's interests to develop activities that ensure active learning.

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For many of the teachers, participating in the HighScope training has been their "aha" moment.

to-expect-from-seattles-universal-pre-k-program/

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- **Preschool Overview**
Aug. 7–11, 2017

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In the Front Door, Out the Back

FINDING SOLUTIONS TO THE EXPULSION OF YOUNG CHILDREN FROM PRESCHOOL

by Joanne Tangorra

In Detroit last May to deliver the keynote speech at HighScope's 2016 International Conference, early childhood expert Walter S. Gilliam, PhD, was taken on a ride through the city by a colleague. Driving through parts of the Motor City — the birthplace of Motown, center of a once-thriving automobile industry, and more recently, the largest American city ever to declare bankruptcy — Dr. Gilliam was excited by what he saw. “It was so wonderful to see all the construction and new development happening,” Gilliam said, addressing over 1,000 attendees the next day at the HighScope Conference. “It felt like a renaissance,” he added.

As Gilliam turned to the subject of his speech, “How 123 Black Children Forever Changed the Way I See Educational Opportunity,” he invited the audience to join him on a different kind of journey, navigating not through city streets but through a complex grid of difficult subjects. “We’re going to be



Dr. Walter Gilliam gave the keynote address on May 10th at the 2016 HighScope International Conference.

talking about child development. We’ll be talking about challenging behavior. And we’ll be talking about social justice, equity, and opportunity,” he explained. “So just bear with me and go along for the ride.”

Currently the director of the Edward Zigler Center in Child Development and Social Policy and Associate Professor of Child Psychiatry and Psychology at the Child Study Center, Yale School of Medicine, Gilliam has been studying the issue of “access” in early childhood education for 15 years. “When we think about social justice, and when we think about civil rights,” Gilliam explained, “typically we think of these as issues

having to do with access: access to opportunity. And that access can be access to a seat on the bus, or it can be access to a seat at the deli counter, or it could be access to voting rights...or it could be access to a seat in an elementary school.” Gilliam said he thinks about access in terms of two kinds: “I think about the access that we typically focus on in early education, and that is ‘front door access’ — making sure that all of our children, *all* of our children, get an equal opportunity to participate in a high-quality early learning environment that will be beneficial to them for the rest of their lives. But there’s another kind of access, too,” he continued. “The kind of access we sometimes forget about: access to the back door. All too often, many of our children have access to the front door, only to be pushed out the back door, if we’re not paying attention....When I think about backdoor access, about being pushed out the back of early education opportunity, largely we’re talking about children being expelled from prekindergarten programs.”

To introduce the topic of preschool expulsion to his audience — warning them that what they were about to see would be “hard to watch” — Gilliam presented a video of a young girl’s literal expulsion by police officers from a kindergarten in St. Petersburg, Florida by police officers. The footage, made public by the mother of the child when she later filed a lawsuit against the school, shows the girl being forcefully subdued after having a temper tantrum. As Gilliam explained, “The handcuffs didn’t work on her hands, so they used nylons [to tie her hands together] and put the cuffs on her feet. They put her in the police car, took her to the police station, and held her there until her mother came and picked her up. While all expulsions are not quite as extreme as the one that took place in St. Petersburg,” Gilliam noted, “some of them are.”

Studies indicate that access to early education does not necessarily guarantee equal opportunity within early education settings.

Gilliam’s speech took a series of chronological twists and turns, beginning with a discussion of a joint position paper that was issued in 2014 by the US Department of Health and Human Services and the US Department of Education, which called for a ban on all preschool expulsions in all early care

“All too often, many of our children have access to the front door, only to be pushed out the back door, if we’re not paying attention.”

and education settings. According to the report, expulsions and suspensions in early care and education programs are greatly disproportionate, skewed heavily toward African-American children, especially boys. Specifically, the report found that while African-American children represent 18 percent of pre-

school enrollment, nearly half of those receiving more than one suspension were black; and boys receive more than three out of four out-of-school preschool suspensions. Gilliam elaborated: “Now you don’t need complicated statistics to tell you whether something like that is significant. That’s a massive amount of disproportionality.” When the report came out, the DOE started to pay a lot more attention to the issue of preschool expulsions. “And all of a sudden, Arnie Duncan [then U. S. Secretary of Education] was on CNN talking about the issue of children being expelled from prekindergarten programs...But that is not the beginning of the story,” Gilliam explained.

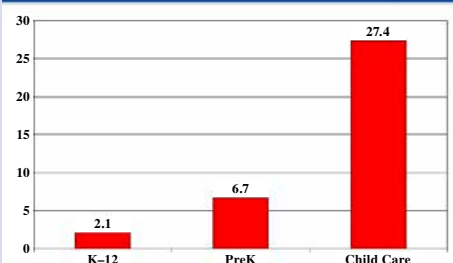
To get to the beginning, Gilliam took his audience of early childhood educators back to 2002, when Gilliam was getting ready to conduct a study on state-funded pre-K programs and



Factors in Preschool Expulsion

“What is it we know about the children who are getting expelled?” poses Gilliam. For one thing, four-year-olds are more likely to get expelled than three-year-olds in mixed-age groups, very possibly because they’re likely to be taller or bigger and are perceived by adults as more threatening. As Gilliam explained it, adults may ask themselves “Is someone going to get hurt? And is somebody going to be held liable and is it possible that I might be that person?”

Expulsion Rates (per 1,000) 100



Gilliam, W. S. & Shahar, G. (2006). Preschool and child care expulsion and suspension: Rates and predictors in one state. *Infants and Young Children*, 19, 228–245.

Gilliam, WS (2005). Prekindergartners left behind: Expulsion rates in state prekindergarten programs. *FCD Policy Brief, Series No. 3*. Available: www.ziglercenter.yale.edu/publications/briefs.html

Yale School of Medicine, Yale Child Study Center

There are other factors in expulsion too, according to Gilliam. Boys are three-and-a-half times more likely than girls to be expelled, and African-American children are twice as likely to be expelled as non-African-American children. Teacher-child ratio also predicts expulsion; that is, the more children per adult in the classroom, the more likely someone will be expelled. Full-day programs expel at a higher rate than half-day programs, and extended-day programs (8 hours or more) expel at the highest rate. Teachers who screen highest for job stress expel at a higher rate than teachers who screen negative for job stress, and those who screen positive for depression expel children at twice the rate of teachers who screen negative for depression.

factors in their adherence to state standards and regulations. At the same time, he was also helping out at the Yale Child Study Center in the Department of Child Psychiatry. Gilliam recounted the experience: “I’m on the other side of the mirror in the clinic, and I’m supervising pediatricians in training, child psychiatrists, and child psychologists — all learning how to work with children younger than six years old. Within the educational and medical fields, we didn’t really have much of a sense of how to work with children much younger than five.” It was then that something caught his attention. “I’m noticing that a lot of the children who were being referred to us for an evaluation were children who had been expelled from a child care or a preschool program,” he explained. “Or they were told that if you do not go to

“What we were looking for,” explained Gilliam, “was this: Expulsion, in terms of permanently kicking out — do not come back — without the benefit of transitioning this child to any other place.”

a place like Yale and get an evaluation, we will expel you from our preschool or child care program.”

“And so I, like a researcher, went to the research and tried to figure out what we knew about children being expelled from preschool programs,” said Gilliam. Hoping to find answers to questions about who these children were, why they were expelled, what happened to them, and what the implications were, Gilliam found “absolutely nothing.” And so he made a decision: “I decided that if we were going to collect all this data from about 4,000 classrooms across the nation [in the state-funded preschool program], why not throw in a few extra questions and ask the teachers them-

selves: ‘Have you ever expelled a child from your preschool program?’ ‘Can you describe what that was like?’ ‘Can you tell me more about that child? Can you tell me more about the circumstances?’ According to Gilliam, the question about expulsion, posed to some 4,000 pre-K teachers in state-funded programs was as follows: *Over the past 12 months, have you ever required a child to permanently terminate participation in your program because of a challenging behavior? Do not include children who were transitioned directly from your program to a therapeutic preschool program, or a special education program, or some other potentially more appropriate setting.* “What we were looking for,” explained Gilliam, “was this: Expulsion, in terms of permanently kicking out — do not come back — without the benefit of transitioning this child to any other place.”

The study, which had an 81 percent response rate, found that 10 percent of teachers reported expelling at least one child over the previous 12 months. “Sometimes it was two. Sometimes it was three. Sometimes it was four,” Gilliam said. Based on the data, the researchers calculated a rate of around 6.7 expulsions per 1000 children in the programs surveyed.

“Is that a lot? Is that a little?” Gilliam asked himself. “How do I compare 6.7 per 1,000 to something in order to be able to make it make sense as to whether this is more expulsions than you would expect?” Gilliam decided that the next step would be to compare the expulsion rate he had found to the same rate for K–12 students. Once again, his search came to a dead end; he could not find the rate for K–12 published anywhere. He did, however, discover online that the US Department of Education had conducted a survey (at around the same time that Gilliam was completing his own data analysis) of K–12 schools across the United States, asking them about expulsions and suspensions for K–12 students.

The problem was that the data had never been analyzed. It existed as 16,000

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databases — one for every school district in America — on the DOE website. Gilliam and his team downloaded all 16,000 databases and then wrote formulas to figure the rate of K–12 expulsion in each state, and for the nation. “And when we did that,” Gilliam explained, “we did have a comparison point to compare the preschool expulsion rate with the K–12 expulsion rate, and the K–12 expulsion rate was 2.1 per 1000, which allowed us to be able to have our headline: That preschool children are expelled at a rate more than three times that of K–12 combined. And when we had that headline, then we had a place to go.”

Closing the Back Door: Preventing Expulsion

One of Gilliam’s goals has been to use his research findings to “sell decision-makers on the notion of early childhood mental health consultation” as a way to reduce the risk of expulsion for children with problem behaviors. “But how do you sell somebody on a solution when they haven’t bought the problem?” Gilliam asked. “The headline became the way we could do that.”

Mental health consultants, who are specially trained to work with early care and education providers, come into early care settings and work with teachers who have a child whose behavior they find challenging. The idea is to “impart to the teacher a set of skills to deal more effectively, not only with the particular child who may have prompted the referral, but also with all the other children,” Gilliam explained. “We need to take advantage, as mental health providers, of all the people who have authentic roles [teachers, child care providers, parents, and pediatricians] in the lives of children,” Gilliam stressed, “to bolster the skill sets they need to respond effectively to children’s challenging behaviors. That’s what early childhood mental health consultation is about.”

Gilliam and his research team have conducted three different state-wide trial studies in his home state of Connecticut and basically found, in just

three months, significant decreases in child oppositionality, hyperactivity, restlessness and impulsivity, and overall externalizing behavioral problems. “There are many factors related to children being expelled,” Gilliam noted. “Therefore, preschool expulsion is really not about a child’s behavior. It is an adult decision. And we might be able to impact that adult decision, based on the way in which we work with providers and support parents and children in the classroom.”

Finally, there are many reasons to be concerned about disproportionality in

**One of Gilliam’s goals
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preschool expulsions, one of which is the Perry Preschool Study, Gilliam said, circling back to the title of his keynote speech. “The study was conducted from 1962 to 1965 with 123 African American children in Ypsilanti, Michigan — not too far from here. It is, by far, the most widely cited study that shows the impact of early care and education and is responsible for many of our programs that exist today,” he explained. “Why is that? Well, it’s because they’ve been studying these children for a long period of time, and they’re still studying the children from 1964 that were graduating from the program. They’ve found that children who went to the program were more likely to succeed in school and in life and to earn more money, and a cost-benefit analysis showed that every dollar that went into the program, was yielding back \$7.16; by the time the children were 27; \$17.00 by the time they were 45, and then on and on. And so, as a result of the study, we’re able to make the argument that when we invest in early care and education, it’s an investment that pays off. That’s a big reason why we have the programs that we have today — because of that argument.” ■

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