



Funded by the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) at the U.S. Department of Education

RESOURCES ABOUT

Early Childhood Education

The **NCELA Resource Guides** address significant issues, provide annotated bibliographies for further reading, and offer guidance on conducting research on topics relevant to the education of English language learners. For other Resource Guides, visit www.ncela.gwu.edu/resabout

The contents of this Resource Guide, including links to external sites, do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of Education nor does the mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government. Unless otherwise noted, readers are free to duplicate and use these materials in keeping with accepted publication standards. NCELA requests that proper credit be given in the event of reproduction.

This Resource Guide is available online at www.ncela.gwu.edu/resabout/ecell

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA)

2121 K Street, NW, Suite 260 • Washington, DC 20037

URL: www.ncela.gwu.edu • e-mail: askNCELA@ncela.gwu.edu

Tel (202) 467-0867 • Fax (202) 467-4283

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs

[Resources About](#) » [Early Childhood Education](#) »

Resources About Early Childhood Education

A Resource Guide from the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA)

This resource is designed for those involved in the education of early childhood English language learners (young ELLs), including parents, educators, and policy makers. It is intended to enrich the knowledge base and educators understanding of the changing demographics of the young ELL population, issues relating to parents and families of young ELLs, and policy issues.

- [Part I: Introduction to the Issues](#)... a brief overview of the topic and relevant issues.
- [Part II: Bibliography and Weblibliography](#)... an annotated list of significant books, articles, and web resources about the topic.
- [Part III: Web and Library Pathfinder](#)... a guide to finding further information on the topic via the Internet or a library.

The complete Resource Guide is also available for download as a single [PDF](#).

This Resource Guide was published August 16, 2006. Links were accurate and active at that time but NCELA cannot guarantee that all links are currently active.

To cite any portion of this Resource Guide:

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition. (2006). *Resources About Early Childhood Education*. Washington, DC: Author. Available at <http://www.ncele.gwu.edu/resabout/ecell/index.html>

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs

[Resources About](#) » [Early Childhood Education](#) » [Part I](#) »

Resources About Early Childhood Education

A Resource Guide from the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA)

Part I: Introduction to the Issues

Prepared by Michelle Kuamoo, M.Ed

An estimated one in every five students who enters school in the U.S. speaks a home language other than English ([Coppola, 2005](#)). English language learners (ELLs) are children who are not fluent in English. ELLs represent more than 5 million students in K-12 public schools, over 2 million in pre-kindergarten to grade 3, and over 300,000 students in Head Start programs nationwide ([NCELA, 2005](#); [Abedi, Hofstetter, & Lord, 2004](#); [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2002](#)). Clearly, the ELL population is becoming a growing presence at all levels of education and their numbers will continue to increase over time. It is estimated that, by the year 2010, more than 30 percent of all school-age children will come from a home where the primary language is not English ([NAEYC, 2005](#)).

CONTENTS

[Overview of Early Education](#)

[The Impact of Preschool on Young ELLs](#)

[Educating Young ELLs](#)

[Access to Quality Programming](#)

[Leading Early Learning Communities: The K-12 Connection](#)

[Parents and Families](#)

[Works Cited](#)

Overview of Early Education

In order to gain a better understanding of early education programs, specifically preschool programs serving three and four year olds, a brief synthesis of early education research, enrollment, and service providers has been compiled:

- In recent years, early childhood education has evolved from “out-of-home” child care to early education programs that promote the academic, social, physical, cognitive, and language development of young children ages 0 to 5 years.

- Over the past several decades, research has confirmed the critical importance of educational experiences and development that occurs during the early years ([NAEYC, 2005](#)). Consequently, early education programs emphasize school readiness skills.
- The term “school readiness” refers to the development of diverse academic skills that prepare children to be successful when they enter K-12 schools. The exact definition of school readiness has varied across service providers and has not been uniformly defined.
- Some of the benefits of high quality early education include greater academic success, decreased referrals to special education programs, greater economic success in adulthood, and the promotion of positive social relationships into adulthood ([Barnett & Hustedt, 2003](#)).
- Participation in early education programs has increased over the last thirty years with two thirds of four year olds and 40 percent of 3 year olds enrolled in preschool programs ([Barnett, Yarosz, Thomas, & Blanco, 2004](#)).
- Research shows that the quality of early education and care significantly influences academic and social development. Unfortunately, the average quality of preschool programs is less than good with the most vulnerable children attending low quality programs ([Espinosa, 2002](#)).
- Currently, 43 states have developed Preschool Content Standards for four year olds ([Strickland & Ayers, 2006](#)). These standards include math, science, literacy, and social studies skills.

Most young children, ages 3 and 4 years, attend preschool programs that are provided through a diverse network of service providers. Generally speaking, preschool providers can be divided into two main groups: government-funded and proprietary care centers (for profits). For the most part, government-funded providers implement the most comprehensive early education services that encompass and serve the entire family. Conversely, proprietary care centers provide strictly early education services to young children ages birth to age 5. The table below provides a description of government and proprietary providers.

Government Funded	
<i>Organization</i>	<i>Services</i>
Department of Health and Human Services: Head Start and Early Head Start	Provide comprehensive services to low income children 0-5 and their families that include: early childhood education (children ages 3 and 4), adult education, parenting, nutrition, and health services.

<p>Department of Education: NCLB</p> <p>Title I: Even Start, Family Literacy, and Early Reading First Programs</p> <p>Title III: Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA)</p> <p>State Preschools</p>	<p>Provide comprehensive literacy programs to state grantees to develop early literacy, adult literacy, parenting, parent/child interactive literacy activities for low income children and their families</p> <p>States provide funding to district and private service providers for early childhood education services for 4 year olds. Programming and services vary by state.</p>
Proprietary Care Centers	
<p><i>Organization</i></p> <p>Center Based Care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Faith Based Providers ● Community Based Providers <p>Laboratory Schools</p>	<p><i>Services</i></p> <p>Provide early childhood education services via private center based environments that include preschool centers, kindergartens and before or after school programs.</p> <p>Preschools that are associated with university schools of education, department of child and family studies, or other departments including psychology, child development and other related disciplines.</p>

Head Start is the most comprehensive service provider funding parent involvement and social services. In 2005, Head Start funded 1,604 grantees and served almost one million young children and their families with an annual budget of 8.7 billion dollars ([U.S. Department of Health and Human Services , 2006](#)). The numbers of children ages birth to 5 served by Head Start include the following ([U.S. Department of Health and Human Services , 2006](#)):

Age	Percent	Number
5 years and older	4%	36,280
4 years olds	52%	417,636
3 year olds	34%	308,378

under 3 years old	10%	90,699
-------------------	-----	--------

Note: Adapted from [Head Start program fact sheet, fiscal year \(2006\)](#), Washington, DC.

States with the largest Head Start funding and enrollment include California, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas ([U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2006](#)).

The Importance of Preschool for All Children

The impact of preschool on cognitive, social-emotional, physical, and language development can pre-determine future school success for all young children. According to Tabors ([1997](#)), most of the cognitive development that occurs in young children during the preschool years involves developing concepts about how the world works and learning the vocabulary that helps children express these understandings. Children learn about the world by asking adults questions, thereby developing an extensive knowledge base and cognitive framework to apply knowledge they will learn later in school ([Tabors, 1997](#)). These early experiences are largely dependent upon language (although not a specific language) because vocabulary and concept development occur through social interaction with peers and adults ([Tabors, 1997](#)). Therefore, understanding first and second language development in young children is critical because language is the “code” that children must acquire to develop cognition.

[\[back to top\]](#)

The Impact of Preschool on Young ELLs

To fully understand the impact of early education on young children, it is important to quantify the number of children participating in early education programs. It is estimated that 50 percent of children ages three and four were enrolled in preschool programs in 2001 ([National Center for Educational Statistics, 2000](#)). To understand the significance of this statistic, one must look at past enrollment rates to gain perspective. In 1970, approximately 7 out of every 10 children were enrolled in kindergarten ([Barnett, 2005](#)). In comparison, approximately 7 out of every 10 children attend a preschool program at age four and 4 out of every 10 children attend a preschool program at age three ([Barnett, 2005](#)). Sadly, recent statistics show that more than half the children in poverty--many of whom are young ELLs--do not attend a preschool program ([Barnett, 2005](#)).

How are young ELLs impacting preschool programs? Research shows that significant cognitive, social, physical, and linguistic development occurs before children enter K-12 education programs. With increasing participation of young ELLs in preschool programs, specifically three and four year olds, it is important to understand the critical development and progress young children make during the early childhood years (birth to age 5). For young ELLs, this development is even more significant as children strive to attain developmental benchmarks (social-emotional, cognitive, and physical development) while also establishing foundations in more than one language.

The developmental process is further complicated by the recent practice of targeting academic skills in preschool programs that were traditionally reserved for kindergarten and first grade. As a result, young ELLs are at risk for school failure due to increased linguistic and cognitive demands in the second language. A central issue for young ELLs and early childhood programs is the language of instruction. For most programs within the U.S. the language of instruction is English. With over 460 languages being spoken in pre-k-3 public schools, it is understandable that providing language support for all young ELLs is challenging ([Kindler, 2002](#)). However, young ELLs face increased risk for school failure due to the lack of early childhood educators who are knowledgeable about second language development in young children ([Coppola, 2005](#)). Therefore, many researchers are concerned with the long term effects of limited language support in the first language for young ELLs during critical developmental stages.

Who are Young ELLs?

Young ELLs are children ages birth to 5 who live in a home environment where a home language other than English is spoken. They enter preschool programs, generally at the ages of 3 and 4 years, with diverse cultural and linguistic experiences. Unfortunately, due to the extensive network of service providers there is limited data available to accurately describe and quantify the young ELL population effectively.

Head Start ([U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Administration for Children and Families, Head Start and Early Head Start, 2002](#)), the largest federal comprehensive early childcare provider, estimates that young ELLs comprise approximately 28 percent of their student population. Further, recent statistics from public school settings estimate that there are more than 2 million ELLs in pre-kindergarten through third grade ([Abedi, Hofstetter, & Lord, 2004](#)). Within this group, approximately 460 languages are represented with Spanish accounting for 80 percent of the non-English languages ([Kindler, 2002](#)).

Young ELLs come from rich and diverse ethnic backgrounds. Currently, one third of the U.S. population is made up of people from ethnically and racially diverse backgrounds ([NAEYC, 2005](#)). Hispanics account for the largest

and fastest growing ethnic group in the U.S. Recent statistics show that there are approximately 40 million people of Hispanic descent from Mexico, Central and South America, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and other places ([NAEYC, 2005](#)). And young Hispanic children, ages birth to 5 years, represent 21 percent (4.2 million) of the total population within this age group ([Collins & Ribeiro, 2004](#)).

Young ELL Immigrants

The impact of young ELLs in early education programs can be attributed to immigration and migration to new areas of the country. According to the NCELA Resource Guide on Immigration and America's Schools ([2006](#)), more than one-half (53.9%) of the ELLs in U.S. schools are immigrants, including students who have recently arrived in the U.S. (17.4%) and students who are long-term U.S. residents (14.7%) ([Zehler, Fleischman, Hopstock, Stephenson, Pendzick, & Sapru, 2003](#)).

Early education and K-12 programs are further impacted by the migration and settlement of immigrant populations in areas of the country where their presence was virtually non-existent before. Changes in immigrant settlement have resulted in a shift in school-age immigrant populations for certain areas of the U.S. For example, North Carolina, Arkansas, and Georgia have experienced large increases in their Latino immigrant child population under the age of five [see chart below] ([NCLR, n.d.](#)). A large portion of these students are English language learners.

Top 10 States with the Fastest-Growing Latino Child Population Ages 0-4, by Percent Growth, 1990-2000

State	Percent Growth
North Carolina	417.3
Arkansas	392.2
Georgia	342.2
Tennessee	339.2
Alabama	260.8
Nevada	238.5
South Carolina	194.0
Kentucky	193.2
Iowa	187.0
Minnesota	159.7

Note: Adapted from [Latino Issues and Universal Preschool, Emerging Hispanic Communities \(n.d.\)](#), Washington, DC: National Council of La Raza.

The rapid expansion of immigrants in these and other states has required new efforts to develop educational environments responsive to the diverse cultural and linguistic needs of these learners.

[\[back to top\]](#)

Educating Young ELLs

Programming Considerations

As stated in the introduction, a central issue for young ELLs and early childhood programs is the language of instruction. Researchers are concerned with the lack of language support in the native language at critical developmental stages for young children. In order to better understand how language is acquired, Tabors (1997) provides early childhood administrators with two important points (p. 179):

- Young children can and will learn a second language in a supportive social setting.
- They do not have to give up their first language in order to learn a second language.

Tabors (1997) provides a *multiple container theory* to help administrators understand how children acquire a second or multiple language(s):

Children's first language acquisition is represented by a single glass that is filled with the first language liquid. When a child is exposed to a second language, a second glass is added. The new glass has some liquid in it (the child's knowledge of how language works) but must be filled with second language liquid to be useful. The two glasses can be filled simultaneously or can contain different amounts depending on the exposure and use of each language (Tabors, 1997, p. 180-81).

Variations in language liquid amounts can occur based on language learning in a language at a given time. However, the amount of language retention in either language is dependent upon language use and exposure. If a child does not get sufficient exposure or practice with a specific language the language liquid can dry up and the child will lose the language. Tabors (1997) recommends that the programs respect and advise parents to maintain the home language.

Programming models for young ELLs include instructional models that provide language support in the native language. Some of these models include ([Tabors, 1997](#)):

- Transitional bilingual programs: programs that alternate instruction in both a dominant home language and English and eventually transition students to an English-only environment.
- Two-Way bilingual programs: programs that have equal numbers of native language and English speakers and promote language development and proficiency in both languages.
- General programs with ESL support: Programs that provide native language support through parent and community volunteers or teacher aides. Instruction is given in English using only ESL strategies.

Language and Literacy Development for Young ELLs

According to Strickland and Ayers ([2006](#)), language and literacy develop concurrently and influence each other. An important part of school readiness includes a strong foundation in the child's home language and pre-literacy skills. Research shows children with limited language and literacy experiences are more likely to experience difficulty learning to read.

Research has shown that a great deal of vocabulary acquisition occurs before children become literate, and before they are reading books that introduce unfamiliar vocabulary ([Becker, 1977](#)). Early language experiences and education provided to young children affects their enthusiasm for learning, ability to interact with others, and success in school. In order to gain a better understanding of how language is acquired, specific attention will be paid to oral language development and second language acquisition.

Oral Language Development in First Language

According to Tabors ([1997](#)), all young children acquire the first language in basically the same way: through an unconscious process of listening and speaking for the purposes of creating meaning and communicating their needs. Recurring activities such as meal and bath times provide young children with specific contexts to build language meaning and vocabulary. Oral language develops as young children evolve in their communication and interact with others to convey needs, share ideas, and entertain through play ([Wells, 1986](#)). General stages of oral development include the following ([Tabors, 1997](#)):

<i>Approximate Age(s) of Development</i>	<i>Characteristics of Development</i>
Birth – 5 months	Oral production that consists of spontaneous sounds that include cooing and babbling
5 – 8 months	Oral production advances to syllable-sequences like “mama” or “baba” which occurs during social interactions
12 – 18 months	Oral production evolves to word production. Early vocabulary includes names of important people (dada), objects (milk), functional words (down), and social words (hi)
Birth – 18 months	Young children are learning about language discourse rules that include turn taking and social language such as greetings and other pleasantries.
2 years	Most children’s oral development will advance to 2 and 3 word phrases. These phrases demonstrate the child’s oral language development in relation to appropriate communication in specific contexts.
3 – 4 years	Sentences become longer and more complex. Their use of grammar becomes more sophisticated and accurate. In English, children begin to acquire past tenses and the passive voice. Vocabulary also grows in leaps and bounds; preschoolers may acquire 6-10 new words a day while also expanding their understanding of the words they already know
5 years	Most of the basic skills of oral language have been mastered. They can construct long and detailed sentences, produce most sounds correctly, and engage in extended conversations.
6 years	Children between the ages of 1.5 years and 6 years acquired an extensive vocabulary and learn to comprehend over 14,000 words (Pham, 1994)

Note: Adapted from [One Child, Two Languages](#) by P. Tabors, 1997, Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brooks Publishing.

Oral Language Development in the Second Language

Second language acquisition in young children can occur in two ways: simultaneously or sequentially ([Tabors, 1997](#)). Simultaneous acquisition occurs in children when they are exposed to both languages at the same time from birth. Parents can foster this development by promoting the languages in specific contexts. For example, if two parents speak different languages, the child will learn the language of each parent because the parents will speak in their native

languages to the child. Therefore, the child associates and learns each language through discourse with each parent. Another method is by speaking the home language at home and the second language in external contexts (outside the home, in school) ([Serna, 2006](#)).

Sequential acquisition occurs when young children have developed some oral language in a first language and must acquire a second language, generally after age 3. Both methods of acquiring a second language have distinct stages that include ([Tabors, 1997](#); [Tabors & Snow, 1994](#)):

Method	Stage	Characteristics
Simultaneous	Birth – 3 years	If children are exposed to two languages before the age of three, they will learn both as one and may often mix the two languages as they speak.
	3 years	At about three years of age, children begin to separate the two languages.
	3 – 5 years	Between ages 3 to 5, young children are able to associate specific people and situations for using each language. As children continue to develop oral language, bilingualism will occur.
Sequential (occurring after 3 years)	<i>Home Language</i>	Children in this stage must develop awareness that their language is not being spoken. As a result they will continue to speak in first language until they realize that a new language is present.
	<i>Nonverbal Period</i>	Children recognize that their language is not being understood and enter into a silent period. During this period children are learning new vocabulary and how to use it in specific contexts. Children will communicate nonverbally and eventually progress to making sounds in the second language that may not be recognizable words.
	<i>Telegraphic and Formulaic Speech</i>	Children in this stage begin to intentionally use individual words in the second language to form short phrases or sentences. Oral communication emphasizes use in specific contexts and may include mixing of languages and incomplete or inaccurate grammar

Productive Language Children in this stage have a basic command of oral language proficiency in the second language. This stage is characterized by children experimenting with the new language by using new phrases and sentences that change as their vocabulary in the second language continues to expand. Mistakes are common during this stage and are a normal process in developing oral proficiency and fluency. Common errors include creative sentences, over-generalizations and under-generalizations of some word meanings.

Note: Adapted from [One Child, Two Languages](#) by P. Tabors, 1997, Baltimore, MD: Brooks Publishing.

Whether acquiring language through simultaneous or sequential means, a critical component for children learning a second language is consistent exposure to language in meaningful contexts that build meaning and vocabulary. Additionally, young children acquire a second language through consistent exposure and multiple opportunities to hear and practice the language in specific contexts.

Research has shown that children who are acquiring a second language sequentially will be able to transfer knowledge and concepts between languages ([Jones & Yandian, 2002](#)). For example, young children who have learned numbers and print knowledge in their native language will not have to be taught these skills in the native language. Simply, they will transfer these skills between languages.

However, children between the ages of 2 to 4 years may acquire a second language at a slower rate than older preschoolers and primary aged children ([Tabors, 1997](#)). In some ways acquiring a second language for young children is easier because the *cognitive demand* is low. This means that children are not required to use the new language in sophisticated ways like older children ([Tabors, 1997](#)). However, the delay may be attributed to the *cognitive capacity* of young children. This means that because children are in critical stages of cognitive development the capacity to acquire a second language is not as large as older students ([Tabors, 1997](#)). For example, one study that compared the vocabulary size of bilingual toddlers to monolingual toddlers (8 months to 30 months) found that bilingual toddlers acquire fewer vocabulary words in each language, yet when taken together the total size is equivalent to monolingual norms ([Coppola, 2005](#)).

Variations in the amount of time required to acquire a second language is also dependent upon external factors that are unique to each child. They include the child's exposure to the second language, intrinsic motivation, and personality ([Tabors, 1997](#)).

Early Literacy Development

Early literacy development for young ELLs is critical because language and literacy development are interdependent. Further, research confirms early literacy development can pre-determine future academic success. According to Coppola (2005), early literacy skills of young ELLs in kindergarten lag behind their English-only peers. Unfortunately, the gap only appears to increase during later school years as the academic language becomes more challenging (Coppola, 2005). A recent nationwide survey of early childhood program administrators showed that most teachers lack knowledge about second language development in young children (Coppola, 2005).

Early literacy instruction for young children focuses on pre-literacy skills that include phonological and phonemic awareness (the awareness of sounds), as well as knowledge of the alphabet and an understanding of common print concepts (print goes from left to right and from up to down on a page). These skills are derived from living in a language- and print-rich environment.

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* promotes early literacy for preschool children through the Title I: Early Reading First and Even Start Programs. These programs provide grants to state and local educational agencies to support the development of early literacy through effective preschool programming and comprehensive family literacy programs that include adult education and parenting classes. Moreover, these programs support the implementation of scientifically based reading approaches that support the five components of the National Reading Panel results and are appropriate for all young children, especially young ELLs.

Assessment of Young ELLs

Due to the emergence of state content standards for four year olds, there is a movement to use assessment in early childhood as a measure of accountability. Although development and implementation of state assessments is still evolving, some educators are concerned about the potential negative ramifications of this action on teaching practice because many teachers may limit instruction to standards related items. Others are concerned with the limited availability of assessments in children's native language and the potential effects on young ELLs with inappropriate referrals to special education. As a result, advocacy organizations like NAEYC have developed a definition for assessment of all young children, especially young ELLs (NAEYC, 2005):

NAEYC promotes the use of appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive assessments that are tied to children's daily activities, inclusive of families, tied to professional development, and connected to specific, beneficial purposes of (1) making sound decisions about teaching and learning, (2) identifying significant

concerns that may require focused intervention for individual children, and (3) helping programs improve their educational and developmental interventions.

[\[back to top\]](#)

Leading Early Learning Communities: The K-12 Connection

With over 2 million young ELLs in Pre-K through grade 3, it is clear that early childhood programs and K-12 schools need to coordinate their efforts to adequately support these children. Further, with estimates of the K-12 ELL population at over 4.5 million, it is evident that educators in the primary grades are serving approximately half of the total ELL population in K-12 schools. As a result, it is critical for K-12 schools to adequately prepare teachers at all levels for the impact these children will have as they progress through the system.

Consequently, the Office for English Language Acquisition (OELA) is committed to partnering with early childhood service providers to coordinate efforts so that all young children, specifically young ELLs, are adequately served throughout their academic experience. OELA and its partners, Head Start and Early Reading First, promote the implementation of effective instructional practice and ongoing professional development that are aligned with research and theory of second language acquisition, culture, and language development for young ELLs.

Adding to these efforts, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) has developed a resource guide that promotes the involvement of elementary principals in coordinating transitions between preschool programs to K-6 environments. The resource guide provides critical information on early education that includes: (1) six performance standards for what elementary principals should know about early childhood; (2) theory on effective practice; (3) self assessments and reflection; and (4) tools and resources. The resource guide builds on the work of NAEYC and Head Start related to early childhood performance standards. ([NAESP, 2005](#))

Other transition solutions for young children include the PreK-3 Education Programs. These programs promote the positive transition of young children from preschool through grade 3 specifically for low income children. The goal of this model focuses on better coordination of educational programs and practices between ages 3 and 9 to enhance learning above and beyond the impact of regular school experiences. Benefits of this model include ([Reynolds, Magnuson, & Ou, 2006](#)):

- More stable and predictable learning environments.
- Ongoing intervention occurs during critical developmental periods in a child's life, thereby increasing the impact of early education interventions

for young children.

Positive outcomes for children are less likely to fade over time with long term interventions.

[\[back to top\]](#)

Parents and Families

Research confirms that children, families, and programs benefit when parents are involved in their child's preschool learning both inside the classroom and at home. Programs can make efforts to engage families by providing language support when communicating in written or verbal communications. In addition, programs can provide multiple opportunities to meet with families in social and academic contexts that celebrate cultural and linguistic traditions and values. However, many preschool providers have difficulty engaging parents and families in school related activities due to limited experience or resources that meet their unique cultural and linguistic needs.

Parents of young ELLs can also support their child's academic and linguistic development at home. Parents are their child's first teacher about the world, culture, tradition, and language. Researchers in the fields of multicultural education and bilingual education have recommended that parents and families support the home language and nurture its development, for it is of much value. The home language adds to children's existing knowledge and understanding. The home language plays an important role in supporting infants and toddlers by providing them with a strong emotional relationship with the significant people in their lives. Also, the home language fosters the development of the knowledge, skills, and world view to help young children make meaning of their environment.

Home language proficiency can be nurtured and developed by talking with the children frequently about their daily activities, listening to the child and not focusing on correcting his/her language, encouraging the child to talk, and providing learning opportunities in areas in which the child is interested in ([Tabors, 1997](#)).

[\[back to top\]](#)

Works Cited

Abedi, J., Hofstetter, C., & Lord, C. (2004). Assessment accommodations for English language-learners: Implications for policy-based empirical research. *Review of Educational Research*, 74 (1), 1-28.

Barnett, S. and Hustedt, J. (2003). [Preschool the most important grade](#). *Educational Leadership*, 60(7), 54-57.

Barnett, S., Yarosz, D., Thomas, J., & Blanco, D. (n.d.). *Two-way and monolingual English immersion in preschool education: An experimental comparison*. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER). Available at <http://nieer.org/resources/research/TwoWay.pdf>

Barnett, S. (2005). *Hearing on early childhood education: Improvement through integration*. (Testimony to the House Subcommittee on Education Reform, April 21, 2005.) New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER). Available at <http://nieer.org/resources/hottopics/BarnettTestimony042105.pdf>.

Beck, I. L. & McKeown, M. G. (1991). Conditions of vocabulary acquisition. In R. Barr, M. Kamil, P. Mosenthal, & P. D. Pearson (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research: Volume 2* (pp. 789-814). New York: Longman.

Becker, W. C. (1977). [Teaching reading and language to the disadvantaged – What we have learned from field research](#). *Harvard Educational Review*, 47, 518-543.

Bowman, B., Donovan, S., & Burns, M. S. (2001). [Eager to learn: Educating our preschoolers](#). Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Bredenkamp, S. & Rosegrant, T. (1995). Reaching potentials through national standards: Panacea or pipe dream? In S. Bredenkamp & T. Rosegrant (Eds.), *Reaching Potentials: Transforming Early Childhood Curriculum and Assessment: Volume 2*. (pp. 5-14) Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Coppola, J. (2005). English language learners: Language and literacy development during the preschool years. *Journal of the New England Reading Association*, 41(2), 18-23.

Collins, R. & Ribeiro, R. (2004). [Toward an early care and education agenda for Hispanic children](#). *Early Childhood Research and Practice*, 6(2).

Dodge, D.T., Colker, L. J., & Heroman, C. (2002). *The creative curriculum for preschool* (4th ed.). Washington, DC.: Teaching Strategies.

Driscoll, A. & Nagel, N. (2005). *Early childhood education, birth-8*. Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.

Espinosa, L. (2002). Policy brief – [“High quality preschool: Why we need it and what it looks like.”](#) National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER).

Jones, J. & Yandian, S. (2002). [Supporting the home language and promoting English acquisition within Migrant and Seasonal Head Start.](#) Washington, DC: Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Quality Improvement Center.

Kindler, A. (2002). [Survey of the states' limited English proficient students and available educational programs and services: 2000-2001 summary report.](#) Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition.

Kochar, R., Suro, R., & Tafoya S. (2005). [The new Latino South: The context and consequences of rapid population growth](#) . Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center.

Lehr, F., Osborn, J., & Hiebert, E. (n.d.) [A focus on vocabulary: Research-based practices in early reading series.](#) Honolulu, HI: Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL).

Little, C., Kagan, S., & Frelow, V. (2003). [Standards for preschool children's learning and development: Who has standards, how were they developed, and how are they used?](#) Greensboro, NC: SERVE.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (2005a). *NAEYC early childhood program standards and accreditation criteria*. Washington, DC: Author.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (2005b). [Screening and assessment of young English-language learners: Supplement to the NAEYC position statement on early childhood curriculum, assessment, and program evaluation.](#) Washington, DC: Author.

National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). (2005). *Leading early childhood learning communities: What principals should know and be able to do*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

National Center for Education Statistics (2000). [America's kindergartners](#). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (NCES-2000-070).

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition. (2006). *Immigration and America's Schools*. Washington, DC: Author. Available at <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/resabout/immigration/index.html>.

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA). (2005). *How many school-aged English language learners (ELLs) are there in the U.S? (NCELA FAQ No. 1)*. Available electronically via <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/expert/faq/01leps.html>.

National Council of La Raza. *Latino issues and universal preschool, emerging Hispanic communities*. (n.d.). Washington, DC: Author. Available electronically via http://www.nclr.org/files/28728_file_PreschoolAccess.pdf

National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) (2003). *State standards database*. Available electronically via <http://nieer.org/standards/>

Passel, J., Capps, R., and Fix, M. (2004). [Undocumented Immigrants: Facts and Figures](#) . Washington, DC: Urban Institute.

Pham, L. (1994). [Infant dual language acquisition revisited](#). *The Journal of Educational Issues of Language Minority Students*, 14, 185-210.

Reynolds, A., Magnuson, K., & Ou, S. (2006). [PK-3 education: Programs and practices that work in children's first decade](#). Foundation for Child Development Working Paper. New York, NY: Foundation for Child Development.

Sawhill, I. (1999). [Kids need an early start: Universal preschool education may be the best investment Americans can make in our children's education-and our nation's future](#). Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution.

Serna, E. (2006). *What are the different ways families manage multiple languages?* Bilingual Families Connect. Available electronically via <http://www.bilingualfamiliesconnect.com/approaches.html>.

Strickland, D. & Ayers, S (2006). [Early literacy: Policy and practice in preschool](#). National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER).

Tabors, P. (1997). *One child, two languages: A guide for preschool educators of children learning English as a second language*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Tabors, P. & Snow, C. (1994). English as a second language in preschools. In F. Genesee (Ed.), *Educating second language children: The whole child, the whole curriculum, the whole community*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Administration for Children and Families, Head Start and Early Head Start. (2002). *Head Start English language learners focus group report: Identifying strategies to support English language learners in Head Start and Early Head Start programs*. Washington, DC: Educational Services, Inc.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Administration for Children and Families, Head Start and Early Head Start. (2006). [Head Start program fact sheet, fiscal year 2006](#). Washington, DC: Author.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security. (2004). *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics: 2004*. Washington, DC: Author. Available electronically via <http://www.uscis.gov/graphics/shared/statistics/yearbook/YrBk04Im.htm>

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. (2006). *Refugees*. Washington, DC: Author. Available electronically via <http://www.uscis.gov/graphics/services/refugees/index.htm>.

Wells, G. (1986). *The meaning makers. Children learning language and using language to learn*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Zehler, A.M., Fleischman, H.L., & Hopstock, P.J., Stephenson, T.G., Pendzick, M. & Sapru, S. (2003). [Descriptive study of services to LEP students and LEP students with disabilities: Volume I: Research report](#). Rosslyn, VA: Development Associates.

[\[back to top\]](#)

This Resource Guide was published August 16, 2006. Links were accurate and active at that time but NCELA cannot guarantee that all links are currently active. **To cite any portion of this Resource Guide:**

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition. (2006). *Resources About Early Childhood Education*. Washington, DC: Author. Available at <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/resabout/ecell/index.html>

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs

[Resources About](#) » [Rural Education](#) » [Part II: Bibliography and Webliography](#) »

Resources About Rural Education

A Resource Guide from the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA)

Part II: Bibliography and Webliography

CONTENTS

[Books & Articles](#)

[Web Resources](#)

Books & Articles

Ahearn, C., Harmon, H., & Sanders, J. (2005). **How to recruit and retain teachers and other school leaders in hard-to-staff rural and small school districts**. Greensboro, NC: SERVE. [NCELA Resource ID: [BE023404](#)]

This toolkit includes procedures for implementing a systematic approach for attracting, selecting, appointing, socializing, and retaining teachers and other school leaders in hard-to-staff rural and small school districts. The toolkit includes the following six tools: Recruitment Brochure Tool; Assessment of Community Resources Tool; Applicant Portfolio Review Tool; Applicant Interview Tool; Personnel Retention Checklist Tool; and Personnel Exit Interview/Survey Tool. Each tool includes a brief description of its purpose, the premise on which it was developed, and procedures for using it effectively.

Bérubé, B. (2000). **Managing ESL programs in rural and small urban schools**. Alexandria, VA: Teachers to Speakers of Other Languages.

This book is designed for use by educators being introduced to English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) learners as well as for ESL professionals who want a resource on state-of-the-art practices. This book describes how a small program of services can fit into the standards movement and how to staff such a program. It also contains suggestions for instruction, student assessment, program evaluation, parent and community involvement, and multimedia resources for the education of second language learners in low density communities.

Bérubé, B. (2002). **Three Rs for ESL instruction in U.S. rural schools: A test of commitment**. *TESOL Matters*, 12(4). [NCELA Resource ID: [BE023388](#)]

In this article, Bérubé discusses the three Rs of recognition, responsibility, and respect as they relate to LEP students and the ESL profession in rural school systems. The author suggests that the three Rs appear particularly elusive in U.S. rural communities, where LEP enrollments are low, where the professional staff are commonly unprepared for the changing realities of having LEP children in their midst, and where LEP newcomer children struggle to fit in. Bérubé suggests that the three Rs are holistically integrated in the work schools must do to assure that LEP children are welcome, are challenged, and enjoy the same experiences accorded their English-only peers.

Coltrane, B. (2003). **Working with young English language learners: Some considerations**. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. [NCELA Resource ID: [BE023381](#)]

This digest provides general information on the characteristics of English language learners (ELLs) in U.S. preschool and primary school programs and describes learning conditions and instructional practices effective for educating young ELLs. The author suggests that educators must continually strive to provide effective, nurturing environments and developmentally and linguistically appropriate instruction for all learners, taking into consideration the characteristics of young English language learners and their language development, the learning conditions most effective for these learners, and the kinds of instruction that best meet their needs.

Hill, J. D. & Flynn, K. (2004) **English language learner resource guide: A guide for rural districts with a low incidence of ELLs**. Denver, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning. [NCELA Resource ID: [BE023389](#)]

This resource guide is designed to help rural school districts with a low incidence of English language learners develop the capacity to build and implement a comprehensive program that meets both the academic and language proficiency needs of ELLs. The guide details MCREL's actual implementation efforts in a Wyoming school district, highlighting the major components of building capacity for leadership, instruction, and parent involvement. The guide offers a list of suggested resource materials and an appendix with sample materials from MCREL's work with the Wyoming school district.

Huang, G. G. (1999). **Sociodemographic changes: Promises and problems for rural education**. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and

Small Schools. [NCELA Resource ID: [BE023382](#)]

Drawing on information from federal statistics, this report summarizes economic and demographic changes relevant to rural education and calls for more research into their impact on rural education. In light of the relatively strong economic recovery that followed the depression of the 1980s, the report suggests that policymakers and communities should take advantage of this upswing to provide new resources for school improvement, ranging from facility maintenance, staffing, and curriculum improvement to serving special needs of at-risk groups. But the report also suggests that uneven growth across geographic regions and demographic categories has put tremendous pressures on schools in some states, so the need for strong state and federal support seems inevitable.

Hughes, G. K., Cowley, K. S., Finch, N. L., Meehan, M. L., Burns, R. C., Kusimo, P. S., et al. (2004). **Effects of a culturally responsive teaching project on teachers and students in selected Kanawha County, WV, schools.** Charleston, WV: Edvantia. [NCELA Resource ID: [BE023059](#)]

This study discusses the effectiveness of a culturally responsive teaching program on teachers and students in selected schools in Kanawha County, West Virginia. The program was implemented in a variety of ways at a number of schools, and student achievement measures, classroom behavior observations, and interviews with participants were used to gather data. The report suggests that teachers who learn about culturally responsive teaching practices and who teach standards-based lessons designed to be consistent with culturally responsive teaching principles are more likely to keep students on learning tasks during the day.

Johnson, J. (2005). **Why rural matters 2005: The facts about rural education in the 50 states.** Arlington, VA: The Rural School and Community Trust. [NCELA Resource ID: [BE022821](#)]

This report analyzes the importance of rural education in each of the 50 states and calls attention to the urgency with which policymakers in each state should address the problems of rural education. The report found that half of the states where rural education is most important to the overall educational performance of the state are either in the Great Plains or the Midwest, and that more than half of all rural students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals in 11 states. The report also found that rural schools face challenges associated with factors other than poverty, including students with disabilities, students who cannot

speak English well, and minority students disadvantaged by generations of racial and ethnic discrimination.

Kandel, W. & Cromartie, J. (2004). **New patterns of Hispanic settlement in rural America.** (Rural Development Research Report No. RDRR99). Washington, DC: Economic Research Service. [NCELA Resource ID: [BE023031](#)]

This report uses 1990 and 2000 Census data and a typology of county types to examine recent settlement patterns and characteristics of Hispanics in nonmetro areas of the United States. According to the report, by 2000, half of all nonmetro Hispanics lived outside traditional settlement areas of the Southwest, and many Hispanics in counties that have experienced rapid Hispanic growth are recent U.S. arrivals with relatively low education levels, weak English proficiency, and undocumented status. The report suggests that Hispanic settlement patterns warrant attention by policymakers because they affect the well-being of both Hispanics and rural communities themselves.

Kochhar, R., Suro, R., & Tafoya, S. (2005). **The new Latino South: The context and consequence of rapid population growth.** Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center. [NCELA Resource ID: [BE023058](#)]

This study examines the demographic characteristics of six southern states newly settled by Hispanics at state and county levels, examining the economic factors that have led to the increase in Hispanic migration to these areas and some of the policy implications for the region. The report found that underlying the growth of the Latino population in the new settlement areas was an unusually robust economy. The report predicts that as the demands on public services increases, so, too, will Hispanics' contributions to the tax bases supporting these services.

Lawrence, B. K. (2004). **The hermit crab solution: Creative alternatives for improving rural school facilities and keeping them close to home.** Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools.

This book seeks to show that, much the way the hermit crab survives by finding an existing structure and adapting it to its own use, so can rural communities find and reuse cost-effective accommodations to ensure the survival of their schools. The author outlines the benefits of keeping rural schools local and reviews the condition of rural school facilities and the obstacles to their improvement. She offers 11 case studies and shows readers how to apply lessons learned, including how to identify assets and liabilities, navigate policy issues, and obtain

funding. She suggests that while finding solutions to facilities issues takes time, effort, persistence, and creativity, crafting a school facility that serves all members of the community and helps sustain its viability is a goal worth pursuing.

Navarrette, L. A. (1994). **School to community transition planning: Factors to consider when working with culturally diverse students and families in rural settings.** *Rural Special Education Quarterly*, 13(1), 51-56. [NCELA Resource ID: [BE019537](#)]

This article addresses issues related to working with families that are culturally diverse. The world view and communication styles of various cultures are discussed, and specific recommendations for effective transition planning designed to increase cultural awareness and sensitivity are given. The article also suggests ways to expose students and families to a variety of role models. Resources and career options are suggested.

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (2004). **English language learner (ELL) programs at the secondary level in relation to student performance.** Portland, OR: Author. [NCELA Resource ID: [BE022195](#)]

This publication aims to provide policymakers with a research base that can guide their decision making, improve their technical assistance and professional development efforts, and assist them in refining their ELL programs. Though not a how-to guide for implementing ELL programs, the publication synthesizes the research and literature that can help educators meet their goal of increasing the achievement of ELL students in secondary settings.

NYU Metro Center for Urban Education. (2001). **Special issue on English language learners in rural areas.** *LEAD*, 1(5). [NCELA Resource ID: [BE023391](#)]

This publication addresses several issues related to educating English language learners in rural districts. The issue provides specific suggestions and resources for addressing deficient ESL/Bilingual programs, inadequate administrative support, insufficient funding and financial commitments, and a shortage of comprehensive and on-going staff development for teaching and assessing ELLs. The issue also details problems associated with planning for ELL population growth and discusses reactive vs. proactive approaches to addressing these challenges.

Oliver, J. & Penney-Howley, C. (1992). **Charting new maps: Multicultural education in rural schools**. Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools. [NCELA Resource ID: [BE019239](#)]

This digest considers the relevance and practice of multicultural education in rural schools characterized by lack of ethnic and cultural diversity. It argues that although many rural areas of the United States are relatively homogeneous, multicultural education can help prepare rural students to live in the culturally diverse larger society.

Schwartzbeck, T. D., Prince, C. D., (with Redfield, D., Morris, H., & Hammer, P. C.) (2003). **How are rural districts meeting the teacher quality requirements of No Child Left Behind?** Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators & Appalachia Educational Laboratory. [NCELA Resource ID: [BE023384](#)]

This report summarizes the findings of a nationwide online survey of more than 3,000 rural school superintendents about how rural school districts are meeting the teacher quality requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. In the survey, superintendents estimated high numbers of teachers employed in their districts would be able to meet the federal definition of "highly qualified," although there was some confusion about the definition at the federal vs. state levels.

Southern Governors' Association. (2004, September). **New traditions: Options for rural high school excellence**. Washington, DC: Author. [NCELA Resource ID: [BE023385](#)]

This report discusses the effect of new demographics on the needs of rural high schools in Southern states and draws on lessons from successful Southern schools with high-minority and/or high-poverty populations. The report presents findings from teams of governor-appointed educators and education policymakers who visited high schools successfully serving high-poverty and/or high-minority student bodies, and provides recommendations for governors who determine their state's educational strategy and momentum.

Taylor, J. E., Martin, P. L., & Fix, M. (1997). **Poverty amid prosperity: Immigration and the changing face of rural California**. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.

policies and details the findings of community fieldwork by researchers who provide a ground-level view of demographic, social, economic, and political changes related to immigration in seven rural towns.

Tinzmann, M. B., Friedman, L., Jewell-Kelly, S., Mootry, P., Nachtigal, P., & Fine, C. (1990). **Why should schools be learning communities?** Oak Brook, IL: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. [NCELA Resource ID: [BE023386](#)]

This essay describes some creative ways that schools and communities work together to help students see links between school and the rest of their lives, increase parent and community dedication to their schools, improve coordination among schools and other social service agencies, and provide stimulating educational opportunities across the lifespan. The authors suggest that achieving these goals leads to expanded roles for both communities and schools.

Twyman, T., Ketterlin-Geller, L. R., McCoy, J. D., & Tindal, G. (2003). **Effects of concept-based instruction on an English language learner in a rural school: A descriptive case study.** *Bilingual Research Journal*, 27(2), 259-274. [NCELA Reference ID: [BE022383](#)]

This report presents a case study of an English language learner in a rural Oregon middle school whose performance in social studies dramatically improved under concept-based instruction. The report suggests that methods such as concept-based instruction, which align curriculum and instruction with assessment, may offer solutions for schools serving culturally and linguistically diverse and other "at-risk" students.

Wrigley, P. (2000). **The challenge of educating English language learners in rural areas.** *NABE News* 24(2), 10-13; 38. [NCELA Resource ID: [BE023380](#)]

This article highlights some promising practices in the area of serving ELLs in rural schools. The article suggests that while the problems and challenges are well known, there are many districts — against all odds — that are making remarkable strides in improving the achievement and high school completion rates of their language minority students.

[\[back to top\]](#)

Web Resources

Mid-Continent Comprehensive Center. (n.d.). **The English language learner knowledgebase: A framework for rural schools starting out with your ELL program.** Norman, OK: Author. Available electronically via http://www.helpforschools.com/ELLKBase/tips/Framework_for_rural_schools.shtml

This resource addresses issues associated with starting an ELL program in a rural school district. The topics are grouped into two general areas: those relating to districts and schools and those addressing the home front. The resource was compiled through interviews with program administrators who have started English Language Learner programs in rural school districts in Nebraska.

National Center for Education Statistics. (n.d.). **Navigating resources for rural schools (RuralEd).** Washington, DC: Author. Available electronically via <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ruraled>

This site is designed for persons who are interested in educational changes taking place in rural America. The site provides access to recent data collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), as well as to resources available through selected contractors and grantees of the U.S. Department of Education.

National Education Association. (n.d.). **Rural education.** Washington, DC: Author. Available electronically via <http://www.nea.org/rural/index.html>

This Web site provides a broad overview of the many challenges facing rural schools, and factors that may contribute to overcoming these challenges. The Web site contains research articles, news articles from NEA publications about rural schools, and links to other advocacy organizations.

North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. (n.d.). **Critical issue: Educating teachers for diversity.** Oak Brook, IL: Author. Available electronically via <http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/educatrs/presrvce/pe300.htm>

Part of the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory's Critical Issues Directory, this interactive Web site addresses many aspects of multicultural education and preparing teachers for diverse classrooms. The Web site provides a historical overview of the push for multicultural education, interviews with practitioners, an article about the key elements of effective teacher education for diversity, case studies of universities successfully preparing prospective teachers for diversity,

and important contact information.

North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. (n.d.). **Pulling together: R&D resources for rural schools**. Oak Brook, IL: Author. Available electronically via <http://www.ncrel.org/rural/>

This Web site brings together a collection of research and development resources to assist rural educators in providing a high quality education for all children. The Web site includes numerous resources, such as written reports; executive summaries; guides and directories; links to Web sites; and toolkits; as well as audiotapes and CDs.

[\[back to top\]](#)

This Resource Guide was published June 22, 2006. Links were accurate and active at that time but NCELA cannot guarantee that all links are currently active.

To cite any portion of this Resource Guide:

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition. (2006). *Rural Education*. Washington, DC: Author. Available at <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/resabout/rural/index.html>