How to Welcome and Support Head Start Dual Language Learners When they Get to Elementary School

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<u>Definition of Dual Language Learners*</u>

Dual Language Learners (DLL) are children learning two (or more) languages at the same time, as well as those learning a second language while continuing to develop their first (or home) language.

*From-"Dual Language Learning: What does

It Take? Head Start Dual Language Report", OHS 2008

http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/ecdh/eecd/English%20Language%20Learners%20and%20Dual%20Language%20Acquisition/Learning%20in%20Two%20Languages/DuallanguageHSreportfinal0308.pdf

The Term DLL

- **Refers positively to children learning more than one language.**

- **Incorporates use of home language while acquiring second language**

- **DLL encompasses other frequently used terms such as:**
  - **Limited English Proficient (LEP)**
  - **English Language Learners (ELL)**
  - **Languages other than English (LOTE)**

<u>TERMINOLOGY MATTERS</u>

Moving toward use of the term DLL—for Head Start and Early Head Start serving Birth -five

- **Children birth to three are still learning language and are considered simultaneous learners.**

- **Children from age three years of age and older are usually considered to have an established language, so they are learning two language sequentially.**

Head Start has a long history of serving culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

- **Nearly 1 million children in Head Start-over 500,000 are 4 years old**

- **Of the 56,000 classrooms, 2,600 funded programs nationwide -420 are school system funded, nearly 1000 non-profits, 178 are government agencies and 185 are tribal governments**

- **Over 140 languages are spoken by Head Start children and families.**

- **Almost three out of ten children enter Head Start speaking a primary language at home other than English.**

- **In 2007-2008 only 14% of Head Start programs nationwide served exclusively English speaking children.**

Children who Speak Languages Other Than English

Head Start Programs Report	2008 English	2008 Spanish	2008 All Other Languages	2008 Total LOTE* (*Languages other than English)
National Totals	69%	26%	5%	31%

Head Start Services to DLLs Vary

For example:

- **Staff support buy-in for children's development of home language is enthusiastic vs. little or none.**

- **Programs may have within their service area centers that have one language spoken only, but within the overall program 10 languages**

- **Programs can match staff-children languages vs. English monolingual teachers and children with different L1**

- **Programs have been providing L1 services for years (decades) and are looking at how to increase children's exposure to English (both preschool and I/T) vs. programs that have been monolingual for decades and are finding one or more different languages in their service area (usually Spanish) vs. programs that have dozens or different L1s**

Overview of Some Key Head Start Services

- Focus on whole child-comprehensive in nature-health (mental, dental, physical, nutrition) social services, disabilities, family and community involvement, education and early childhood development

- Screening, observation and ongoing assessment requirements, including progress on child outcomes in language and literacy development, mathematics, science, creative arts, social & emotional development, approaches to learning, physical health & development

- Progress towards English required while at the same time being culturally and linguistically responsive---not an either or

- Numerous Head Start regulations across all service areas that require responsiveness to language and culture of children/ adults

- Management systems and procedures and shared decision making with parents regarding various program aspects, hiring/firing of staff, etc..

"Dual Language Learning: What Does It Take Head Start Dual Language Report -2008"

- **Purpose:** To gather information, document strengths and challenges and determine how best to address the needs of children, families, program staff, and local communities with respect to supporting language development in children learning two or more languages.

  Methodology: focus groups, conference calls, and meetings with over 200 individuals representing cross section of stakeholders

OHS Dual Language Report-10 Major Findings

1. Many Head Start programs reported **struggling with knowing how best to promote children's language acquisition, both their home language and English, when children come from diverse language and cultural backgrounds**.

OHS Dual Language Report-10 Major Findings

2. Local programs are required to conduct developmental screenings and ongoing assessments of enrolled children. Yet, there exist few valid and reliable assessment instruments for evaluating progress in language and literacy development, as well as development in other domains of learning for children who are learning two languages.

OHS Dual Language Report-10 Major Findings

3. Head Start programs reported having great **difficulty finding, attracting, and retaining bilingual staff qualified in early childhood education.** Having staff who speak the language and understand the culture of the children and families is essential for communication and learning.

4. Many programs reported struggling with being uncertain about how best to support young English learner as they transition into or out of the Head Start program, as well as onto other child care arrangements or public schools.

OHS Dual Language Report-10 Major Findings

5 Monolingual Head Start managers reported having difficulty assessing the language skills of prospective bilingual staff, which is important to ensure that proper language usage is being modeled for children and clear and respectful communication occurs with parents

6. Successfully serving children and families from various language and cultural backgrounds cannot be accomplished without a program-wide, comprehensive plan. Yet, many programs did not know how to undertake this process (and some did not understand its importance).

OHS Dual Language Report Findings

7. **Parents stated** that they were **unable to fully participate** in their children's education or in the Head Start program's governance and parent involvement activities because they did not speak English well or at all.

8. Programs reported being unable to **communicate fully** and, at times at all, with **parents,** particularly when multiple languages and cultures were served by a program.

9. **Programs reported having** difficulty helping families **from diverse language and cultural backgrounds access the support services they need (medical, dental, mental health, English as a Second Language classes, speech therapists, social services, etc.)**

10. **Many American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) communities, as well as other native communities, reported facing the** impending loss of their native languages**. Supporting children in learning their community-**

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OHS Dual Language Report Recommendations

- Establish a Head Start priority/initiative dedicated to improving staff knowledge and program performance with respect to DLL and their families.

- Enhance professional development opportunities to strengthen Head Start staff knowledge and skills around DLL and their families.

- Establish partnerships and or competitive awards dedicated to:
    1. Ensuring Positive Outcomes for Children
    2. Strengthening Program Planning & Professional Development
    3. Enhancing Family Involvement
    4. Building Community Resources

Current Head Start Transition (to School) Regulations

1304.41(c) Transition services.

- (1) Grantee and delegate agencies must establish and maintain procedures to support successful transitions for enrolled children and families from previous child care programs into Early Head Start or Head Start and from Head Start into elementary school, a Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act preschool program, or other child care settings.

These procedures must include:

- (i) Coordinating with the schools or other agencies to ensure that individual Early Head Start or Head Start children's relevant records are transferred to the school or next placement in which a child ill enroll or from earlier placements to Early Head Start or Head Start;

- (ii) Outreach to encourage communication between Early Head Start or Head Start staff and their counterparts in the schools and other child care settings including principals, teachers, social workers and health staff to facilitate continuity of programming;

Head Start Transition Regulations Continued

- – (iii) Initiating meetings involving Head Start teachers and parents and kindergarten or elementary school teachers to discuss the developmental progress and abilities of individual children; and
- – (iv) Initiating joint transition-related training for Early Head Start or Head Start staff and school or other child development staff.

- (2)……regulation regarding transition from Early Head Start to Head Start or other program.

- (3)……additional requirements related to parental participation in their child's transition to and from Early Head Start or Head Start.

2007 Head Start Act –Some Highlights Regarding Transition (Sec. 642A) and DLLs

To promote continuity of services and effective transitions, including:

- Systematic procedure for transferring, with parental consent, Head Start records for each participating child to the school where they will enroll

- Establishing ongoing communications between HS staff and their counterparts in the schools (including teachers, social workers, local educational agencies….) to facilitate coordinated services

- Establishing ongoing communications between HS agency and local educational agency for developing continuity of developmentally appropriate curricular objectives (child outcomes framework) and for shared expectations for children's learning and development as the children transition to school

- Organizing and participating in joint training, including transition-related training for school staff and HS staff

- Assisting parents who speak languages other than English understand the instructional and other services provided by the school in which such child will enroll after participation in Head Start…

School Readiness…

"It is a matter of everyone working together to support children and families as they become ready for the next type of service or state of development"

from *Continuity in Early Childhood: A Framework for Home, School, and community linkages developed by the Regional Educational Laboratories' Early Childhood collaboration Network 2002* **http://www.serve.org/TT/Continuity%20in%20Early.pdf**

Implications for partnership/work between K and Head Start programs serving DLLs

1. Understand each other's mission and definition of school readiness, and acknowledge that it is not the same

2. Develop common language and understanding of dual language learners and dual language learning

3. Understand each other's requirements and goals for working with DLLs and overall

4. Include families fully in the equation-acknowledging their role as primary educator of their child-- start reaching out early and seek assistance from Head Start .

Implications for partnership/work between K and Head Start programs serving DLLs

5. **Work with the Head Start Program to identify specific ways to help parents understand the "rules" and "expectations" of school vs. Head Start. Neither is right or wrong, just different. Acknowledge Head Start culture, school culture, home culture**

6. **Reach out to Head Start programs and ask to have kindergarten teachers come to Head Start to visit in K entry classrooms. Invite Head Start teachers to Kindergarten classrooms.**

7. **Definition of transition and continuity may not be identical and that is okay. Head Start does not do what Kindergarten does and Kindergarten does not do what Head Start does. Work together to fill the gaps between.**

8. **Head Start State Collaboration Offices are charged with working on Alignment with K-1 standards/Transition and Head Start and child care. Contact them http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/hsd/SCO/SCO.pdf**

Questions?

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when they get to Elementary School

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www.ncela.gwu.edu

NCELA's report:

"Dual Language Learners in the Early Years: Getting Ready to Succeed in School"

http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/resabout/ecell/earlyyears.pdf

Ballantyne, Sanderman, D'Emilio & McLaughlin

How many English language learners in K-12?

About 5 million; approximately 10% of K-12 population

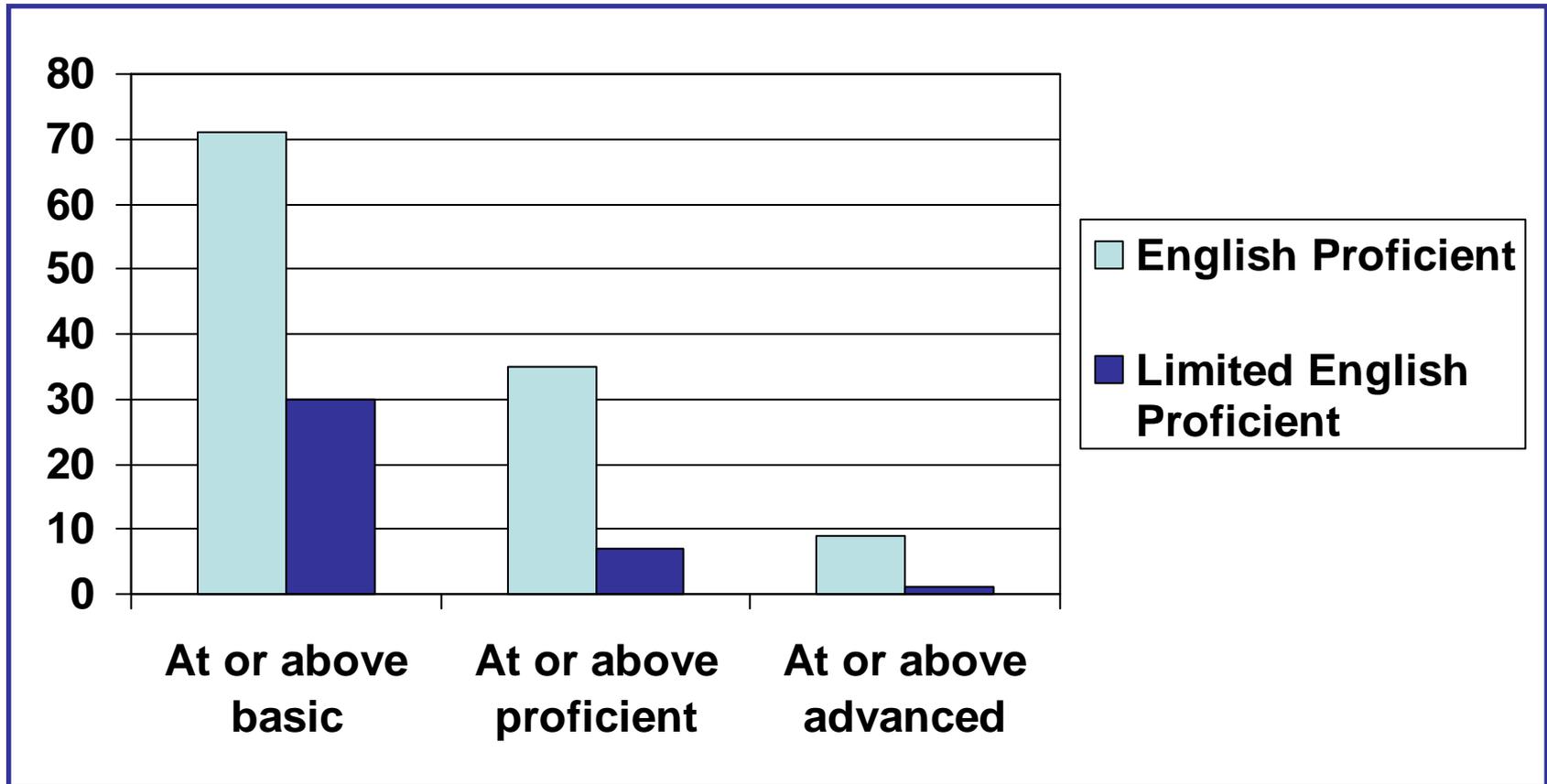# How many DLLs entering kindergarten?

No clear data, but

- Head Start data show a clear increase in number of DLLs

- ELL data generally show a clear increase in number of ELLs K-12 (60% over the last 10 years)

- The majority of K-12 ELLs were born in the US (Batalova, 2006)

In general, there are large data gaps regarding DLLs.

Why is early childhood important for DLLs?

Percentages of Students At or Above Basic, Proficient, and Advanced on Fourth-grade Reading

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics (2007a) .

Getting kids ready for school

National School Readiness Indicators Initiative

17 state partnership to measure how well states are performing on getting kids ready for school

Getting kids ready for school

Ready communities +

Ready families +

Ready services +

Ready schools

= Children ready for school

(Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, 2005)

Ready Communities

- Latino children are more likely than other children to live in low-income families.

- Children of immigrant parents are more likely than other children to live in low-income families.

  (National Center for Children in Poverty, 2007)

- Therefore, DLLs are very probably more likely than other children to live in low-income families. (and FACES data supports this)

Poverty + Linguistic barriers = Bigger hurdles

Ready Families

- Parents of DLLs are less likely to have completed high school than other parents
  (FACES data from Ziv, 2008)

- For immigrant Hispanic families, there is rapid growth in educational achievement across generations
  (Miller & Garcia, 2008)

Ready Families

- Parents of DLLs are less likely than other parents to read to children regularly
  (O'Donnell, 2008)

- Are parents worried that reading in the home language might be harmful for children learning English?

- The effects of early reading **in any language** continue at least through eighth grade. (Reese et al., 2000)

Ready Services: Early Care

- DLLs are less likely than other children to be enrolled in preK

- Survey data says 97% of Hispanic families would use free preK programs if they had access (Pérez & Zarate, 2006)

- PreK attendance reduces the achievement gap for all children, and **for Hispanic children more than any other group** (Gormley & Gayer, 2004; Laosa & Ainsworth, 2007)

Getting kids ready for school

- **Physical Well-Being and Motor Development**
- **Social and Emotional Development**
- **Approaches to Learning**
- **Cognition and General Knowledge**
- **Communicative Skills**

(Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, 2006, p. 13)

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Social & Emotional Development in DLLs: What does the research say?

- Finding: DLLs who are more fluent in English are more likely to socialize with monolingual English speakers (Strong, 1983; 1984)

- Recommendation: Teachers should provide structured activities to help DLLs & monolingual English speakers communicate (Strong, 1983)

- Finding: Spanish speaking students in classrooms where their teachers use greater amounts of the child's home language are less likely to be victims of bullying (Chang et al., 2007)

Communicative skills

- Vocabulary

- Oral language proficiency

- Preliteracy skills

Vocabulary

Early vocabulary correlates with later reading proficiency

Researchers recommend vocabulary instruction for K-12 students.

(Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer & Rivera, 2006; Gersten et al., 2007)

Using cognates is an excellent strategy for some learners.

e.g. triangle~triángulo

Oral language proficiency

- Oral language proficiency takes time! 4-6 years

- Oral language proficiency is a key component of advanced reading skills.

  (August & Shanahan, 2006)

Preliteracy Skills

Include:

- print awareness
- phonological awareness
- vocabulary
- fluency
- comprehension

  + others ...

- print awareness: understanding that print signifies language

- phonological awareness: noticing that language is made up of sounds

Can preliteracy skills **transfer**?

Language knowledge *transfers* when knowledge from one language can be applied to a second language.

e.g. if you know when to say "*gracias*," you know when to say "thank you."

Can print awareness transfer?

- Yes!

Can phonological awareness transfer?

- Children who receive direct instruction in phonological awareness in **either** language see an increase in **both** languages

  (Roberts & Corbett, 1997; Terrasi, 2000)

Missing from the picture …

Research on comprehension

We know a lot about teaching children to *decode* print, but not enough about teaching them how to *understand* what they are reading.

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For more information:

Head Start Information on Dual Language Learners:
http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Dual%20Language%20Learners

NCELA's report *Dual Language Learners in the Early Years*
http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/resabout/ecell/earlyyears.pdf