

# Talking with Your Child in Your Home Languages

A resource for families with children in Kindergarten



As a parent of a child learning a new language, you play a vital role in helping your child maintain your home languages. Research shows that speaking two or more languages benefits children's well-being, language and literacy development, thinking and reasoning, and learning skills.



## Children who speak multiple languages:

- Develop a strong sense of identity.
- Connect to their cultures and communities.
- Gain confidence and develop positive self-esteem.
- Develop strong family relationships.

- Can transfer literacy skills from one language to another.
- Can apply reading and writing strategies learned in their home language when learning to read and write in an additional language.

### *Well-Being*

### *Language and Literacy Skills*

### *Thinking and Reasoning Skills*

### *Learning Skills*

- Can think in flexible ways.
- Can share thoughts and ideas with family members using complex language.
- Develop planning and problem-solving skills.

- Take risks in their learning.
- Focus effectively on relevant information.

# Use your home languages with your child:

## To support oral language development:

- Talk with your child when playing together, and discuss activities that you do.
- When doing daily tasks together, talk about what was done first, next and last.
- Encourage your child to explain to a family member how to play a game or do an activity.

## To support literacy skills:

- Read with your child every day and talk about the story, such as what the story reminds you of.
- Help your child learn to read in your home languages.
- Provide opportunities for your child to see you reading in your home languages.

*\*Adapted from Supporting English Language Learners in Kindergarten, 2007*

## Help support the development of your child's languages at school

*Speak with and share information with your child's Kindergarten educators often. You can:*

- Share your child's strengths and interests with them.
- Share learning experiences with the Kindergarten team that your child has engaged with outside of school.
- Ask how they are supporting your child's English language development.
- Ask how they are building on your child's home and community languages.
- Ask how play supports your child's oral language development.



*Graphic adapted from Ontario Ministry of Education, 2017*

## References

