

# Home Visitors' Knowledge, Perspectives, and Practices

Informing Culturally Responsive Training for Supporting Dual  
Language Learners

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February 2025

Washington, DC

early  
learning  
nation

# COLLECTIVE

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**Harnessing the power of communities  
to help children prenatal to age 8 grow  
and thrive.**

## OUR NATIONAL ORGANIZATION PARTNERS

These seven national organizations are listening to and working with local leaders who are committed to ensuring all young children and their families can grow and thrive in their communities. Select each organization to learn about their unique contributions to the ELN Collective.



# ELN COLLECTIVE

# Who We Are:

Amanda Quiroz-Guajardo



# “Myths and Truths About Bilingualism”

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- "Children raised with two languages will be confused."
  - (Myth)
- "Speaking two languages at home helps children succeed in school."
  - (Truth)
- "Bilingualism causes language delays in young children."
  - (Myth)
- "It's better for children to stop speaking their home language to learn English."
  - (Myth)
- "Bilingual children tend to have stronger problem-solving skills."
  - (Truth)

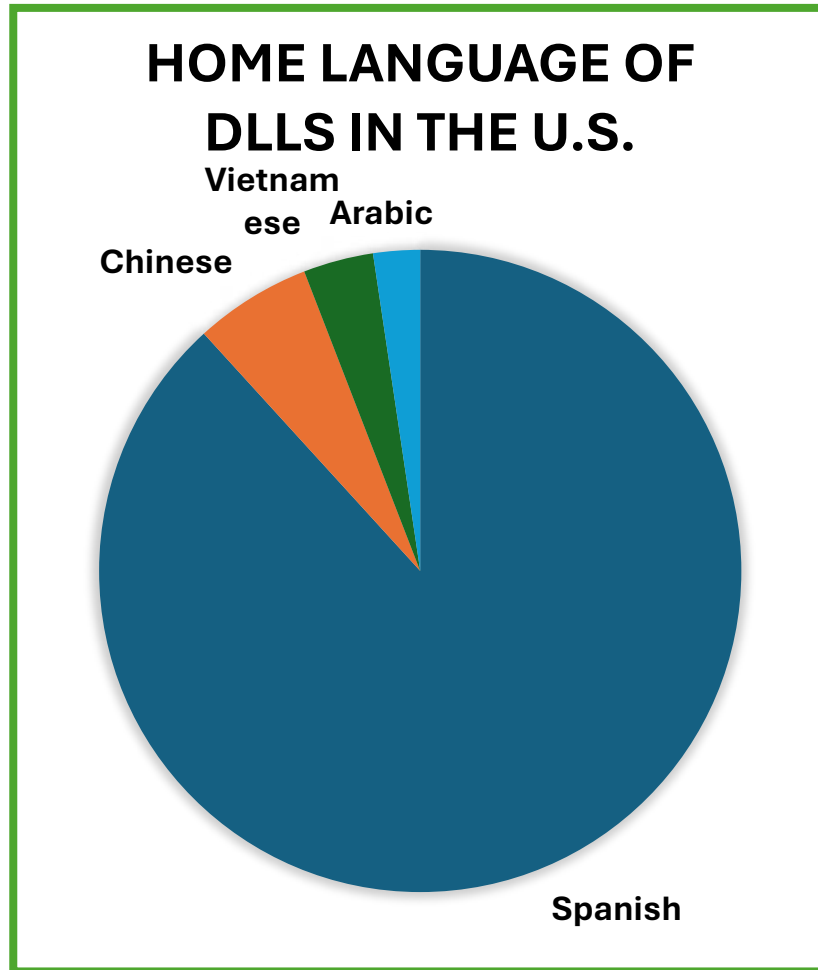
**Objectives:** By the end of this presentation, participants will be able to:

- **Understand the Importance of Supporting DLLs**
- **Learn Key Findings from the Study**
- **Identify Training Gaps and Challenges**
- **Apply Recommendations for Professional Development**
- **Promote Advocacy and Systemic Change**

# ***Setting the Stage: Why This Matters***

## **Challenges for Culturally Diverse Families**

- Diversity of Families
- Language Development Myths
- Limited Resources



## CHALLENGES FACED BY ELLs



Two-thirds of ELLs are from low-income families with lower education levels.



ELLs are the lowest academically performing groups of students in K-12 schools.



ELLs are 4x more likely to drop out of high school, compared to English speakers.

### LIMITED TEACHER TRAINING ADDS TO THESE ELL CHALLENGES.



Less than one-third of teachers with ELLs in their classes have the requisite preparation to effectively teach these students.



## ENROLLMENT IS GROWING.

4.7 million

ELL students in the United States



## HIGHEST PERCENTAGES OF ELL STUDENTS RESIDE IN:

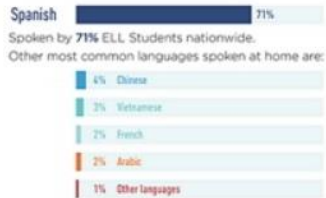


## LANGUAGES SPOKEN AT HOME

Top 3 languages spoken in ELL students' homes are:



SPANISH CHINESE VIETNAMESE



## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT ANCHORS THE "FAMILY APPROACH"

When parents are engaged in ways that support learning at home and school, students make greater gains.

### PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IS A CRITICAL ELEMENT FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.



ELLs are more likely to have parents with limited formal education.



48% of ELLs in grades PK-5 have parents who did not finish high school.



A strong home-to-school connection is necessary.



Offering parents the opportunity to learn English along with the children is an excellent way to promote parental involvement while helping them succeed personally.

### RESEARCH SHOWS THAT WHEN PARENTS ARE INVOLVED STUDENTS HAVE:



Higher grades, test scores, and graduation rates



Better school attendance and increased motivation



Better self-esteem



Lower rates of suspension



Decreased use of drugs and alcohol



Fewer instances of violent behavior



Research has shown that evidence-based home visiting programs produce positive outcomes that save taxpayer dollars by reducing societal costs associated with intimate partner violence, child maltreatment, youth crime, substance use disorder and need for government assistance.

**Enhanced Child Development &  
Increased Child Safety**

**Strengthened Parent  
Capacity**

**Home  
Visiting  
Program**

# Bilingualism: An Advantage, Not a Barrier

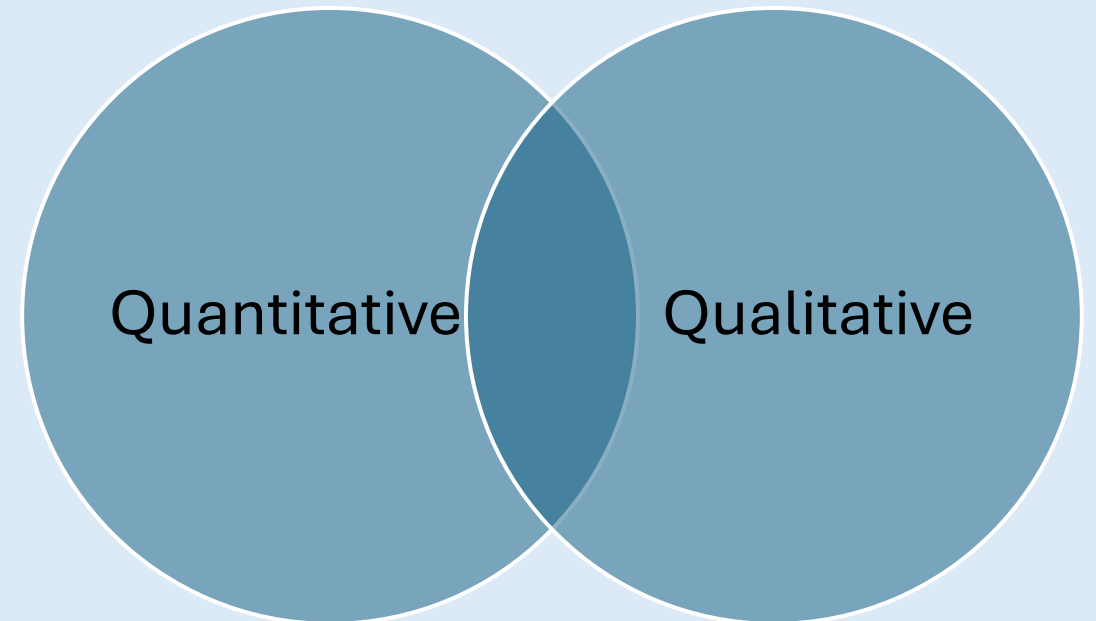
- Cognitive Benefits
- Academic Success
- Social-Emotional Growth
- Career Opportunities
- Stronger Family Bonds



# Study Design:

A Mixed-Methods Approach

- **Objective of the Study:** To explore home visitors' knowledge, perspectives, and practices in supporting dual language learners (DLLs) and fostering father engagement.
- **Study Methodology:** Mixed-Methods Approach: Combining quantitative and qualitative methods for a comprehensive view. Participants: 130+ Home visitors from diverse programs serving culturally and linguistically diverse families.
- **Timeline:** Data collection spanned 6 months in 2024. Collaboration with Start Early, Save the Children, UnidosUS and its affiliates.



# Data Collection: Surveys and Interviews

- Self-assessment questions to gauge confidence, knowledge, and skills related to Dual Language Development
- Likert scale questions to measure agreement with statements like:
  - “I feel confident supporting dual language learners in home visit”

- Sample Size & Demographics:
  - Inclusion criteria – home visitors serving families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Focus area:
  - Perceived gaps in training
  - Awareness of bilingualism myths vs. research-based practices

# Data Collection: Surveys and Interviews cont....

## **Interview Process:**

- One-on-one interviews conducted with a subset of participants.
- Semi-structured format with open-ended questions like:
  - “What challenges do you face when supporting dual language learners?”
  - “Can you share a success story about engaging fathers during home visits?”

## • **Focus Areas:**

- Practical strategies used to address DLL needs, Barriers encountered, such as limited time, cultural norms.
- Personal experiences with training and professional development.

## • **Thematic Analysis:**

- Identified recurring themes, such as: Lack of confidence in addressing bilingual language development.

# Key Findings

## A. Strengths Identified

Recognition of the importance of bilingualism

Existing practices that align with culturally responsive approaches.

## B. Gaps in Knowledge and Practice

Lack of training on bilingual language development.

Perceived barriers, such as work schedules and cultural norms.

## C. Need for Resources

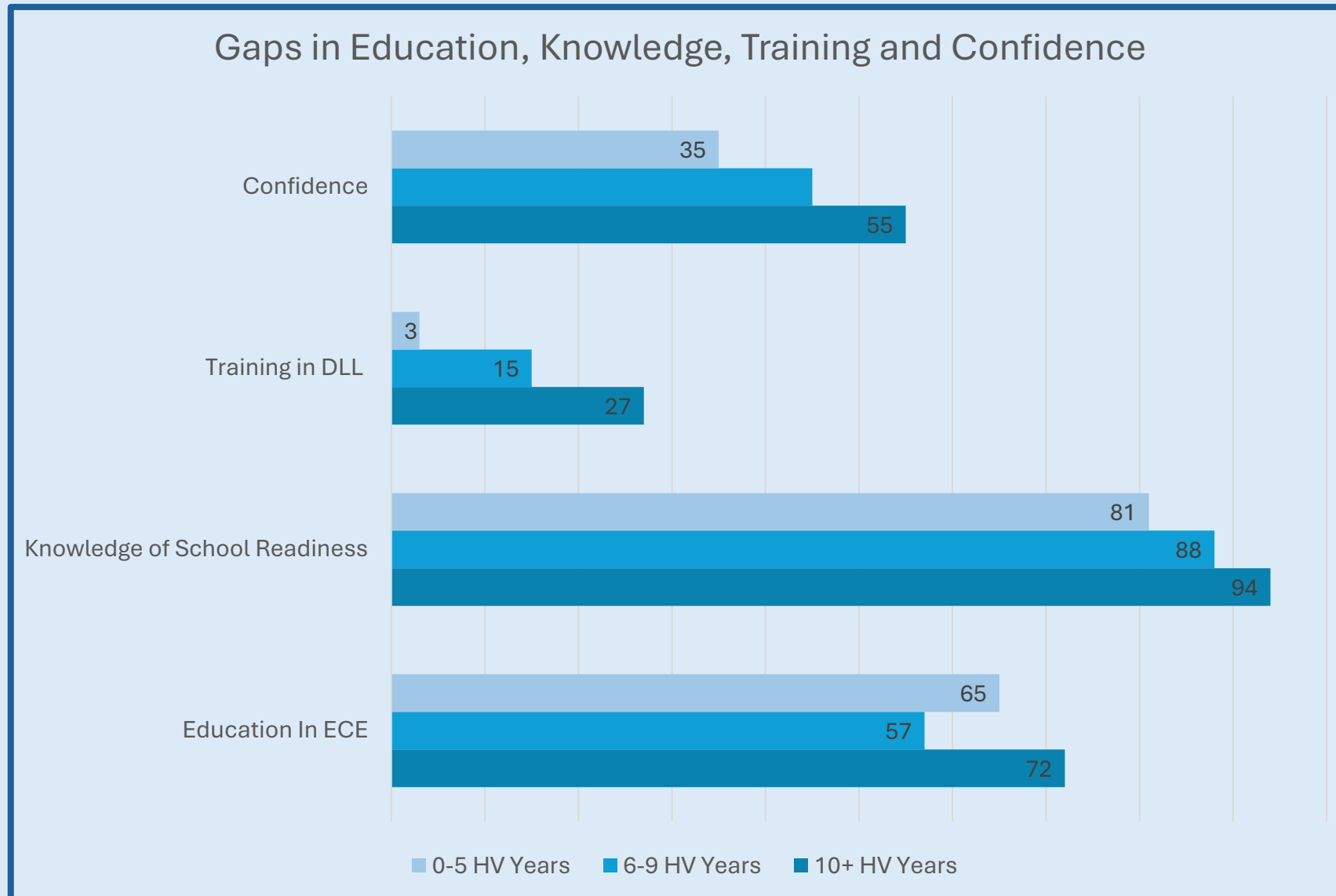
Insufficient tools for integrating cultural and linguistic diversity into practice.

Limited strategies

# Key Findings : **STRENGTHS IDENTIFIED**



# Key Findings : GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE & PRACTICE

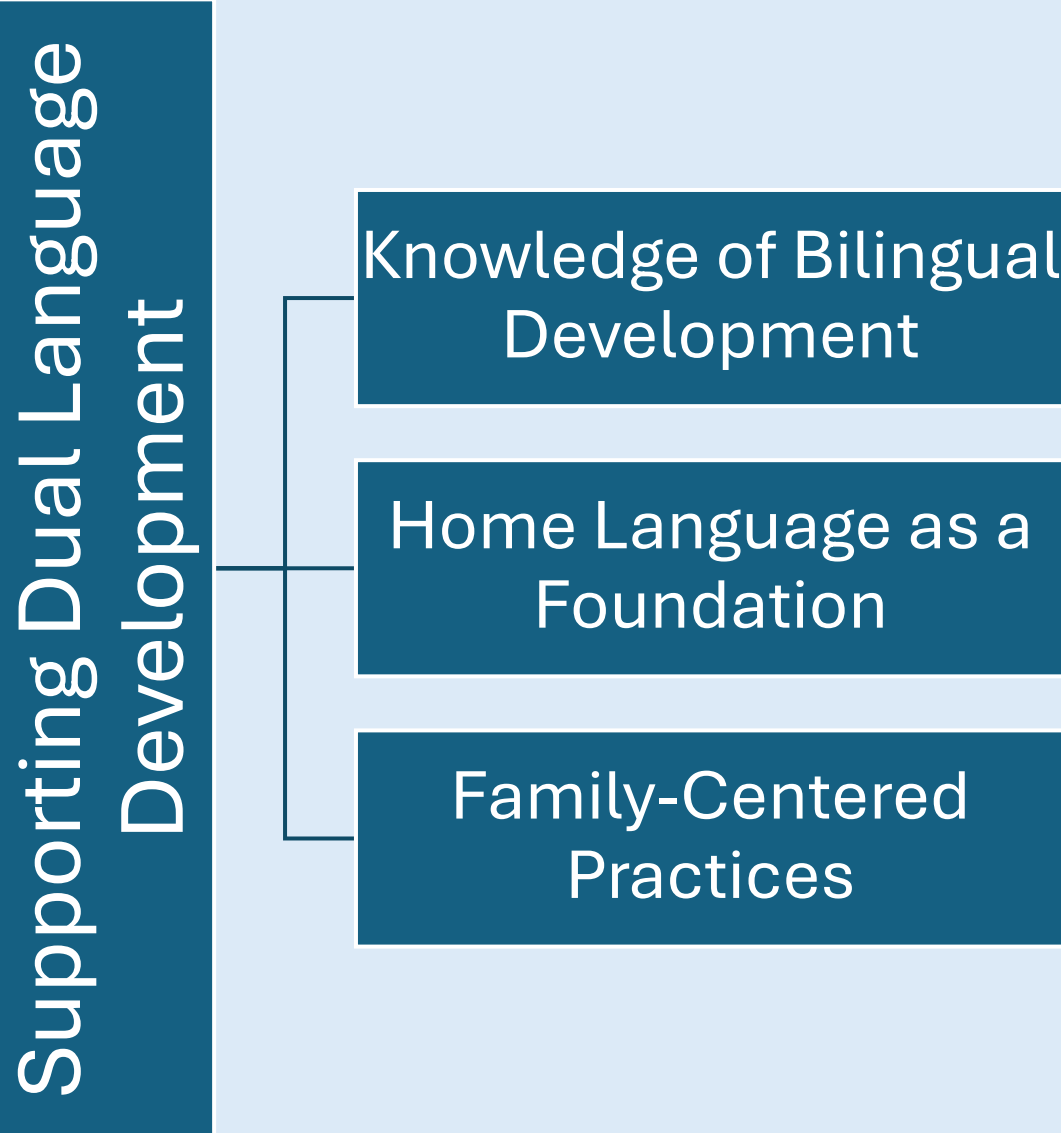




# Key Findings : NEED FOR RESOURCES & SUPPORT



# Framework for Culturally Responsive Training



**Implementation Methods:**

- Scenario-based role-playing to practice conversations with families about bilingualism.
- Practical tools, such as bilingual books and activity guides, to encourage dual language use at home.
- Workshops that include cultural case studies to deepen understanding of Latino families' linguistic contexts

**Professional  
Development  
for Dual  
Language  
Development**





# Next Steps:

- Title: “Fostering Dual Language Development in Early Childhood: Strategies for Home Visitors”
- Modules: Culturally responsive, social-emotional aspects, practical strategies.
- Format: Interactive, evidence-based.

**Young DLLs should be given opportunities to develop high levels of proficiency in both of their languages because the advantages are significant and lasting..**

# Key Takeaways:



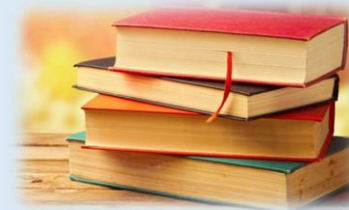
THE IMPORTANCE OF DUAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT



STRENGTH OF HOME VISITORS



NEED FOR CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TRAINING



# Turning Insights Into Action

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Home Visitors and  
Educators

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Program Leaders and  
Administrators

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Community Advocates  
and Stakeholders



“This course really helped me to reinforce and reaffirm that I am doing a good job in motivating families and children to use the dual form. Also, when I go to visit families, carrying out activities with intention, in an intentional way, whether throughout songs or books, and also doing it in a fun way. Without forcing it or as if it is a rule where you must speak two languages at that moment, to simply let it flow, which is also valid if one speaks to them in one language and the child answers in another, it is fine, we will flow. That way we motivate other people to feel comfortable, it is a very safe way to express ourselves. We learn from the person who is speaking, but we also learn from the community that is there at the moment.

Thank you very much.”

## VIDEO TESTIMONIAL





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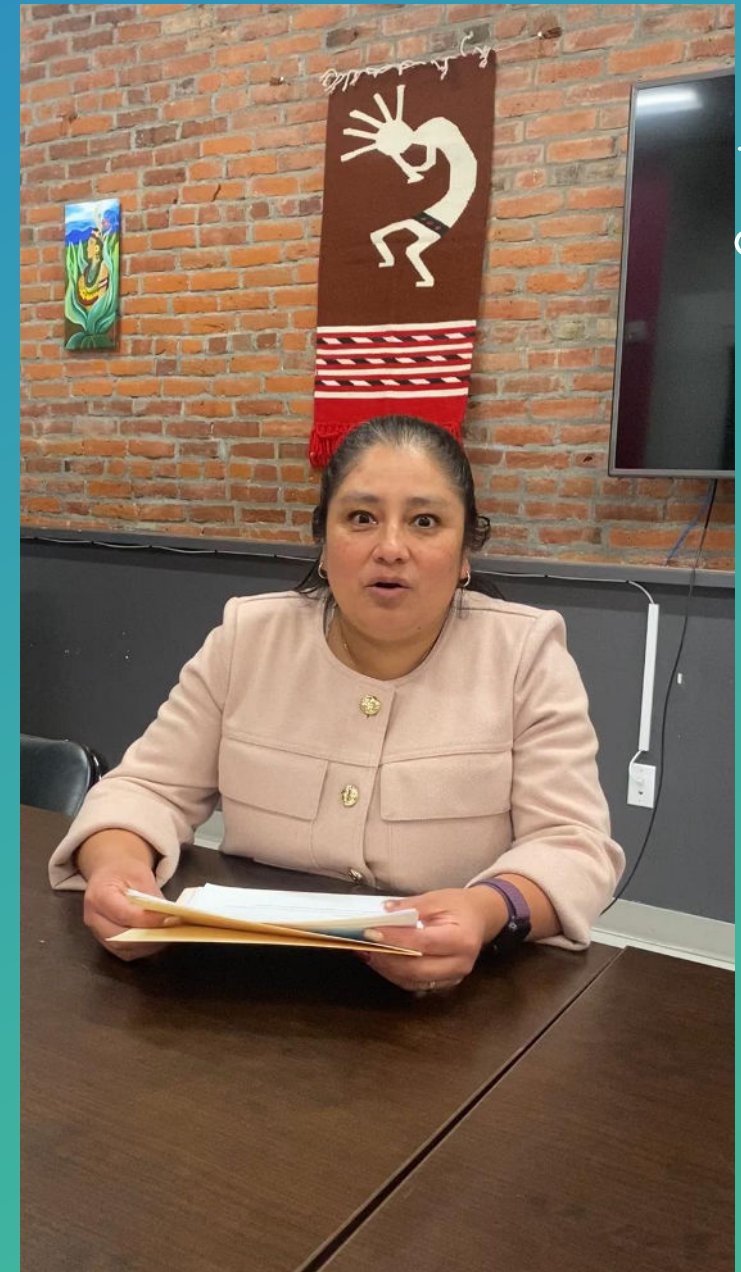
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**Harnessing the power of communities  
to help children prenatal to age 8 grow  
and thrive.**

**YOUR QUESTIONS AND REFLECTIONS**

It is not something technological that is just trending, no. A language, a culture is the most important thing that you can pass on to your child, or to our children who are around us.

# VIDEO TESTIMONIAL



*“Thank you for your dedication to supporting families and children.”*

**“Bilingualism is not a limitation; it’s a superpower. Together, we can empower the next generation to thrive in a diverse and dynamic world.”**

**•Contact Information:**

- Email: [amanda@goodstarhub.com](mailto:amanda@goodstarhub.com)
- Email: [4aguajardo@gmail.com](mailto:4aguajardo@gmail.com)
- Website: <https://eln-collective.org>

# Statistics on Dual Language Learners and Bilingualism

## 1. Prevalence of Dual Language Learners (DLLs):

1. Approximately **32% of children under age 8 in the U.S. are dual language learners** (Migration Policy Institute, 2020).
2. **Spanish-speaking DLLs represent the largest language group**, making up nearly 75% of DLLs in the U.S. (National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy, 2022).

## 2. Benefits of Bilingualism:

### 1. Cognitive Benefits:

1. Bilingual children demonstrate **better executive function skills** like problem-solving and multitasking compared to monolingual children (American Psychological Association, 2019).

### 2. Academic Success:

1. Students in dual-language immersion programs outperform their peers on reading and math tests by **10 percentage points or more** (American Educational Research Journal, 2016).

### 3. Social-Emotional Development:

1. Bilingual children are more likely to exhibit **stronger empathy** and cross-cultural understanding (Child Development, 2017).

## 3. Family Language Use and Connection:

1. **85% of Latino parents believe it's important for their children to maintain the home language** to stay connected to family and culture (Pew Research Center, 2015).
2. Children who maintain their home language report **closer relationships with parents and extended family**, fostering emotional security (Bilingual Research Journal, 2020).

## 4. Misconceptions and Myths:

1. Nearly **50% of parents report being told that speaking two languages at home will confuse their child**, despite evidence disproving this myth (UnidosUS Focus Group Findings, 2022).

## 5. Economic Impact:

1. Bilingual individuals earn **5-20% more than monolinguals** in the workforce, reflecting the economic value of bilingualism (Harvard Business Review, 2016).

<https://edsource.org/2024/should-4-year-olds-have-to-take-an-english-proficiency-test/708134>