

LINC works at the intersection of education and community development to engage families and community members to support young readers. LINC surrounds families with programs that increase both children's and parents' access to literacy-building opportunities, raise expectations, and create lifelong readers. LINC is so glad to be partnered with ROR and 15 other partners as part of the NYC Council's Early Literacy Initiative City's First Readers as well as our two neighborhood initiatives, South Jamaica Reads and East New York Reds.

Tonight, we are going to focus on working with dual language learners, kids who are learning to speak more than one language. This usually looks like speaking a home language and learning English. We are excited to feature our special guests from Literacy Inc, Karen Rogel.

Question: Will speaking a language other than English with your young child at home interfere with learning English in school?



No. This is a common myth. Some parents, caregivers and even teachers might think that speaking with a child in several languages at a young age can confuse them and make it harder for them to learn a primary language.

It's estimated that more children are growing up learning two languages than those who are learning only one language. Fun fact, as of Jan 2020 there are over 640 languages recorded in NYC

According to research, children who learn two languages simultaneously go through the same processes and progress at the same rate as children who learn only one language. They begin to start talking and say their first words or first sentences within the same time frame.

Question: What are the benefits of children learning more than one language from a young age?

Yes, there are many benefits! In fact, between the ages of 0-3, the brains of young children are uniquely suited to learn a second language as the brain is in its most flexible stage. They can learn a second language as easily as they learned to walk and learn their primary language. Their brains are very active and flexible.

Research also shows that, compared to their non-bilingual peers, bilingual people have an easier time developing strong thinking skills, using logic, focusing, remembering, and making decisions. These skills are all so important when entering kindergarten.

Being bilingual also supports children in maintaining strong ties with their family, culture, and community. All of these are key parts of a child's developing identity.

Question: How can families support learning and keeping up with a home language?

1. Talk and read in your home language: Talking directly with a child is the surest way to help them build their early vocabulary.
2. Know that if you speak a language other than English at home, it's normal for your child to start out slowly learning English. With time and attention, they'll match their peers.
3. Be proud: Children raised in households that speak a language other than English are lucky. Research has shown that children who learn two languages display greater concentration, have a better grasp on the basic structure of language, and may have an easier time understanding math and science symbols later on in school.
4. Visit your public library as often as you can: Local library branches often have children's books in Spanish, Mandarin, Bengali, as well English related materials for the whole family.
 - a. <https://www.bklynlibrary.org/event-series/ready-set-kindergarten>
 - b. <https://www.nypl.org/locations>
 - c. <https://www.queenslibrary.org/about-us/locations>

Question: What types of books are best for dual language learners and where can I find quality books in different languages?

- Wordless books- Do a story walk by talking about the pictures as you page through
- Bilingual Books- Take turns reading in Spanish and English
- Share Family Stories- Use your home language to tell family stories and share traditions that have been passed down through generations. This is a great way for children to form their family identity and practice speaking and listening.



For any questions about the content or our virtual programming, please email Kristen Rocha Aldrich at krochaaldrich@reachoutandreadnyc.org.

