

# Parent Involvement Toolkit



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## Colorado Parent Information & Resource Center

### Reaching Out to Parents of English Language Learners

The Colorado Parent Information & Resource Center a program of Clayton Early Learning is dedicated to helping schools and families form meaningful partnerships. This Toolkit provides tools and information for educators, administrators, and parents to reach out to all families in order to make parent involvement effective for increasing student achievement. There are tools that give strategies for successful communication, understanding a diversity of family backgrounds, reaching out to English Language Learners (ELL), developing parent-school compacts, and handouts for parents to help their child at home and at school.

Some of these materials have been adapted from other sources taken from highly recognized parent involvement organizations and websites on the internet, including ColorinColorado, Southwest Education Developmental Laboratories (SEDL), and the Colorado and U.S. Departments of Education.

Colorado Parent Information &  
Resource Center  
a program of  
Clayton Early Learning

3701 E. Martin Luther King Blvd.  
Denver, CO 80205

Phone: 303.355.5387  
Fax: 303.321.2959

[www.cpirc.org](http://www.cpirc.org)

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# Bridging Communication Gaps

Consistent and on-going communication between staff and parents is essential to improving student achievement and engaging parents in their child's education. The following materials provide examples of specific communication strategies to use with parents and also examples of self-reflection on your own communication style.

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# Teaching Practices to Improve Communication

Epstein (1989) suggests the following ideas about effective school-home communication.

- ☑ Make sure that memos and notices are written so all parents can read and understand them.
  
- ☑ Communications from school to home should be:
  - simple and readable,
  - jargon-free, and
  - in the language spoken by the family.
  
- ☑ Communications can be done:
  - in print form,
  - via e-mail, by phone,
  - through TV, radio, and newspaper,
  - at extra curricular activities, and
  - in other creative ways.
  
- ☑ Sponsor programs or community events that allow educators and parents to interact socially in addition to parent-teacher conferences or school/program meetings.
  
- ☑ Provide feedback opportunities for parents and family members such as surveys on current program issues or special parent interests.

## Teacher Reflection

### What will I do to improve my communication skills?

Reflect on your current practices in each of the elements highlighted in the left column. Develop a plan for improvement which includes support needed, how strategies will be implemented, and how you will know if each element has been accomplished (Evidence of Mastery). Use the resources provided in this module to support your efforts.

Communication Strategies	What I've done	What I will do from now on
I communicate with families in a meaningful way, using one-way and two-way methods.		
I communicate with families in ways that honor family differences, individual needs and cultural preferences.		
I communicate with families of students who are ELLs.		
I communicate with other staff to best meet the needs of families.		
I communicate with families to obtain feedback regularly from students and families in a way that enhances student learning and understanding.		
I inform families of student expectations, including the Colorado Content Standards and Benchmarks.		
I encourage parents to ask questions and take the time to answer them.		
I carefully plan parent-teacher conferences.		



# Reaching out to ELLs and families that are hard to reach

The following materials can help teachers find ways to reach out to parents of English Language Learners. They provide information to develop relationships with families and build a community of learners. These materials give information about how to communicate with parents and classroom activities for children and staff to get to know the backgrounds of students in the class.

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# Respect and Celebrate the Diversity that Students and Families Bring to School

**Cultural differences are valuable to student learning and should be celebrated at school.**

- ☑ Make every effort to utilize locally relevant curriculum materials with which students can identify, including materials prepared by local Native authors.
  
- ☑ Participate in local and regional language immersion camps to learn and hear traditional language, cultural ways, and their meaning in contemporary life.
  
- ☑ Ask a parent, elder, or community member to help you create a language-rich environment in your classroom, such as posting labels in other languages, reading in other languages, etc.
  
- ☑ Recognize and validate all aspects of the knowledge students bring with them and assist them in personal and cultural affirmations.
  
- ☑ Provide enough flexibility in scheduling family participation so everyone is able to fully share, such as offering parent meetings more than once. Provide enough advance notice for family members to make the necessary preparations to attend.
  
- ☑ Be patient when students make mistakes speaking English and encourage their efforts.
  
- ☑ Recognize that trust is the best way to get parents in the school. Develop trusting relationships where parents feel comfortable and invited.

## Barriers to Parent and Community Involvement among ELL Populations

Often, language and/or cultural barriers prevent parents from feeling confident in their own ability to collaborate with schools and assist in their children's academic achievement. Below is a summary of the primary barriers that can impede full parent and community participation in the educational system (Ritter, Mont-Reynard & Dornbusch, 1993; Inger, 1992; Epstein & Dauber, 1991; García, 1990). Knowledge and understanding of these barriers is the first step toward bridging them.

- ☑ **Language skills.** Inability to understand the language of the school is a major deterrent to the parents who have not achieved full English proficiency. In these cases, interactions with the schools are difficult, and, therefore, practically nonexistent.
- ☑ **Home/school partnerships.** In some cultures, such as many Hispanic ones, teaming with the school is not a tradition. Education has been historically perceived as the responsibility of the schools, and parent intervention is viewed as interference with what trained professionals are supposed to do.
- ☑ **Work interference.** Work is a major reason stated by parents for noninvolvement in school activities. Conflicts between parent and school schedules may mean parents cannot attend school events, help their children with homework, or in other ways become active participants in their children's education.
- ☑ **Knowledge of the school system.** A great number of low-income parents view schools as an incomprehensible and purposefully exclusionary system. Lack of trust is often the result of misunderstanding the perceived intentions of each party. Sending home communications in English only and scheduling meetings at times when parents cannot attend serve to reinforce parent apprehension. The lack of involvement that results from mistrust and apprehension is often misperceived by schools as a lack of concern for the children's education.
- ☑ **Self-confidence.** Many parents of ELL students believe that their participation does not help schools perform their jobs as educational institutions; as a result, they separate themselves from the process. Parents who feel uncomfortable in the school setting are less likely to be involved than those who have developed a sense of equal partnership.
- ☑ **Past experiences.** Many non-English speaking parents have had negative education experiences of their own, and these memories linger through adulthood. In some cases, these parents have fallen victim to racial and linguistic discrimination by the schools. Negative feelings toward home-school interaction are often reinforced when schools communicate with parents only to share bad news about their children.



## Supporting Parent and Community Involvement for ELLs

Research on effective practices for all students has identified a number of factors that support parent involvement, many of which are especially relevant to parents of ELLs. For example, parent involvement in children's education is higher if school policies and teacher practices are designed with parents in mind (Eccles & Harold, 1996; Epstein, 1992). A salient feature of exemplary parent-involvement programs is respect for cultural diversity and active efforts to strengthen the native language in the home (McCollum & Russo, 1993). When parents' home language is limited, they serve as poor models for children acquiring the language. Home language loss can also have "serious [negative] consequences for parent-child relationships" (Wong Fillmore, 1991).

Therefore, certain pedagogical models, such as family literacy or developmental bilingual education, may facilitate parent involvement. Family literacy programs support education for the whole family, connect parents to their children's schooling, and increase student achievement (Mulhern, Rodríguez-Brown, & Shanahan, 1994). Developmental bilingual education models, because they are designed to develop both languages, facilitate family communication.

Research shows that schools can involve and empower parents of ELL students to fully participate in the education of their children. Following are concrete examples of how schools can immediately increase parental involvement and subsequently establish mutual trust and respect between themselves and parents:

- ☑ Translate parent meetings and informational materials into community languages;
- ☑ Offer adult English classes and family literacy programs;
- ☑ Make explicit unstated rules and behavioral expectations (for example, that parents are expected to attend parent/teacher conferences);
- ☑ Invite and encourage parents to volunteer at the school; and
- ☑ Offer power-sharing relationships by encouraging parents to form advocacy groups and enabling them to share in decision-making about school programs and policies (Delgado-Gaitán, 1991).

A similar set of outreach strategies was outlined in a more recent study of how to successfully involve Hispanic parents (Espinosa, 1995). Many of these recommendations are relevant to parents of all languages and cultures:

- ☑ **Personal Touch.** Written flyers or articles sent home have proven to be ineffective even when written in Spanish. Thus, it is crucial to also use face-to-face communication, recognizing that it may take several personal meetings before the parents gain sufficient trust to actively participate. Home visits are a particularly good way to begin to develop rapport.
- ☑ **Non-Judgmental Communication.** In order to gain the trust and confidence of Hispanic parents, teachers must avoid making them feel they are to blame or are doing something wrong when their children do not do well. Parents need to be supported for their strengths, not judged for perceived failings.

- ☑ **Perseverance in Maintaining Involvement.** To keep Hispanic parents actively engaged, program activities must respond to a real need or concern of the parents. Teachers should have a good idea about what parents will get out of each meeting and how the meeting will help them in their role as parents.
- ☑ **Bilingual Support.** All communication with Hispanic parents, written and oral, must be provided in Spanish and English. Having bicultural and bilingual staff helps promote trust.
- ☑ **Strong Leadership and Administrative Support.** Flexible policies, a welcoming environment, and a collegial atmosphere all require administrative leadership and support. As with other educational projects or practices that require innovation and adaptation, the efforts of teachers alone cannot bring success to parent involvement projects. Principals must also be committed to project goals.
- ☑ **Staff Development Focused on Hispanic Culture.** All staff must understand the key features of Hispanic culture and its impact on their students' behavior and learning styles. It is the educator's obligation to learn as much about the culture and background of their students as possible.

Outreach efforts need not be limited to parents. Schools can identify and access community-based organizations (CBOs) able to provide opportunities for out-of-school experiences that enrich children's lives. These organizations can keep children safe, mobilize needed services, and provide children with opportunities for productive use of free time. In neighborhoods that are rich with resources, it is taken for granted that children will be exposed to opportunities for experiential learning, travel, recreation, and experiencing the arts. When ELLs lack opportunities to be exposed to community resources - because of language, financial, or cultural barriers - CBOs are in a position to make deliberate and concerted efforts to provide these opportunities (Schorr, 2000). Additionally, schools can serve as a resource and referral agency to support the overall strength and stability of the families by having access to family literacy programs, vocational training, ESL programs, improved medical and dental services, and other community-based social services.

### **An Effective Model**

Schools and school districts throughout the nation have established meaningful policies and practices to involve parents and the community. For example, the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) has established that each school site, preschool through high school, develop a long-range parent involvement plan that is an integral part of the general school improvement plan. The plan must address the needs of parents of linguistically and culturally diverse and impoverished students, and require that each school assess the effectiveness of its plan in involving these parents. Additionally, the district requires:

- ☑ all school communications to parents be issued in the major languages of the district's linguistically diverse students;
- ☑ all public meetings with parents to be translated between English and the major languages of the district's linguistically diverse students; further, that the language of communication used to conduct the meetings will not always be English with translation provided into the parents' languages, but, instead, that meetings will also be conducted on a regular basis in the languages of the parents and translated into English.

- ☑ all one-to-one communications and meetings between a student's parent(s) and the school be conducted in the language of the parent(s); further, that the student may not be utilized as the translator.

SFUSD also recommends that schools go beyond the traditional ways of engaging and empowering parents to include strategies that:

- ☑ Provide flexible hours for holding meetings so that parents are able to attend;
- ☑ Enable familiarity with their students' communities;
- ☑ Provide parents with access to information, planning, and power structures;
- ☑ Teach parents about school institutions and structures;
- ☑ Involve parents in professional development efforts;
- ☑ Recognize the contributions of parents and communicate respect to parents; and
- ☑ Identify sources of knowledge that parents possess and incorporate them into curricula.

## Conclusion

Bermúdez and Márquez (1996) highlight the fact that efforts to involve the community in the education of ELL students invariably lead to the involvement of parents. Thus, there is a three-way link between parents, schools, and the community. When the partnership between any two of these stakeholders is strengthened, the other two are consequently strengthened. Additionally, enabling and empowering parental and community involvement is an important component of school reform for all students, and the barriers to effective involvement and their proposed remedies merit everyone's consideration. For ELLs, the need to examine and establish effective involvement programs is especially crucial to academic success. Given the established benefits associated with engaging parents and communities in school activities, it is worth the time and effort to create bridges that will allow them to communicate effectively between these two important worlds of children.

## Building Communities of Learners Involving Parents of ELL Students

Frequent communication with parents, and sending home resources translated into Spanish, motivates parents of English language learners to understand and participate in the education of their child. The following are some suggestions for building a collaborative relationship with your ELL families:

- ☑ Send home notes about student progress and flyers about school events.
- ☑ Send home a schedule of each new unit of instruction or concept being taught.
- ☑ Invite parents to help with literacy activities at school.
- ☑ Send home activities for parents and students to do together.
- ☑ Invite parents to share their culture as a literacy activity at school.
- ☑ Praise students by sending home notes when they are doing well.
- ☑ Provide reading lists in English and Spanish based on the students' reading level.
- ☑ Gather parents for the purpose of explaining their children's progress in school. Discuss specific ways they can help their child at home.
- ☑ Talk to parents about their children's abilities to read at home in Spanish and/or English.
- ☑ Explain to parents that you welcome their questions, comments, ideas, and help. Try to overcome parents' reluctance to talk with teachers. Encourage two-way communication. Let them know you value their input.

### ***Provide Incentives and Services to Facilitate Participation***

Some parents of ELLs — particularly new immigrants — may be holding more than one job, often supporting an extended family in their homes or communities, as well as family in their home country. Consequently, time and financial resources are often limited. You and your school can enable parents to participate by offering a number of incentives and services including:

- ☑ Giving away books for parents to start a home library through free book programs such as Reading Is Fundamental and First Book.
- ☑ Sending supplies home to facilitate students' work there.
- ☑ Providing supervised child care for younger children, so that parents can meet with teachers, attend meetings and events, and volunteer at your school.

## Building Relationships Among Schools, Communities, And Families

(Putting the Research into Practice, Southwest Educational Development Laboratory)

- ☑ **Adopt formal school- and district-level policies that promote family involvement, including an explicit focus on engaging families who reflect the full diversity of the student population. Policies may address the following:**
  - communicating often with families, both formally and informally
  - adapting materials and activities to accommodate the needs of families of all backgrounds, languages, and circumstances
  - emphasizing family and community outreach
  - involving families in school planning and decision-making processes
  - training teachers to work effectively with families
  - offering to help families build their own capacities to support their children's schooling
  
- ☑ **Demonstrate active and ongoing support from the school principal. Principals can show their support by:**
  - communicating often with families (in their native language) through school newsletters, bulletins, and other written materials;
  - holding informal meetings with families to seek their perspectives and to keep them updated on school policies and practices;
  - maintaining a strong presence at parent-teacher meetings and at other school-sponsored events for families;
  - making the implementation of family-involvement policies a priority; and
  - emphasizing that commitment with both families and school staff.

*Support from principals made a difference in helping diverse families become more engaged with their children's school.*
  
- ☑ **Honor families' hopes and concerns for their children. Most families, regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, or income, care about their children's future and do what they can to support them.**
  
- ☑ **Find ways to let families know that you recognize and value their efforts.**
  
- ☑ **Acknowledge both commonalities and differences among students and families.**

- ☑ **It is important for schools and community organizations not to simply ignore issues related to diversity or to act as if differences don't exist. Ignoring racial issues, for example, can push parents and schools farther apart.**
- ☑ **Acknowledging and valuing diversity means more than celebrating food or holidays.** It means making room for a range of voices, perspectives, resources, and styles of interacting. One important way of valuing diversity is for the school staff to reflect the varied makeup of your community. Another is to use families as resources for incorporating culturally relevant material into the local curriculum.
- ☑ **It is important to make instructional materials relevant to students' "community culture."**
- ☑ **Strengthen school staffs' capacity to work well with families.**
- ☑ **Provide supports to help immigrant families understand how schools work and what's expected of both families and students.**
- ☑ **Familiarize families with the ins and outs of that culture.** Think of school as a small country, with its own patterns of behavior and unwritten, as well as formal, rules and expectations. This is particularly true for immigrant families, who likely have experienced a different kind of school culture. Use both formal and informal strategies to help families get oriented, from conversations in the parking lot to formal meetings and classes. Organize volunteers to meet with other families and to offer guidance in negotiating the school system. In addition, find resource people who can help orient school staff members to the backgrounds of students and families.
- ☑ **Make outreach a priority;** take the extra steps necessary to make it possible for families to get involved at school, as well as at home. Important elements in any outreach plan include:
  - ensuring that families and school staffs can communicate in the language with which family members are most comfortable. Have a bilingual teacher or translator available for all family conferences and meetings; hire teachers, aides, and other school staff who speak languages other than English; provide written materials in families' native languages; post welcoming signs and other information in the languages spoken in the community.
  - making it as easy as possible for families to participate in school activities. For example, schedule meetings to accommodate working parents; work with volunteers or community-based organizations to help with child care and transportation. Organize parents who are actively involved at school to communicate with immigrant, newly arrived, and hard-to-reach families, and encourage their participation.
  - finding multiple ways for families to get involved. Where possible, draw on families' experiences and interests, such as the project that engaged Latino immigrant families in fundraising by organizing them to make and sell piñatas.

- getting out into the community. Home visits are an important way of getting to know families and showing commitment to family involvement. Participating in community activities, such as church and social or civic events, is another way of getting to know, and becoming known by, the varied members of the school's community.

- ☑ **Recognize that it takes time to build trust. As several studies described, many minority and low-income families have had frustrating experiences with schools and other public institutions.**

### Helping families strengthen student achievement

- ☑ Provide families with training and resources to support early literacy.
- ☑ Help families use specific communication and monitoring strategies to support their children's learning.
- ☑ Encourage and support students' involvement in a range of school- and community sponsored extracurricular and after-school activities.
- ☑ Help low-income families obtain the supports and services they need to keep themselves safe, healthy, and well fed.

## *How to Get Parents to Attend Workshops and Other Events*

**Here are some suggestions on how to get a good turnout for your workshops:**

- ☑ Recruit parent volunteers to help plan and promote the workshops to other parents.
- ☑ Schedule parent and family activities at least a month in advance, and try to schedule them at times that can accommodate most parents.
- ☑ List all events in the student calendar that is sent home.
- ☑ When possible, conduct some of your workshops in your parents' neighborhoods — in churches, community centers, office building meeting rooms, etc.
- ☑ Provide parents with child care services at your school. This is an opportunity to treat their children to a fun literacy-based experience with games, food, activities, and free books, if your school can afford them.
- ☑ Provide transportation such as a taxi, school bus, or parent carpool. Often taxi and bus companies are willing to donate these services.
- ☑ Provide food that is quick and easy to put together, or organize a potluck that celebrates workshop participants' traditions and cultures.
- ☑ Announce that you will be raffling off school supplies (call local businesses for donations) and additional reading materials.
- ☑ Provide parents with corporate sponsorship incentives, such as discount coupons for restaurants or school supplies. Most local establishments are more than happy to sponsor workshops and other school events.

This is a lot to do by yourself. In addition to parents, recruit other teachers, paraprofessionals, school volunteers, and even older middle-school students. You may also want to contact your local union representative (school district level) to partner with you.



## How to Reach Out to Hispanic Parents of ELLs

ELL students benefit just as much from their parents' involvement in their education as other students. Some Hispanic parents may feel apprehensive about getting involved because of their limited English skills, lack of familiarity with mainstream culture and the public school system in the United States, and other reasons. Here are some ways to reach out to parents of ELLs and increase the likelihood of their participation.

### ***Use Their Preferred Language***

This is an essential place to start. Without a common language, very little communication can take place. At home, your ELL students and their families communicate in the language they know best. Although there are regional and social variations, Spanish is one commonly understood language.

The more Spanish you know and can use as a teacher, the more you will be able to reach out to your Hispanic students and their families. Even a little Spanish can go a long way. Here are a few things you can do:

- ☑ **Find a fully bilingual interpreter.**  
Whether a school employee, parent liaison, family member, friend, or community member, this person can translate for parent-teacher conferences, back-to-school nights, PTA meetings, and regular communications. It is best to find an adult and not rely on the student as the translator, as this practice can disempower the parent.
- ☑ **Learn a few basic words and everyday expressions in Spanish.**  
Although it may seem like a small gesture, using Spanish phrases can mean a great deal to your students and their families. Making the effort shows that you respect and value their language.
- ☑ **Translate the written communications that you send home.**  
Find a way to send home personal notes and materials in Spanish. This will keep parents in the loop on issues such as report cards, school events, and homework. Try to offer complete translations in straightforward Spanish that parents can understand.
- ☑ **Put parents in touch with bilingual staff.**  
Give parents a list of names and phone numbers of bilingual staff in the school and district who they can contact to deal with educational concerns. Also encourage them to reach out to other parents who are bilingual or monolingual so they can share experiences and help one another.
- ☑ **Try taking a Spanish class.**  
Learning more Spanish will improve your communication with Hispanic students and their parents. And by going through the process of learning a second language, you will better understand the challenges faced by your students, who have to learn English and subject matter at the same time. You will also become more aware of effective strategies for teaching your students.

Adapted from [ColorinColorado.org](http://ColorinColorado.org)

# Learn About Your ELLs

## **Learn About Your ELL Students' Family Background**

- ☑ Try to really learn where your ELL families come from. They may represent diverse languages and cultures from around the world. The majority of ELL families in the United States come from Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America. These Hispanic families may have many things in common, such as customs, foods, dances, values, and the Spanish language. However, there are also many rich cultural differences within and between countries like Argentina, Mexico, Cuba, and El Salvador.
- ☑ Read about your ELL students' countries, regions, customs, histories, and languages. You can find information in books and articles and on the Internet. Even just looking in encyclopedias or travel guidebooks will give you basic overviews of their countries. The more you learn about where your students' families come from, the easier your job will become. This knowledge will help you support your students in the classroom and encourage more support from home. There are many ways to make their linguistic and cultural diversity a huge asset.
- ☑ Be sure to invite your ELL students' family members to show-and-tell, story telling, food tastings, dances, etc.
- ☑ Designing activities that encourage families to share their culture will likely raise the self-esteem of ELL students and generate greater respect from their peers. Your efforts will go a long way toward making your ELLs' parents feel more welcome.

## **Learn About Your ELL Students' Family Values**

Hispanic families often immigrate to the United States with high hopes for better educational opportunities for their children that can lead to economic improvement. Even if parents do not speak English or cannot read in Spanish, they often share some of the following values and beliefs about education:

- ☑ **High expectations**  
Hispanic parents in the United States tend to make big sacrifices for the future of their children. They often move far from home and work long hours so that their children can succeed in school and in life. So it is no surprise that these parents have high expectations and aspirations for their children's success in school.
- ☑ **Respect for the teacher and school**  
In Latin America parents tend to put teachers on a pedestal. They respect education. It is assumed that the teacher's job is at school and the parent's job is at home. Hispanic parents in the United States care deeply about their children's education, but they may not be used to taking an active role. It is up to you, the teacher, to explain that in the United States it is common for teachers to welcome and invite parents to be in touch, come in for conferences, help with reading and homework at home, and make decisions together with the school.
- ☑ **Family relationships**  
Family is often the cornerstone of the Hispanic social structure. Families have a strong sense of interdependence, mutual respect, and co-parenting. Grandparents, godparents, aunts, uncles, and older siblings may be helping to raise your ELL students. This extended family might live at home, visit frequently, or live nearby. Many Hispanics travel back and forth between their native country and the United States. Understanding this family structure might help you to gain trust and participation from both the immediate and extended family members.

## ***Find Out About Your Students' Home Environment***

Although you do not want to pry for information, the more you can find out about where your students come from, the better you will understand their strengths, needs, and real-life circumstances. One way to find out is to get to know their families — whether at school, in their home, or in the community. (Note: If a family is very reluctant to meet with you, respect their wishes and understand that they may have good reasons for this.) Having answers to the following questions may help you work better with your students and their families:

- Who lives at home? Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, older siblings? How many of them speak English? How many know how to read in English and/or Spanish?
- How long have they been in the United States? Why did they come?
- How familiar are they with the US school system?
- What is the child's prior educational experience?
- Has the child been formally instructed in English before? If so, for how long?
- Do they come from a big city or a rural town?
- Does your student have a quiet place to study? Is there someone to help with homework? Most of this information can also be obtained by using a written "Getting to Know You" survey or through informal conversations.

### ***Arrange Home and Community Visits***

Visiting homes and communities is a way to establish a relationship with parents who are working during school and after-school hours or who may feel intimidated by the school setting. Before doing this, however, make sure that parents are receptive to the idea and that your school district and union allow home visits by teachers. It is often easier to resolve difficult issues face-to-face as opposed to over the telephone or through written communication. This way, you and the parents can anticipate problems and agree on how to solve them.

#### **When organizing home and community visits, try to:**

- Arrange for an interpreter to be present.
- Respect the family's time constraints and choice of location — whether in the home, a church, or a community center.
- Be prepared to share positive news about the child's work in school.
- Point out ways they can help with their child's language development, reading skills, and homework.

Adapted from [ColorinColorado.org](http://ColorinColorado.org)


## Parents of English Language Learners No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

The No Child Left Behind Act requires extensive parent involvement at the state, district, and local school level. Among other things, parents of English language learners can now expect to:

- ☑ Have their child learn English and other subjects such as reading, science, and math at the same academic level as all other students.
- ☑ Know if their child has been identified and recommended for placement in an English language acquisition program, and to accept or refuse such placement. (Please note that in some locations, state law supersedes this and parents cannot refuse to have their child receive ESL services.)
- ☑ Choose a different English language acquisition program for their child. (This, of course, only applies to school districts that have more than one English acquisition program.)
- ☑ Apply for supplemental services, such as tutoring, for children from low-income families if their child's school is identified as "in need of improvement" for two years.
- ☑ Have their child tested annually by their school district to assess his or her progress in English language acquisition and receive information regarding their child's performance on academic tests.
- ☑ Have their child taught with programs that are scientifically proven to work.

Title III of the No Child Left Behind law requires that parents are involved in key decisions about their children. Title III provides funds for bilingual education. School districts receiving Title III funds must inform parents of:

- ☑ The reasons why their child has been identified as limited English proficient (LEP) and why their child has been placed in a program for LEP students.
- ☑ The child's level of English proficiency, including how the level was assessed and the status of the child's academic achievement.
- ☑ The method of instruction that will be used in the program, including options for alternative programs.
- ☑ How the program will meet the child's educational strengths and needs.
- ☑ How the program will help the child learn English and meet academic standards.
- ☑ The requirements your child must meet to leave the program, including when the transition will take place and when graduation from secondary school is expected.
- ☑ How the program will meet the objectives of an individualized education plan for a child with a disability.



In addition, the district must inform parents of LEP children about their rights. This information should include **written guidance** that:

- ☑ Spells out the parents' right to have their child removed immediately from a language instruction program, if they request it;
- ☑ Describes the parents' options: parents may decline to enroll their child in such a program, or they may choose another program or method of instruction, if available; and
- ☑ Assists parents to select the best program for their child, if more than one program or method of instruction is offered.

Finally, the district is required to notify parents of children in a Title III LEP program if the district has failed to make the Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs). This notice is to be provided within 30 days of public notice.

All notices to parents must be provided in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that the parent can understand.

## Los padres de estudiantes que aprenden el inglés

La ley *Que Ningún Niño Se quede Atrás* requiere la participación e involucramiento de los padres al nivel del estado, del distrito, y de la escuela local. Entre otras cosas, los padres de estudiantes que aprenden el inglés (estudiantes ELL) ahora pueden:

- ☑ Confiar en que su hijo aprenda el inglés y otras materias tales como la lectura, las ciencias, y las matemáticas al mismo nivel de dificultad académica como los demás estudiantes.
- ☑ Saber si su hijo ha sido identificado y si han recomendado que participe en un programa de adquisición del inglés, y aceptar o rehusar el programa. (Por favor, tomen en cuenta que, en algunas localidades, la ley estatal tiene precedencia y así los padres no pueden rehusar el que su hijo reciba servicios de lenguaje ESL.)
- ☑ Elegir un programa de adquisición del inglés distinto para su hijo. (Por supuesto, esto sólo se aplica a los distritos que tienen más de un programa de adquisición del inglés.)
- ☑ Solicitar servicios suplementales, por ejemplo, la tutoría, para niños que proceden de familias de bajos ingresos si su escuela ha sido indentificada como que “Necesita Mejoría” durante dos años.
- ☑ Confiar en que el distrito le haga un examen anual a su hijo para asesorar su progreso en la adquisición del inglés y recibir información relativa al progreso de su hijo en las pruebas académicas.
- ☑ Saber que su hijo recibirá la enseñanza con programas que han sido comprobados científicamente como eficaces.

El Título III de la ley *Que Ningún Niño Se quede Atrás* requiere que los padres estén involucrados en cuanto a las decisiones clave sobre la educación de sus hijos. El Título III provee fondos para la educación bilingüe.

Los distritos escolares que reciben fondos bajo el Título III tienen la obligación de informar a los padres de:

- ☑ Las razones por las cuales se le ha identificado a su hijo como estudiante con una proficiencia limitada en el inglés (estudiante LEP), y por qué le han puesto a su hijo en un programa para estudiantes LEP.
- ☑ El nivel de destreza que demuestra el estudiante en el inglés, cómo se ha asesorado dicho nivel, y cuál es la posición del logro académico del niño.
- ☑ El método de instrucción que se usará en el programa, incluidas las opciones para programas alternativos.
- ☑ Cómo encajará el programa con las fortalezas y necesidades académicas del niño.

- ☑ Cómo el programa ayudará al niño para que aprenda el inglés y llegue a los estándares o normas académicas.
- ☑ Los requisitos que tiene que cumplir el niño para que pueda salir del programa, incluida la fecha cuando tomará lugar la transición y cuándo se le espera graduarse de la preparatoria (*high school*).
- ☑ Cómo cumplirá el programa con los objetivos de un plan educacional individualizado para un niño con una discapacidad.

Adicionalmente, el distrito tiene que informar a los padres de estudiantes *LEP* sobre sus derechos. Esta información debe incluir **información escrita** que

- ☑ explica claramente que los padres tienen el derecho de que su hijo salga inmediatamente de un programa de enseñanza de lenguaje si los padres lo piden,
- ☑ describe las opciones de los padres: los padres pueden negarse a matricular a su hijo en un programa de lenguaje, o pueden optar por otro programa u otro método de instrucción, si es disponible, y
- ☑ ayuda a los padres a seleccionar el programa mejor para su hijo si se ofrecen más de un programa o métodos de instrucción.

Finalmente, se le requiere al distrito que notifique a los padres cuyo hijo esté en un programa LIEP del Título III si el programa no ha conseguido un progreso adecuado en los AMAO (*Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives* o *Objetivos Anuales Adecuados*). Tal notificación se tiene que proveer a los padres dentro de los 30 días después de que el programa se haya identificado como que no ha alcanzado un progreso adecuado.

Todas las notificaciones a los padres tienen que proveerse en un formato comprensible y uniforme y, al grado practicable, en un lenguaje que pueden entender los padres.



# Planning for Parent Involvement

It is important that schools think about parent involvement intentionally. Parent Involvement should be integrated into curriculum, instruction, leadership, and overall school culture. Title I schools are required to develop a parent involvement policy that includes a parent compact. We encourage schools to use the compact as an organizational and planning tool to provide meaningful activities for parent involvement. The following tools can help develop a parent-school compact.

[www.cpirc.org](http://www.cpirc.org)



## Parent-School Compacts

### Did You Know...

- ☑ The compact must outline how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement.
- ☑ Parents of Title I students are required to participate in the development and design of the compact.
- ☑ Compacts are developed to reflect the needs and culture of the home of the students.
- ☑ That the compact is part of the school's written parental involvement policy developed by the school and parents.
- ☑ The compact must be evaluated regularly for effectiveness.

## Committing to a Parent Involvement Plan

- ☑ Identify leaders to be involved in development of a plan including parents that represent all school demographics.
- ☑ Commit to developing, implementing, and reviewing the plan annually for revisions. A plan can be the compact itself or an extension of the compact.
- ☑ Analyze the demographics and needs related to each demographic if identified.
- ☑ Identify all parent involvement policies, activities, and documentation i.e.): staff and parent attitudes and knowledge of activities, surveys, sample policies, lists of activities, etc.
- ☑ Analyze the awareness and attitudes data to see what the similarities and differences are in expectations of staff vs. parents,
- ☑ List all parent involvement activities. Be very specific when describing activities.
- ☑ Align requirements of the law with each activity listed. Create possible activities for items that are required but for which no activity exists at present. Be sure that all activities not only comply with the law, but are also meaningful activities.
- ☑ Identify outcomes related to current activities and other desired outcomes.
- ☑ Chart outcomes and develop benchmarks. Decide how you will know if you reach a benchmark. What tools will you use to measure your progress?
- ☑ Evaluate the plan annually.

## Examples of Measuring the Effectiveness of Required Parent Involvement Activities

REQUIRED ACTIVITY	SPECIFIC ACTIVITY	MEASURE OF EFFECTIVENESS
Assist parents in understanding the State's academic content standards, student academic achievement standards, and academic assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct parent workshops</li> <li>• Provide monthly newsletter articles</li> <li>• Hold Q &amp; A nights for parents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop evaluations</li> <li>• Pre/post survey</li> <li>• Pre/post survey</li> </ul>
Provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology, to foster parent involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct parent workshops</li> <li>• Provide monthly Tip sheet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop evaluations</li> <li>• Pre/post survey</li> <li>• Levels of Use</li> </ul>
Educate school personnel, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, how to reach, communicate, and work with parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct an inservice workshop</li> <li>• Provide written materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop evaluations</li> <li>• Pre/post survey</li> </ul>
Coordinate and integrate parent involvement programs and activities with other organizations such as Head Start, Parents as Teachers, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a single parent involvement plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of jointly sponsored events and activities</li> </ul>
Ensure that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to parents in a format and language that parents can understand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop policy and procedures related to the distribution of information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre/post survey</li> <li>• Parent focus group</li> </ul>
Provide reasonable support for parent involvement activities as parents may request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document requests and any subsequent activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre/post survey</li> <li>• <i>(dependent on activity type)</i></li> </ul>



## Handouts for Parents Who Want to Become Engaged in their Child's Education

The following materials have been adapted to be family friendly so parents will enjoy reading and using them. The handouts can help parents to be involved in their child's school and at home. The materials are provided in English and Spanish and give specific ways for parents to be engaged with the school and their child.

Some of these materials have been adapted from other sources taken from highly recognized parent involvement organizations and websites on the internet, including ColorinColorado, Southwest Education Developmental Laboratories (SEDL), and the Colorado and U.S. Departments of Education.

[www.cpirc.org](http://www.cpirc.org)

## 6 Ways to Be Involved with Your Child's School

**Meet your child's teacher early in the school year.** Let your child's teacher know you're interested in communicating and learning more about what you can do to help out.

**Don't forget that you're the expert on your own child.** You know your child better than anyone else. Let the teacher know your child's strengths, weaknesses, and if you have any concerns.

**If there is a problem, follow the chain of command.** It's important to first discuss any problems with your child's teacher and try to work together to find a solution. If that doesn't solve the problem, the next step would be to talk to the assistant principal or principal, then the superintendent or school board.

**Show up well-prepared for the parent-teacher conference.** Most important, of course, is to show up. Throughout the year, keep a list of questions and concerns you'd like to share with the teacher. Talk with your child before the conference, asking if there's anything he or she wants you to bring up.

**Don't let language differences stop you from getting involved.** Many schools have teachers who speak only English, but there are assistants who speak Spanish and who can act as translators. Parents should insist that an English-proficient family member or neighbor accompany them to the school if there is no other translator available.

**If you can't visit the school, find other ways to communicate.** Maybe you can ask another family member or child care provider to talk to the teacher. Parents can send a note or leave a telephone message for their child's teacher, explaining their schedule and asking the teacher to call.

## Seis maneras de colaborar con la escuela de su hijo

Los padres, que también son educadores, ofrecen las siguientes ideas sobre cómo comunicar con la escuela de su hijo:

**Reúnase con la maestra de su hijo pronto en el año escolar.** Deje saber a la maestra que usted tiene interés en comunicarse con ella con regularidad y en aprender más sobre qué puede hacer para ayudar.

**Si no puede visitar la escuela, encuentre otras maneras de comunicarse con ella.**

Posiblemente pueda pedir a otro miembro de la familia o a la persona que cuida de los niños que hable con la maestra de su parte. Los padres pueden mandar una nota o dejar un mensaje telefónico para la maestra de su hijo en el cuál explican su horario y piden que les llame.

**No permita que las diferencias de idioma le impidan participar.** Muchas escuelas tienen maestros que hablan sólo el inglés, pero hay ayudantes que hablan el español y que pueden hacer el papel de traductor. Si no hay ningún traductor disponible, los padres deben insistir que les acompañe a la escuela un vecino o un miembro de la familia que domina el inglés.

**Asista a las reuniones entre padres y maestros, habiéndose preparado bien anteriormente.** Evidentemente, lo más importante es *ir a la reunión*. Mantenga a lo largo del año una lista de preguntas y preocupaciones que quiere compartir con la maestra. Hable con su hijo antes de la reunión, y pregúntele si hay algo que quiere que usted le mencione a la maestra.

**Si hay algún problema, siga la cadena de autoridad.** Es importante que hable primero con la maestra de su hijo y que intente colaborar para encontrar una solución. Si esto no soluciona el problema, el próximo paso sería hablar con el subdirector, con el director, con el superintendente, o finalmente, con la mesa consultiva de la escuela (*school board*).

**Nunca olvide que, en cuanto a su propio hijo, usted es el máximo experto .** Usted conoce mejor que nadie a su hijo. Deje saber a la maestra cuáles son los puntos de fuerza y de debilidad de su hijo y las preocupaciones que usted puede tener.

## Learning about the US School System and Parent Involvement

### What do schools want in this country?

In the United States, families and schools form partnerships. Parents are encouraged to ask teachers questions and be involved in making decisions regarding your child and the school. Your ideas and questions are important. The relationship between the family and the school makes a big difference in how a child can get better grades.



### How do I help with my child's education at home?

**Share your high expectations.** Perhaps you dream of your child finishing high school or attending college. Share this dream with your child often, starting at a very young age. Sharing your high expectations can help your child succeed.

**Provide a positive attitude toward school.** Children learn attitudes from their parents. When you get involved and talk positively about your children's education, your children discover that you think learning is very important. They start to believe that learning is important too, and this has a powerful influence on how well they do in school.

**Provide a good learning environment.** This means that you should take your children to the library, read books with them, and talk with them whenever you can, even when they are very young. Limit their TV watching. It's best to watch educational TV shows. Provide a quiet and consistent place to study. All these things will help them do better in school.

**Children learn everywhere.** At home, you can teach your children the names and uses of things, like the furniture, the refrigerator, and the telephone. In the community, you can talk to them about things like cars, streets, stores, and the weather. They will be learning important language skills no matter what language you're speaking, so you should do these activities in whatever language is most comfortable for you.

**Children learn better when they are healthy and well-rested.** You need to make sure that your children are getting enough sleep, going to the doctor for immunizations, getting dental checkups, and eating a healthy diet. Your community clinic can give you more information about how to do these things.

## Aprender sobre el sistema escolar en Estados Unidos y sobre la participación de los padres



### ¿Qué quieren las escuelas en este país?

En los Estados Unidos, las familias y las escuelas forman una estrecha colaboración. Se les animan a los padres para que planteen preguntas y participen en tomar las decisiones sobre sus hijos y la escuela. Sus ideas y sus preguntas son importantes. La relación entre la familia y la escuela cuenta mucho para que el niño saque provecho de la escuela.



### ¿Cómo ayudo en casa con la educación de mi hijo?

**Comparta sus altas esperanzas.** Quizás usted tenga el sueño de que su hijo termine la prepa (*high school*) o asista a la universidad. Comparta este sueño a menudo con su hijo, comenzando a muy temprana edad. El hecho de compartir sus esperanzas puede contribuir al éxito de su hijo.

**Los niños necesitan un ambiente favorable al aprendizaje.** Esto quiere decir que usted debe llevar a sus niños a la biblioteca, leer libros con ellos, y conversar con ellos a menudo, hasta cuando tengan muy pocos años. Limite sus horas delante de la televisión. Es mejor mirar programas educativos. Provee un sitio quieto para estudiar que esté siempre disponible. Todo esto les ayudará a mejorarse en la escuela.

**Los niños necesitan una actitud positiva hacia la escuela.** Los niños aprenden sus actitudes de sus padres. Cuando usted se involucre en la educación de sus hijos, ellos descubren que usted considera muy importante la educación. Empiezan a creer que el aprender también es importante, y esto tiene una influencia poderosa sobre su progreso en la escuela.

**Los niños aprenden donde estén.** En casa puede enseñar a sus hijos los nombres y usos de las cosas como, por ejemplo, los muebles, el refrigerador, y el teléfono. Dentro de la comunidad, usted les puede comentar cosas de los carros, las calles, las tiendas, y el tiempo. Estarán aprendiendo habilidades de lenguaje importantes, sea cual sea el idioma que hablan. Por tanto, usted debe hacer estas actividades en el idioma que le resulte más cómodo.

**Los niños aprenden más y mejor cuando se encuentren sanos y descansados.** Usted debe asegurarse de que sus niños duermen bastante, vayan al médico para vacunarse, tengan chequeos dentales, y coman una dieta sana. Su clínica de vecindad puede informarle más sobre cómo hacer estas cosas.



## Learning about the US School System and Parent Involvement



### How do I help with my child's education at school?

**Use translators.** Ask the school for a translator if you need one. Or, bring along a friend who speaks both English and Spanish. If you want to speak with the teacher or someone else at the school, it is important that you understand each other well.

**Build trust.** Schools want parents to communicate with them and to be involved.

**Get to know your child's teacher.** Talk with the teacher frequently, even when things are going well and there are no problems with your child. Ask about your child's learning and behavior. Ask about things you can do at home to help your child learn better. Ask about ways you can get involved at the school, for example, by helping out in the classroom or attending class field trips.

**Attend parent-teacher conferences.** If you are not available at regular conference times, call and ask for a time that fits your schedule. Write down and bring questions about things you would like to know, or things that are worrying you.

**Ask questions.** To understand the school better, it is important to ask questions: "How can I stop that bully from picking on my son in the playground?", "Why is my daughter painting in class when I want her to learn to read?" The better you understand what's happening, the better it is for your child.

**Talk to the teacher about your child's strengths and areas of need.** *Remember, you are the expert on your own child!* When you talk to the teachers, you can teach them about ways to work better with your child. Maybe your son learns better when he sits closer to the teacher. Maybe your daughter learns best by practicing. It's better for your children if you tell the teacher these things. Your feelings and opinions are important.

**Learn about school policies and school programs.** Find out how they affect your child and how he or she can benefit from them. Such programs could be:

- Afterschool programs
- Tutoring
- Homework help

## Aprender sobre el sistema escolar en Estados Unidos y sobre la participación de los padres



### ¿Cómo ayudo dentro de la escuela con la educación de mi hijo?

**Utilice traductores/intérpretes.** Si le hace falta, pida a la escuela un intérprete. O, traiga consigo a un amigo o amiga que hable ambos idiomas. Si quiere hablar con la maestra o con otra persona en la escuela, es importante que ambas partes se entiendan bien.

**Construya confianza.** Las escuelas quieren que los padres comuniquen con ellas y que participen.

**Llegue a conocer bien a los maestros de su hijo.** Hable con la maestra a menudo aunque todo va bien y no hay problemas con su hijo. Pregunte sobre el aprendizaje y el comportamiento de su hijo. Pregunte sobre las actividades que puede hacer en casa para ayudar a que su hijo aprenda mejor. Pida información sobre cómo puede involucrarse en la escuela - por ejemplo, ayudando en el salón de clase o con los viajes educativos de la clase.

**Asista a las reuniones entre padres y maestros.** Si usted no puede asistir durante los horarios normales, llame y pida una hora que le conviene mejor. Haga lo posible por llevar consigo preguntas sobre las cosas que quiere saber, o sobre los asuntos que le están preocupando.

**Haga preguntas.** Si quiere entender mejor la escuela, es importante hacer preguntas. “¿Cómo puedo evitar que intimide el peleón de la clase a mi hijo durante el recreo?” “¿Por qué está pintando mi hija en clase cuando yo quiero que aprenda a leer?” Si usted entiende lo que está pasando, su hijo lo pasará mejor.

**Recuerde que, en cuanto a su hijo, ¡usted es el máximo experto!** Cuando hable con los maestros, usted les puede enseñar formas de trabajar con su hijo que le sientan mejor. Posiblemente su hijo aprenda mejor sentándose más cerca de la maestra. Posiblemente su hija tenga sueño porque hubo un alarma de incendio en su edificio la noche anterior. Es mejor para sus hijos que usted le informe a la maestra de estas cosas. Sus sentimientos y sus opiniones son importantes.

**Infórmese de las reglas de la escuela y de los programas que ofrece.** Averigüe cómo afectan a su hijo y cómo su hijo puede beneficiarse de ellos. Estos programas podrían ser:

- Programas para después del horario escolar normal
- Tutorías
- Ayuda con la tarea

## Learning about the US School System and Parent Involvement

### What if I have problems with the school?



**Keep trying.** Remember, teachers and principals are busy people, just like you. If you tell them about a problem and nothing changes, maybe they forgot or didn't have time yet to take care of it. Call them again, or write them a note. Don't give up, because then nothing will change. But they do need to listen to you. If you think they aren't taking your problem seriously, there are other things you can try.

**Set up a special meeting.** Make an appointment to speak with the teacher or the guidance counselor about your concern. If that doesn't work, you may want to meet with the principal. Even though you might be upset, remember to stay calm!

**If you do not agree, you can appeal.** Maybe you disagree with the school's decision about your child, such as being placed in a reading group that is too easy. Maybe the school won't hire enough translators. You have the right to appeal these decisions. You can find out how to start the appeal process by asking someone at the school or the school district office. It's important to do what you think is best for your child's education.

**Talk with parents and advocates outside the school.** Your neighbor or someone at your church might already have solved a problem similar to the one you're having now. Some communities even have organizations to help Latino parents. Ask around to see if anyone has advice for you. Solving a problem can be easier when you have help.

## Aprender sobre el sistema escolar en Estados Unidos y sobre la participación de los padres

### ¿Qué pasa si tengo problemas con la escuela?



**Siga intentando.** Recuerde que, al igual que usted, los maestros y directores están muy atareados. Si les cuenta un problema y nada cambia, es posible que se les haya olvidado o que aún no hayan tenido tiempo para arreglarlo. Llámelos de nuevo, o escríbalos una nota. No se rinda, porque entonces no cambiará nada. Y sí tienen que escucharle a usted. Si usted piensa que no toman en serio su problema, hay otras cosas que puede intentar.

**Arregle una reunión especial. Haga una cita para hablar con la maestra o con un consejero sobre sus preocupaciones.** Si no funciona esta estrategia, haga una cita con el director. Posiblemente usted se encuentre muy ansiosa, pero ¡es importante mantener la calma!

**Si no está de acuerdo con alguna decisión, puede apelar.** Es posible que no esté de acuerdo con la decisión de la escuela sobre su hijo, por ejemplo, que le han puesto en un grupo de lectura que es demasiado fácil. Quizás la escuela no quiera contratar a bastantes traductores. Usted tiene el derecho de apelar estas decisiones. Puede informarse sobre cómo comenzar el proceso de apelar, preguntando a alguien en la escuela o en la oficina del distrito. Es importante que haga lo que considera importante en cuanto a la educación de su hijo.

**Hable con otros padres y con expertos fuera de la escuela que saben abogar por los padres.** Su vecino o alguien de su iglesia ya puede haber solucionado un problema similar al suyo. Algunas comunidades tienen organizaciones que ayudan a padres hispanos. Pida consejos a las personas que le rodean. La solución para un problema siempre llega más rápido cuando uno tenga la ayuda de otros.

# Helping Your Child Become a Reader

Read books in any language!

## ***Before Reading***

- ☑ Point out the front and back of the book.
- ☑ Read the author and illustrator names. Ask about their roles. (The author writes the story. The illustrator draws the pictures.)
- ☑ Talk about what is happening on the cover of the book. Ask questions such as, “Why do you think the boy looks sad?”
- ☑ Ask questions such as, “What do you think this book will be about?” This lets children predict what will happen. Also, this kind of question usually requires an answer that is more than one word.

## ***During Reading***

- ☑ Follow the words with your finger as you read.
- ☑ Read the book with excitement. Use different voices for different characters.
- ☑ Hold the book so that the child can see the print.
- ☑ Point out letters, punctuation marks, and pictures.
- ☑ Let the child “fill in the blank” at the end of sentences.
- ☑ Ask questions such as:
  - ~ “What do you think the story is about?”
  - ~ “What do you think will happen next?”
  - ~ “Have you ever wondered about this?”
  - ~ “Tell me about something this reminds you of?”

## ***After Reading***

- ☑ Ask children more questions that make them think, such as:
  - ~ “What did you like most or least about the story?”
  - ~ “Were we right about what we thought the book was going to be about?”
  - ~ “Can you tell me about something you’ve done or seen that relates to the story?”
- ☑ Have children write, draw or act out their version of the story.

## Ayudar a su hijo para que llegue a ser *Lector*

### ¡Lea libros en cualquier idioma!

#### ***Antes de leer:***

- ☑ Señálele las tapas de adelante y de atrás del libro.
- ☑ Léale el nombre del autor y del ilustrador. Pregúntele acerca de sus roles. (El autor escribe el cuento. El ilustrador hace los dibujos).
- ☑ Háblele acerca de la cubierta del libro. Hágle preguntas tales como, “¿Por qué piensas que el niño está triste?”
- ☑ Hágle preguntas tales como, “¿De qué crees que se trata este libro?” Esto les permite a los niños predecir qué es lo que va a pasar. Generalmente, este tipo de preguntas también requiere una respuesta de más de una palabra.

#### ***Durante la lectura:***

- ☑ Señálele las palabras con su dedo a medida que lea.
- ☑ Léale el libro con entusiasmo. En el diálogo, hable con voces divertidas.
- ☑ Sostenga el libro de manera que el niño pueda ver las letras.
- ☑ Señálele las letras, los signos de puntuación y las figuras.
- ☑ Hágle preguntas, tales como:
  - ~ “¿De qué piensas que se trata el libro?”
  - ~ “¿Qué crees que pasará luego?”
  - ~ “¿Te has preguntado esto alguna vez?”

#### ***Después de la lectura:***

- ☑ Hágles a sus hijos más preguntas que los dejen pensando, tales como:
  - ~ “¿Qué fue lo que te gustó más del cuento?”
  - ~ “¿Qué fue lo que te gustó menos?”
  - ~ “¿Teníamos razón de lo que pensábamos que se trataba el libro?”
- ☑ Pídeles a sus hijos que escriban o dicten su versión del cuento.

## Empowering Parents of English Language Learners at Home

All parents can be helpful in their children's literacy development, regardless of their language, education, or literacy level. Parents who speak little or no English can contribute to their children's education in valuable ways. English language learners may benefit when they develop solid literacy skills in their first language before learning to read in a second one. This develops key language and literacy skills that may enable children to become excellent readers.

### Literacy Activities at Home

Regardless of their language or literacy level, parents can help their children develop oral language skills and support their literacy efforts. Here are a few ideas:

#### **Tell stories.**

In Hispanic families, oral storytelling is often more of a natural activity than reading a bedtime story together. By telling stories, parents are developing their children's vocabulary and oral language skills. Parents can also encourage children to add to stories or make up their own.

#### **“Read” wordless picture books.**

Wordless picture books tell stories through pictures. This can be a fun way for parents and children to sit down together with books and talk about stories. Children can learn how stories progress, make predictions, and develop a love for books.

#### **Say rhymes and sing songs.**

Rhymes, songs, and chants help develop oral language skills such as intonation and word stress.

#### **Make frequent trips to the public library.**

Taking children to the library once a week and letting them choose their own books is a great way to encourage young readers. Become familiar with the idea of a public library where anyone can check out books for free, but do need to show proof of address.

#### **Engage in meaningful conversation.**

For oral language development, it is important that parents engage their children in meaningful conversation. Whether at the dinner table or at the grocery store, parents should ask children questions that about what they child thinks or feels.

#### **Watch closed-captioned TV.**

By turning on the closed-captioned feature on their TV sets, children can read the words that the characters are speaking on the screen. This could also be a way for parents to practice their English. It is important for children to see words in print.

#### **Read books in Spanish.**

Just as English-speaking parents read books with their children in English, Spanish-speaking parents can read books with their children in Spanish.

#### **Read bilingual books.**

Bilingual books are a great way for ELL students and their parents to enjoy books together. In addition, they can both improve their English along the way.

## Los padres de estudiantes que aprenden el inglés tienen el poder de ayudar en casa

Todos los padres pueden ayudar en el desarrollo de la alfabetización de su hijo, no obstante su lengua nativa, educación, o nivel de alfabetización. Los padres que hablan el inglés poco o nada, sin embargo pueden contribuir a la educación de sus hijos de varias maneras valiosas. Los estudiantes que están aprendiendo el inglés pueden sacar mucho provecho desarrollando habilidades sólidas en su lengua nativa antes de aprender a leer la segunda lengua. De esta forma el estudiante desarrolla habilidades clave en su capacidad de leer, escribir, y pensar. Tales habilidades pueden ayudarles a ser lectores excelentes.

### Actividades de leer y escribir en casa

No obstante su lengua nativa ni su nivel de alfabetización, los padres pueden ayudar a que sus hijos desarrollen habilidades de lenguaje oral, y pueden así apoyar a sus hijos en sus esfuerzos para aprender a leer. A continuación hay algunas ideas:

#### Cuente historias y cuentos.

Para las familias hispanas, la costumbre de *contar* cuentos oralmente suele ser una actividad quizás más natural que *leer* cuentos a la hora de dormir. Contando historias, los padres están fomentando el vocabulario y las habilidades orales del lenguaje de sus hijos. Los padres también pueden animar a los hijos a que añadan detalles a los cuentos, o que inventen sus propios cuentos.

#### “Lea” libros sin palabras (libros de dibujos).

Los libros sin palabras cuentan historias a través de los dibujos. Pueden proporcionar una manera divertida de sentarse, padres e hijos, con libros y de charlar sobre los cuentos. De esta forma, los niños pueden aprender cómo progresa un cuento, cómo hacer predicciones, y cómo llegar a tener un amor por los libros.

#### Recite rimas y cante canciones.

Las rimas, canciones, y cantos rítmicos ayudan a desarrollar el lenguaje oral y las habilidades como la entonación y la énfasis silábica.

#### Haga viajes frecuentes a la biblioteca pública.

El llevar a los niños a la biblioteca una vez a la semana para que puedan escoger sus propios libros es una manera fantástica de animar a estos jóvenes lectores. Póngase familiar con la idea de la biblioteca pública, donde todo el mundo puede sacar libros sin pagar nada, con sólo una prueba de su dirección.

#### Involucre a sus hijos en conversaciones significativas.

Para el buen desarrollo del lenguaje oral, es importante que los padres conversen con sus hijos de forma significativa. Si se encuentran en la mesa de cenar o en la tienda de comprar comestibles, los padres deben plantearles a los niños preguntas sobre qué piensan y qué sientan.

#### Mire la televisión con el “diálogo escrito” puesta.

Poniendo en función los subtítulos en la pantalla de la televisión (*closed captioning*), los niños pueden leer las palabras que dicen los personajes de su programa favorito. Los padres, también podrían practicar su inglés de esta forma. Es muy importante que los niños vean las palabras escritas.

#### Lea libros en español.

Tal como los padres que hablan inglés leen libros con sus niños en inglés, los padres que hablan español pueden leer libros en español con sus hijos.

#### Lea libros bilingües.

Los libros bilingües proporcionan una oportunidad fabulosa para que estudiantes del inglés (ELL) y sus padres puedan disfrutar de los libros juntos. Además, para ambos es una manera de mejorar el inglés.



## Homework Help

If parents do not speak English, there are a variety of ways you can help:

### **Provide a Regular Homework Time.**

Parents can keep in touch with teachers to make sure their children are finishing their homework. Schedule a time for homework everyday, even if there is none assigned, children can practice skills they are learning in school. This will avoid the power struggle of getting homework done.

### **Provide good workspace.**

It is important it is for children to have a consistent, quiet workspace to read or do their homework with materials ready for use. Even if it is a simple table and chair, children will concentrate better with a defined place to study.

### **Find a homework support.**

If parents cannot directly help with homework, locate a someone who can help the child and answer any questions. This may be an aunt, uncle, neighbor, older sibling, or volunteer from a local tutoring program. If homework completion is an issue, because of space or there is not someone there to help at home when needed. See if your school has homework clubs where children can go after school and complete (or at least begin) their homework in a good work environment.

### **Starting a Home Library**

Parents can help their children develop a special collection of books at home:

#### **Pick a special place in the house.**

Designate a book area so that the child knows where to find his or her books. Buy, make, or clear off an area for a simple bookshelf. Even a board or cardboard box will do.

#### **Find quality books.**

There are a number of ways to build up a home library. Make frequent trips to the public library. Parents can also buy books from bookstores and school book fairs as well as finding books for little cost at used bookstores, thrift stores, and garage sales. Another way to develop a collection is to encourage family members and friends to give books to their children as presents for birthdays and other occasions or trade books with classmates and friends.

## Ayuda con la tarea

Aunque los padres no hablan el inglés, todavía existen muchas maneras de ayudar:

### **Mantenga una hora fija para la tarea.**

Los padres pueden comunicarse con regularidad con los maestros para asegurarse de que sus hijos estén cumpliendo su tarea. Fije una hora cada día para la tarea. Aunque no haya tarea asignada aquel día, los niños pueden practicar las habilidades que están aprendiendo en la escuela. Tal constancia evitará la lucha diaria de hacer la tarea.

### **Provee un sitio bueno para el estudio.**

Es importante que los niños tengan un sitio fijo y quieto donde pueden leer o hacer su tarea y donde todos los útiles necesarios estén a mano. Incluso una simple mesa y silla - un sitio definido de estudio -hará que los niños se concentren mejor.

### **Busque apoyo para la tarea.**

Si los padres no pueden ayudar directamente con la tarea, busquen a alguien que puede ayudar al niño y que puede dar respuestas a sus preguntas. Puede ser una tía, tío, vecino, hermano mayor, o un voluntario de algún programa local de tutoría. Si el problema es completar la tarea, debido a la falta de espacio o de ayuda en casa, investigue si la escuela tiene un club de tarea donde los niños pueden ir después de la escuela para terminar su tarea (o por lo menos, comenzarla) en un ambiente de estudio bueno.

### **Comenzar a construir una biblioteca en casa**

Los padres pueden ayudar a que sus niños empiecen una colección especial de libros en su casa:

### **Elija un sitio especial en la casa.**

Designe un espacio o área para libros para que el niño sepa dónde encontrar sus libros. Puede comprar o construir un estante especial. O simplemente, puede limpiar un espacio particular que sea para sus libros. Hasta una plancha de madera o una caja de cartón puede valer.

### **Busque libros de calidad.**

Hay varias maneras de formar una biblioteca en casa. Haga viajes frecuentes a la biblioteca pública. Los padres también pueden comprar libros en las tiendas o librerías, en las ferias del libro en las escuelas, y también en tiendas de libros de segunda mano o en mercadillos y rastros donde encontrarán libros a bajo precio. Otra manera de comenzar su colección es de animar a los miembros de la familia y a amigos para que den libros a sus niños como regalos de cumpleaños u otras ocasiones. También los niños pueden intercambiar libros con compañeros de estudio y con amigos.



## Handouts for Parents Who Want to Become Engaged in their Child's Education

The following materials have been adapted to be family friendly so parents will enjoy reading and using them. The handouts can help parents to be involved in their child's school and at home. The materials are provided in English and Spanish and give specific ways for parents to be engaged with the school and their child.

Some of these materials have been adapted from other sources taken from highly recognized parent involvement organizations and websites on the internet, including ColorinColorado, Southwest Education Developmental Laboratories (SEDL), and the Colorado and U.S. Departments of Education.

[www.cpirc.org](http://www.cpirc.org)