

## What should I expect when my child learns more than one language?



Every child is different. Learning more than one language depends on how often your child experiences both languages.

- Children use their first words by the time they are one year old, such as, “mama” or “dada.” By age 2, most children can use two-word phrases, such as, “my book” or “want milk.” These developmental milestones are the same for children who learn only one language.
- Sometimes children who are learning more than one language may mix words from both languages in the same sentence or mix-up grammar rules. This is normal.
- When a second language is introduced, some children may not use the other language right away. This is also normal.

## If my child is having trouble communicating, should we use only one language?

If your child has problems using more than one language, use the language you are most comfortable with when talking to your child. If you have questions or need support with your child’s development, talk to a FIPP staff member.



To find out more about children and bilingualism contact The Family, Infant and Preschool Program.



**Family, Infant and  
Preschool Program**

800-822-3477  
828-433-2661

Please visit us online at  
[www.fipp.org](http://www.fipp.org)

FIPP is a community-based program of the J. Iverson  
Riddle Developmental Center, Morganton, NC.

## Children and Bilingualism



**Family, Infant and  
Preschool Program**



## Children and Bilingualism

Anyone can learn to speak more than one language. People who can speak more than one language well are referred to as bilingual. Children can become bilingual from a very early age. Depending on their opportunities to hear and use more than one language, some children know one language better than the other. Learning to use two languages takes lots of practice. Children can practice their languages by interacting with parents and other important people during typical everyday activities at home, school, and in the community.



### How does my child become bilingual?

- *Talk to your child using the language(s) you want him/her to learn.*
- *Use the language while you and your child are doing things he/she enjoys doing.*
- *Provide your child with many opportunities to hear and practice using both languages during everyday situations.*

### What resources can I use to help my child be bilingual?

- **Books.** Read to your child in both languages. Books with topics of interest to your child can be found at bookstores, libraries, and on the internet.
- **Audiotapes and CDs.** If your child likes music, tapes and CDs in other languages, you can sing together as a way to learn a second language.
- **Videotapes and DVDs.** If your child likes to watch videos or DVDs, you may want to find titles in the languages your child is learning. Children's programs are also available in many languages.
- **People.** Playing with, talking to, and participating in interesting activities with important people in your child's life who speak another language provide opportunities to learn a second language.



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The content of this brochure was adapted from information found at [www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org)