



AMERICAN
SPEECH-LANGUAGE-
HEARING
ASSOCIATION

The Advantages of Being Bilingual

Most children have the capacity and facility to learn more than one language. Researchers say that there are advantages to being bilingual. These advantages might include;

- Being able to learn new words easily
- Playing rhyming games with words like "cat" and "hat"
- Breaking down words by sounds, such as C-A-T for cat
- Being able to use information in new ways
- Putting words into categories
- Coming up with solutions to problems
- Good listening skills
- Connecting with others

Learn More

- Learning Two Languages
- Second Language Acquisition
- Accent Modification

According to the American Community Survey, more than one in 5 individuals over the age of 5 (21%) speak a language other than English at home. That number of bilingual speakers is projected to increase in the coming years.

Children who are learning to speak two languages follow patterns of learning. The sounds of the first language can influence how children learn and use a second language. It is easier to learn sounds and words when the languages you are learning are similar. Over time, the more difficult sounds and words will be learned.

If a child has a speech or language problem, it will show up in both languages. However, these problems are not caused by learning two languages. If you know a child who is learning a second language and you have concerns about speech and language development, ASHA recommends contacting a bilingual speech-language pathologist (SLP). If you are unable to find a bilingual speech-language pathologist, look for a SLP who knows the rules and structure of both languages and who has access to an interpreter. For more information or for a referral to a SLP, contact ASHA at 800-638-TALK (8255) (Spanish-speaking operators available)

Fact: Communication disorders affect more than 42 million Americans. Of these, 28 million have a hearing loss and 14 million have a speech or language disorder.

Brochure on Bilingualism Available

A brochure, "Teaching Your Child Two Languages," is available to consumers free of charge from ASHA. This brochure is written for parents who are considering introducing a second language. It describes different ways parents can assist in that learning process.

A bilingual flipbook, "Becoming Bilingual"/"El Niño Bilingüe," is available to consumers from ASHA as well. With one side in English and the other in Spanish, this brochure describes the typical language development of bilingual children and answers frequently asked questions about how to support them.

You may receive one complimentary copy of any brochure. Call Product Sales at 888-498-6699 to request yours today.

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