



Appendix A

Campaign Launch Encourages Dual Language Learning Across L.A. County



Christina Hoag | Freelance Writer

"Two Languages. Twice the Opportunities." That's the message of First 5 LA's new campaign to encourage dual language learning and dispel myths that growing up in a multilingual environment will impede young children's development.

"We need to have continual messaging about the benefits of being bilingual and bicultural," said First 5 LA Program Officer Gina Rodriguez. "It's important to reinforce that it is really a cultural asset."

Funded as part of [First 5 LA's Dual Language Learner Initiative](#), the campaign utilizes multiple channels, starting with display posters, billboards, bus benches and more throughout L.A. County. The campaign also features radio spots and newspaper ads that will run until the end of August. Brightly colored brochures in [Spanish](#) and [Chinese](#) are also being distributed through more than 100 child care providers to give to their client families, as well as through branches of the county and city library systems and First 5 LA-funded home visiting services.





Two Languages

Twice the Opportunities

When we support children in learning more than one language, we give them a superpower! Being multilingual can lead to improved academic and social emotional abilities, more career opportunities, and better financial outcomes in your children's lives.

Plus, they will grow up with greater awareness of their heritage, create more meaningful connections with friends and family, and enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

Tips





兩種語言，

雙倍機會

當我們支持孩子學習一種以上語言時，我們就會賦予他們超能力！會說多種語言可以提高孩子的學業和社交情感能力，為他們帶來更多的職業機會和更好的經濟收入。

此外，他們將在成長過程中更加了解自己的傳統，與朋友和家人建立更有意義的聯繫，並為成功進入幼兒園做好準備。

提示

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Launched in 2021, the Initiative is being implemented by [Quality Start LA \(QSLA\)](#), a nonprofit collaborative dedicated to improving the quality of child care for children under age 5 in L.A. County. In addition to First 5 LA, the collaborative is led by five other early childhood education agencies: the L.A. County Office of Education, the Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles (CCALA), the L.A. County Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education, the L.A. County Child Care Planning Committee, and Partnerships in Education, Articulation and Coordination in Higher Education (PEACH). Additional partners on the campaign include Early Edge California and UNITE-LA.



Encouraging dual language learning is one of QSLA's key goals. Over the past two years, the collaborative has developed a robust bank of resources aimed at creating greater awareness among both parents and early childhood educators about the benefits of bilingualism. Resources include workshops and training courses offered both in person and online, "Read Together" live events where a multilingual author reads a picture book in two languages, and materials such as bilingual picture books. Resources are available in Spanish and Mandarin, the most common languages spoken besides English in L.A. County. Read Together events have also been held in Tagalog and Armenian.



"Parents have been really appreciative," said CCALA's Ilyssa Foxx, who serves as QSLA's director. "They don't know where to find books in their home language. The need is huge."

California is the most linguistically diverse state in the nation, while Los Angeles is the most multilingual county in the state. Over 60 percent of children under 5 live in households where English is not the primary language.

Parents are often susceptible to misconceptions about bilingualism, such as the erroneous idea that hearing two languages confuses young children or the myth that speaking in their heritage language will prevent children from learning English well enough to succeed.

"We have to do a lot of myth dispelling," Foxx said. "Parents receive a lot of mixed messages."

In fact, research has shown that a second language is an asset throughout life. Bilingual people have a lower risk of developing dementia, exhibit higher cognitive flexibility, enjoy expanded job opportunities and display a stronger sense of identity and awareness of cultural diversity.

Child care providers said parents have received the brochures with enthusiasm. Yanfen Zhang, who provides care in her Monterey Park home for 11 mostly Chinese-speaking children, ranging in age from 14 months to 4 years, said the brochure has assuaged the fears of many parents who have been concerned that learning their home language might



cause children to experience speech delays or be held back academically in school.

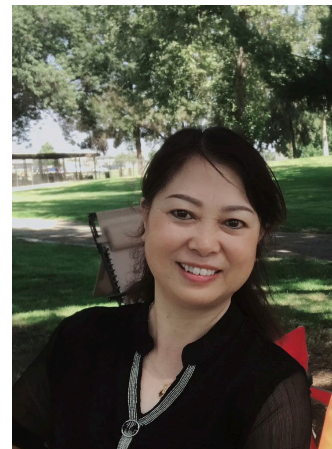
“The brochure was really clear,” she said. “They feel they have a better understanding in how learning two languages can work and have more confidence in their children speaking their home language.”

Zhang said the brochures marked the first time in her 26 years of child care that she has seen resources about dual language acquisition for the Chinese community.

The key to developing dual language use is to support young children in both English and their home language before they enter school. The brochure contains several ways that parents can help their children, such as teaching them songs, watching videos and playing games in their heritage language, taking them to cultural events, and praising their efforts to converse in their home language. It also notes the advantages of bilingual children, including having a wider circle of friends in school.

“It validates what parents are already doing and gives them more guidance,” Foxx said. “The message we’ve received is that they want more.”

Shirong Zeng, who cares for nine children ranging in age from 18 months to 4 years in her La Puente home, said that, while parents understand that their children must speak English to succeed, they also want their families to retain their cultural roots.



“Parents worry that if their kids are raised with two languages, they won’t speak either very well, so they emphasize learning English. The brochure has made them more accepting of learning two languages and more excited that their

children can grow up speaking two languages and being close to their culture,” she said.

Both child care providers said they also have trilingual children, who learn two languages from parents from different ethnic backgrounds and also learn English. Zeng said she hopes to see more in-depth resources to give to parents about the benefits of bilingual children in the future.

Resources were designed to be evergreen and are available for download from the [Quality Start LA website](#).

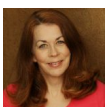
California has come a long way since the days when bilingualism was frowned upon. Back in 1998, Proposition 227 was passed with the intent of eliminating bilingual education and requiring public schools to teach all students only in English. Part of the English-only movement, the law was subsequently repealed by voters in 2016.

“The pendulum has swung completely to the other side,” First 5 LA’s Rodriguez said. “We’re going to continue to work with partners to get this message out.”





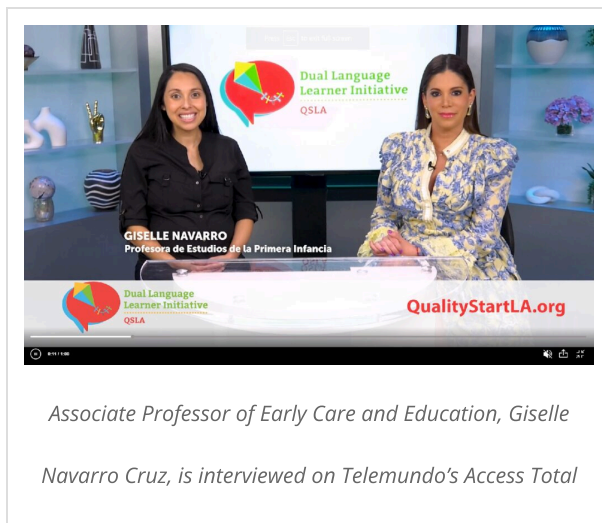
Media Campaign to Promote Bilingualism Adds Four New Languages



Christina Hoag | Freelance Writer

Last year, Spanish and Chinese. This year, Vietnamese, Khmer, Korean and Armenian. The Dual Language Learner Initiative has launched a new media campaign in four additional languages to encourage increased bilingualism among Los Angeles County children.

Thanks to the success of the [initial Spanish and Chinese campaign](#) and a \$2 million grant from the L.A. County Office of Education, the Initiative's expansion now includes radio and television spots, digital advertisements, and billboards in four languages that are also widely spoken throughout the county. Colorful brochures will also be handed out to parents through child care and home visiting providers and local libraries.



Associate Professor of Early Care and Education, Giselle

Navarro Cruz, is interviewed on Telemundo's Access Total

The campaign aims to encourage parents to teach children their home language because bilingualism benefits people throughout their lives. Research has shown that learning a second language lowers the risk of dementia, expands cognitive flexibility, increases job opportunities and provides greater

awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity.

California is the most linguistically diverse state in the nation, and Los Angeles is the most linguistically diverse county in the state. Research shows that nearly 60% of children under 5 grow up in homes where English is not the primary language. In such a multilingual region, adding the new languages was a much-needed development, said

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programs for Early Edge California, one of the partners in the campaign.

([Click here](#) to listen to an episode of the podcast, “Talking to Grandma,” in which Crolette and First 5 LA Program Officer Gina Rodriguez discuss the campaign.)

“We need to be reaching all of our communities,” she said. “These campaigns uplift the benefits of bilingualism and reach some of our most vulnerable communities.”



Launched in 2021, the DLL Initiative is being implemented by Quality Start LA, a nonprofit collaborative dedicated to improving the quality of child care for children under age 5 in L.A. County. In addition to First 5 LA, which funded the Spanish and Chinese campaign last year, the collaborative is led by five other early childhood education agencies: the L.A. County Office of Education, the Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles, the L.A. County Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education, the L.A. County Child Care Planning Committee, and Partnerships in Education, Articulation and Coordination in Higher Education (PEACH). Additional partners include Early Edge California and UNITE-LA.

The communication campaigns align with national and state policies concerning bilingual education, especially in early learning, when children are most open for language development, Crolotte said.



One of the primary goals of the campaign is to dispel the myth that using two or more languages at home will confuse children and hinder their English language learning. Experts say that parents don't need to worry about children not learning English because they are surrounded by an English-speaking environment. In fact, once children start school, daily use of their home language starts to drop off, making it more challenging to maintain a non-English language.



“Children lose that interest,” said Charles Song, a native Cambodian and an active member of the large Cambodian community in Long Beach. Song reviewed [Khmer language](#) materials for the campaign.

The DLL campaign will encourage parents to keep their home language alive, Song said. He also hopes it will boost efforts to establish a Khmer-language dual immersion school in the Long Beach Unified School District. Dual immersion schools offer instruction in both English and another language. “The campaign is a new beginning to bring people to join the force,” he said. “This is a big deal for us. I’m very grateful Khmer was included.”

The lack of bilingual materials for young children in less widely spoken languages in the United States is another factor that can hinder language acquisition.

Author and journalist Chau Nguyen said she wanted to teach her daughter her heritage language, Vietnamese, but found few resources existed. So she decided to create her own, penning a small book to teach her daughter the Vietnamese alphabet. Word got out, and soon other parents began clamoring for a copy. The demand was so great that Nguyen decided to team up with an



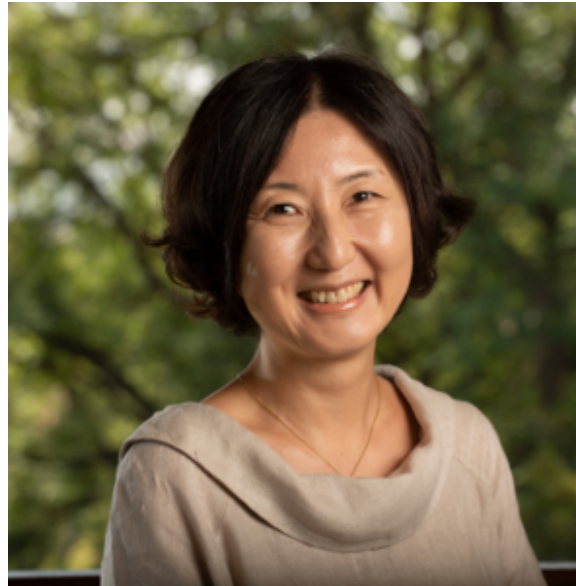
illustrator and formally publish her project as a board book. Today, Nguyen has a series of eight books and two games in a collection she calls “Gemma’s Library” in honor of her daughter. The books focus on vocabulary acquisition — such as colors, numbers and animals — as well as feelings and daily activities. “It’s been a very heartwarming response,” she said. “There’s definitely a need for these types of books.”

As part of the DLL Initiative, Nguyen will be featured in an upcoming [Read-Aloud event](#) where she will read from some of her books and engage children in fun activities.

Attitudes and official policies toward bilingualism have undergone a sea-change from 25 years ago. In 1998, California voters passed Proposition 227, a measure that eliminated bilingual education and required public schools to teach all students only in English. The law, which was in keeping with the English-only movement at that time, was repealed by voters in 2016.

The change in attitude has been driven by wider acceptance of multiculturalism and research showing the advantages of speaking more than one language, Crolotte said.

Attitudes among immigrants toward bilingualism have also shifted, said Soon Young Jang, assistant professor in early childhood studies at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, who specializes in bilingualism and related topics. Jang, who reviewed [Korean language materials](#) for the DLL Initiative, explained that previous generations of immigrants focused on blending into U.S. society as much as possible under the belief that “we have to be assimilated in our host country in order to be successful”



Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education,
Soon Young Jang, Ph.D.

Nowadays, more immigrant families want their children to learn their heritage language as a way to connect to their culture, roots and relatives, Jang said.

Still, it’s an uphill battle with few resources to support bilingualism and opportunities to speak languages such as Korean outside the home.



Some families send their children to Korean language programs, often offered at local churches on weekends, but it’s usually too little to become fluent or retain fluency. An ideal way to acquire fluency is to

attend a dual immersion school, Jang said.

“A few hours a week is not enough,” she explained. “The tendency is to

become stronger in English and weaker in Korean.”

Featuring easy teaching strategies parents can use, the media campaign to promote bilingualism will go a long way toward helping build up parents’ confidence to teach children their heritage language, said Giselle E. Navarro-Cruz, assistant professor in early childhood studies at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, and a consultant for the Dual Language Learners Initiative.



Offering the campaign in as many languages as possible strengthens bilingualism overall. “In California, we see so many languages,” she said. “It’s important to value all languages.”





Conversations That Count: Encouraging Bilingualism in Young Learners



By, Ruel Nollado | Freelance Writer

April 22, 2025

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The young boy is talking about cognates.

“I know some words in Spanish,” Mateo tells the nice lady sitting next to him in the booth. “When we watch these videos, they show the word first in English and then, at the bottom, in Spanish. Like the English and Spanish words for *vehicle*.”

The nice lady nods. “Exactly. It’s *vehicle* in English and *vehiculo* in Spanish. You see what you did there? That’s called transferring your knowledge about one language to another language. *Vehicle* and *vehiculo* are cognates.”

Mateo and the nice lady talk some more about cognates — and paleontologists, which is Mateo’s favorite word (because *dinosaurs*). Outside, the rain continues to drum against the tarp walls of the booth, where the two sit in the cozy pop-up storytelling nook put together by [Quality Start Los Angeles Dual Language Learning](#) partners.



It's the kind of conversation with a child — spontaneous and charged with discovery — that would make anyone smile. That's certainly the case for the nice lady in question, author [Sandra Gonzalez-Mora](#), who is still beaming as she gets up to prepare for her storytelling session.

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annual [Los Angeles Times Festival of Books](#) begins, a region-wide event that welcomes close to 150,000 book enthusiasts over two days.



Children's author Sandra Mora-Gonzalez stands with books from her multilingual book press, Skillful and Soulful.

Gonzalez-Mora knows how valuable these conversations can be. It was one such exchange with her daughter, then age 4, that inspired the creation of "[Mommy, Tell Me Why I Am Radiant](#)." Created by the mother-daughter team, the bilingual picture book centers on a conversation between a little girl and her mother. A key feature of the book is a set of vocabulary words in English and Spanish that help improve children's language skills while instilling self-confidence.

"I remember thinking: What a beautiful moment," Gonzalez-Mora says of that initial talk with

her daughter. "Having conversations like that was a way of supporting not just my daughter's socio-emotional development but her language skills."

For the longest time, the prevailing theory among American psychologists was that bilingualism was bad. They thought exposing children to more than one language would confuse their brains, leading to lower IQ scores and delayed intellectual development. These flawed ideas even made their way into educational policies,

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reinforced by flawed studies that failed to account for socioeconomic factors or the quality of language exposure.

Fast forward to today, and the consensus among researchers is clear: early exposure to more than one language is actually a *very good thing* for children. For children whose parents primarily speak a language other than English, learning both their home language and English early in life results in a host of benefits, including enhanced cognitive and socio-emotional skills, improved academic outcomes, and long-term economic gains. In recent years, a growing number of employers and policymakers have begun to recognize that bilingualism can be an invaluable asset that contributes to [economic success](#).

By all rights then, this *should* be good news for California, known as the most [linguistically diverse state](#) in the U.S., and Los Angeles, the most linguistically diverse county in the state. But due to a history of wide-ranging and harmful [policies](#), including an 18-year state ban on bilingual education that just ended in 2016, California lags behind other states in fostering multilingualism.

That's why LA-based [Quality Start LA \(QSLA\)](#) — which represents a consortium of organizations including First 5 LA, the L.A. County Office of Education, the Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles, the L.A. County Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education, as well as additional partners Early Edge California and UNITE-LA — has been working to spread the word about the benefits of bilingualism.

Dedicated to improving the quality of child care for L.A. County's young children, QSLA also oversees the [Dual Language Learner \(DLL\) Initiative](#), which seeks to foster a countywide culture that embraces and encourages dual language learners and the strength they bring.

As part of its initiative, QSLA [launched its multi-year, multi-phase](#) outreach campaign in 2023, focusing on encouraging dual language learning while disproving harmful myths. The campaign has garnered



Angeles County, using a mix of outdoor media, print ads, broadcast spots and various social media platforms. As part of the campaign, QSLA has also partnered with child care providers, home visitors and librarians, who shared resources with parents on the benefits of

multilingualism as well as advice on fostering a dual language learning environment in the home.

For this current year's campaign, First 5 LA Program Officer Gina Rodriguez says that the focus has been to expand to include a newer, younger audience.

"Previous campaign phases were aimed at parents, child care providers, and the communities at large," she explains. "Now, we're expanding it to reach out to children."

Two Languages, It's Always More



That new approach is evident in "Two Languages, It's Always More," the new QSLA-sponsored video produced by Makefully Studios.

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Multilingual Awareness Month, the 30-second animated spot features two young children discovering the world around them, in English and Spanish, with a sense of wonder and joy. Although the video is currently in English and Spanish only, plans are afoot to translate it into other languages and reach more children throughout L.A. County.

The spot was accompanied by a postcard and sticker pack in all six of the campaign languages — Armenian, Korean, Vietnamese, Khmer, Chinese and Spanish — which were mailed to more than 70 partners throughout L.A. County, including libraries and childcare centers.



The stickers, developed in both English and the home language, allow kids to proudly declare their bilingualism, contributing to the goal of building confidence around bilingualism.

“It’s important to help kids celebrate their home language and realize it isn’t a barrier,” says Rodriguez. “It’s a superpower.”

April Wu, another featured storyteller at the QSLA booth at the Festival of Books, agrees.

“I was raised bilingual,” says Wu, the author, educator, and founder of [Seedlingo](#). “And I think that really opened up so many more doors for me. I was able to connect with so many more people.”



Children's author, April Wu reads bilingual book, "It's Bedtime Little Moon."

It's a packed house as Wu captivates her audience with a reading from "[It's Bedtime, Little Moon](#)," a gorgeously rendered lift-a-flap book about a girl who resists bedtime. Written in both traditional and simplified Chinese, Pinyin, and English, the book was inspired by Wu's daughter, Luna, who assisted during the reading by holding up a sign that read "NO"— a running gag from the book as the little girl resists bedtime.

"I want children to be able to see how those words can be used in context," Wu explains after the storytime session. "There are all these benefits that come with knowing more than one language."

Ensuring all families are able to reap those benefits is the major impetus behind First 5 LA's work in fostering bilingualism. As part of its [Whole Child, Bright Futures](#) initiative in the new [2024-2029 Strategic Plan](#), the organization promotes increased access to quality early care and education that meets the needs of all families. While working with

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First 5 LA Program Officer Gina Rodriguez stands with QSLA partner representatives, Joanna Cole with Early Edge California and Olivia Kim with QSLA.

multilingualism, First 5 LA will continue to advocate for culturally affirming curricula that reflect the diversity of LA County's communities.

"It's something that resonates throughout the different communities across Los Angeles," says Rodriguez.

In the end, it's about making sure L.A.'s youngest learners have something valuable to carry with them into the future: an enriching multilingual vocabulary that's rooted in home, culture and connection.

"Words are the currency of education," says Gonzalez-Mora. "The more deposits you put into their word bank, the more they get to profit from in the future."

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Related Articles:

- [New Initiative Aims to Bolster Support of Dual Language Learners From Infancy \(2021\)](#)
- [Campaign Launch Encourages Dual Language Learning Across L.A. County \(2023\)](#)
- [Media Campaign to Promote Bilingualism Adds Four New Languages \(2024\)](#)

