

## USEFUL REFERENCES

Equality and Diversity: An Anti-Bias Approach, 2002, *Barnardos*

Supporting Quality; Guidelines for Best Practice in Early Childhood, 2003, Geraldine French, *Barnardos*

Every Child Matters: Developing anti-discriminatory practice in early childhood settings, 2004, Marie Willoughby, *Barnardos*

Fair Play: Talking with Children About Prejudice and Discrimination, Paul Connolly

Childcare and Social Inclusion, policy measures for the development and provision of inclusive quality early childhood care and education, *Planet Policy Document*

“Respect”: Education Without Prejudice, A challenge for early years educators in Ireland, 2001, *Pavee Point Travellers Centre*

Save the Children, Anti Bias Approaches in the Early Years, 2003

Diversity and Equality Guidelines for Childcare Providers, 2006, *Office of the Minister for Children*

[www.translator.live.com](http://www.translator.live.com)

[www.freetranslation.com](http://www.freetranslation.com)

## RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN

### BOOKS

The Colour of Home, *Francis Lincoln Limited*

All Kinds of People, *Tango Books*

All the Colours of the Earth, *Mulberry Books*

Two Eyes, a Nose and a Mouth, *Scholastic Limited*

Can't Lose Cant, *Kidsown Publishing*

All Kinds of Bodies, *Tango Books*

For books in French, German, Spanish and Italian visit [www.thebilingualbabyco.com](http://www.thebilingualbabyco.com)

For books in Albanian, French, Portuguese, Polish, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Yoruba, Japanese, Hindi contact Mantra Publishing at [mantrapub@aol.com](mailto:mantrapub@aol.com)

For dual language books visit [www.letterboxlibrary.com](http://www.letterboxlibrary.com)



Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown  
County Childcare Committee



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# A GUIDE TO HELPING CHILDREN WITH ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Transforming Ireland

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## ADVANTAGES OF LEARNING AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

Learning two or more languages can help a child's overall language and learning abilities in school.

A child with more than one language will develop:

- A larger vocabulary
- A greater awareness of how words sound and rhyme, which helps when learning to write and spell.
- A more creative use of language in talking and writing.

Children who speak two or more languages are at an educational advantage and the skill of speaking more than one language should be valued.

## MAKING THE CHILD FEEL WELCOME

Prepare the other children, explaining how they can help the child feel welcome; try to make sure other children do not crowd the new child.

Listen carefully to the child's name and make sure you can pronounce it correctly.

Make sure that the child knows the names of the childcare workers in their room.

Learn key words in the child's language such as Hello, Goodbye, Toilet, Hungry, Thirsty, Tired.

Place a sign in the child's language or a picture over areas of importance such as the exits and toilets.

Make sure that each child's ethnic diversity is reflected in the pre-school environment, for example, visual images and home language, dolls, picture books, posters and music.

Try to have activities that involve working together without language i.e. sand, water, blocks, painting.

Give the child roles that require little or no English such as helping to give out food or set up activities etc.

## HELPING CHILDREN ACQUIRE ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

Be consistent with the language you use so that the child becomes familiar with the words.

Allow the child time to adjust to hearing the new language.

Listening skills will need to be acquired before speaking.

Games are an excellent opportunity to acquire language.

These can include picture snap, rhyming games, picture bingo, books and computer games are particularly useful.

Use songs and rhymes with actions and group refrains to encourage confidence with language.

Be aware of the importance of body language and non-verbal communication. Use lots of visual supports such as objects, pictures and gestures.

Allow the child extra time to think before replying.

Encourage any attempts to communicate. Try to expand on the children's utterances but do not insist on complete sentences or finish their sentences.

Be aware that some children can stay silent for weeks, sometimes months. This is their right.

Emphasise to the parents the importance of maintaining their own language at home; it's the quality of parent/ child communication in the home that is important.

Regularly observe/record the child's developing use of English.

## DOS AND DON'TS CHECKLIST

**Do** try to understand that children are coping with, not only a new language, but possibly also with an entirely new culture.

**Don't** refer to children who are talking in their own language as "gibbering away" or talking nonsense, as this is disrespectful.

**Do** group children with strong role models. Children instinctively learn a lot from their peers, especially from peers with good language skills.

**Don't** worry if the child does not want to talk. Work at building a relationship with the child. Language will come later.

**Do** accept that children need to copy and imitate each other. It is a natural way of learning.

**Don't** continually ask questions, as this is putting undue stress on an already stressful situation.

**Do** accept and praise any attempt to communicate even if it is minimal.

