

POLL OVERVIEW

FOR FAMILIES



Research tells us that during the first years of life, children are capable of and benefit from learning a second language. Children who have strong language skills are better prepared to succeed in kindergarten and later school years.

As a parent, ensuring your child has access to high-quality, developmentally appropriate learning experiences is so important. It is also critical that adults who care for your child support the ongoing development of home language while promoting the acquisition of English using key strategies like Personalized Oral Language Learning (POLL).

POLL is a set of strategies designed to meet the needs of young children learning their home language and English. POLL strategies are based in research that emphasizes the importance of strong home language skills and the advantages of early bilingualism. These strategies offer opportunities for children to improve oral language abilities, understand new concepts, and build social-emotional skills.

THE THREE MAIN ELEMENTS OF POLL STRATEGIES

1. Family Supports

- Engagement activities, collaboration, and partnership opportunities between caregivers and families including participation in a Family Languages and Interests interview.

2. Environmental Supports

- Materials, learning areas, and displays that reflect children's cultures and languages and where children feel safe, comfortable, and excited to learn

3. Instructional Supports

- Instructional practices that promote oral language abilities in home language and English, help children understand new concepts, and build social-emotional skills.

POLL STRATEGIES IN ACTION

In your child's learning environment, you will notice:

- Parent Communication Boards with key information about POLL strategies, and how to use these strategies at home to help your child practice.
- Active learning areas that have materials in all children's languages that link to themes, books, and materials that reflect the languages and cultures of the children and families.
- Children using gestures and movements to remember new words.

In your child's learning environment, you will hear...

- Children using new words in home language and English as they learn new concepts.
- Children singing familiar songs and chants that have key content vocabulary.
- Caregivers reading to children, asking questions, and introducing rich and interesting words.
- Caregivers repetitively using vocabulary to help children learn and understand new words and concepts during activities and experiences throughout the day.

RESOURCES:

To learn more about the POLL approach, see the Personalized Oral Language Learning (POLL) Overview video at <https://www.pollstrategies.org>