

Growing Up Bilingual

Studies have shown that there are many advantages to growing up with two or more languages:

- Developing language skills in two languages helps develop the child's brain.
- Children who know their parents' native language as well as the language of the country they live in helps to keep them connected to their families and their cultural heritage.
- Knowing two languages is a skill that can help children later in their school life and work life.

People often say that learning two languages makes children mix languages and slows down their learning. However, there is strong evidence that this is not true.

- Children learning two languages at the same time sometimes use words from both languages in the same sentence. This is normal. They will stop doing it after a while.
- People may think that learning two languages at the same time will make children's learning of other subjects more difficult and slower. However, if a child hears and speaks both languages on a regular basis, his learning of all subjects will proceed at a normal rate

Parents can do certain things to make sure that learning two languages is positive and useful for their children:

- Make sure the child hears and uses both languages often – every day, if possible.
- Do not suddenly stop using one of the languages. This kind of interruption can be emotionally and mentally difficult for the child.
- Give children a lot of experiences in both languages – talking, reading, singing, playing solving problems, etc.
- Start teaching the child both languages early.
- Don't rely on TV to teach your child a language. It's the personal interaction that works.

Sources:

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