

Useful Reference Books

- Equality and Diversity: An Anti-Bias Approach 2002, Barnardos
- French, Geraldine: Supporting Quality; Guidelines for Best Practice in Early Childhood 2003, Barnardos
- Connolly, Paul: Fair Play: Talking with Children About Prejudice and Discrimination
- Planet Policy Document: Childcare and Social Inclusion, policy measures for the development and provision of inclusive quality early childhood care and education services
- “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

This leaflet is a collaborative publication from the support and development working group and includes the counties listed below.



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A Guide



jak ci leci?

kā klājas?

jak se máteř?

您好嗎

Kuidas sul läheb?
كيف أنت؟

Comment allez-vous ?

to working
with children
who are
learning English
as an
additional
language

conas atá tú?

kaip jums sekasi?

Welcoming the Child

- 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.
- Try to have activities that will give the child the opportunity to use language e.g. arts and crafts or cooking
- Learn key words in the child's language such as *Hello, Goodbye, toilet, hungry, thirsty, tired.*
- Place a sign in the child's language 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 / songs and tapes)

Helping children acquire English as an additional language

- be consistent with the language you use so that the child can become familiar with the words.
- Children who are bilingual (or trilingual) are at an educational advantage and the skill of speaking more than one language should be valued.
- Games are an excellent opportunity to acquire language. These can include picture snap, rhyming games, picture bingo, books, and computer games are particularly useful.
- Encourage language but do not put the children under any pressure to speak.
- Encourage any attempts to communicate. Try to expand on the children's utterances but do not insist on sentences or finish their sentences.
- The children may need to focus on their listening skills before concentrating on language skills.
- Allow the children think before they answer. Gestures are helpful to demonstrate meaning.
- Be aware that some children can stay silent for weeks, sometimes months. This is their right.

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. For a while work away at building a relationship with him/her. 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.