

chatter matters™



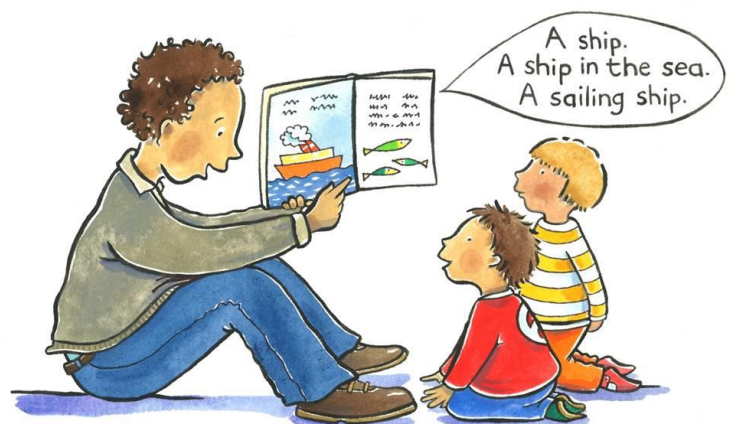
being bilingual

We know that it's really important to speak to your child in your most natural language. We call this your 'home language' as it's often the language that is spoken in the home. You could have more than one home language and it is sometimes called your 'family' or 'heritage language' too.

Talk to me in our home language; it makes me feel included.



I will hear lots of nursery rhymes and stories in English. Sing songs, rhymes and read poems and books in our language. I'd like to learn these too.



Learning my home language will help me when I start to learn English.



Learning my home language will help me learn about our culture and our traditions.



Some children are multilingual; they experience two or more languages at home as well as English. These tips are helpful for multilingual children too.

Speak to me in the language that feels most natural to you; that way I will learn more too.



If you speak to me in our home language, I may reply in English. I am still learning from you, and I do understand what you have said.



When I first start school or nursery, I may not speak for a while. Don't worry! I am learning new words all the time and I will use them when I feel ready.



We may switch between our family language and English. This feels natural. It is helpful when you repeat back what I have said, whichever language I use.



being bilingual...

- Children may experience a **silent period of up to 6 months** when they are first introduced to another language. This is because they are focusing more on listening to and understanding the language.
- Talk to your child about what they have done in the day. If your child responds in English, **repeat what they have said in your home language**, but do not correct or make your child use your language.
- When children are better at using their 'new' language, they may stop using their original language. They may use their new language all the time, even when they are responding to someone who has spoken to them in their home language. You can **continue to use your family language without asking your child to**.

- Your child might make **grammatical errors** when speaking English if this is not their home language. This is because the grammatical rules are not the same in each language.
- Speaking to your child in your family language allows them to communicate at home, with the **wider family** and with people in your **community** who have the same language.
- **Create opportunities** for your child to use all of the languages they hear. Let them join in with community activities where they may hear your language and also take them to toddler groups where English is used.
- Bilingual children have been shown to have certain **academic advantages** compared to those children who only speak one language. For example, bilingual children can be better at **problem solving** and can demonstrate more creativity.



Where to get more information:

If you'd like to know more about how to help your child learn to communicate, then take a look at our website:

www.timetotalkwarwickshire.co.uk

If you have any questions or concerns, then contact your **Warwickshire Health Visitor** or local **Children & Family Centre**

As a service, we aim to provide fair and equal access to all experiences, backgrounds and differences. If you feel we can make reasonable adjustments to support you with accessing our material, please speak to the person sharing this information with you or contact the team using the details above.

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