# Family Engagement Strategies for all Languages and Cultures

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# Trusted Sources

Books by Karen N. Nemeth are being used in thousands of early childhood education classrooms.

Learn More

## Featured Items

**Getting Teachers Ready to Teach Young DLLs**
A Professional Development Resource Kit

**Many Languages, Building Connections**
Supporting Infants and Toddlers Who Are Dual Language Learners

**Digital Decisions**
Technology for Early Childhood Edu.

# *The End*

And so, in conclusion…

Family engagement for all languages and cultures depends on your ability to be open to changing our attitudes and practices.

Now…

Let’s talk about the strategies that will get you there!

- Parent involvement?
- Parent engagement?
- Parents as partners?

We'll take this discussion one step beyond!

# Why are you interested in family engagement?

# POLL #1

# *Today's three goals:*

1. To understand the families
2. To have the families understand you
3. To engage the families as partners in their child's education

# What are your goals?

1. You want to understand all of the families but….
   - They speak a different language
   - They do things that seem strange to me
   - They act like they don’t care
   - They are not responsible

# Considerations for families when you don't understand:

- *Different language*
- *Different dialect*
- *Different culture*
- *Different expectations of their role in their child's education*
- *Different past experiences with schools*
- *Individual differences in temperament, communication skills*

# Considerations for families when you don't understand:

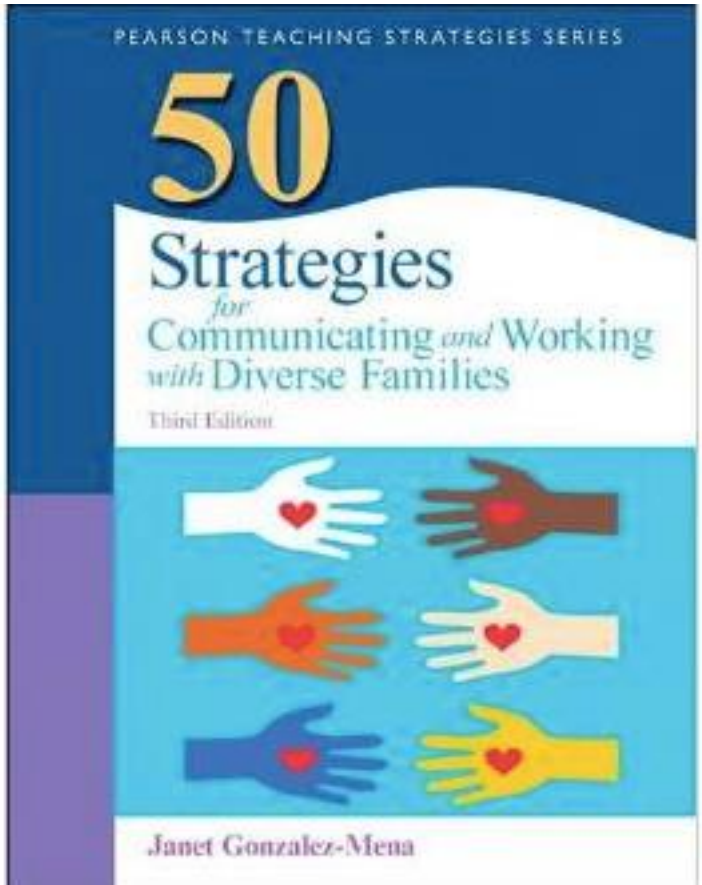
- ***Believe*** they want the best for their child – but they may not agree with you
- ***Believe*** they are not having an easy life and you may not know the challenges they've faced
- ***Believe*** that there is no one book on "cultural awareness" that's going to help you relate to each individual family

# Strategies for Goal 1

- Digital translators with voice capabilities:
  - GoogleTranslate
  - iTranslate
- Telephone interpreter services
- Live certified interpreters
- Siblings as last resort

# Resources for Goal 1

50 Strategies for Communicating and Working with Diverse Families (3rd ed.) 2013 by Janet Gonzalez-Mena



# Strategies for Goal 1

- Building rapport across language barriers can only happen with time spent together. Try these:
  - Show a picture of their child and listen to how they talk about it.
  - Show an interest in learning how to say some of their words so they'll slow down and help you.
  - Spend time with individuals during field trips, class visits, or special events.

# Strategies for Goal 1

Borrow from Powerful Interactions

by Judy Jablon, Charlotte Stetson, and Amy Dombro

www.powerfulinteractions.com

(It's all about the relationship!)

# Strategies for Goal 1

Understanding cultural differences:

The Culture Quiz by Judie Haynes

http://www.everythingesl.net/downloads/culture_questions02.pdf

Not for ESOL Teachers (2nd ed) Eileen Whelan Ariza

# Just remember…

Knowing where a family came from is just one step on the path to getting to know who they are!

# Strategies for Goal 1

- Immigrant families are not like you:
  - They did not go to American schools
  - They did go to schools that built different expectations
  - They are more likely to live in poverty
  - They are likely to have family stress factors now or in the past

# Strategies for Goal 1

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Select Language

WHAT IS THIS?

BRYCS

Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Home | About BRYCS | About Refugees | What's New | Publications | Promising Practices | Clearinghouse | DONATE

- Child Welfare
- Family Strengthening
- Schools
- Youth Development
- Youth Arts Page
- Anti-Trafficking
- Head Start Collaboration
- Maya Health Toolkit for Medical Providers

**ANTI-TRAFFICKING**

NEW Visit our new section on anti-trafficking.

## Welcome

SEARCH BRYCS.ORG GO

Your information hub for empowering immigrant children and their families.

Announcements | Events | Funding | Resources | BRYCS Brief | Awards

**BRYCS Receives APSAC Award!**

BRYCS is the winner of The American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children's (APSAC) Award for the Advancement of Cultural Competency in Child Maltreatment Prevention and Intervention!

More Information

BRYCS Photo/Courtesy of Claudia Gilmore

# Poll #2

# *Strategies for Goal 2*

If you want families to understand you….

**You have to say less…**

**and make it count!**

# *Strategies for Goal 2*

- Say less
- Simplify language
- Use standard recognizable phrases, colors, headings
- Use pictures
- No slang or lingo
- Multiple modes for the important things

Field Trip

Reply Needed

Calendar Dates

# *Strategies for Goal 2*

- Say less
- Simplify language
- Use standard recognizable phrases, colors, headings
- Use pictures

***Think: adult versions of short notes, sentence frames and rebus messages***

- "When parents are unable to talk to their children, they cannot easily convey to them their values, beliefs, understandings or wisdom about how to cope with their experiences. They cannot teach them about the meaning of work, or about personal responsibility, or what it means to be a moral or ethical person in a world with too many choices and too few guideposts to follow. What is lost are the bits of advice, the consejos parents should be able to offer children in their everyday interactions with them. Talk is a crucial link between parents and their children: It is how parents impart their cultures to their children and enable them to become the kind of men and women they want them to be. When parents lose the means for socializing and influencing their children, rifts develop and families lose the intimacy that comes from shared beliefs and understandings." Lilly Wong Fillmore (1991)

# *What happens when people just pour information on you?*

# *Strategies for Goal 2*

- Change communication from

to

# *Two-Way Communication with diverse parents*

- Photos
- Facebook/website
- Texts
- Email
- Phone call/voicemail
- Other parents!

# *Strategies for Goal 2*

Q. Why does social media work?

A. Because it's SOCIAL!

Think of information you send home as the start of a conversation

# *Strategies for Goal 2*

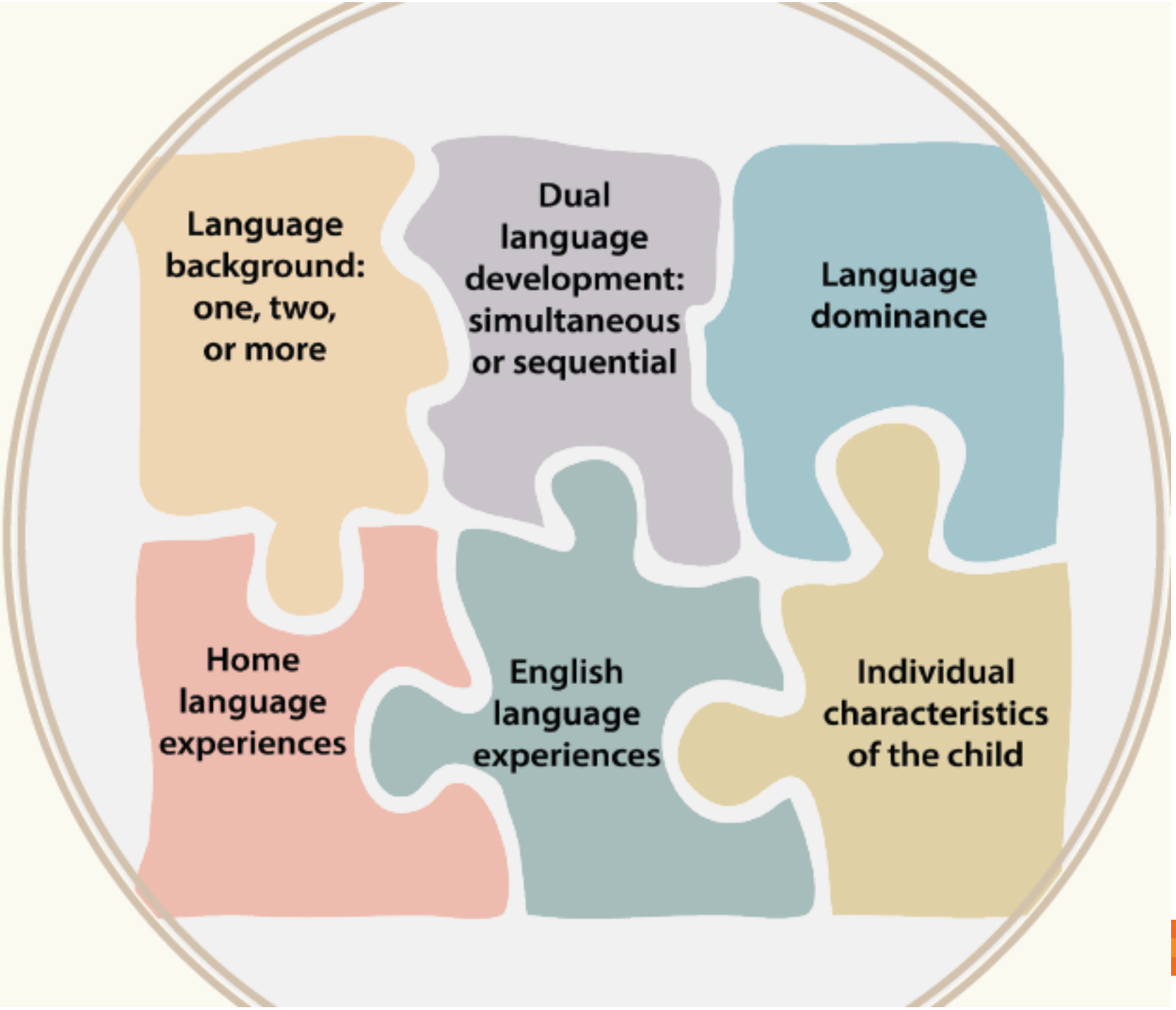
- Gathering and Using Language Information that Families Share

http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/docs/dll_background_info.pdf

# Gathering and Using Language Information that Families Share

EXPANDED!

One-third of the children in Early Head Start and Head Start are Dual Language Learners (DLLs). Recent research provides insights into dual language development and key ways


Language background: one, two, or more
Dual language development: simultaneous or sequential
Language dominance
Home language experiences
English language experiences
Individual characteristics of the child

# Who knows the child's home language best? Their FAMILY!

# *Strategies for Goal 3*

Helping families get involved as partners in their child's learning…

Starts with listening and responding

# Goal 3: Helping families support language and literacy at home

- Research shows conversations are key
- Reading books is good – talking WITH children ABOUT books, stories, and poems is better

# *High Five Bilingüe™* Parent Guide

In this month's issue, you'll discover in Spanish and English:

- how Jack and Isabella find their missing friend, Lola,
- how Jake learns to skate,
- what happens when Spot encounters snow,
- how to play a circle game, and
- other fun puzzles, poems, stories, and games.

Children learn a lot about language by moving their bodies. Your actions while talking and reading stories also help your child understand the words you say. Non-verbal communication is especially helpful to children who are learning in two languages. This month, *High Five Bilingüe ™* provides many opportunities to help your child connect what they hear in English and Spanish, with what they do.

- For Educators
- For Families
  - What you can do at home
  - Helping your child succeed at school
  - Building Strong Parent-Educator Partnerships
  - Let's read
  - FAQs
- Books & Authors
- Glossary
- Topics from A-Z
- Research & Reports
- Free Guides & Toolkits
- LearningStore
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# For Families

## Welcome to ¡Colorín Colorado! *¡Bienvenidos!*

This bilingual section was created just for parents and families to provide you with the information you need to help your child become a good reader and a successful student.

Research shows that it's vitally important for children to have a good start in reading. Reading is the key to success at school and in life. And because you are your child's first and best teacher, what you do at home – even before your child goes to school – is what will help him or her become a skilled and confident reader.

When you click below, you'll find simple, but powerful ways to help your child become a successful reader. There are fun reading tips and activities, suggestions for choosing books to read with your child, ideas for getting involved at your child's school, and much, much more.

- **What you can do at home**
- **Helping your child succeed at school**
- **Building Strong Parent-Teacher Partnerships**
- **Let's read**: Fun reading tips, activities, and more!

We hope that you enjoy exploring the Colorín Colorado website. Feel free to print out and use any of the information you find here. And most of all, enjoy reading with your child — you can find many great recommended books in the **Books & Authors** section. As the late, beloved **Celia Cruz** said, "Reading is a carnival!"

Sincerely,



Major support for Colorín Colorado is provided by the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.

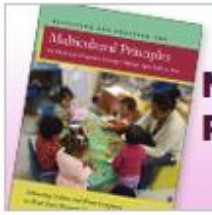
From Santiago, Chile, please accept my most sincere congratulations for the wonderful work you are developing. I am a librarian and your articles, activities, and recommended books have supported my work in the library, where I work for children, parents, educators, and other librarians.
~ Paulina O.

National Center on
# Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness



Every individual is rooted in *culture*

Multicultural Principle 1



**Multicultural Principles**

**Professional Development**

**Resources by Role**

**Refugee Families**

**Program Preparedness Checklist**

**NCCLR Events**


Was this page helpful?

YES NO



For more information, contact us at: **ncclr@bankstreet.edu**, 1-888-246-1975 or **ncclrinfo@edc.org**, 1-855-494-0331.

# Head Start NCCLR on ECLKC

## English language versions

## Spanish language versions

# *Strategies for Goal 3*

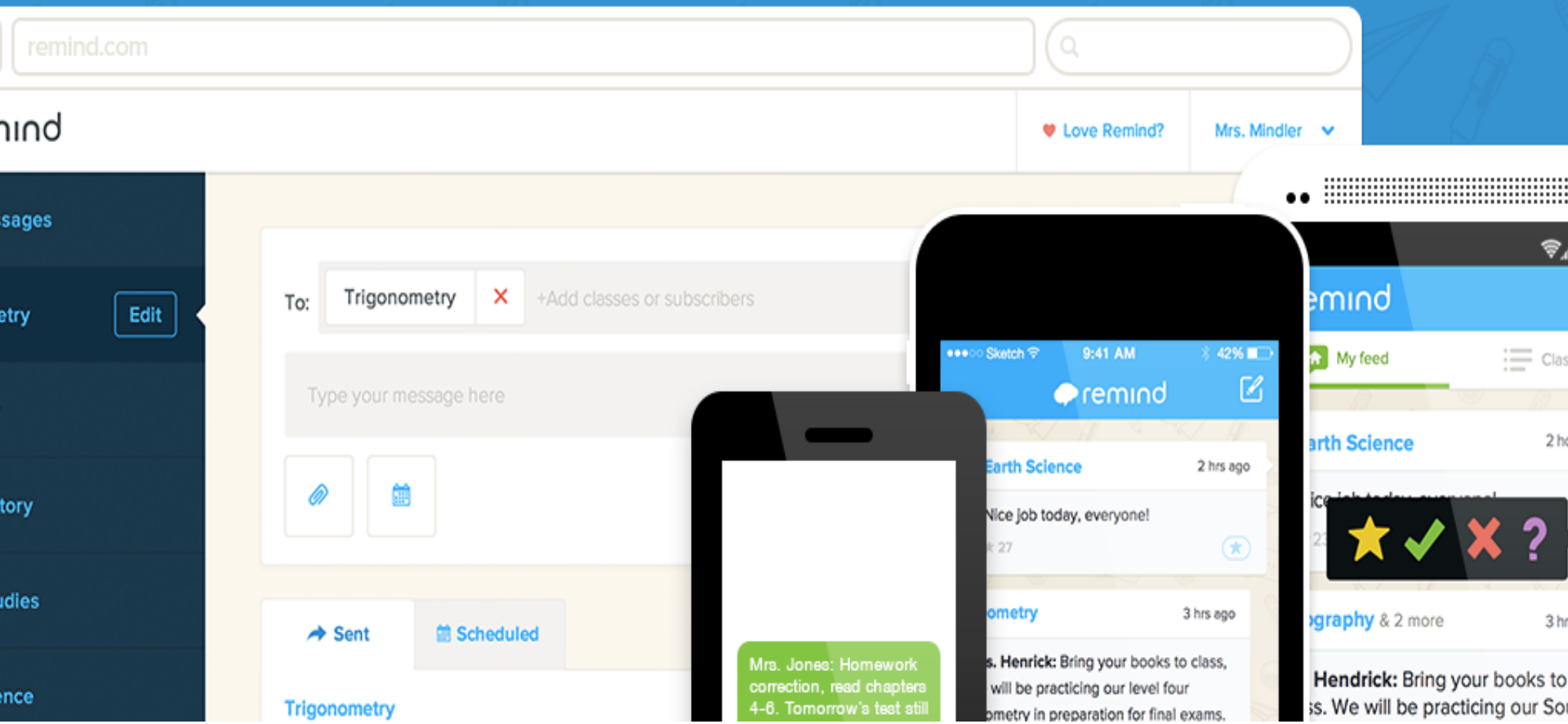
- Don’t just keep sending stuff home!

# *Strategies for Goal 3*

## *Effective Parent Engagement for DLLs is…*

- Personal
- Respectful
- Mutual
- Ongoing
- Meaningful
- For school and for home

Remind is a free, safe, easy-to-use communication tool that helps teachers connect instantly with students and parents.

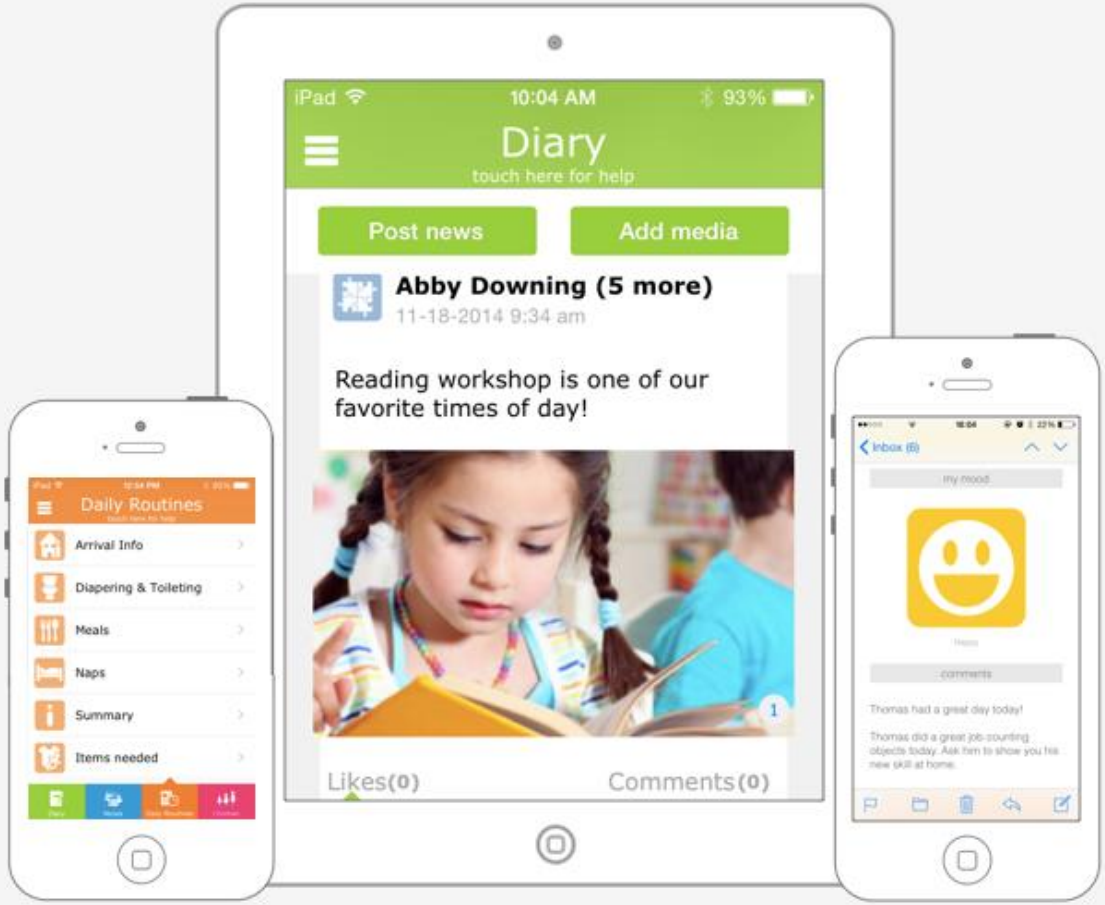


# Helping families support language and literacy at home

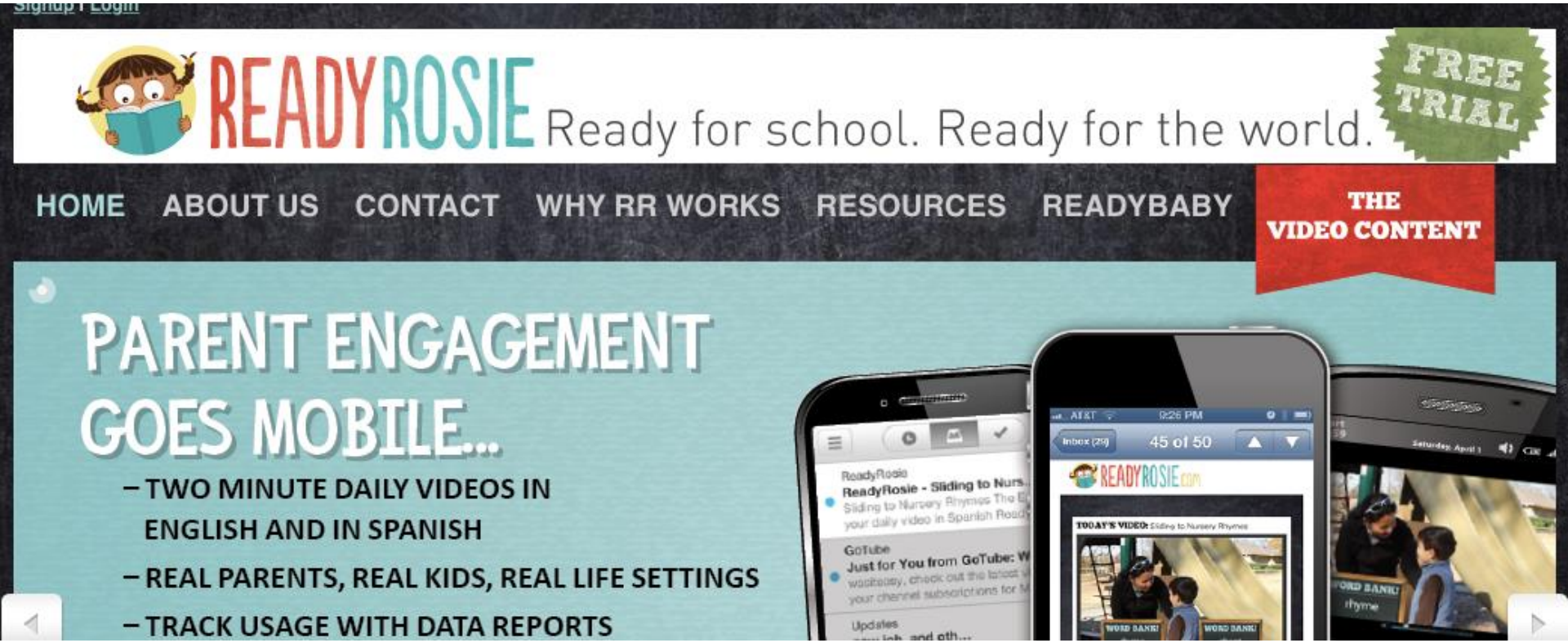
- Research shows conversations are key
- Reading books is good – talking WITH children ABOUT books, stories, and poems is better

mychild Daily Reports

Why Parents Teachers Directors Features How to Start Contacts Help Start



# *Strategies for Goal 3:*



# *Engaging parents from different languages and cultures*

If you want parents to come to school:

- ask them for help
- give them something THEY need
- don’t try to “fix” them!

# *Research base*

- Head Start's Family Engagement in Transitions series:

http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/family/docs/transitions-kindergarten.pdf

- Harvard Grad School of Ed project: Family Involvement Network of Educators

http://www.hfrp.org/family-involvement/informing-family-engagement-policy

- NAEYC's Engaging Diverse Families Project

http://www.naeyc.org/familyengagement/about

COMPLEMENTARY LEARNING

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

- Overview
- **Informing Family Engagement Policy**
- FINE: Family Involvement Network of Educators
- Projects
- Publications & Resources
- Staff

OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

# Informing Family Engagement Policy

- How Harvard Family Research Project informs policy
- Harvard Family Research Project's policy work
  - National Coordination Center for the Parental Information and Resource Centers
  - The National Family, School, and Community Engagement Working Group
  - National Policy Forum on Family, School, and Community Engagement
  - Policy recommendations
  - Harvard Family Research Project's accomplishments to inform policy
  - Policy briefs and publications

## How Harvard Family Research Project informs policy

Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) offers policymakers and education advocates the research base to develop effective policies that promote family engagement as a strategy to achieve student success. HFRP catalyzes new ideas to create pathways for families to promote the cognitive, social-emotional, and healthy development of children from cradle to career.

# Poll #3

## *But… researchers find many ineffective strategies:*

- “Random acts of family engagement”

# *And now findings show that*

- Family engagement must by a shared responsibility, and must be:
  - Systemic!
  - Integrated!
  - Sustained!

BACK TO SCHOOL
NIGHT!

# *Examples for Goal 3:*

- Avance – making toys together
- New Brunswick – learning English and creating books for their children
- Cookbook project
- Family fix-up day
- DIVERSITY TEAM

# *New book out March 2015*

In It Together: How Student, Family, and Community Partnerships Advance Engagement and Achievement in Diverse Classrooms

by Debbie Zacarian and Michael Silverstone

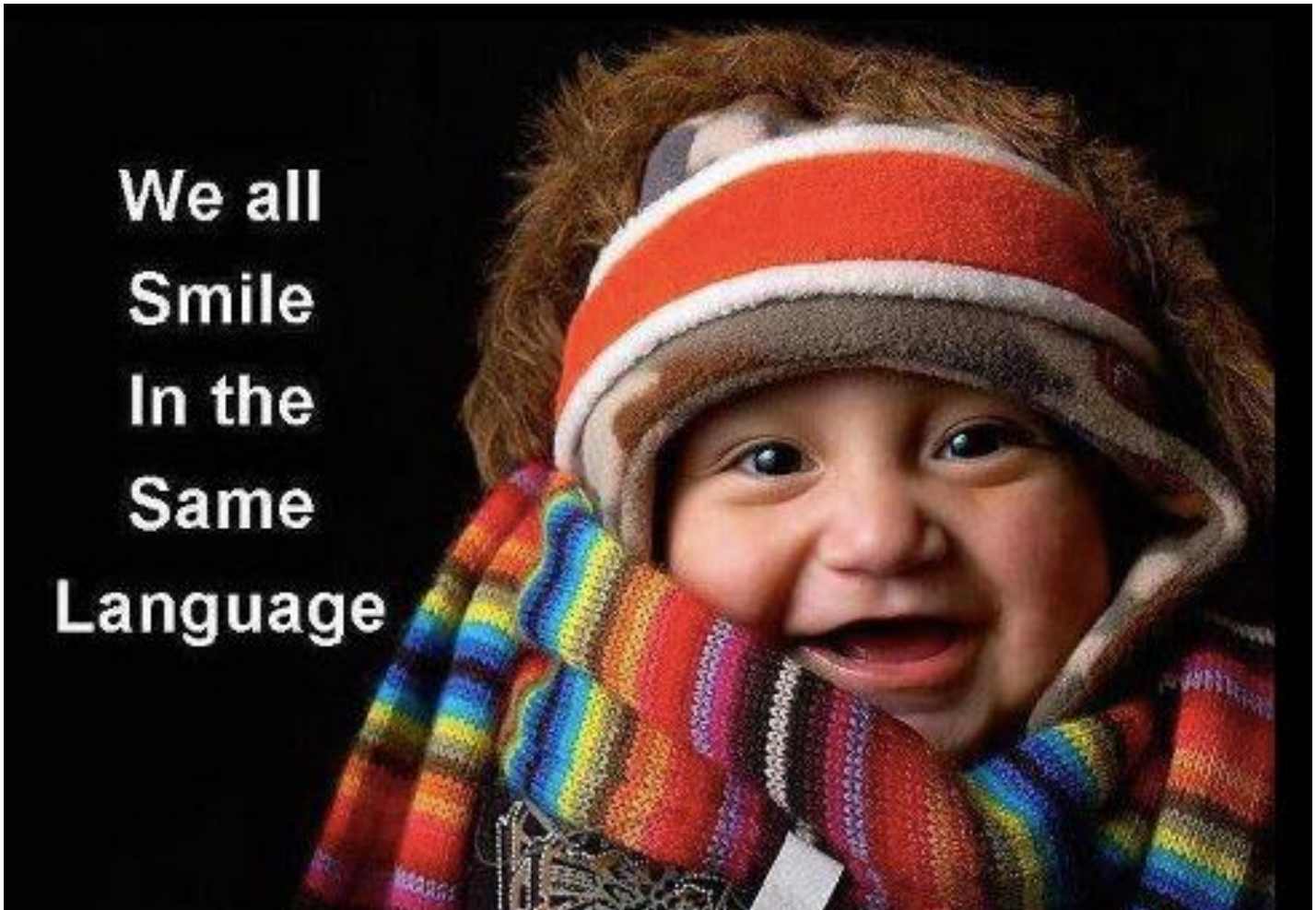
# *Get this movie - or the trailer*

# *The End*

And so, in conclusion…

Family engagement for all languages and cultures depends on your ability to be open to changing our attitudes and practices.

Now…

You know that it’s all about building relationships, one family at a time!

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