

I learn to talk ... from YOU!

Tips for you as a family

- > Speak to your children mainly in the language which you feel most comfortable with and which you speak well.
- > Read to your children.
- > Make sure your children have opportunities to build trustful relationships with people who speak the new language.
- > Visit playgrounds or institutions in which children and adults speak the new language.
- > Watch out for offers such as playgroups, sports, music, drama groups and libraries to enable your children to live and experience the new language in different contexts.
- > Look for and maintain social contacts with people who speak the new language.
- > Show appreciation for the word(s) your children learn in the new language and try to learn them yourself.
- > Be a model for your children and give speaking the new language a try.
- > If possible, attend language courses yourself so that you will be able to accompany your children on their journey of learning a new language.

CHILDREN AND THEIR LANGUAGE(S)

Language learning in the family

2. How do children successfully learn a new language?

Further leaflets from this series and its translations into various languages are available at:



Useful Links:



Kindergarten

Published by:
Deutsche Bildungsdirektion
Landesdirektion deutschsprachiger Kindergarten

*with the friendly support of the Migration Division –
Language Centres and of Dr Christiane Hofbauer, linguist*

Amba-Alagi-Straße 10
39100 Bozen
T 0471 41 76 50
ld.kindergarten@provinz.bz.it

How do children successfully learn a new language?

The children's families and environment are crucial.

2

CHILDREN AND THEIR LANGUAGE(S)

Language learning in the family



ENGLISCH
ENGLISH

AUTONOME PROVINZ
BOZEN - SÜDTIROL



PROVINCIA AUTONOMA
DI BOLZANO - ALTO ADIGE



Speaking to your children in your own language

When speaking to their children, parents instinctively use the language which they feel most comfortable with and which they speak well.

Why?

Speaking the language you feel most comfortable with, will have a positive effect on your parent-child-relationship.

Family languages are important for your children's identity.

The children's first languages are an important basis for learning further languages. Having a sound foundation in their first language(s) gives children the best chance to learn further languages.

Your children will easily learn a new language

- > if you – as a family – cherish this new language.
- > if you – as a family – are open to this new language.
- > if your children are interested in speaking this new language, e.g. because they want to communicate with their friends.
- > if your children come across this new language in a trusting atmosphere also outside the kindergarten.
- > if as many people as possible speak this new language with your children on a regular basis.
- > if the people your children are in touch with cherish all their (verbal and non-verbal) communication abilities without exerting any pressure.

Your children's education – a decision that requires some thought

- > Your children's education will span over a long period of time and needs to be monitored by you as a family.
- > Children usually benefit from attending kindergarten and schools in the same language of instruction. Please bear this in mind when you choose the kindergarten for your children.
- > It is important that the children's parents agree on which educational institution to choose for their children.
- > Make sure that you understand the language of your children's educational institution. Have someone who can support you and translate for you if need be.

