The research and activities summarized in this report were funded by a grant through First 5 California's Dual Language Learners Pilot Study Expansion Phase. The work of the QSLA Dual Language Learner Initiative was also made possible by the support of QSLA’s members and partners, including colleagues from: First 5 Los Angeles, the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles (CCALA), Child360, and California Preschool Instructional Network (CPIN). We thank all of our partners for helping us to support California’s youngest learners.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Authors ................................................................................................................................. 1  
Table of Contents ............................................................................................................ 2  
Executive Summary ......................................................................................................... 3  
Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 6  
  DLL Pilot: History and Current Goals ............................................................................ 6  
  L.A. County Partnership and Offerings ......................................................................... 8  
Professional Development Trainings .............................................................................. 11  
  DLL Preschool PD Modules ......................................................................................... 11  
  DLL Infant/Toddler PD Modules ................................................................................ 16  
  DLL Joint PD Module – PreK and K ......................................................................... 17  
Communities of Practice ................................................................................................. 19  
  Communities of Practice: Providers ........................................................................... 20  
  Communities of Practice: Coaches ........................................................................... 23  
Training of Trainers ......................................................................................................... 25  
Family Workshops ........................................................................................................... 27  
  Family Workshop Series ............................................................................................ 28  
  Family Workshops: English ....................................................................................... 30  
  Family Workshops: Spanish ....................................................................................... 32  
  Family Workshops: Mandarin/ Cantonese ................................................................ 34  
  Read Together Workshops ......................................................................................... 36  
Public Outreach ............................................................................................................... 38  
  Communications .......................................................................................................... 38  
  Book and Resource Distribution ............................................................................... 39  
  Advertising Spot ......................................................................................................... 40  
Need For Ongoing Work ................................................................................................. 41  
  Community Survey: Families of DLLs ...................................................................... 41  
Outcomes and Impact ....................................................................................................... 43  
Successes ......................................................................................................................... 44  
Lessons Learned .............................................................................................................. 46  
Recommendations for Ongoing Work ........................................................................... 47  
Learning Briefs ................................................................................................................. 49  
References ......................................................................................................................... 50
Executive Summary

Across California, early educators and advocates are working to address the need for DLL-focused professional development, family supports, and educational system improvements. This report summarizes the process and results of the 2021-2022 Quality Start Los Angeles DLL Initiative, including the development and launch of activities to support Dual Language Learners. It highlights the outcomes and impact of these activities, and summarizes successes, lessons learned, and recommendations for continuing work and next steps.

In early education, Dual Language Learners (DLLs) are defined as children from birth to five years old who are learning two languages simultaneously, or who are learning a second language in addition to their first, or home, language (Ramos Harris & Zepeda, 2017). Research clearly shows the cognitive advantages conferred by bilingualism, but historically, Dual Language Learners (who make up the majority of Californian children from birth to five years old) have not received the support they need. Families, teachers, and Early Childhood Education (ECE) specialists need DLL-specific training and support to provide a high-quality bilingual education to the children in their care. The goal of the DLL Initiative project was to provide that support to teachers and families of Dual Language Learners in Los Angeles County.

In response to First 5 California’s Dual Language Learner Pilot Expansion Phase opportunity, in 2021 and 2022, several ECE organizations in Los Angeles County came together under the umbrella of Quality Start Los Angeles to create a suite of professional development trainings, family workshops, and community outreach tactics that would address the increased need for DLL services and supports in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The result of this collaboration was a set of over 100 hours of DLL-specific virtual trainings and workshops, provided in English, Spanish, and in some cases, Mandarin and Cantonese. The virtual trainings designed for ECE providers included a set of professional development modules for early educators, additional professional development modules focused on the infant/toddler years, a joint professional development session for teachers of Pre-K and kindergarten, an intensive training of trainers, and two separate series of Communities of Practice meetings for ECE teachers and classroom coaches, respectively. The virtual workshops for families included a three-session series to provide caregivers with information about supporting their DLL children, and a set of family engagement events featuring bilingual authors and promoting bilingual early literacy. Public outreach strategies included the distribution of bilingual books in eight languages to targeted zip codes across the Los Angeles area, a set of language development toolkits and information for parents, an extensive email and social media campaign to promote the DLL trainings, and a mass-media advertising spot highlighting the benefits of bilingualism.
Feedback received from participants at all trainings was overwhelmingly positive, and expressed appreciation for the information provided and the space that had been created for DLL topics. In many cases, providers were still experiencing or just recovering from the personal and professional challenges of COVID-19; a sense of relief emerged from the opportunity to speak with other like-minded professionals, especially in the case of the Communities of Practice. Participants in the family engagement workshops, especially in the sessions offered in Mandarin and Cantonese, also provided positive feedback and reaffirmed the desire to receive information about how to support their DLL children’s developing language skills. As a result of the offerings created by the DLL Initiative,

- **260** ECE providers and trainers benefitted from DLL-specific professional development
- **4,731** families and children received literacy materials and support
- **240K** Los Angeles County households learned about the importance of supporting children’s home languages.

These impacts will continue to spread throughout the community, as providers and families share their knowledge with others.
In its first year of implementation, the QSLA DLL Initiative built a strong foundation for ongoing efforts in the Los Angeles area. The content, networks, and collaborations established over the past year will form a scaffold for future trainings and outreach, as well as for future partnerships with other organizations. To continue building on these successes, much work remains to be done. The following high-level recommendations for organizations that support Dual Language Learners and their teachers and families emerged from the work of the DLL Initiative. More details on each of these points are provided in the Recommendations section at the end of this report.

- Expand available funding to develop and maintain resources and opportunities that support Dual Language Learners, their families, and their early educators.

- Expand access to professional development for early educators, especially for those who work with DLLs and their families. Organizations providing professional development related to work with DLLs should prioritize innovative delivery and outreach solutions to invite the participation of underserved populations.

- Organizations that support early educators and the ECE workforce should network, collaborate, and communicate, in order to increase structural commitment to DLLs across Los Angeles County and beyond.

- Organizations planning to increase the scale of their DLL services should prioritize effective communications, a central hub for resources, and a core network of organizational partners.
Introduction
In early education, Dual Language Learners (DLLs) are defined as children from birth to five years old who are learning two languages simultaneously, or who are learning a second language in addition to their first, or home, language (Ramos Harris & Zepeda, 2017). The term “Dual Language Learner” emphasizes that these children are still in the early phases of language development and are rapidly gaining fluency in both languages. Research shows that children who speak multiple languages demonstrate cognitive advantages in both childhood and adulthood (Kroll & Dussias, 2017) and perform better on problem-solving tasks requiring attention and executive control (Barac & Bialystok, 2012). They may also demonstrate advantages in social-emotional competence (Sandhofer & Uchikoshi, 2013). Although the majority (around 60%) of children from birth to age five in California are DLLs (Cro- lotte & Pérez, 2019), historically, these children and their families and teachers have not received the systemic support they need in order to reach their cognitive and educational potential. Families may struggle with language barriers and access to resources, or may not know how to advocate for their children at school (Halgunseth, Jia, & Barbarin, 2013). Teachers, in turn, need DLL-specific training to best address the differing needs of children in a multilingual classroom (Zepeda, 2017). Over the coming years, the proportion of Dual Language Learners in California is expected to rise even further (Park, Zong, & Batalova, 2018), increasing the need for trained teachers and family resources. The goal of the DLL Initiative, described in this report, was to provide that support to teachers and families of Dual Language Learners in Los Angeles County.

DLL Pilot Study: History and Current Goals
The DLL Initiative and the First 5 California grant that funded it were momentous, given the conflicted history of bilingual education in California. Proposition 227 (passed in 1998) required that classroom instruction occur in English only. For a generation of children, this meant that bilingual education in a public school was inaccessible. Then, in November 2016, California voters passed Proposition 58, which authorized school districts to create dual-language immersion programs. This change made public bilingual education programs a possibility, and created the need to determine how these programs might be implemented to achieve the best student outcomes.

To help answer this question, First 5 California (F5CA) funded a pilot study of the Dual Language Learner landscape in counties across California. The background phase of this study, completed in 2019, examined the policies and infrastructure that shape DLL education in California. The in-depth phase, completed in 2020, collected data at schools to achieve a deeper understanding of the relationships between school-based experiences and DLL outcomes. The expansion phase, which is the third and final phase of the pilot study, was the context for the work reported here. For this phase, F5CA had allocated funding to target counties across California, with instructions to develop resources and well-researched strategies that would support DLLs, and to provide recommendations for scaling these strategies so that they could be implemented on a wider basis.
In early 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic changed the nature of education, work, and interaction across California and the world, F5CA found it necessary to include this new context in the third phase of the pilot study. To address public health needs, and to ensure that this work would benefit the low-income and immigrant families who were most likely to be affected by the pandemic, F5CA refocused the final pilot phase to ask counties to focus on effective strategies for serving DLLs and their families through the pandemic (First 5 California, 2020).

In response to the F5CA request for work that would support Dual Language Learners during and after the crisis of the pandemic, Los Angeles County organizational partners designed their DLL Pilot Expansion Phase efforts around three main goals:

• **Strengthen teacher knowledge and use of instructional strategies that are effective in supporting DLL children’s learning and development during COVID-19 and recovery from the pandemic, including English and home language support;**

• **Strengthen family engagement strategies that support DLLs and their families through this public health emergency, prevent DLLs from falling further behind, and emphasize the importance of home language and how to support children’s home language development; and**

• **Strengthen a systemwide commitment to DLLs and cross-agency plan for supporting DLLs’ learning and development as the early learning and care system rebuilds from the COVID-19 crisis.**

These goals formed the basis for the effort known as the QSLA DLL Initiative. All organizational partners in the DLL Initiative were members of Quality Start Los Angeles (QSLA), and existing QSLA systems served as a network and communications hub through which many of the DLL workshops and trainings were organized, calendared, and publicized. QSLA is a quality rating and improvement system that helps families find high-quality early education, and offers support to providers who commit to maintaining high-quality ECE services.

To provide motivation and focus, and to assert their intentions for this project, the DLL Initiative partners developed a statement of a shared goal and core belief.

**DLL Initiative Shared Goal and Core Belief**

**Goal:** To provide research highlights and strategies that will assist early educators in guiding our youngest Dual Language Learners, ages birth to 5 years, in developing their home language and English.

**Core Belief:** We believe that a child’s family, their home language, and their culture are assets they bring to our early learning programs.
L.A. County Partnership and Offerings

The Los Angeles County project team for the DLL Initiative was composed of members from three QSLA partner organizations: Child360, Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), and Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles (CCALA). First 5 Los Angeles (F5LA) served as the grant administrator and project manager. Beginning in the summer of 2021, these members worked collaboratively in a Steering Committee to plan and prepare for implementing the activities defined in their respective scopes of work. The Steering Committee served as a guiding body for the project; DLL Steering Committee Meetings were held monthly, composed of two or more members from each partner organization, and facilitated by First 5 LA. In addition, each organization held monthly organizational check-ins, meetings that allowed project leads at LACOE, CCALA, and Child360 to receive progress reports and updates from the developers, implementers, and evaluators on their team. Organization-specific check-ins represented opportunities to resolve issues or discuss next steps within a smaller, more focused setting than the larger Steering Committee meetings.

The partner organizations prioritized collaboration and a systematic approach to developing professional development offerings for providers, family engagement workshops, and communications efforts. This collaboration and planning was especially important to ensure that training timelines for all organizations were in sync and to streamline implementation of project activities. It was also essential to align content across all forms of trainings, presenting consistent messaging and information to audiences including DLL families, teachers, directors, and coaches. As the partners developed training content, they participated in feedback sessions and “previews” or “run-throughs” of trainings, prior to implementation. These preview sessions allowed the partners to ensure that all organizations had a chance to view each other’s training content and provide feedback before trainings were presented to their intended audiences. There was widespread agreement that these feedback sessions were very useful. Alignment of training content and phrasing enabled the partners to provide a shared message across offerings for all audiences, avoiding the mixed messaging or confusion that might have resulted if trainings were developed independently.

In order to track the impact of the DLL Initiative’s activities, and to accurately report on the number of individuals reached by its offerings, the QSLA partners also worked together to agree on the content and wording of intake and feedback survey questions, and to align data collection procedures. To achieve this alignment, the partners formed an Evaluation Workgroup. Meetings of the workgroup were held every two to three weeks, and were facilitated by the project evaluators (Child360). The meetings were typically attended by one to two project members from each organization who were involved in data collection for the project activities. The formation of the Evaluation Workgroup turned out to be a useful strategy in making sure that all partners were meeting their individual evaluation needs while still achieving overall project evaluation goals, and in streamlining processes to reduce burden and duplication of efforts.
This planning was essential to ensure the collection of required reporting information for First 5 California and identify key evaluation questions, as well as to enable the evaluators to combine data collected by multiple partners across various platforms. For example, the Evaluation Workgroup developed a shared intake form, aligned to First 5 California’s reporting requirements, to be completed by all providers participating in one or more DLL trainings (a modified version was designed for the Family Engagement workshops). The intake form was required only once for each participant, regardless of how many trainings they chose to complete, and collected information on demographics, professional roles, languages spoken, and the number of children served in providers’ classrooms. All professional development modules used the same intake form, and all family workshops used the same intake form, to streamline the collection of demographics and to avoid accidental duplication of participants in official reporting. A core set of questions on post-workshop feedback surveys were also aligned across training offerings, while other feedback questions varied to reflect the specific content of each training.

Through these collaborative meetings and planning efforts, project members were able to propose opportunities to enhance the project, work through potential obstacles, and coordinate a large-scale process of content development across organizational partners.

The DLL Initiative developed and implemented many different types of training offerings for the LA County community of DLLs and their families and teachers during the 2021-22 program year. These included: professional development (PD) modules, with specialized but aligned content for infant/toddler, preschool, and kindergarten teachers; workshops and reading events for families; training-of-trainers sessions for professional ECE trainers and coaches; and communities of practice for both teachers of DLLs and the coaches who support those teachers. Almost all professional development trainings were offered in both English and Spanish, and the family engagement workshops were also offered in Mandarin and Cantonese. The trainings and workshops were developed with the intention of strengthening families’ and teachers’ abilities to support the Dual Language Learners in their care.

Another component of the DLL Initiative was the distribution of bilingual and monolingual books, language learning toolkits, and other resources to families with young children. Books were offered in eight languages (English, Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Armenian, Korean, Simplified Chinese, and Vietnamese), and toolkits were offered in seven languages (all of the above, with the exception of Simplified Chinese), reflecting the diversity of the DLL population in LA County. In addition to book and resource distribution, the DLL Initiative also prioritized outreach to the larger community. The partners created an advertising spot aimed at parents and caregivers, which highlighted the benefits of bilingualism and was screened through a cable television provider in targeted zip codes around Los Angeles. The goal of the spot was to increase public awareness of bilingualism and to highlight young DLLs’ need for support.
In September 2021, the DLL Initiative held a virtual launch event to gather members of the ECE community, including families and providers serving DLL children. This event was designed to share knowledge about Dual Language Learners and the benefits of bilingualism, and to provide a preview of the topics that would be covered in the trainings and workshops offered through the DLL Initiative. Dr. Marlene Zepeda, an expert in ECE and Dual Language Learners, graciously contributed her time to help plan the launch, and provided a keynote address that summarized research on the bilingual brain and best practices for support of DLLs at home and at school. The event presentation also included creative DLL classroom strategies suggested by teachers, and provided references and further resources, as well as a link to register for the DLL Initiative’s trainings.

The QSLA DLL Initiative Virtual Launch drew over 200 attendees, of which the majority were child care providers (including directors, teachers, and Family Child Care owners). In a feedback survey completed after the event, 99% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that professionals who work with DLLs need more training and support, and respondents expressed appreciation for the resources and information that had been conveyed.

Thus, with collaborative planning and development well underway, and with the launch event serving as an official kickoff and introduction, the DLL Initiative began to offer its series of professional development modules in October 2021.

“ I think our region did an incredible job of coordinating, communicating, and collaborating to launch the DLL Initiative successfully and am very proud of the commitment of all partners to support each other. ”

-Steering Committee Member
Professional Development Trainings
The professional development training modules offered by the DLL Initiative were targeted to early care and education (ECE) professionals, including teachers, directors, administrators, and coaches. Several different sets of training modules were offered, in both English and Spanish. Participants could enroll in as many of these trainings as desired. Many participants chose to attend multiple trainings, and some even attended the same trainings twice, in English and in Spanish. Thus, attendance and demographic statistics across the sets of modules are potentially duplicated; that is, the same person may be counted in the attendance and demographics for the Preschool PD Modules and for the Infant/Toddler PD Modules.

DLL Preschool Professional Development Modules
This set of 10 professional development modules was targeted to an audience of ECE professionals working with Dual Language Learners in preschool settings. Each module focused on a different element of DLL practice, including literacy, oral language, culture, math, and science. Titles of the 10 English modules are displayed in the sidebar to the right. The modules offered in Spanish covered the same content as those in English. Training modules were presented virtually by a live instructor, in two-hour-long, webinar-style sessions. Module 1 was offered four times in English and three times in Spanish between October and December of 2021; the other nine modules were offered twice each in English, and once each in Spanish, between January and June of 2022.

There were no differences expected between the demographics of participants in each of the 10 modules. However, the content of each training differed. Therefore, demographics are reported as a whole, across all modules, below and in the Audience sidebar; while the information in the Impact sidebar is also calculated across all trainings, the feedback from each module is reported individually as well.

DLL Preschool PD Module Titles

1. Introductory Module
2. Understanding the Relationship of Language, Culture, Identity, and Equity
3. Promoting Language Learning for Dual Language Learners through Play
4. Environments that Support DLLs
5. Phonological Awareness to Support DLLs
6. Family Literacy Practices
7. Math Meaning-Making and Problem-Solving
8. A World of Science: Promoting Scientific Inquiry
9. Celebrating Culture and Diversity through the Visual and Performing Arts
10. Engaging DLLs in Project-Based Learning
Of the 158 unduplicated participants across all trainings, 157 (99%) submitted intake forms. Demographics presented in the Audience sidebar represent participants across all training sessions. The majority of participants were from Los Angeles County (89%), identified as Hispanic or Latino/a (74%), were between the ages of 36 and 55 (59%), and worked as teachers at a childcare center (63%). Module 1 had the highest attendance, with 138 participants, and Module 9 had the lowest attendance, with 25.

Across the 10 modules, 342 participants submitted feedback forms, and feedback was consistently positive. The Impact sidebar presents statistics from participant feedback forms across all training sessions. Responses to open-ended questions on the participant feedback forms are presented on the following pages.

“I learned that] literacy is more than just books. We can include music, storytelling, bonds between family members and school family.”

-Participant, PD Module 6
Feedback forms for all PD modules consisted of nine statements (abbreviated in the table below), to which participants responded on a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

1. This training was valuable to my job/professional development goals.
2. Resources from this training will be beneficial for my job/professional development goals.
3. This training was well organized.
4. My understanding of the benefits of bilingualism and/or multilingualism has increased.
5. My understanding of how to support culture and diversity in my program has increased.
6. The interactive format of this training supported my learning.
7. I will share what I have learned today with others.
8. My knowledge of the content presented in this training has increased.
9. My confidence that I can implement the content or strategies presented in this training has increased.

|                          | Introduction | Culture & Equity | Lang & Play | Environments | Phono-logical | Family Literacy | Math | Science | Perform. Arts | Project-Based |
|--------------------------|--------------|------------------|------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|------|---------|               |               |
| **Valuable**             | 4.54         | 4.69             | 4.76       | 4.65         | 4.54          | 4.75            | 4.21 | 4.93    | 4.94          | 4.72          |
| **Resources**            | 4.53         | 4.71             | 4.71       | 4.67         | 4.54          | 4.75            | 4.21 | 4.87    | 4.88          | 4.72          |
| **Organized**            | 4.48         | 4.71             | 4.68       | 4.67         | 4.57          | 4.75            | 4.21 | 4.93    | 4.88          | 4.56          |
| **Benefits**             | 4.45         | 4.69             | 4.61       | 4.60         | 4.61          | 4.67            | 4.21 | 4.87    | 4.88          | 4.72          |
| **Diversity**            | 4.45         | 4.64             | 4.61       | 4.60         | 4.54          | 4.67            | 4.21 | 4.87    | 4.88          | 4.61          |
| **Interactive**          | 4.45         | 4.64             | 4.63       | 4.65         | 4.50          | 4.75            | 4.21 | 4.93    | 4.94          | 4.61          |
| **Share**                | 4.52         | 4.71             | 4.66       | 4.60         | 4.54          | 4.79            | 4.21 | 4.87    | 4.94          | 4.78          |
| **Knowledge**            | 4.46         | 4.69             | 4.66       | 4.60         | 4.50          | 4.67            | 4.16 | 4.73    | 4.94          | 4.72          |
| **Confidence**           | 4.43         | 4.69             | 4.66       | 4.63         | 4.57          | 4.75            | 4.16 | 4.73    | 4.94          | 4.72          |
| **Average**              | **4.48**     | **4.69**         | **4.66**   | **4.63**     | **4.55**      | **4.73**        | **4.20** | **4.86** | **4.91**      | **4.68**      |

There was little variation in participant feedback across all 10 DLL PD modules. The Math module (Module 7) was rated lowest, but still received a positive rating of between 4 (Agree) and 5 (Strongly Agree) on all feedback items. The Performing Arts module (Module 9) was rated highest.
To expand on their responses to the rating-based questions on the training feedback form, participants (N=342) had the opportunity to answer open-ended questions about the training. When asked to identify a new family engagement strategy that they planned to implement in their classroom or program, many of the participants (44%) described sharing, encouraging, and connecting with families as strategies they would implement. Responses included having families “share about their culture,” asking parents “for more information about their child,” and sharing “with parents about the importance of bilingualism.” Over one quarter of this group (27%) specifically stated that they would invite parents and families into the classrooms to promote engagement, including to share cultural items, read favorite books, or teach children a song from their culture. General strategies related to home language and culture were offered by 13% of participants, such as “fostering home language,” “appreciate that home language is important,” and “learn and understand the culture of others.” Another 15% of participants planned to implement activities focused on reading, math, or science (e.g., “Make math activities interesting for children”) or encouraging families to engage children in these areas (“Encouraging parents to complete science experiments at home with their child”).

Activities related to music, art, or play were offered by 11% of participants. The activities were either provider-driven (e.g., “incorporate songs and rhymes throughout the day”) or family-driven (e.g., “Invite parents to dance with their children to their favorite music”). Making changes to the classroom environment or using various materials, such as incorporating environmental sounds, setting up displays, or using props, were noted by 8% of participants. Participants also nominated language/communication strategies (6%) and responsiveness through interaction and observation (6%). Examples included “serve and return” interaction, answering “in one language when children mix two languages,” and planning lessons and activities based on children’s interests. Finally, remaining responses included the use of specific strategies (e.g., “color coding,” “code switching”) and other general activities, such as “intentional planning” and sharing information with other teachers.

Participants also had the opportunity to identify a specific family engagement strategy or practice that they planned to implement in their classroom or program. Responses to this question varied; common themes were language development (18%), including “parallel talk” and “implementing peer-to-peer conversations to support children’s language,” and strategies incorporating art, music, or play (17%), including “sing songs in the children’s native language in class” and making play “more fun and engaging.”

“In order for me to get to know my student’s family, I need to honor the home culture and support their home language.”

-Participant, PD Module 2
Responses related to sharing with or encouraging parents (11%) were general (e.g., “pass information to parents”), as were responses incorporating home language and culture (11%) (e.g., “take the time to learn more about the culture of families and students”). About 10% of participants noted practices related to math, science, vocabulary, or phonology. Having more patience, as well as being more attentive and responsive, were endorsed by 9% of participants. Such responses included integrating children’s interests more and allowing time for children to respond, especially Dual Language Learners. Upgrading the classroom environment and increasing use of materials (e.g., “adding books to centers”) were noted by 7% of participants. The remaining responses were diverse in content, with less than 5% of participants in any particular category; these included using or sharing resources, planning more intentionally, and learning about Project-Based Learning.

Participants were also asked how the training could be improved. More than half of the participants (53%) offered generally positive feedback about the training (e.g., “It was great”), and 30% reported that no improvements were necessary. Ten percent of the respondents offered suggestions related to time (e.g., “Please reduce the time to 2 hours”) or presentation format (e.g., “Breakout rooms should have at least 3-4 people.”) Additional responses focused on technology or technical “glitches” (5%), or offered specific suggestions, such as the need for more resources or more information on the topics covered (e.g., “More information on the pre-skills of speaking, reading”).

When participants were asked whether they anticipated any challenges to implementing what was learned in the trainings, across all of the modules, 266 participants (78%) did not anticipate any challenges. Of the remaining 22%, responses varied as participants described potential challenges or noted areas that might be important to consider. Many responses were overly general (e.g., “Yes,” or “Always”), while several others noted that “time” and “need for practice” were challenges. More specific responses fell into three primary categories: working with parents (“Parents may not be as open to the information”), language strategies (“The challenge for me will be not to mix the two languages with the children”), or classroom practices (“Making reading more interesting for children”). A few respondents noted challenges that were more specific to themselves, such as being more “objective,” or “getting out of [their] comfort zone.”
DLL Infant/Toddler Professional Development Modules

Separately from the set of 10 preschool-focused DLL modules, a second set of two DLL modules was offered, from October 2021 through January 2022. The intended audience for these trainings included ECE professionals serving infants and toddlers (ages zero to three) in childcare settings. There were two infant/toddler (I/T) modules: “Using a Social-Emotional Lens to Support Infant and Toddler Dual Language Learners,” and “Supporting Language Acquisition for Infant and Toddler Dual Language Learners.” Modules were offered in English and in Spanish, covering the same content in both languages. Like the preschool-focused DLL modules, these trainings were presented virtually, by a live instructor, in a two-hour-long webinar format.

The Social-Emotional (SEL) training was presented twice in English and twice in Spanish, to a total of 19 participants. The Language Acquisition (LA) training was presented once in each language, to a total of 17 participants. Of the 30 unduplicated participants across all trainings, 28 (93%) submitted intake forms. Demographics presented in the Audience sidebar represent participants across all training sessions. The majority of participants were from Los Angeles County (75%), identified as Hispanic or Latino/a (68%), and were between the ages of 46 and 65 (64%). Center-based teachers (29%) and FCC providers (32%) were both represented among the attendees.

Feedback forms were submitted by 24 participants (SEL: 12 forms, LA: 12 forms). The Impact sidebar presents statistics from participant feedback forms across all training sessions. Overall, feedback was very positive. For the Language Acquisition training specifically, 100% of participants responded “Agree” or “Strongly Agree” to feedback statements, including “My understanding of how to support culture and diversity in my program has increased,” and “My confidence that I can implement the content or strategies presented in this training has increased.”

Audience

89% of attendees worked directly with DLL children
72% of attendees spoke two or more languages
   Spanish (Bilingual): 68%
   Spanish (Only): 7%
82% of attendees had previous DLL training or education

Impact

96% of attendees said the training was valuable to them professionally
96% of attendees increased their understanding of the benefits of bilingualism
96% of attendees planned to share their new knowledge with others
DLL Joint PD Module – Pre-K and K

The DLL Joint PD Module was designed to include ECE professionals working with Dual Language Learners in preschool, transitional kindergarten, and/or kindergarten. The goal of the training was to promote alignment of best teaching practices for DLLs between Pre-K and K classrooms, and to share strategies and content with teachers of both age groups, giving them a chance to build connections and discuss how practices could be clearly articulated across the Pre-K/K divide.

The Pre-K/K Joint PD Module was presented six times, in English, to a total of 121 participants. Of the 108 unduplicated attendees across all trainings, 88 (81%) submitted intake forms. Demographics presented in the Audience sidebar represent attendees across all training sessions. The majority of participants were from Los Angeles County (98%), identified as Hispanic or Latino/a (72%), and were between the ages of 36 and 55 (68%). Most participants were center-based teachers (63%); FCC providers (13%) and coaches (11%) were also present. Although many attendees worked with preschoolers (77%), fewer worked in transitional kindergarten (15%) or kindergarten (9%) (some providers reported working with more than one grade). Future implementations will emphasize recruitment of TK- and K-level ECE professionals, to encourage equal participation and partnership of these teachers in working toward alignment of DLL practices.

Feedback forms were submitted by 67 participants. The Impact sidebar presents statistics from participant feedback forms across all training sessions. Overall, feedback was positive. Attendees agreed that the training was well organized (78% Strongly Agree), but were less likely to agree that their confidence in implementing training strategies had increased (66% Strongly Agree). One participant wrote that “I think finding the time to process, reflect, and implement is an ongoing struggle.”
Participant feedback forms (N=67) asked participants to share one new family engagement strategy that they planned to implement in their classroom or program.

Twenty-four participants (36%) reported that they planned to share resources and information with families, and to teach them activities (e.g., sorting, vocabulary) to use with their children. These participants also explained that they would invite families to share stories, songs, home language words, and other materials that could be used in the classroom. Further, some of the participants would provide more encouragement to families in promoting home language use. Fifteen participants (22%) planned to implement the CROWD or dialogic reading strategy, and three of these participants added that they would share related information with parents so they could use the CROWD strategy at home. Other classroom activity-related strategies shared by 14 participants (21%) included sorting, distancing prompts, making patterns, asking open-ended questions, and reading books in the home language. Participants also described math activities (6%), music and play activities (6%), and home language interaction (4%). When asked to describe at least one additional takeaway from the training that they would use in their classroom or program, a majority of the participants (60%) identified CROWD or dialogic reading. Play was reported by 10% of participants as important in working with DLL children; this was followed by sorting, classifying, and patterning, which were listed by 6% of participants.

The feedback forms also asked participants to share how they felt the Joint PD training could be improved. Almost half of the participants (49%) offered generally positive feedback about the training, and 37% wrote that no improvements were necessary. Of the remaining participants, 13% would have liked added content on book reading, teaching strategies, and alignment between preschool and TK/K, and additional resources or materials. In terms of training structure, 9% would have appreciated more training hours, more opportunities for engagement, and an in-person format (unfortunately, in-person trainings were not possible at the time the Joint PD was conducted, due to pandemic restrictions).

When participants were asked whether they anticipated any challenges to implementing what was learned, over three-quarters of the participants (78%) reported that they did not anticipate any challenges to implementing what they had learned in the Joint PD training. Of the remaining 22%, most indicated that they foresaw potential challenges in terms of time for organizing activities, as well as carving out time to process, plan, and practice; some also anticipated potential challenges from administrators.
Communities of Practice
Communities of Practice (CoPs) developed and implemented by the DLL Initiative partners were another option for ongoing professional development. The theory behind Communities of Practice (Lave & Wenger, 1998) states that learning occurs, either intentionally or incidentally, when a group of people who share a passion for an activity come together regularly to interact. In order for a Community of Practice to be productive and fruitful, the participants must see themselves as engaged members of a group of like-minded practitioners. By coming together to discuss their practice and their goals, members of these communities can develop a set of shared resources, ideas, knowledge, and experience related to their chosen profession or activity.

The Communities of Practice that were facilitated by the DLL Initiative represented a non-traditional training offering. Many professional development opportunities for ECE teachers and coaches are presented in a lecture-based format and are separated into individual sessions. The Communities of Practice sessions conveyed information on set topics but were also designed to build connections; facilitators invited a set group of ECE professionals to participate in multiple consecutive sessions, with the goal of building bonds between the returning participants, who would learn from each other, add to their network, and share information.

This professional learning objective was achieved; additionally, however, an unexpected outcome was the extent to which CoP participants reported feeling emotionally supported. The CoPs were offered in Spring 2021, approximately 12 months into the COVID-19 pandemic, which was an intensely difficult experience for early education professionals. Many ECE providers and coaches were directly affected by the pandemic, both economically (by losing business due to pandemic restrictions and precautions) and socially/emotionally (through working with young children and families who were also struggling). Anecdotally, participants and facilitators both reported that the CoPs came to represent an opportunity to process this shared trauma, and that the intended topic or content of a session sometimes gave way to a group catharsis and sharing of support. Unfortunately, one drawback of the timing of the Communities of Practice was that, due to COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings, the CoPs had to be held electronically. This presented challenges for some participants; in several cases, ECE providers attempted to participate in a virtual CoP session while also managing a classroom or completing other tasks. Participants’ levels of engagement also varied, and in some cases, the virtual setting may have contributed to a lack of participation in breakout discussion groups.

Two CoP series were offered; one series was designed for the community of ECE providers (including teachers and directors), and the other was designed for the ECE coaches who support classroom teachers. Topics covered in the two CoPs were aligned, and included a review of DLL research; attitudes toward bilingualism; a discussion of culture, diversity, and equity; pathways to bilingualism; stages of language development; building connections with families; and shared resources.
Communities of Practice: Providers
The Communities of Practice series for providers was designed for ECE providers working in the classroom or at the site level. Participants were not required to have attended any of the other DLL professional development workshops in order to attend this series. The series included 9 virtual sessions of 2 hours each (1 session per month), and was offered in both English and Spanish between October 2021 and June 2022. Communities of Practice sessions included presentations on DLL practice by knowledgeable trainers, as well as opportunities for attendees to discuss the new information with each other and share their own experiences related to DLL practice.

Of the 40 unduplicated participants across all trainings, 40 (100%) submitted intake forms. Demographics presented in the Audience sidebar represent participants across all training sessions. The majority of participants were from Los Angeles County (93%), identified as Hispanic or Latino/a (75%), and were between the ages of 36 and 55 (66%). Participants were primarily center-based teachers (33%), FCC providers (28%), or admin/supervisors (23%). Feedback on the series (16 surveys received) was extremely positive.

Providers reported that they had learned about DLL strategies and content, and had felt validated in their own bilingualism or in how they were already supporting the Dual Language Learners in their classrooms. Providers who had participated in these Communities of Practice were also invited to share more details of their experience through interviews and focus groups.

“I gained a lot of information on how to create an environment that supports the children’s home language by adding labels to enhance print but not to overwhelm.”
-Participant, CoPs: Providers
Of the 40 participants in the Communities of Practice, 5 (12.5%) volunteered to share their experiences in focus groups or interviews. For all five of these providers, the DLL CoP had been their first experience of a Community of Practice. Topics addressed in these conversations included participants’ positive and negative experiences with the CoPs, their experiences with session facilitators, the format of the CoPs as compared to more typical lecture-format trainings, the usefulness of the content that was covered, and takeaways or changes that the participants had made as a result of the CoPs.

**Positive and Negative Experiences**
Focus group participants reported almost entirely positive experiences, saying that the CoPs reinforced their existing practices and knowledge, but helped them “put a name to what I was already doing” and “express it in a way where it is understandable.” They also shared that the CoPs provided opportunities for sharing unique ideas, strategies, and experiences, and that the sessions made attendees feel respected and valued by reinforcing attitudes of respect for home languages and cultural identities. The minimal negative feedback that was provided was related to the difficulties of interacting online. Participants would have preferred in-person sessions; however, this was not possible due to the ongoing pandemic restrictions at the time. Some participants also felt that it was difficult to keep conversations going, especially when people frequently entered or exited the online discussion rooms.

**Facilitators**
The providers who were interviewed perceived the CoP facilitators as respectful and responsive to the trauma that many providers and families endured during the pandemic. They explained that “the Community of Practice took place during a very sensitive time,” and that the facilitators “understood that sometimes, even though we are physically present, we had a lot on our minds.” The facilitators also helped challenge participants to reflect, and encouraged additional thought and expansion on discussions.

**Format**
Providers were asked how the unique format of the Communities of Practice made these sessions different from other trainings. They reported that there were more fun and engaging activities, and more opportunities to share with, learn from, and discuss with each other. Increased time for discussion was seen as a benefit, except in cases when peer participation was lacking (e.g., one participant reported that a breakout discussion room she was assigned to had no active participants). Overall, participants felt that it was helpful to be able to talk with their colleagues, and to share real-life experiences.

“This is something I was already doing with my little ones or with the small group of families in my program. And I realized that I was doing something good.”

-Participant, CoPs: Providers
Usefulness of Content
Of the content areas covered by the Communities of Practice, focus group participants reported that the sessions on the ECE Competencies and on stages of children's language development were the most useful. Participants reported that they knew about the Competencies but appreciated the refresher, the detailed discussion, and the examples of how to apply them to activities in the classroom.

"I appreciated the CoP was in Spanish, the presenters were very helpful. It was more easily understood for me. And it makes me realize that my children would appreciate hearing lessons in their own language."
-Participant, CoPs: Providers

Sessions covering family interactions and provider beliefs and attitudes were also seen as useful. Providers appreciated the discussion of building relationships with families, and felt recognized for their own backgrounds, culture, and history. One provider did point out that DLL practices may not depend on classroom teachers' beliefs or attitudes, but on those of site directors or owners, saying, "How are we supporting the teachers getting the backlash for trying to help the children? It seems sometimes related to the mission of the center.... It is a shame because if there is the ability to teach in multiple languages, they should be able to." Finally, the CoP session addressing culture, equity, and justice was seen as somewhat useful, but limited in depth, and perhaps rushed by time constraints.

Changes to Practice
Participants reported that they had made or planned to make important changes to their classroom or site practices as a result of what they learned in the Communities of Practice. Among others, these changes included: adding bilingual books to the classroom library (including less common languages); building relationships with parents and providing parent workshops in multiple languages; specifically incorporating multiple languages into lesson plans; and using videos and resources provided by CoP facilitators.

"I think they should include [DLL] in the teacher education programs.... The CoP changed me a lot and helped me to lose my fear of speaking Spanish in the classroom."
-Participant, CoPs: Providers

Takeaways
The conceptual takeaways that participants gained from the CoP sessions centered around beliefs and attitudes that will help them to support their DLL students, including the following statements: all families are unique and deserve respect; support each individual student where they are; help students to be proud of their language and their culture; children who are bilingual will have more choices in life; and providers should be encouraged to look at Dual Language Learning as a benefit for children and for their sites.
**Communities of Practice: Coaches**

A second Communities of Practice series was also offered; these CoPs were designed for the coaches who work to support teachers of DLLs in providing high-quality early education and services. Like the CoPs for providers, the CoPs for coaches did not require participants to have attended any of the other DLL professional development workshops in order to attend. The series included virtual sessions of 2 hours each (1 session per month), and was offered twice in English, to two separate cohorts of coaches, between August 2021 and June 2022. Cohort A received 10 sessions, while Cohort B received 9 sessions (the planned March session did not occur). Communities of Practice sessions for coaches were similar to those for providers in that they included presentations on DLL practice, but the sessions for coaches focused more heavily on the peer community and on participant sharing of experiences.

Of the 80 unduplicated participants across all trainings, 74 (93%) submitted intake forms. Demographics presented in the Audience sidebar represent participants across all training sessions. All participants were from Los Angeles County (100%). The majority identified as Hispanic or Latino/a (65%) and were between the ages of 36 and 55 (73%). Most participants were coaches (89%), with a minority of community-based providers (e.g., home visitors or resource and referral) (7%). Feedback on the CoPs: Coaches series (18 surveys received) was very positive, although less unanimously so, compared to the CoPs: Providers series.

**“I learned that families need more advocates like us coaches to deliver the information to FCC providers and Childcare Center Teachers.”**

- Participant, CoPs: Coaches
The coaches who responded to the Communities of Practice feedback survey (N=37) were asked to list one takeaway that they planned to implement in their classrooms or programs. Twelve participants (32%) identified specific activities or practices they would use, such as incorporating DRDP practices, creating mentors, speaking in more than one language, and listening to children more intently. Seven participants (19%) described information they had gained that would be useful to them, such as the four stages of second language acquisition, the need for advocacy, and outcomes of early reading development. A small number of participants shared that they planned to share the information with others (8%), and mentioned personal changes (5%) such as self-care practices and their own appreciation of different languages and cultures. With respect to format, 8% of participants said they would incorporate videos, group norms, and multilanguage resources in their work with other providers. Four participants (11%) reported learning “how to support” DLL children and providers. The remaining participants (16%) offered general responses, such as “Everything is very interesting,” and “Information was a refresher.”

When asked how the Communities of Practice could be improved, over one-third of the participants (43%) offered generally positive feedback about the training (e.g., “Everything was great”) and 19% reported that no improvements were necessary. Of the remaining participants, 24% would have liked more (or less) time for the sessions, more videos, access to slides, and more small group discussions. In terms of content, 11% would have liked the addition of newer content (e.g., information on Universal Pre-K), discussions of bias and technology, and strategies for promoting cultural representation of DLL students.

The majority of the participants (88%) reported that they did not anticipate any challenges to implementing what they had learned through the Community of Practice sessions. Of the remaining 11%, most indicated a potential for challenges with willingness from their “coachees” (that is, buy-in to new strategies or attitudes), as well as the challenge of finding time to organize and share.
**Training of Trainers**

A Training of Trainers series was offered, which consisted of modules designed for coaches and others who provide guidance and training to teachers of DLLs. Attendance at the Training of Trainers was not linked to participation in any of the other DLL professional development workshops. The series included nine virtual sessions of 6 hours each (with a one-hour break), and was offered one time, in English, between April and June of 2022.

The content of the Training of Trainers modules was intentionally aligned with the content presented in the DLL Professional Development Modules, to ensure that participants at all levels received the same messages around the benefits of bilingualism, and to enable coaches and trainers to support directors and teachers in implementing the strategies that were shared. Modules included information on family engagement strategies, classroom strategies, and the stages of language development. The presenters also shared resources that the trainers could use and share in their own trainings.

Of the 28 unduplicated participants across all trainings, 28 (100%) submitted intake forms. Demographics presented in the Audience sidebar represent participants across all training sessions. Most participants were from Los Angeles County (93%). The majority identified as Hispanic or Latino/a (68%) and were between the ages of 36 and 55 (78%). Most participants listed “Trainer/Coach” as their job role (86%) and reported working primarily with ECE professionals (71%). Feedback on the Training of Trainers series (21 surveys received at the end of the nine-session series) was primarily positive.

---

**Impact**

- **86%** of attendees said the training was valuable to them professionally.
- **86%** of attendees increased their understanding of the benefits of bilingualism.
- **95%** of attendees said their knowledge of DLL content had increased.

---

**Audience**

- **15%** of attendees worked directly with DLL children.
- **86%** of attendees spoke two or more languages:
  - Spanish: **79%**
  - Other: **7%**

---

**Training of Trainers**

- **15%** of attendees worked directly with DLL children.
- **86%** of attendees spoke two or more languages:
  - Spanish: **79%**
  - Other: **7%**
On their training feedback forms, participants (N=21) were asked to share at least one new DLL strategy, learned during the Training of Trainers, that they planned to highlight in their own future professional development efforts. Many of the strategies focused on interaction with families and children, such as building family connections and specific classroom activities. Building family connections, a strategy mentioned by four participants (19%), included welcoming families and using family engagement strategies to learn more about children’s language and culture (e.g., music, food). Four participants (19%) also described specific classroom-based strategies to support DLLs that they would share with others, such as use of play, creating webs, use of vocabulary and physical gestures, and “mirrors and windows.” Three participants (14%) shared potential strategies related to building children’s confidence, through “setting the stage for success” and establishing climates that embrace children’s creativity and language usage “without shame.” Three participants (14%) also intended to share resources (e.g., Unite for Literacy) with future participants. Two participants (9%) reported that being aware and responsive to a child’s stage of language development and giving them time to process were important strategies. Strategies related to the training format were mentioned by two participants (9%), specifically in the use of videos for sharing examples and breakout rooms, which allowed participants to make connections. Of the remaining four participants (19%), two described plans for general use of all or most of the strategies addressed in the sessions, and two offered no response.

Participants were also asked how the Training of Trainers series could be improved. Five participants (24%) offered positive comments about the training, particularly about the engagement and activities. However, about two-thirds of the 21 participants (67%) reported that the training’s timing, format, trainers, and/or presentation style were areas for improvement. Two of these participants (9%) believed the training should have been spaced out differently, as a full day was too long to maintain full engagement. Three participants (14%) reported challenges with the format and access to documentation. More time for practice and interaction was also suggested.

Six participants (29%) shared information about the trainers and presentation style. One participant explained that there was not enough of the “how to” incorporated into the trainings: “I felt more like this training was being facilitated to me as someone who was attending the DLL training, not the Training of Trainers DLL.” Another participant echoed this by adding that some modules were presented as if they were the trainers and other modules presented as if they were the audience, making the training less effective. A participant also stated that the approaches shared might not be appropriate for all family child care providers.

Fifteen participants (71%) did not anticipate any challenges to implementing what they had learned in the Training of Trainers series. The remaining six participants (29%) indicated potential for challenges in terms of time constraints with teachers, new teachers entering the field, and the need for accommodations to future participants.
Family Workshops
To strengthen family engagement strategies and address the second goal of LA County’s DLL Initiative, the QSLA partners designed a series of family engagement workshops aimed at providing information, support, and community to families of Dual Language Learners. These trainings began with a pilot workshop, which was a “test run” to finalize content and receive feedback from family audiences. The fully developed family trainings included three modules, each with different content, which were presented in English, Spanish, Mandarin, and Cantonese. Separately, several stand-alone “Read Together” events focused on family engagement and early literacy.

Multiple targeted communications efforts and partnerships were key elements in encouraging families to enroll in the workshops. First, the workshop organizers connected with staff at QSLA sites and home visiting programs (through First 5 LA and LA Babies Best) to ask the directors, home visitors to share information about the DLL Family Workshops, and to encourage families to attend. The organizers also connected with Best Start program officers from First 5 LA and added them to a mailing list sharing information about the workshops, so they could share the information with their communities in turn. Additional outreach was conducted through Resource and Referral Agencies (R&Rs); the QSLA partners shared monthly graphics and flyers for their use in their own social media and e-mail outreach, enabling them to connect with families in their service areas.

Finally, the workshop organizers also regularly posted on QSLA’s social media about upcoming Family Workshops and events, in an effort to reach families to encourage enrollment. The goal was to cast a wide net across the county for family enrollment; as QSLA does not work directly with families, the partners were aware that connections with family-facing organizations like Best Start would be key in helping

The Importance of DLL Family Engagement
Families often want to support their children’s language development, but may encounter barriers to communication with teachers or school staff. In order to effectively support Dual Language Learners, educators must reach out to families of DLLs to partner with them as their children’s first teachers and cultural guides. Especially for children who speak a language that is uncommon in their school or community, or children with fewer DLL peers in their classrooms, a teacher’s effort to engage family members can help children participate in school and build their social-emotional skills (Premo, Ros Pilarz, & Lin, 2022).

DLL children come from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and these family contexts should be valued as sources of linguistic, cultural, and social-emotional learning. By building connections between home and school, teachers can help children to build strong foundations for success in school and beyond (Hsin et al., 2022).
to spread the word about available workshops and resources. An additional benefit of this strategy was that these external organizations became more aware of the DLL project and the resources being offered, not only for families, but also for their own staff and providers, who might be interested in the professional development trainings offered by the DLL Initiative. The goal of all these outreach efforts, and of providing Mandarin and Cantonese training options, was to reach families who typically are not aware of or cannot access these trainings.

The Family Workshop series was designed as a series of three hour-and-a-half-long modules; however, each module was stand-alone, and the information presented in the series was not cumulative. During each module, trainers shared a slideshow presentation with research-based information about the benefits of bilingualism and tips for supporting Dual Language Learners at home. At the end of each module’s presentation, time was reserved for workshop participants to ask questions of the trainers. Participants also had the opportunity to complete a feedback survey to share their thoughts and recommendations. These Family Workshop modules were designed to be attended by adults (parents/caregivers and providers) only. All participants in any of the workshops received up to 5 books in both English and the language of the workshop they attended.

In contrast, the “Read Together, Create Together” events (two sessions, one hour each) were designed to include young Dual Language Learners. These were one-time, bilingual virtual events, featuring published bilingual authors who shared their experiences as bilingual parents and authors, led a read-aloud of their book, and engaged participants in a family-friendly activity such as a crafting session or a song. These events focused on promoting bilingual literacy in families, and each participant was mailed a copy of the book presented to add to their home library. The third Read Together event, called “Read Together, Learn Together,” was led by a bilingual English/Chinese children’s author and was aimed at bilingual English/Chinese ECE providers. The event focused on helping providers learn to support bilingual literacy in families and how to use the author’s books in the classroom to teach early learning concepts. All participants in the provider Read Together event also received copies of the book presented. Overall, the Read Together events were more discussion-based and interactive, while the Family Workshop series was more presentation-based, but still included many opportunities for breakout discussions, activities, and questions.

**Family Workshop Series**

In December 2021, the developers of the Family Workshop Series conducted a “Pilot Series” test run of each of the planned family workshop sessions, with three individuals attending each session. Due to the small number of attendees, demographics are not reported for these test sessions.

The attendees were asked to provide feedback in order to help the workshop developers shape the series into a culturally relevant and useful family offering. Feedback from each test workshop was used to improve and revise the modules before they were offered at a larger scale. Some additional revisions were made to the family workshops after the first round of the workshops was presented, to align with family participant feedback.
After piloting and revisions, the final Family Workshop Series consisted of three modules:

1. **Our Home Language Is Important: Myths and Facts of Bilingualism**

2. **Maintaining Our Home Language: Best Practices to Support Young Dual Language Learners at Home**

3. **Advocating for Our Young Dual Language Learners: Partnering with Teachers to Support Children’s Dual Language Development**

These three workshop modules were offered as a series presented in a virtual setting by a live trainer. The series was presented separately in English, Spanish, Mandarin, and Cantonese. There were two “rounds” or instances of the workshop series in each language. Round 1 took place in March 2022, and Round 2 took place in May and June of 2022.
Developers met with trainers after the first round of workshops was offered in each of the four languages, and noted their feedback on successes, challenges, and recommendations for improvement. These data, as well as provider feedback, led to enhancements in the modules and the logistics of the virtual workshops before the workshops were offered again in Round 2.

The Family Workshops were designed to be presented to parents and caregivers of young DLLs. In some cases, attendees identified themselves as ECE providers on intake forms, and some of these providers noted that they also had children of their own. Thus, participants may have been able to apply their learning both at home and to support other families at school.

**Family Workshops: English**

The Family Workshop Series was presented twice in English, to a total of 47 unduplicated participants. Of these 47 participants, 36 (77%) submitted intake forms. Demographics presented in the Audience sidebar represent participants across all training sessions. The majority of participants were from Los Angeles County (94%), identified their children as Hispanic or Latino/a (63%), and were between the ages of 36 and 55 (58%). Feedback on the series was positive; the majority of attendees agreed or strongly agreed that they would be interested in attending other DLL workshops for families (91%) and that they would recommend the workshop to other families of Dual Language Learners (91%).

“I am going to keep speaking my home language only with my preschooler, and not worry if there is a quiet stage. On the other hand, I honor my teen’s preference to speak English at home. So my strategy is translanguaging, and not over-correct my teen when she speaks in my home language.”

-Participant, Family Workshop Series: English
Participants who completed feedback forms for the English sessions of the Family Workshops (N=16; feedback forms from pilot workshops are not included) were asked to name one strategy, practice, or piece of information they had learned that they might use to support the Dual Language Learner in their family. Six of the responses to this question (38%) were specifically related to language strategies. Examples included “one parent, one language” and incorporating home language into math and science lessons. Three responses each (a total of 38%) were apparently from providers, and focused on the importance of interacting or sharing information with parents (e.g., “Sharing information with parents about how we can bring their culture to our daycare) and on the overall importance of bilingualism (e.g., “bilingualism is really valued”). Of the remaining responses, two were positive but non-specific, and two were indecipherable.

When participants were asked how the Family Workshops could be improved, 50% of responses indicated “N/A” (not applicable) or that no improvements were necessary. Four other responses (25%) were generally positive, suggesting that everything about the workshops was good. Of the remaining responses, two (12.5%) were related to issues with Zoom or session timing (e.g., “more time”); the other two (12.5%) suggested adding more teaching strategies for Dual Language Learners, and providing more information on the challenges parents are likely to face while raising dual-language children. According to one respondent, this type of information could help to advise schools and programs on the tools and resources that would best support these parents.

Participants were also given the opportunity to report whether they had hoped to learn anything that was not addressed in the workshop. The majority of participants (56%) responded “No.” Four participants (25%) left the question blank, and one (6%) responded “Everything was important.” The remaining two responses (13%) included a desire to learn more about immersion schools and programs (for example, what characteristics to look for and how to enroll), and specific strategies on implementing Dual Language Learning best practices with younger children at home.
Family Workshops: Spanish
The Family Workshop Series was presented twice in Spanish, to a total of 41 unduplicated participants. Of these 41 participants, 36 (88%) submitted intake forms. Demographics presented in the Audience sidebar represent participants across all training sessions. The majority of participants were from Los Angeles County (94%), identified their children as Hispanic or Latino/a (84%), and were between the ages of 46 and 65 (66%).

Content for the Spanish-language Family Workshop Series was aligned with the content presented in the English-language series, but was translated with the help of consultants, who ensured that language and examples used in the training were accurate and culturally appropriate and would connect with the audience.

Feedback on the Family Workshop Series in Spanish was positive, although less overwhelmingly so than the feedback on the English workshops. The majority of attendees agreed or strongly agreed that they would be interested in attending other DLL workshops for families (82%) and that they would recommend the workshop to other families of Dual Language Learners (82%).

“I learned to] read in Spanish and sing rhyming songs to support the child’s language.”
-Participant, Family Workshop Series: Spanish

Audience
Family Workshops - Spanish
53% of attendees had children under the age of 6 years old
89% of attendees spoke a primary language other than English
Spanish: 86%
Cantonese: 3%
48% of attendees had completed a college-level degree

Impact
Family Workshops - Spanish
82% of attendees said the training felt relevant to their life experiences
82% of attendees increased their understanding of the benefits of bilingualism
82% of attendees planned to share their new knowledge with others
Participants who completed feedback forms for the Spanish sessions of the Family Workshops (N=35) were asked to name one strategy, practice, or piece of information they had learned that they might use to support the Dual Language Learner in their family. The three most common themes of responses were the importance of practicing in the home language (20%), learning the importance of bilingualism (17%), and sharing with parents (14%). Examples of each included putting “more importance on the home language,” “the importance of emphasizing both languages at the same time,” and “how to engage parents to share about their culture.” As mentioned previously, several attendees at the Family Workshops were ECE providers, which accounts for the responses relating to parental engagement and knowledge sharing.

Seven responses (20%) identified language-based strategies to implement (e.g., “playing the lottery” [Lotería, a bingo-style picture-matching game] and using “flash cards and display in both languages”), while 11% mentioned reading and singing in the home language. The remaining responses (17%) were generally positive about what participants had learned during the sessions (e.g., “information” and “I learned many things.”)

Participants were also asked how the Family Workshops could be improved, and the majority of responses (54%) were generally positive (e.g., “Everything was excellent”). An additional 17% of responses responded “N/A” (not applicable) or that no improvements were necessary. Of the participant responses that did suggest improvements, 11% specifically wanted more time for the sessions, while another 11% requested more workshops. The remaining respondents (6%) suggested more participation, as well as offering presentations in two languages.

The feedback form also asked participants if there was anything they had hoped to learn about that had not been addressed. Most participants (91%) responded “No,” or gave a general positive response indicating they enjoyed the workshops. Two of the three remaining responses (6%) included wanting to learn more about how to “act with children,” and how to give importance and “enhancement” to different cultures so children felt proud of their cultures. The third respondent (3%) expressed a desire for more information to share with parents about the importance and value of speaking more than one language.
Family Workshops: Mandarin and Cantonese

Although the Family Workshop Series was presented separately in Mandarin and Cantonese, the two languages are analyzed together in this report because the same intake and feedback forms were used for both trainings, making it impossible to determine which forms were submitted by attendees at the Mandarin workshops versus the Cantonese workshops.

Content for the Mandarin- and Cantonese-language Family Workshops was aligned with the content presented in the English-language series, but was translated with the help of consultants, who ensured that language and examples used in the training were accurate and culturally appropriate and would connect with the audience.

The Family Workshop Series was presented twice in Mandarin and twice in Cantonese, to a total of 101 unduplicated participants. Of these 101 participants, 76 (75%) submitted intake forms. Demographics presented in the Audience sidebar represent participants across all training sessions. The majority of participants were from Los Angeles County (78%), identified their children as Asian (95%), and were between the ages of 36 and 55 (53%).

Feedback on the Mandarin and Cantonese workshops was almost unanimously positive. The majority of attendees agreed or strongly agreed that they would be interested in attending other DLL workshops for families (96%) and that they would recommend the workshop to other families of Dual Language Learners (99%).

"[I learned that] bilingualism will not slow down the child’s language."

-Participant, Family Workshop Series: Mandarin/Cantonese
Participants who submitted feedback forms for the Family Workshops in Mandarin/ Cantonese (N=120; some participants attended multiple sessions) were asked to nominate one strategy, practice, or piece of information they had learned that would be used to support their Dual Language Learner at home. The most common theme focused on the importance of practicing and speaking the home language (32%); for example, “Communicate with your children in Chinese at home,” and “Practice is most important.” The general importance of bilingualism and bilingual education was shared by 18% of respondents. Sixteen responses (13%) generally mentioned “information” as what they learned through the training, with some sharing that they hoped to “have more Chinese information.” Thirteen responses (11%) were more activity-specific and included singing, playing, and teaching cultural content such as “Chinese Festivals.” Ten responses (8%) noted communication and language development strategies, including learning how to “create a comfortable environment for children to speak Chinese naturally at home.” Six responses (5%) were related to an environment for learning (e.g., “Arrange games for children to learn in a natural environment”); four responses (3%) addressed parent support or communication, such as communication with the school or to “speak up for bilingualism;” and 3% mentioned having learned information about language development and policy (e.g., “Changes to the Language Learning Act”). The remaining 10 responses (8%) were generally non-specific (e.g., “strategy” and “yes”), although one respondent stated that they learned how to help new students feel safe.

When asked how the Family Workshops in Mandarin/ Cantonese could be improved, 22% of responses provided no comment or reported that no improvements were necessary. An additional 25% of responses were generally positive, suggesting that everything went well with the trainings (e.g., “already perfect”), and 17% of responses indicated that participants simply wanted more workshops on these topics. Suggestions for improvement included changes to the timing of the workshops (9%), including “class time needs to be a little longer,” and improvements to the virtual format (3%), including “link to Zoom is not very convenient.” Another 3% of responses mentioned limited interaction within the sessions. While the remaining responses varied, two general themes that emerged were the importance of preserving the home or Chinese language, and persisting in or strengthening language development.

Participants were also asked whether they had hoped to learn about anything that was not addressed. A large majority (73%) responded “No,” or gave a general positive response indicating the workshop was good. Of the remaining responses, 11% addressed some aspect of the training, mostly the timing and the features of the online format, echoing the suggestions for improvement provided above. Examples included “Change the time of the class, it is easier to enter Zoom,” “Later or earlier,” and “Less group interaction, no one speaks, wasting time.” An additional 14 responses (12%) requested more workshops, trainings, or resources. One respondent suggested, “More details, information, and true stories.” The remaining 1% of responses suggested more bilingual support, more information on the benefits of bilingualism, and “more Chinese volunteers.”
Read Together Workshops

Separately from the Family Workshop Series, three stand-alone “Read Together” virtual events were offered between March and May, 2021. Two of these events (one in Mandarin, and one in Spanish) were designed for family participation, and the third (in Mandarin) was targeted to ECE providers, with a focus on support for DLL families and bilingual literacy. The family Read Together events featured an appearance by a local author, a “read aloud” segment, a “family craft” segment, and tips to help parents support their DLL children’s early reading skills and creativity. There were 16 attendees at the Mandarin family event, of which 8 (50%) submitted feedback surveys, and 25 attendees at the Spanish family event, of which 18 (72%) submitted feedback surveys.

**Audience**

**Read Together - Mandarin**

38% of adults spoke Mandarin at home
- Cantonese: 63%
- Tagalog: 13%
- English: 13%

38% of children spoke Mandarin at home
- Cantonese: 38%
- English: 38%

**Read Together - Spanish**

72% of adults spoke Spanish at home
- English: 94%
- Mandarin: 6%
- Cantonese: 6%

61% of children spoke Spanish at home
- English: 83%
- Mandarin: 6%
- Cantonese: 6%

**Impact**

**Read Together - Mandarin**

75% of attendees said they learned new ways to support their child’s early reading skills

75% of attendees said they learned new ways to support their child’s creativity

**Read Together - Spanish**

83% of attendees said they learned new ways to support their child’s early reading skills

83% of attendees said they learned new ways to support their child’s creativity
The Read Together event for providers, presented in Mandarin, was a webinar-style virtual presentation. The event focused on the benefits of bilingualism, and provided suggestions for sharing bilingual books and supporting Dual Language Learners in preschool settings. There were 19 attendees at the provider event, of which 14 (74%) submitted feedback surveys. The majority of attendees (71%) were Family Child Care providers, with 14% reporting that they worked for a school district.

Feedback for the provider Read Together event was primarily positive. Of the 14 attendees who submitted feedback surveys, 86% agreed that the trainer presenting the webinar was knowledgeable on the content covered, and 93% agreed that the presentation structure of the webinar supported their learning and their ability to share thoughts with others on the webinar. One attendee suggested that they would have benefitted from an interpreter or a separate session in a different language; however, the desired language was not specified.

When providers were asked what steps they planned to take as a result of the information they learned, one provider responded, “Teach children counting 1-10 in another language … we have books in the class in English/Spanish and when I do read both sometimes the children who [speak] Spanish ... laugh [and] get a kick out of it. Because I speak only English.” This attitude and willingness to try new strategies in an unfamiliar language is an example of the openness and creativity that is key to ECE providers’ support for DLL students.

**Audience Read Together - Providers**

- **85%** of attendees worked directly with DLL children
- **57%** of attendees served children who speak Mandarin or Cantonese
  - Spanish: **35%**
  - Tagalog: **21%**

**Impact Read Together - Providers**

- **93%** of attendees said the training content was relevant to their work
- **93%** of attendees increased their understanding of the benefits of bilingual books and resources
Public Outreach
The goals of the DLL Pilot Expansion Phase, as put forward by First 5 CA, included strengthening of teacher knowledge and family engagement strategies to support Dual Language Learners, and also included strengthening a systemwide commitment to DLLs, reflecting a need for widespread intervention and information-sharing. Through the work of the DLL Initiative, the QSLA partners hoped to engage families and providers who may not have been reached by previous efforts, including Family, Friend, and Neighbor providers, Home-Based Child Care providers, and families and providers who speak languages other than English or Spanish. By increasing families’ and providers’ access to knowledge and training around support for young DLLs, the DLL Initiative also hoped to inspire a renewed commitment to support for bilingualism at all levels of the Los Angeles ECE community.

Thus, in addition to professional development sessions for providers serving DLL children, and the family engagement workshops for DLL families, QSLA included outreach to the community as part of its work to support Dual Language Learners in Los Angeles County. This outreach had three components: aligned social media and email communications, distribution of age-appropriate bilingual books and resources, and a televised advertising spot designed to promote awareness of the benefits of bilingualism. These efforts occurred between December 2021 and June 2022.

Communications
To create shared resources for group communications, develop tactics for outreach, and support collaboration between partners, QSLA created a Communications workgroup. This workgroup allowed the partners to share information about the DLL Initiative in a centralized location, and to avoid the confusion that might result from posting resources separately to multiple agency websites. The group met regularly to share updates about outreach, logos, templates, and other details of communications, and to ensure consistent branding or identify other template needs, ensuring that all partners had access to the same resources. The Communications workgroup chose to use the existing QSLA website as a location to house all the training information and resources, and created a logo for the DLL Initiative that used color and style elements of the existing QSLA logo, but added speech bubbles to indicate the DLL theme.

Many of the outreach tactics for the DLL Initiative were built on the existing foundation of QSLA’s outreach methods. Information about upcoming provider and family workshops was shared via a monthly “What’s New” email newsletter, which included promotional graphics, dates and times, and registration links for the workshops. Similarly, professional development workshops were promoted and registration links were shared through QSLA’s Professional Development email list, which was sent to QSLA providers two to three times per month.
In addition to the existing QSLA outreach methods, the Communications Workgroup developed a new email list specifically for DLL content. This email was sent out approximately every month to QSLA participants and to anyone who had taken a DLL training, and was dedicated to sharing information about provider and family workshops, flyers, and registration links. Later in the project, a process was created to have all partners share training information and registration links with CCALA’s QSLA team on a monthly basis. This ensured that outreach materials could be created and that the DLL webpages and calendar could be updated in time to allow for successful outreach and registration of participants in advance of each training. CCALA’s QSLA team developed the messaging for the DLL email list, developed social media graphics in English and Spanish to share about the partners’ upcoming trainings, added training information from each partner to the DLL webpages and live calendar, and shared graphics on social media in advance of each training.

**Book and Resource Distribution**

The QSLA partners reached out to local organizations serving young children and families to plan giveaway events for books, resources, and toolkits. Partner organizations in this effort included Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Crystal Stairs (a child care services and advocacy organization), and LA Care. Events were held at community centers or ECE sites in November and December 2020, and the DLL Initiative coordinated with partner organizations to create fun, festive atmospheres for the giveaways.

Book distribution was targeted by zip code to ensure that families could access books in their home languages. In addition to bilingual and monolingual books, families received flyers, information sheets, a book companion card with read-aloud tips, and a fold-out illustrated toolkit created by the QSLA partners, which emphasized the benefits of bilingualism and provided suggestions for parents to support children’s language development. To increase the reach of the toolkit, the DLL Initiative created versions in seven languages: English, Spanish, Armenian, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, and Vietnamese. Some families also received a bundle of toys, books, and small manipulable items from the learning toy company Lakeshore. These toy sets were themed and designed to promote language production and comprehension. For example, an ocean-themed toy set included several books about ocean animals, toddler-friendly toy animals of the same types, and buckets, balls, and blocks to promote counting, color naming, and labeling.

In addition to organizing these giveaway events, the DLL Initiative also connected with WIC to coordinate distribution of books to children in targeted zip codes. Books were packaged by language, based on the most prevalent language in each community, and sent to the appropriate WIC center to be shared with families. Some books were also distributed to families at the Family Workshops and Read Together events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Book Distribution</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,126 books were distributed to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4,731 families, including at least 4,817 children between birth and 6 years old.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Book distribution was targeted by zip code to ensure that families could access books in their home languages. In addition to bilingual and monolingual books, families received flyers, information sheets, a book companion card with read-aloud tips, and a fold-out illustrated toolkit created by the QSLA partners, which emphasized the benefits of bilingualism and provided suggestions for parents to support children’s language development. To increase the reach of the toolkit, the DLL Initiative created versions in seven languages: English, Spanish, Armenian, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, and Vietnamese. Some families also received a bundle of toys, books, and small manipulable items from the learning toy company Lakeshore. These toy sets were themed and designed to promote language production and comprehension. For example, an ocean-themed toy set included several books about ocean animals, toddler-friendly toy animals of the same types, and buckets, balls, and blocks to promote counting, color naming, and labeling.

In addition to organizing these giveaway events, the DLL Initiative also connected with WIC to coordinate distribution of books to children in targeted zip codes. Books were packaged by language, based on the most prevalent language in each community, and sent to the appropriate WIC center to be shared with families. Some books were also distributed to families at the Family Workshops and Read Together events.
Advertising Spot

The second component of the DLL Initiative addressing the need for community outreach and public awareness was a 30-second video advertising spot which was designed to increase knowledge of the benefits of bilingualism, and to encourage support for bilingualism in both home and early education settings. It featured live-action family scenes, including a child unwrapping a gift, which was seasonally appropriate, since the spot began airing around the December holidays. A voice-over described how parents could give their children the gift of bilingualism by reading, speaking, and encouraging children to speak their home language.

The advertising spot aired in English and Spanish, on Spectrum television channels, in Los Angeles-area zip codes that contained a higher proportion of subscribers who speak a second language and of subscribers with young children. The aim of the DLL Initiative was to reach households in most need of support for their multilingual children, and Dual Language Learners in California are more likely to live in low-income households, compared to non-DLL children (Park, O’Toole, & Katsiaficas, 2017). Therefore, zip codes were also selected for ad distribution based on the number of low-income households in those communities. The zip codes representing the top 20% of views were: 90003 (South LA/ Florence); 90250 (Hawthorne); 90011 (Southeast LA/ Jefferson); 90301 (Inglewood); and 90044 (South LA/ West Athens).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Monolingual</th>
<th>Bilingual (English +)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>1699</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>1657</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenian</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantonese</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simplified Chinese</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>3741</strong></td>
<td><strong>1385</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Languages of books distributed to families.

---

**Audience**

**Advertising Spot**

- **240,420** families were reached by the advertising spot
- **44%** of ad views were in Spanish

**Impact**

**Advertising Spot**

- **97%** of viewers watched the ad to completion
Need for Ongoing Work
The organizational partners in the Los Angeles County DLL Initiative recognize the scope of the solutions that remain to be implemented, both locally and state-wide, and are committed to ongoing work supporting Dual Language Learners and their teachers and families. The year of planning, launch, implementation, and evaluation represented by the current report is only a beginning. The partners look forward to the next steps in this journey, including the continuation of trainings and workshops that were developed over the past year, expansion of access to trainings through online self-paced courses, collaboration on further content, and integration of support for multilingualism into all activities and resources offered by QSLA.

As resources for teachers and families of Dual Language Learners are developed and refined, developers have an opportunity and a responsibility to ensure that offerings are truly relevant to their audiences. Although the majority of Dual Language Learners in Los Angeles County speak Spanish, the population is extremely diverse, and a fully developed DLL program must be available in all of the languages spoken by those it intends to serve. Additionally, cultural context and the specific needs of local families must be considered in order to ensure uptake of the information and tools being provided. To this end, ongoing work will include learning about current conditions and desired improvements directly from DLL populations.

Community Survey: Families of DLLs
To gather additional information about the needs of multilingual families and the resources currently being provided to Dual Language Learners through their schools, the DLL Initiative partners conducted an online survey for families of preschool-aged Dual Language Learners. The survey was provided in English and Spanish, and asked about language practices in the home, communication with children’s teachers about their language development, activities or resources offered by children’s schools, and parents’ beliefs and desires regarding dual language development. The link to the survey was shared via QSLA’s social media accounts, and received 135 responses from California residents.

Only one respondent chose to complete the Spanish version of the survey. Home languages of children included English (57%), Spanish (15%), Mandarin (5%), Korean (4%), Japanese (4%), and Cantonese (3%). Children’s non-home languages included English (49%), Spanish (18%), Armenian (7%), Mandarin (6%), Cantonese (5%), and Indigenous languages (4%).

Participants were asked about their experiences discussing their child’s language development with their child’s teachers or other school staff. Overall, responses were mixed, with about half of participants reporting positive and frequent interactions with teachers or staff, and about half of participants reporting infrequent or unsatisfactory interactions.
How would you describe your interactions with your preschool child’s teacher or other school staff, around the topic of your child’s language development?

My child’s teacher or school staff are always very willing to talk to me about his/her language development, and I have all the information and support I need  

I have had conversations with my child’s teacher or school staff about his/her language development, but I didn’t get all the information or support I needed  

I have not been able to talk to my child’s teacher or school staff about his/her language development, because they are not available or because there is a language barrier

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My child’s teacher or school staff are always very willing to talk to me about his/her language development, and I have all the information and support I need</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have had conversations with my child’s teacher or school staff about his/her language development, but I didn’t get all the information or support I needed</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have not been able to talk to my child’s teacher or school staff about his/her language development, because they are not available or because there is a language barrier</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often do you discuss your preschool child’s HOME language development with his/her teacher?

- Never: 18%
- Rarely: 39%
- Sometimes: 37%
- Often: 5%

How often do you discuss your preschool child’s HOME language development with other school staff (for example, a director, a classroom assistant, or another school helper)?

- Never: 13%
- Rarely: 44%
- Sometimes: 31%
- Often: 8%

How often do you discuss your preschool child’s OTHER language development with his/her teacher?

- Never: 17%
- Rarely: 34%
- Sometimes: 36%
- Often: 11%

How often do you discuss your preschool child’s OTHER language development with other school staff (for example, a director, a classroom assistant, or another school helper)?

- Never: 18%
- Rarely: 36%
- Sometimes: 30%
- Often: 14%

The survey also asked families which of the following DLL-specific resources or activities were offered by their child’s school: Bilingual book giveaways; distribution of toolkits, brochures, or other information; information nights or meetings for parents; and workshops or trainings for parents. Of these options, bilingual book giveaways were the most common, with 60% of participants reporting their school offered giveaways. However, less than half of schools offered workshops or trainings for parents (44%) or information nights or meetings for parents (42%), and under one-third of participants’ schools had distributed toolkits, brochures, or other information (30%).

These results demonstrate the ongoing need for DLL services in California, including professional development for teachers, resources for school administrators, and support and guidance for families.
Outcomes and Impact

The findings presented in this report demonstrate both the effectiveness and impact of the 2021-22 DLL Initiative activities in Los Angeles County, and the desire of families and ECE professionals for more workshops and professional development in the area of DLL. Through a varied and extensive set of offerings, the DLL Initiative succeeded in reaching the goals of First 5 California’s DLL Pilot Expansion Phase.

By offering professional development modules, train-the-trainer sessions, and communities of practice, the DLL Initiative strengthened teachers’ knowledge and confidence around implementing instructional strategies that support DLL children’s learning and development. The family workshops, professional development for providers, advertising campaigns sharing the benefits of bilingualism, and distribution of bilingual books and toolkits in multiple languages helped to strengthen family engagement strategies that support DLLs and their families, and emphasized the importance of maintaining a home language. By building partnerships between local ECE organizations to connect with families and providers and increase the reach of messaging, and by using QSLA structures to centralize DLL communications and planning, the DLL Initiative helped to strengthen a systemwide commitment to DLLs, and laid the foundation for a cross-agency system of support for DLLs’ learning and development.

Throughout the planning and implementation of the DLL Initiative’s activities, evaluators conducted a process evaluation, which included interviews and discussions with members of the Steering Committee. The experiences they shared and their reflections on the work have informed the following discussion of successes and lessons learned over the past year. Based on these reflections, and on outcomes from the implementation of DLL activities (including demographics and feedback of participants served), several recommendations for future work to support young DLLs are also offered.
Successes
One of the greatest successes of the DLL Initiative was the level of collaboration and teamwork achieved by all the organizational partners. It would not be unusual for a project such as the DLL Initiative, including multiple organizations and encompassing complicated tasks and differing scopes of work, to become bogged down in committee discussions. Instead, the monthly meetings of the Steering Committee and associated workgroups proved to be an efficient means of structuring the planning and development process across organizations.

This commitment to collaboration allowed for alignment of DLL content and evaluation materials across trainings serving multiple populations (families, directors, teachers, coaches) in multiple languages (English, Spanish, Mandarin, and Cantonese). Alignment of materials, in turn, enabled a comprehensive approach to improving DLL services, ensuring that schools and families are unified in their support for DLL children.

"I loved knowing that bilingual books are available so close to home."

-Participant, “Read Together” Family Event

Another successful outcome of the DLL Initiative was the number of assets created in just one year. The QSLA partners together created over 100 hours of training content for families and providers, across four languages. This content will continue to be used by trainers, and will be available to new cohorts of participants over the years to come, increasing the impact of the DLL Initiative even further. Additionally, the communications systems that were created by the QSLA partners will form a strong foundation for future years of implementation. Now that the groundwork has been laid, future DLL collaborations by the partners will be easier to execute.

The DLL Initiative’s focus on family engagement was also a point of pride for the QSLA partners. The Initiative was able to reach and serve Family Child Care (FCC) providers, who often have less access to information and training opportunities, as compared to providers at child care centers. The participation of FCC providers in workshops designed for families was unexpected but encouraging, and suggests new ways of thinking about future content development and outreach to support these providers in learning how to support their DLL students. Targeted communications efforts and partnerships with family-facing organizations helped encourage families to enroll in workshops; these strategies will be further developed and used as a template for future efforts.

The creation of materials in Mandarin and Cantonese, as well as in English and Spanish, was a sizeable undertaking, requiring time and effort to ensure quality of the materials. The high level of engagement shown by both families and providers within the Mandarin and Cantonese language communities demonstrates their desire for information about DLLs, which should continue to be addressed by future implementations of this and other initiatives.
The need of the QSLA partners to align their outreach tactics and training schedules led to the identification of best practices for scheduling and communications. For example, the partners developed an internal spreadsheet with all training topics, and entered the dates for those trainings as they were scheduled. This helped partners identify conflicts caused by offering trainings on the same dates, and allowed them to easily reschedule. The practice of having one organizational team add all trainings to a central external calendar worked as a failsafe system for identifying training overlap and notifying the related agencies. The QSLA Communications workgroup also emerged as a central hub for all discussions of shared branding, timing of outreach, content of mailings, and other details of external communications. These types of collaboration strategies are recommended for other cross-agency initiatives, and will continue to be used by the QSLA partners in the future.

The connections that were built between the QSLA partners and local family-facing organizations were essential, enabling the partners to spread the word about available workshops and distribute resources to families who would not have been reached by typical QSLA communications strategies. These external organizations, in turn, became more aware of the resources being offered for families; they also learned about the DLL Initiative overall, and became aware of professional development trainings that might be of interest to their own staff and providers.

Finally, the success of the DLL Initiative’s offerings was evident in the positive feedback received through participant post-training surveys, and in their broad impact. All told, the professional development modules, communities of practice, family workshops, book distribution, and advertising spot directly or indirectly reached hundreds of ECE providers, thousands of young children, and over 240,000 families, most of whom were in Los Angeles County zip codes identified as high-need. The knowledge and resources conveyed through this outreach will continue to ripple through the community, as trainers and directors share best practices for serving DLLs in the classroom with providers, providers connect with families to share information on raising bilingual children, and families work with teachers to ensure that the DLL children in their care receive support in maintaining their home languages.
Lessons Learned
Several lessons surfaced from the QSLA partners’ work on the DLL Initiative this year. Many of the barriers encountered were related to the theme of time: time to plan and prepare for the initiative, to create and translate workshop and training content, and to move from development stages to full implementation of all activities. The First 5 CA DLL Pilot Expansion Phase included only a year’s worth of budgeted time, which presented difficulties, given the vast scope of work planned by the DLL Initiative partners. When surveyed, members of the DLL Steering Committee commented frequently on the theme of limited time, emphasizing the coordination and effort required to launch a high-quality workshop series. In future iterations of this project, partners in charge of planning, development, and implementation will have more knowledge of the time and effort required for each stage of the work.

Another barrier to reaching the goals of implementation was a lower-than-expected attendance rate, both overall and within specific populations. Although trainings were provided virtually due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, attendance at professional development trainings did not reflect providers’ typically high levels of interest. Initial planning had also highlighted the QSLA partners’ intention to reach out to populations that are less likely to be aware of or attend trainings (including providers in Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) childcare settings and Home-Based Child Cares (HBCCs)), but ultimately, most training attendees were not from these populations. Strategies for reaching these underserved groups should be a priority in planning for future trainings and outreach.

Finally, the importance of communication and collaboration emerged repeatedly throughout the course of the DLL Initiative. By the end of the Pilot Expansion Phase, several activities were recognized by the QSLA partners as essential components which should be explicitly included in planning for future projects. These were: creating shared training calendars; assigning dedicated workgroups to develop specific content (e.g., Communications, Evaluation); partnering with local organizations to reach families; earmarking time and funding to create small-scale communications materials (e.g., flyers, emails, translated registration information); and developing shared online systems for external communications and access to co-created assets.

“\ We definitely only scratched the surface and there is still so much room to grow in DLL strategies across L.A. County. “

-DLL Steering Committee Member
Recommendations for Ongoing Work

Given the short time available for this first iteration of the DLL Initiative, and given the size of the need for DLL services and support in Los Angeles County, identifying ongoing funding for this work and expanding the reach of the offered services are both crucial. In the coming years, work on the DLL Initiative will include the following priorities:

- Transformation of “live” virtual trainings into pre-recorded, self-paced trainings, to improve accessibility
- Communication of the importance of multilingualism, and integration of DLL services, as part of the ongoing work of QSLA
- Allocation of DLL funding specifically for creation of communications materials and marketing of trainings, to improve outreach
- Partnering with additional ECE leaders to design and fund future implementations of DLL services.

Based on the successes and challenges of launching the DLL Initiative in 2021-2022, and on the findings described in this report, the partners in the QSLA DLL Initiative suggest the following recommendations for ongoing work to support Dual Language Learners in the Los Angeles area and beyond.

Expand available funding to develop and maintain resources and opportunities that support Dual Language Learners, their families, and their early educators. Specifically, targeted funding is required to provide professional translation and interpretation of educator training content, family resources, and outreach materials, and to build ECE staff and trainers’ capacity to support their ECE colleagues in multiple languages (see also recommendations by Zepeda, 2022).

- Expand investments in DLLs and their families beyond state-funded preschool programs. FCCs, private early learning programs, and families need funded access to books, classroom materials, program resources, and trainings in order to continuously improve the quality of learning opportunities for DLLs.

- Ensure that DLL funding is embedded within ECE budgets, in order to serve all providers and strengthen the mixed-delivery system; for example, budgets for training of coaches should include specific funding for training on DLL content, resources, and workshops. Early educators should also receive support to help them attend trainings more frequently, including incentives like free workshops or courses, trainings that count toward stipend programs or permits/credentials, and funding for substitute teachers to cover the classroom during trainings.
Expand access to professional development for early educators who work with DLLs and their families. Organizations providing professional development related to work with DLLs should prioritize innovative delivery and outreach solutions to invite the participation of underserved populations. Creating new communication strategies, connecting with community partners, and developing training materials in additional languages will enable organizations to connect with more diverse types of ECE providers, including those who work at FCCs or home-based child care facilities.

- Increase the cultural relevancy and accessibility of instructional opportunities by working with families and educators to learn about their language, culture, beliefs, and goals (see also recommendations by Martin, White, Quick, and Manship, 2022). Piloting workshops with several members of a language community before offering them to a larger group, as was done in the case of the DLL Initiative’s Family Workshops, creates opportunities for feedback and targeted development.

- Ensure that practices for increased accessibility, including interpretation, translation, and community outreach, are embedded in budgets for the creation of trainings and workshops. Expand professional development offerings to include currently underrepresented languages, and hire trainers who are able to provide support to early educators and families in their home languages.

“There is a lot of interest from teachers in enhancing their teaching practice to be inclusive of DLLs in every aspect. The responses we receive after each module demonstrate how necessary these topics are.”

-DLL Steering Committee Member
Organizations that support early educators and the ECE workforce should network, collaborate, and communicate, in order to increase structural commitment to DLLs across Los Angeles County and beyond. Building regional collaborations requires time, funding, and extensive thought. Rather than creating additional infrastructure for each new effort, it is preferable to strengthen existing foundations, like those created over the past year by the QSLA DLL Initiative.

• A major step toward collaboration would be the development of a shared online repository, where early educators and families could easily locate a variety of resources from organizations across the region. Many individual organizations already have resources to share that would contribute to support for DLLs in ECE, including informational links, family toolkits, training materials, tip sheets, or similar assets.

• Connect and coordinate with local partners and QSLA members (including organizations offering professional development and workforce supports) to improve diverse provider types’ access to and general awareness of DLL resources, trainings, family workshops, and events. Through clear and consistent messaging, local ECE organizations such as Resource and Referral Agencies should be provided with information about and access to all DLL trainings.

Organizations planning to increase the scale of their DLL services should prioritize effective communications, a central hub for resources, and a core network of organizational partners. Existing DLL efforts with the goal of increasing the scale of the services they provide should create a virtual or live space where all audiences can easily access trainings and other resources; the content of these resources should be collaboratively created and aligned, so that families, early educators, and directors receive consistent information and messaging.

• Programs that are interested in beginning to provide DLL services should start by tailoring their efforts to a core audience (e.g., families, providers) and one or two language communities (e.g., Spanish, Mandarin), addressing the specific needs and desires of these groups. Feedback from these populations should be used to refine and build on this initial content. Translation of communications and training materials can be a lengthy and costly process; starting with a smaller number of languages and adding to that number will prevent overextending resources in the early stages of program development.

• Consistent, frequent communications are essential to spreading a memorable message and attracting an audience. Ensure that core partners are networked tightly to ensure aligned and powerful messaging around DLL resources, events, and workshops. Then, expand the partner network to amplify messaging around DLL program offerings and the benefits of multilingualism, using social media and websites to connect with a diverse group of providers and families.
Learning Briefs
In order to share the efforts and knowledge of the DLL Initiative partners with the families and teachers of Dual Language Learners in the Los Angeles area and beyond, as well as with other organizations and education professionals who may benefit, QSLA is pleased to offer the results of this year’s efforts in an easily accessible format, through the publication of three brief reports including infographics and high-level findings. These Learning Briefs are addressed to three primary groups: families of Dual Language Learners; ECE providers with children who are learning two or more languages in their classrooms; and policy-makers, organizational stakeholders, and advocates for DLL services and equity in early education. Please visit the link in each description to download the corresponding brief or to learn more.

Providing Support and Resources to Families of Dual Language Learners:
QSLA’s DLL Initiative, 2021-2022
Highlights the family workshops and events presented by the DLL Initiative, including outcomes and feedback from participating families; summarizes ECE providers’ learning about engagement with families of DLL children; and describes the DLL Initiative’s upcoming priorities and plans to expand families’ access to resources and workshops.

Creating Opportunities for Early Educators of Dual Language Learners:
QSLA’s DLL Initiative, 2021-2022
Highlights the provider-focused professional development opportunities presented by the DLL Initiative, including outcomes and feedback from participating providers; summarizes findings from family workshops, especially regarding family engagement at ECE programs; and describes the DLL Initiative’s upcoming priorities and plans to increase the availability of trainings and resources for all types of ECE providers.

Foundations of a Network Serving Early Educators and Families of Dual Language Learners:
QSLA’s DLL Initiative, 2021-2022
Describes the multiple family engagement and professional development offerings provided by the DLL Initiative, including outcomes and feedback from participants; informs advocates of the outreach and engagement strategies, including identification of funding, that will be needed to continue this work effectively; describes next steps and upcoming priorities; and reaffirms the ongoing commitment of the DLL Initiative to the success of Dual Language Learners.
References

Barac, R., & Bialystok, E. (2012). Bilingual effects on cognitive and linguistic development: Role of language, cultural background, and education. Child Development, 83(2), 413-422.


For more information on our DLL Initiative, scan the QR code:  
For more information on our DLL resources, scan the QR code:
“What we have accomplished this year should only be seen as a beginning.”

-Member, DLL Initiative Steering Committee