

# Pre-K Dual Language: Frequently Asked Questions

## What is a pre-K dual language program?

Dual language programs provide instruction in two languages: English and a target language. The goal of pre-K dual language programs is for students to experience high-quality early learning in both English and the target language.

Dual language programs enroll a mix of children whose home language is English and children whose home language is the target language. Students support one another's language development by talking to their friends and teachers in both languages.

## What are the target languages offered in pre-K dual language programs?

The following target languages will be offered during the 2019-2020 school year in pre-K dual language programs:

- Bengali/বাঙালি
- Chinese/中文
- French/Français
- Haitian-Creole/Ayisyen-Kreyòl
- Hebrew/עברית
- Italian/Italiano
- Japanese/日本人
- Russian/Русский
- Spanish/Español

For more information about programs that offer these target languages, refer to the enrollment information below.

## How do I enroll my child in a pre-K dual language program?

The pre-K application for New York City families with children born in 2015 opens February 4, and the deadline to apply is March 15. To enroll your child in a dual language pre-K program, use the following resources to learn more and start exploring programs now:

- **Search for and apply to pre-K dual language programs** on MySchools.nyc ([myschools.nyc](https://myschools.nyc.gov)). The Search tool on this website will allow you to filter for pre-K programs that offer dual language. With MySchools, you can explore program options, filter by language, and find choices for your child's application, and apply - all in one place. If you are interested in applying to a dual language program, make sure to select that program as one of your application choices (some pre-K providers offer more than one program, so be sure to add the correct dual language program to your application!)
- **Pre-K Admissions Guide:** view or download our 2019 Guide to learn about the admissions process and which programs offer dual language ([schools.nyc.gov](https://schools.nyc.gov))

If you have questions about a specific dual language program, please contact the program directly. You can find contact information on MySchools or in the Pre-K Admissions Guide.

### **What does instruction look like in a pre-K dual language classroom?**

In New York City's dual language pre-K classrooms, teachers spend half of the time teaching in English and half of the time teaching in the target language over the course of the year.

Some programs choose to conduct one full day in English and the next full day in the target language. Other programs divide instruction between the two languages within the day. In all dual language programs, children are encouraged to explore and practice their full language capabilities and vocabulary during all parts of instruction.

### **What are the advantages of a dual language education?**

There are many advantages to a dual language education. Research shows that speaking multiple languages benefits children in school and in life.<sup>1</sup>

- Bilingualism is good for the brain. Learning two languages helps children develop strong thinking skills.
- Learning two languages can help children gain new skills, and show better self-control.
- Becoming bilingual helps children maintain strong ties with their family, culture, and community, and learn about other cultures.
- Bilingual adults may have increased job opportunities around the world.

### **Will my child get confused learning two languages?**

Research shows that young children's brains are able to learn multiple languages at the same time. In fact, children in early childhood are able to learn a second language more easily than teenagers or adults!

### **How will I support my child at home if I only speak one language (English or the target language)?**

The most important way you can support your child is to use your home language with your child. Children have an easier time learning a second language when they have a strong foundation in their first language. Tell your child stories. Sing songs together. Read books. Children learn many skills they will need in school when they listen to stories and read with their families at home.

### **My child will be entering 3-K. Are there any dual language 3-K programs?**

Official dual language programs are currently only available in pre-K classrooms for four-year-olds. To learn about general 3-K options for your family, visit [MySchools.nyc](http://MySchools.nyc).

### **Are there other bilingual options in pre-K in addition to dual language programs?**

Some NYC Early Education Centers' pre-K programs offer enhanced language supports, which include a staff member who is fluent in the target language and is available to support families, interpretation services for family meetings, translated communications, and teaching staff who support continued development of both English and the target language during instruction. For more information or to enroll your child in a language support program, visit [MySchools.nyc](http://MySchools.nyc) or refer to the Pre-K Admissions Guide.

### **Our family is undocumented. Can we still enroll our child in a dual language program?**

All NYC families regardless of immigration status are eligible for all pre-K programs.

For more information, email [prekduallanguage@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:prekduallanguage@schools.nyc.gov).

<sup>1</sup> [The Benefits of Being Bilingual, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Head Start](#)