COACHING CORNER   SYSTEMS THINKING

Systems That Support Dual Language Learners: *Exploring Mental Models About Dual Language Development*

Use these ideas and questions to build on what you've learned and extend your practice.

THINK ABOUT IT!

- **Self–Reflection**
  Use these questions to think about your own practice.
- **Reflect with Others**
  Supervisors, directors, coaches, and teachers/providers can be reflective partners.
- **The Power of Practice**
  Invite a colleague to join you; observe or record each other and share ideas.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

- What mental models do I hold about dual language development?
- How do my mental models influence the experiences I provide to dual language learners in my program?
- How might the experiences I provide to dual language learners influence their mental models about the importance of their home language?
- How can I increase my understanding and knowledge about dual language development? Where can I find possible resources?

TRY IT OUT!

Select a child in your setting who is a young dual language learner. Over the course of a week, document how you support the child's home language in your setting, including:

- How the child's home language is reflected in the physical environment
- How often the child has opportunities to speak in his or her home language (rarely, sometimes, often)
- What opportunities the child has to engage in conversations with others in English or in his or her home language (e.g., through conversations with peers in small-group activities; in one-on-one conversations with teachers/providers or family members)

Use a journal to record your findings throughout the week.

How Did It Go?

What did you learn about this child and how he or she is being supported as a dual language learner in your setting? Was there anything that surprised you? What are some changes you can make to improve how you support children's home-language development?

What Next?

Try this exercise again, but with a different dual language learner in your setting. Check out the next pack in this bundle, *Structures That Support Dual Language Learners*, to learn more about how you can structure your environment and routines to provide more intentional interactions and supports for young dual language learners in your setting.