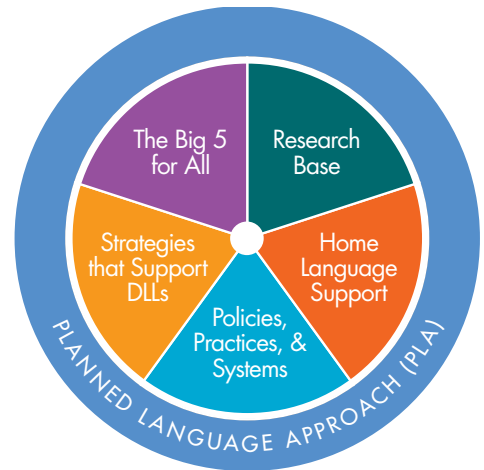


PLANNED LANGUAGE APPROACH: TIPS FOR GETTING STARTED

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A PLA?

A Planned Language Approach (PLA) is a comprehensive, systemic, research-based way for Head Start, Early Head Start, and child care programs to ensure high-quality language and literacy experiences for *all* children. It is particularly helpful for children whose home language is not English. The PLA articulates programs' values, policies, and teaching practices that are expected using their curriculum models, within the context of their unique community. A PLA also helps programs plan systems and services to create a coordinated approach that ensures the full and effective participation of children who are Dual Language Learners (DLLs) and their families. If you use the five components of a PLA to support language and literacy development, then you are beginning to implement a coordinated approach.



WHO BENEFITS FROM A PLA?

When a program has a PLA in place, the entire community of staff, families, and volunteers benefit from a shared vision and a wealth of information that supports children from ages birth to five. PLA resources support program leaders, staff (including education, family and community engagement, human resources, interpretation, and translation staff), and families in Head Start and child care.

HOW TO GET STARTED

With your PLA implementation team, begin by reviewing the resources "[What is a Planned Language Approach?](#)" and [Planned Language Approach \(PLA\): Research Based Literacy and Language Practices](#). Depending on the roles of the implementation team members and their knowledge of language and literacy development for young children (including DLLs), the entry point may vary.



LEADERS

Start with the [Policies, Practices, and Systems](#) section of the pie.

- A. Determine how you will use the [Dual Language Learners Program Assessment \(DLLPA\)](#) to identify language and literacy needs for your program. Note there is a section titled, [How Do You Get Started?](#)
 1. Use the DLLPA and additional resources linked in each of the ten sections to guide your work.
 2. Use the DLLPA to identify needs and solutions for your PLA across the entire program, encompassing all children and families.
 3. Use the PLA sections on [Specific Strategies to Support DLLs When Adults Do Not Speak Their Language](#) and [Home Language Support](#) to support education and child development services.

LEADERS

- B. Along with the implementation team, identify language and literacy goals for your program based on the DLLPA results as well as other types of data, including child assessment data and community assessment information, needed to create a PLA.
- C. With the implementation team, draft a plan for a coordinated approach to support language and literacy development for all of the children in your program. Include specific steps you will take to support children who are DLLs and their families. Enhance your plan by including supports for each of the [Big Five for ALL skills](#). Once clicking on the Big Five for ALL section of the pie, you'll see the Explore Resources section which includes resources for each of the Big 5 skills: Alphabet Knowledge and Early Writing; Background Knowledge; Book Knowledge and Print Concepts; Oral Language and Vocabulary; and Phonological Awareness. These documents provide an introduction to the skill, explain the research and developmental progression, and provide examples of effective practices from birth to age five in a variety of early learning settings.
- D. Use the [Classroom Language Models: A Leader's Implementation Manual](#) to plan to implement a program-wide Classroom Language Models system.

COACHES

- A. Refer to the [DLLPA](#) in the Policies, Practices, and Systems piece of the pie and ask the program leaders what areas they have identified and are working on. If they have not used it, ask how you can help them get started. Ask the program leaders if they have identified school readiness goals and areas of focus for their professional development needs and coaching plans. Ask them about the data they used to identify these professional development needs. One type of data might be the findings of their DLLPA.
- B. Use the [Big 5 for ALL](#) section of the pie to make connections with identified school readiness goals and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework or state early learning guidelines. For further implementation considerations, review [Exploring Joan Talks: A Resource Guide for Training and Technical Assistance Providers](#), which supports coaching, peer learning communities, and group socializations.
- C. Effective teaching practices for staff who serve children ages birth to five are at the core of the work. Find them in each of the [Big 5 for ALL](#) skill documents with examples for the variety of program options. Use the [Practice-Based Coaching](#) cycle and the [PLA Needs Assessments](#) to determine the targeted practices.

EDUCATION STAFF

- A. Start with the [Home Language Support](#) piece of the pie. Use the resource [Gathering and Using Information That Families Share](#) to collect information from the families of DLLs regarding their children's language development and experiences.
- B. Visit the [Strategies that Support DLLs](#) piece of the pie for numerous resources that are helpful when you do not speak the language of the children you work with.
- C. Reference the resource [Code Switching: Why It Matters and How to Respond](#) to learn about a common practice that DLLs use called code switching.
- D. View each of the [Big 5 For ALL](#) skill documents. Each Big 5 skill document includes an introduction; an explanation of what the research says; the developmental progression from birth to age five; effective practices that support the skill with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers; and examples of the Big 5 skills in various early learning settings. Plan to implement these skills every day with every child!

FAMILIES

- A. Start with the [Big 5 for ALL](#). Each of the Big 5 skills has a page with a tip sheet about how parents and families can support their skills. Try some strategies at home or in your community!
- B. Visit the [Home Language Support](#) section of the pie. You'll see the [Importance of Home Language Series](#), which includes four documents in six languages other than English (Spanish, Arabic, Brazilian Portuguese, Chinese, Haitian Creole, and Russian), that emphasizes the benefits of being bilingual, the importance of maintaining home language, and the value of becoming fully bilingual.

These tips for getting started provide key pieces of information about a PLA, including its purpose, benefits, and where to start. Many resources support the development and implementation of your plan. We hope you find these materials useful as you develop a PLA.