

HOW CAN PROVIDERS PREVENT INADVERTENTLY SENDING NEGATIVE MESSAGES ABOUT HOME LANGUAGE TO CHILDREN?

By first striving to answer "yes" to the following questions:

- Do I respond to children when they initiate contact with me in their home language?
- Do I take care not to use the home language only to reprimand children?
- Do I take care not to use home language only to give the children directions?
- Do I use the home language to give the children positive reinforcement?
- Do I encourage the use of the home language by both children and parents?
- Do I create opportunities for different languages to be used in day-to-day activities?
- Do I offer nurturing phrases and reassuring sounds to children in their home language and non-verbal repetitives?
- Do I let children giggle, cry or share confidences with me in their home language?
- Do I have materials in the classroom that reflect home language-and are these materials of equal quality to the English materials?
- Do I understand the concept of code-switching and do I work with parents to identify when to appropriately validate home language and dialects and when to emphasize standard English?