

RAISING SPANISH-FIRST PEQUES

in an English-first World.



WHAT IS A SPANISH-FIRST KID?



A Spanish-first kid learns and uses Spanish as their main language at home (especially in those early years before school).

This means that Spanish comes first, so it has a real shot at staying.

It also means:

- Spanish is the language of hugs, bedtime stories, and silly songs.
 - It's how your child hears love, comfort, and rules.
 - It's the sound of home.
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In an English-first world, Spanish won't "stick" unless we make space for it early and often.

Spanish-first doesn't mean English-last. It means building bilingualism from the roots up.





WHY CHOOSE SPANISH FIRST?

No one grows up wishing they hadn't learned their family's language. But many grow up wishing they had.

When Spanish comes first, it sets the stage for real bilingualism...not just passive understanding.

RESEARCH BACKS THIS UP!

Kids who start by learning the minority language (like Spanish in the U.S.) are far more likely to grow up truly bilingual. When English comes first, Spanish tends to fade. But when Spanish is strong from the start, English catches up naturally, and both languages thrive.





REAL-LIFE STRATEGIES

Start as early as possible. Research shows that babies are amazing at distinguishing different languages from birth.

Speak it as much as possible. The more consistent the input, the better the outcome.

Read in Spanish. As little as 10 minutes a day can make a big difference.

Make screen time count. Use screen time as your ally by playing their favorite shows in Spanish and turning what they watched into play!

Speak it everywhere. If you feel embarrassed or rude, remember that you might be inspiring someone to do the same thing for their child.

Reframe the reminders. Instead of “say it in Spanish,” try:

- “Let’s switch to our secret language.”
- “I think Spanish got shy...can you help me bring it back?”
- “Oops! The Spanish fairy didn’t understand that one.”



TOOLS YOU'LL ACTUALLY USE

TOYS, BOOKS & GAMES

Check out my favorite toys and games to help bring Spanish into playtime in my [Amazon storefront!](#)

SONGS & AUDIOBOOKS

Build “Spanish ears” with our [themed playlists](#) and help them expand their vocabulary through rhythm and rhyme.

YOUR OWN VOICE

Don't underestimate the power of your voice. You don't need to speak the language perfectly...you just need to speak it.



WHAT ABOUT ENGLISH?

I know this question lives in your head. You're raising your peque in Spanish because it means something, but you wonder...

"Am I holding them back? Will they be behind in school? Will English still come?"

BUT HERE'S THE DEAL...

English is everywhere. You won't need to chase it. It's in the playground, in media, in school, in conversations all around them (yes, even if you homeschool in Spanish!).

Spanish won't come automatically. But that's why you're choosing to lead with it. You're not keeping your child from English...you're giving Spanish a chance.





WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

ENGLISH CATCHES UP.

Most bilingual kids reach social-level English fluency within a year after starting school. Academic English takes a few years, but if they have strong thinking and literacy skills in Spanish, it's much easier.

READING IN SPANISH FIRST CAN HELP.

Spanish is more phonetically consistent, so it's often easier to decode. That means more confidence early on.

LANGUAGE SKILLS TRANSFER.



If your child learns how to tell a story in Spanish, they don't start from scratch in English. Storytelling, comprehension, phonological awareness...all those skills carry over when they start speaking English.





WHEN IT GETS HARD...

You're not imagining it...this isn't easy.
We're all up against:

- An English-dominant environment
- Friends and family who don't speak Spanish
- Comments and looks that make you second guess yourself

BUT HERE'S WHAT'S ALSO TRUE:

Every time you speak Spanish to your child, you plant a seed. Even when they answer in English. Even when you're tired. Even when no one else around you is doing it.

They may not say thank you today...but they will someday.



BEFORE YOU GO...

SAVE THIS GUIDE

Revisit it when the doubt creeps in.

FOLLOW [@PLAY_PATOPATO](#)

for community, free bilingual tools, and support every step of the way.

KNOW THAT WHAT YOU'RE DOING MATTERS. DEEPLY.

And you're not alone in this. We're raising the next generation of bilingual voices, one word at a time.

