

Information for parents of children who speak several languages at home

Multiple languages

Research shows that children can learn two or more languages at the same time. Some children learn languages quickly, while others take more time. Children are most susceptible to language learning at the age of 1.5 to 2.5 years. Some children may have a silent period before they start talking at kindergarten (up to six months). It is important not to force the child.

Research shows that it is important for the child to acquire both their own mother tongue and Norwegian.

Children who have Norwegian-speaking friends will learn Norwegian easier and better than children without Norwegian-speaking friends. Good Norwegian skills will make starting school and schooling easier.

What parents can do

Use your native languages as much as possible at home; talk a lot with your child, sing, read and tell stories, use rhymes and play with words. Feel free to take the child on daily errands and talk to the child about what you are doing. Then the child gets experience that support the words.

Children with a good mother tongue find it easier to learn Norwegian.

Different languages support each other, and it is important to learn many words in the languages the child uses. Multilingual children mix languages, and sometimes the child will only speak Norwegian and sometimes the child will only speak the mother tongue; this is normal.

If the parents each have their own language and want the child to learn both languages, the main rule is "one person, one language". This makes it easier for the child to connect the language to the individual parent. The child will eventually separate the languages himself.

Sincerely,

Employees of the kindergartens in Eidsvoll