

2. Why should our family speak Vietnamese?

There are many benefits to being multilingual. Here are eight good reasons to maintain speaking Vietnamese:

1. Identity and culture

Learning your home language (e.g., Vietnamese) is an important part of developing children's identity and connection to culture. People's earliest memories, emotions and experiences are often stored and best described using their home language. Therefore, their home language can be the best language to use for parenting as it helps to share important information with children about who they are and how to live and engage in the world. Speaking the home language can help children to feel connected to their culture, beliefs, traditions and customs.

2. Mental health and wellbeing

Speaking your home language is strongly linked with a sense of belonging in a community or culture. When children feel they belong it increases their self-esteem, mental health and emotional wellbeing. In contrast, when languages are lost children may feel as though they are "stuck between two worlds" not sure which one they belong to.

3. Social skills

Children who speak more than one language have been shown to have more advanced social skills as they learn to pay attention to their speaking partner, use empathy to think about how to communicate with others, and select their communication style based on these social skills.

4. Family relationships

Speaking your home language can be very important for building and maintaining strong family relationships, especially with family members who only speak the home language such as grandparents or relatives living in the home country. Without being able to use your home language children may not be able to speak to important people in their lives which can have negative impacts of family connection and relationships as well as the passing down of knowledge between generations.

5. Thinking and cognitive benefits

Researchers have shown that children who speak more than one language have more flexible thinking and stronger cognitive skills. They are better at thinking about language and taking the perspective of others because they are always thinking about what language is best to use in every situation they enter.

6. School success

Researchers have shown that children who speak more than one language have good academic abilities and may get better results at school.

7. Employment and economic opportunities

Australians who speak more than one language are more likely to have full time employment, higher income and higher university qualifications than monolingual Australians.

8. Broadening children's understanding of the world

Speaking more than one language can open up new worlds to children. They can learn about different ways of living, learning and experiencing the world.



More information

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