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### (ENGLISH) TRANSLATION

**Headline:** First 5 LA promotes language development campaign

**Sub headline:** *Talking is Teaching* motivates parents to engage in communication activities with their children from birth

First 5 LA recently launched a national campaign in LA County to promote brain and language development in children at an early age.

The campaign '[Talking is Teaching](#): Talk, Read, Sing', an initiative from [Too Small to Fail](#) organization, encourages parents to talk to their children from birth with simple activities such as reading and singing.

"It is a public campaign that helps parents recognize their power in their child's brain development through common, simple, and everyday activities," said Diana Careaga, F5LA Spokesperson.

Careaga emphasized that when a parent talks, reads or sings to their child they are helping in their brain development and preparing them for success in school and in life.

*Talking is Teaching* focuses on bilingualism or variations in language.

"Part of the campaign is to teach that research shows that bilingual children benefit in knowing another language," said Careaga. "We tell parents that it increases their mental agility, attention, and ability to solve problems."

#### **An integrated campaign within a maternal support program**

The campaign takes place within F5LA's program, Welcome Baby, which had its start in 2009 as a pilot program of Maternal Child Health Access in partnership with California Medical Hospital (Centro Medico Hospital California).

Welcome Baby has extended to 13 hospitals of Los Angeles County and is a free program for interested mothers that live within the areas they serve. Last year, 11,500 families were served and half of them were of Latino origin.

Every mother who participates in Welcome Baby is assigned to a parent coach throughout the 9 months they will be active in the program.

One of the parent coaches is Melina Ramirez who highlights that as a maternal counselor, her work is to support mothers at home with any questions. Contingent upon their entry to the program, participating mothers receive information from pregnancy through first months of their babies life.

“At Welcome Baby we are a source of information and other resources that could help women what they need,” said Ramirez, highlighting in-home visits as part of the program.

Through this program, mothers receive an in-home visit from a nurse within the first week that they go home with their baby.

After the first 7 days, a parent coach is responsible of advising the mother with 4 more visits.

The addition to the campaign *Talking is Teaching*, through Welcome Baby, are integrated strategies for better communication with the babies, materials include books, songs, and ideas for parents’ interaction with babies.

“This campaign provides different tools to support parents and motivate them to focus more in the healthy development of their baby at home,” said Ramirez. “It allows them to feel confident that they can be the first teachers of their children.”

It also teaches them that any opportunity is valuable to teach and talk to them.

“Everyday moments are opportunities to teach and help and support their development and healthy growth,” said Ramirez, stressing that early interactions with children are important.

### **A difference in the life of the children**

Carolina Carrillo Chavez participates in *Talking is Teaching* which benefits her 3 month old daughter, Violeta.

“It is important and I do enjoy it. I think it is important that we begin to talk to them at an early age,” said Carrillo Chavez. “A lot of people say that they are too little and won’t understand, but they understand everything and are very smart. By giving them more language skills, their development is improved.”

Carrillo Chavez understands the importance of speaking to children at an early age and shares this knowledge with other parents through her job as a teacher in the Head Start program of Hope Street.

“That helps a good deal. We realize how they try to talk and mimic the sounds they hear and how they develop and grow,” said Carrillo Chavez.

Carrillo Chavez highlights that at first many parents neglect to believe that talking to babies may have a result in their education.

But when they notice the difference of the growth of their children, they decide to give it a try.

We emphasize that it is important that they have that communication with their babies because that is how they learn a lot," said Carrillo Chavez. "Although they are busy, they can talk to them about what they are doing."

Aside from sharing this information with other parents, participating in the campaign has helped her find as strong fountain of resources that helped her with the growth of her daughter.

"When you have doubts, we can talk to them (parent coaches), receive advise, they support us. It is a program I recommend to every person, especially those who are expecting a baby for the first time," said Carrillo Chavez.