

REGION VII

DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN HEAD START PROGRAMS

Region VII includes Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska.



Head Start programs reflect our nation's growing cultural diversity by including **dual language learners** (DLLs). The Office of Head Start promotes the full and effective inclusion of families with children who are DLLs. This overview focuses on data regarding home languages, program enrollment, and language proficiency of Head Start staff serving children and families.

Head Start program(s): The Head Start program includes Head Start preschool programs, which primarily serve 3- and 4-year-old children, and Early Head Start programs for infants, toddlers, and pregnant people.

Dual Language Learners (DLLs): Children who are learning two or more languages at the same time or learning a second language while continuing to develop their first language. (Terms, 45 CFR §1305.2)

According to the **2022-2023 school year Program Information Report (PIR)**,

Approximately
36,000
children and families are enrolled in Region VII Head Start programs.

Over
7,500
enrolled children and families in Region VII are dual language learners.

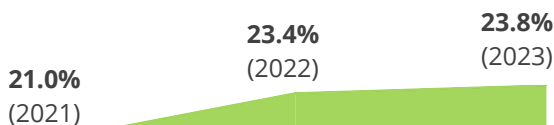


7 out of 10

enrolled children and families in Region VII are **dual language learners**³

**PIR: Provides comprehensive data on the services, staff, children, and families in Head Start programs.*

DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNER ENROLLMENT RATE



Over the last 3 years, there has been a **rise in the enrollment of DLLs in Region VII Head Start programs.**

From 2021 to 2023, DLL enrollment in Region VII Head Start programs increased

2.8%

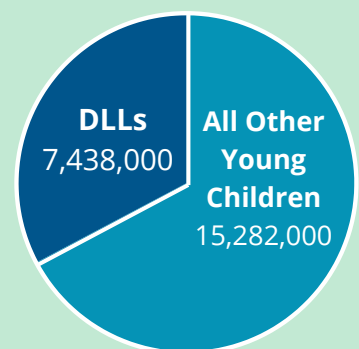


Did you know ...

Learning more than one language has been proven to be beneficial for DLLs, improving **brain development** and school performance, creating more job opportunities, and encouraging an overall positive and **respectful attitude toward different languages and cultures**.¹

Did you know ...

Approximately, **one-third** of children in the United States aged 0-5 are dual language learners, **consistent with the national rate of DLLs enrolled in Head Start programs**.²

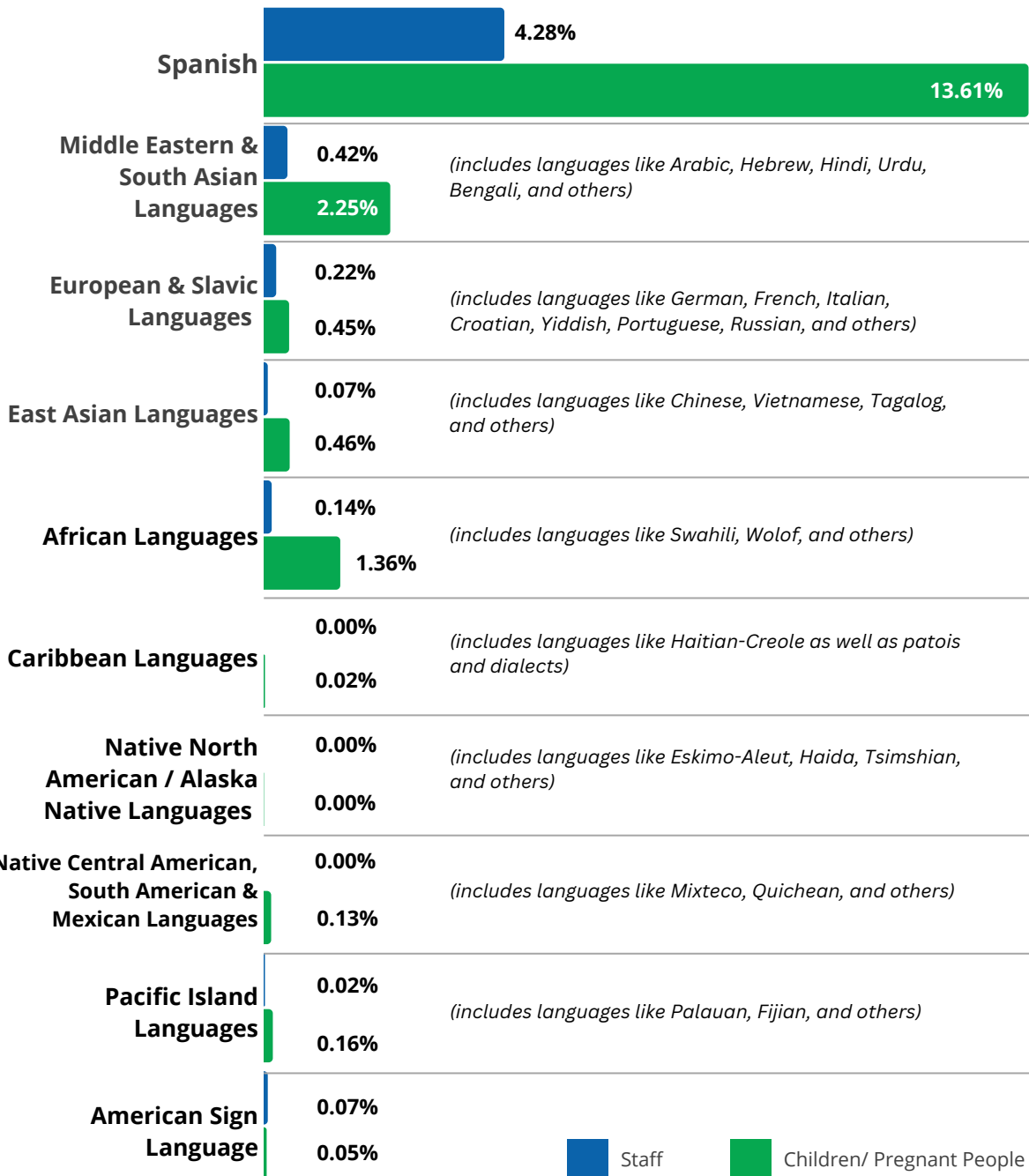


REGION VII: COMPARING DUAL LANGUAGE STAFF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AND ENROLLEES' PRIMARY HOME LANGUAGES

Over 5.20% of Region VII Head Start staff are proficient in languages other than English.

The proportions of multilingual staff largely match the proportions of enrolled children/pregnant people who are DLLs across language families.

Language Groups spoken by **Enrolled Children/Pregnant People** and **Head Start Staff**
(excluding English; based on **2023 PIR data**)



Did you know ...

Over 35,000 Head Start staff speak two or more languages, fostering an **inclusive environment for DLLs**.³ Effective communication in native languages enhances cognitive development, social and emotional development, and the ability to thrive in Head Start and beyond, supporting diverse and multilingual communities.⁴



Did you know ...

The Head Start Program Performance Standards **require** the use of evidence-based teaching practices for **English and home language development**.

Sources:

- 1 Kroll, Judith F., and Paola E. Dussias. "The Benefits of Multilingualism to the Personal and Professional Development of Residents of the US." *Foreign Language Annals* 50, no. 2 (Summer 2017): 248-259.
- 2 Park, Maki, Jacob Hofstetter, and Ivana Tú Nhi Giang. "Overlooked but Essential: Language Access in Early Childhood Programs." Migration Policy Institute (October 2022).
- 3 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. Program Information Report (PIR) Summary Report - 2022 - National Level. Washington, DC, October 2022.
- 4 Bloom, Howard S., and Christina Weiland. "Quantifying Variation in Head Start Effects on Young Children's Cognitive and Socio-emotional Skills Using Data from the National Head Start Impact Study." MDRC (March 2015).