Young Hispanic Children: Early Learning Needs and Opportunities
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Hispanic Children Have the Largest Achievement Gaps at Kindergarten Entry
Hispanic Children Have the Least Access to Preschool Education

NIEER calculations based on ECLS-B. Am. Indian sample on quality too small to report.
Why Are Hispanics Less Likely to Attend Pre-K?

- High cost of quality
- Lack of transportation
- Limited access to public programs
- Low standards in states where most Hispanic children live—including CA, FL, TX
- Inadequate outreach, particularly in Spanish
- Few dual language programs
  - Spanish speaking children least likely to attend pre-K
How Would Hispanic Children Benefit from Pre-K for All?

• Hispanic children make large gains in high quality pre-K
  – School readiness in language, literacy, and math
  – Long-term achievement
  – Reduced grade repetition and special education, which predict high dropout rates

• Hispanic children are more likely to attend if Pre-K is not means-tested and is high quality
Dual Language Pre-K is Essential

• Rigorous research finds dual language pre-K can produce large gains in English and Spanish
  – Children lose in Spanish without formal education
• Bilingualism has cognitive benefits
• Bilingualism has economic and social benefits
• Need to invest in good bilingual teachers
  – Enable the pre-K teachers we have to attend higher education
  – Provide adequate salaries to all pre-K teachers
Conclusions

- Hispanic children are least likely to attend quality pre-K
  - Most children in Spanish dominant families do not attend pre-K

- Limited English proficiency at K entry significantly contributes to low achievement and high dropout rates

- Pre-K can prevent these problems & dual language pre-K can produce both English and Spanish proficiency

- Most dual language learners (DLL) do not have a bilingual teacher and few teachers have been trained to teach DLLs

- US must increase access to high quality pre-K, especially pre-K that meets the needs of young Hispanic children
Additional Information

Two Policy Briefs at nieer.org

- Preparing young Hispanic dual language learners for the knowledge economy
- Is public pre-K preparing Hispanic children to succeed in school?