

Meet Mateo: One of our Parent Child Home Program (PCHP) Shining Stars



When Mateo started in the Parent-Child Home Program in September 2014 he was 27 months old and he did not speak at all. Children that age should be speaking an average of 50 words yet Mateo was essentially mute. He was cheerful and engaging at times, but he would also get easily frustrated because he struggled to be understood and he would have several

emotional outbursts during visits with his home visitor. He was identified as needing speech services so in addition to twice weekly PCHP visits he began getting weekly speech therapy as well.

Mateo's mom wasn't sure why he would not speak. She continued to talk and read to him patiently, but she worried that he would fall behind when he entered school since he wasn't speaking in either English or Spanish, his family's native language.

For most of his first year in PCHP Mateo made very little progress in his language development, but as spring came around he finally started to say individual words, many of them related to activities that went on during visits, such as "open" and "close" when using scissors or naming specific shapes that were part of a shape sorting toy, but he still wasn't putting together two-word sentences.

By the start of the second year Mateo had made so much progress! For the last five months his vocabulary has grown steadily and he never has emotional outbursts of any sort. He is an avid and enthusiastic student and he loves writing and talking about the alphabet. He can write all of his letters, spell his name, and he can count past 25, which puts him right on track if not ahead of his peers. Mateo also knows his colors in both English and Spanish and he loves looking for shapes. He can recognize and discuss more advanced figures such as hexagon, pentagon, and octagon, which he learned through the shape sorter puzzle he received from PCHP. Learning to speak has opened up new worlds to Mateo who can now communicate more easily with his family, sing along with his favorite songs, and even make silly jokes. He is a very smart boy who is clearly destined for great things.